



Arabic Language Teachers' Efforts to Overcome Students' Difficulties
in Reading Arabic Texts in Class VIII A MTs PPM Al-Ikhlash
Lampoko / Upaya Guru Bahasa Arab untuk Mengatasi Kesulitan
Siswa dalam Membaca Teks Bahasa Arab di Kelas VIII A MTs PPM
Al-Ikhlash Lampoko

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Abstract: This study aims to describe the difficulties experienced by students in reading Arabic texts and the teacher's efforts to overcome students' difficulties in reading Arabic texts in class VIII A MTs PPM Al-Ikhlash Lampoko, Polewali Mandar. The research method used in this study is qualitative research, the type of which is included in field research. Data collection in the study through interviews with research informants. Then analyzed using three stages, namely: 1) Data reduction, 2) Data presentation, and 3) Data verification and drawing conclusions. The results of this study indicate that: 1) the difficulties often experienced by students in reading Arabic texts vary. The difficulties often experienced by students in class VIII A MTs PPM Al-Ikhlash Lampoko are difficulties in recognizing Arabic letters, difficulties in pronouncing Arabic letters, and difficulties in reading and understanding long reading texts. 2) Teachers' efforts to overcome students' difficulties in reading Arabic texts can include; teachers listen to the contents of the text repeatedly to students before students read it themselves. Before giving reading texts to students, teachers provide vocabulary related to the reading text. And teachers provide reading texts that are relevant to students' daily lives.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan kesulitan yang dialami siswa dalam membaca teks bahasa Arab dan upaya guru untuk mengatasi kesulitan siswa dalam membaca teks bahasa Arab di kelas VIII A MTs PPM Al-Ikhlash Lampoko, Polewali Mandar. Metode penelitian yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah penelitian kualitatif, yang jenisnya termasuk dalam penelitian lapangan. Pengumpulan data dalam penelitian ini dilakukan melalui wawancara dengan informan penelitian. Kemudian dianalisis menggunakan tiga tahap, yaitu: 1) Reduksi data, 2) Penyajian data, dan 3) Verifikasi data dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa: 1) kesulitan yang sering dialami siswa dalam membaca teks bahasa Arab bervariasi. Kesulitan yang sering dialami siswa di kelas VIII A MTs PPM Al-Ikhlash Lampoko adalah kesulitan dalam mengenali huruf Arab, kesulitan dalam melafalkan huruf Arab, dan kesulitan dalam membaca dan memahami teks bacaan yang panjang. 2) Upaya guru untuk mengatasi kesulitan siswa dalam membaca teks bahasa Arab dapat meliputi; guru mendengarkan isi teks berulang kali kepada siswa sebelum siswa membacanya sendiri. Sebelum memberikan teks bacaan kepada siswa, guru memberikan kosakata yang berkaitan dengan teks bacaan. Dan para guru menyediakan teks bacaan yang relevan dengan kehidupan sehari-hari siswa.



Introduction

Language is a nation's identity and a means of communication. Everyone needs language to interact, express ideas, opinions, and engage in other social interactions.¹ Language is a tool for conveying messages to others, where the speaker's intended message can be understood by the listener or interlocutor through linguistic expression.² Language plays a crucial role in everyday life because it serves as a means of communication for human interaction.³ Through language, a person can convey thoughts, ideas, and feelings, both verbally and in writing. Without language, social interaction would be difficult, and humans would struggle to carry out daily activities, given that humans are social beings who constantly interact with others. Therefore, language is essential in daily life.

Arabic is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, especially in the Middle East. Arabic is also recognized as an international language because it is not only a foreign language used in a specific region but also a language with broad global influence, encompassing aspects of religion, culture, economics, and politics, making it one of the most important international languages.⁴ Learning Arabic is crucial because it is the key to gaining knowledge about life in the world. Furthermore, learning Arabic is the primary path for a Muslim to understand religion, as the Quran and Sunnah are written in Arabic. By mastering Arabic, a Muslim will more easily understand Islamic teachings. As explained in the Quran, Surah Yusuf 12:2, which reads:

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ قُرْءَانًا عَرَبِيًّا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ

Translation:

"Indeed, We have sent it down as an Arabic Quran so that you may understand."

There are four skills that students must master in learning Arabic: reading skills (*Maharah al-Qira'ah*), listening skills (*Maharah al-Istima'*), speaking skills (*Maharah*

¹ Ummi Aisyah Siregar et al., "Bahasa Sebagai Alat Komunikasi Dalam Kehidupan Manusia," *Jurnal Hata Poda* 2, no. 2 (2023): 95–104.

² Delceria Sagala and Dorlan Naibaho, "Mampu Menggunakan Bahasa Yang Komunikatif," *Jurnal Pendidikan Sosial Dan Humaniora* 2, no. 4 (2023): 12724–35.

³ Ayu Condro Ningrum and Izqi Tazqiyah, "Peran Bahasa Dalam Komunikasi Lintas Budaya: Memahami Nilai Dan Tradisi Yang Berbeda," *Jurnal Selasar KPI: Referensi Media Komunikasi Dan Dakwah* 4, no. 2 (2024): 146–67.

⁴ Syaiful Mustofa, *Bahasa Arab Dan World Class University* (UIN Maliki Press, 2021).

al-Kalam), and writing skills (*Maharah al-Kitabah*).⁵ In this study, the author will focus on one of these skills, namely reading skills (*Maharah al-Qira'ah*).

Qira'ah is one of the Arabic language skills that students must master in learning Arabic.⁶ The ability to read is the primary focus, so the primary focus is on a person's reading ability.⁷ The goal of the ability to read Arabic texts fluently, according to the pronunciation of the letters.⁸ Reading proficiency encompasses two aspects of understanding. First, converting written symbols into sounds. Second, grasping the meaning of the entire situation represented by those written symbols and sounds.⁹

Problems or issues often arise in the learning process, resulting in ineffectiveness. These issues can be caused by various factors, both external and internal. Problems in learning can be influenced by students' enthusiasm or interest in learning Arabic. One such issue is the difficulty many students experience in reading Arabic texts.

Difficulty is a condition where various obstacles prevent someone from achieving something.¹⁰ Difficulty can take the form of hardship, difficulty, or challenging circumstances. Facing difficulties often requires overcoming various obstacles, requiring additional effort, innovative thinking, and perseverance.¹¹ For example, in learning Arabic, many students experience difficulty reading Arabic texts. To address learning issues or challenges, the teacher's efforts as an educator are essential. Teachers must be able to find appropriate solutions to ensure effective learning.

Teachers are professional educators with the primary task of educating, teaching, guiding, directing, training, assessing, and evaluating students in early childhood

⁵ Basri Mahmud and Hamzah Hamzah, "Pembelajaran Efektif Dalam Pengajaran Bahasa Arab Tingkat Menengah," *Loghat Arabi: Jurnal Bahasa Arab Dan Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 1, no. 1 (2020): 23–36.

⁶ Mohammad Ahsanuddin, Afifah Akmalia, and Narita Dewi Cahyani, "Implementations of STAD and JIGSAW Cooperative Learning in Maharah Qira'ah of Arabic Language Learning," *Global Journal of Arts Humanity and Social Sciences ISSN 2583* (2023): 2034.

⁷ Uril Bahrudin et al., "The Teaching of Maharah Qiraah in Arabic for Economic Management Departement," *Psychology and Education* 58, no. 2 (2021): 9377–83.

⁸ Melvi Azizaton Ni'mah, "Metode Contextual Teaching And Learning Dalam Pembelajaran Maharah Qira'ah: Metode Pembelajaran, Metode Contextual Teaching And Learning, Maharah Qira, Ah.," *Revorma: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pemikiran* 3, no. 1 (2023): 26–41.

⁹ Efi Nur Fitriyanti, Dina Mustika Ishak, and Imroatul Azizah, "Pengaruh Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Maharah Qira'ah Untuk Siswa Madrasah Aliyah Terhadap Pemahaman Budaya Arab," in *International Conference of Students on Arabic Language*, vol. 4, 2020, 61–74.

¹⁰ Muhamad Fatkhul Muin, "Peranan Bimbingan Konseling dalam Mengatasi Kesulitan Belajar Siswa Kelas 7 di MTsN 01 Ponorogo 2023," *Jurnal Bimbingan Penyuluhan Islam* 5, no. 1 (2023): 103–34.

¹¹ Suci Ramadani, "Upaya Guru Dalam Mengatasi Kesulitan Belajar Peserta Didik Pada Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam Melalui Daring Di SMP Negeri 1 Mallusetasi Kabupaten Barru" (IAIN Parepare, 2021).

education, formal education, primary education, and secondary education.¹² As teachers, they must address the various issues that frequently arise in the learning process by finding solutions to address the challenges faced by students during the learning process. For example, in Arabic language learning, many students experience difficulty reading Arabic texts.

Al-Ikhlash Modern Islamic Boarding School (PPM) Lampoko is one of the Islamic boarding schools in West Sulawesi, located in Lampoko village, Polewali Mandar. Known as PPM Al-Ikhlash Lampoko, this Islamic boarding school is under the auspices of the Islamic Education Foundation (YPI). This Islamic boarding school attracts many parents and children due to its strategic location and various extracurricular activities. In addition to focusing on non-formal learning, PPM Al-Ikhlash also provides formal education like a regular school, allowing students to continue their education from junior high school to high school. This Islamic boarding school oversees five educational units: RA, SMP, MTs, SMA, and SMK.¹³

Al-Ikhlash Modern Islamic Boarding School teaches and develops foreign languages such as Arabic and English. In Arabic language learning, students are taught topics such as *nahwu* (grammar), *shorf* (syntax), and formal Arabic language instruction. However, differences in students' educational backgrounds, such as those from elementary schools (SD/MI) or Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), and their learning interests, contribute to various challenges in Arabic language learning. As a result, many students still experience difficulty reading Arabic texts.

Based on the findings, the author formulated the title "Arabic Language Teachers' Efforts to Overcome Students' Difficulties in Reading Arabic Texts in Grade VIII A Students of MTs. PPM Al-Ikhlash Lampoko, Polewali Mandar" because many students are still not proficient in reading Arabic texts.

Methods

This study employed qualitative research. Qualitative research begins with field observations of phenomena or symptoms that occur to subsequently generate or develop

¹² Dina Erawati, Dini Rakhmawati, and Arri Handayani, "Peran Guru Dalam Mengatasi Kesulitan Belajar Siswa SD," *Jurnal Akademik Pengabdian Masyarakat* 2, no. 4 (2024): 29–39.

¹³ Tahniah Wafiq Anugrah Yusuf, "Gambaran Pengetahuan, Sikap, Dan Perilaku Santri Terhadap Personal Hygiene Dalam Mencegah Skabies Di Pondok Pesantren Modern Al-Ikhlash Polewali Mandar Sulawesi Barat= Description of Knowledge, Attitudes and Behavior of Santri towards Personal Hygiene In " (Universitas Hasanuddin, 2024).

theories.¹⁴ Qualitative research is also a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written words, not numbers.¹⁵

This study is a field study. The data collection techniques used in this study were observation and data collection through interviews with research informants. Informants are individuals who can provide precise and accurate information and understand the information provided, or are individuals who are utilized to provide information about the situation and conditions of the research setting.¹⁶ The informants in this study were an 8th-grade Arabic language teacher at MTs PPM Al-Ikhlash and several 8th-grade students at MTs PPM Al-Ikhlash Lampoko. After collecting the data, the researcher analyzed the data using three stages: 1) Data reduction, 2) Data presentation, and 3) Data verification and conclusion drawing.¹⁷

Results and Discussion

Students' Difficulties in Reading Arabic Texts

The Arabic language learning process often faces various challenges that hinder the achievement of objectives. Based on research, students in grade VIII A of MTs PPM Al-Ikhlash Lampoko experience several difficulties in reading Arabic texts. These difficulties reflect significant barriers in the learning process. The difficulties experienced are as follows:

a. Difficulty Recognizing Arabic Letters

Difficulty recognizing letters is one of the challenges experienced by students in reading Arabic texts. Several students in grade VIII A of MTS PPM Al-Ikhlash Lampoko have not yet mastered the recitation of the Quran. This causes them to have difficulty recognizing Arabic letters when reading Arabic texts. Based on interviews with the Arabic language teacher, he stated that:

¹⁴ Alexis Bazen, Frances K Barg, and Junko Takeshita, "Research Techniques Made Simple: An Introduction to Qualitative Research," *Journal of Investigative Dermatology* 141, no. 2 (2021): 241–47.

¹⁵ Josephine Oranga and Audrey Matere, "Qualitative Research: Essence, Types and Advantages," *Open Access Library Journal* 10, no. 12 (2023): 1–9.

¹⁶ Bui Thanh Khoa, Bui Phu Hung, and Mohsen Hejsalem-Brahmi, "Qualitative Research in Social Sciences: Data Collection, Data Analysis and Report Writing," *International Journal of Public Sector Performance Management* 12, no. 1–2 (2023): 187–209.

¹⁷ Esubalew Aman Mezmir, "Qualitative Data Analysis: An Overview of Data Reduction, Data Display, and Interpretation," *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences* 10, no. 21 (2020): 15–27.

There are still some students who are not yet fluent in reciting the Quran, and this results in difficulties in recognizing letters, which makes it difficult for them to read Arabic texts, especially when the letters are connected to each other.¹⁸

He further explained the difficulty in recognizing letters, stating that:

Students' difficulty in recognizing Arabic letters is due to their limited Quran recitation, with some even struggling with the Iqra' (idiomatic pronunciation). This can hinder the learning process. When students are still very poor or not yet proficient in reading the Quran, it will be very difficult to learn Arabic. Reading Arabic text is more difficult than reading the Quran, as we often hear the Quran differently from the Arabic text itself.¹⁹

Based on the interview results above, it was concluded that difficulty recognizing Arabic letters is one of the main problems in Arabic language learning, reducing the effectiveness of the learning process and decreasing students' interest in learning Arabic.

b. Difficulty Pronouncing Arabic Letters

Several students in grade VIII A of MTs PPM Al-Ikhlash Lampoko experienced difficulty reading Arabic text due to their lack of fluency. This was explained by a grade VIII A student at MTs PPM Al-Ikhlash Lampoko, who served as an informant in this study. Based on the interview, he stated:

As a student, I also have difficulty pronouncing some of the hijaiyah letters correctly, which makes me slow in reading. This often confuses me because I have difficulty following the lesson properly.²⁰

Echoing the previous informant's statement, an interview with a grade VIII A Arabic language teacher at MTs revealed the difficulties experienced by students in reading Arabic texts. He stated:

Regarding the difficulties experienced by students in reading Arabic texts, many students are still not fluent in pronouncing Arabic letters. This can impact their ability to read Arabic texts.²¹

After analyzing the answers from the informants above, it is clear that students face difficulties pronouncing Arabic letters when reading Arabic texts. This can result in slow reading, confusion, and difficulty in following the lesson properly. This was also confirmed by an Arabic language teacher who stated that many students are not yet fluent in pronouncing Arabic letters, which directly impacts their reading ability.

c. Difficulty Reading and Understanding Long Texts

¹⁸ Sulpadli, "Interview" (MTs PPM Al-Ikhlash Lampoko, July 28, 2024).

¹⁹ Sulpadli.

²⁰ Sofia Lukman, "Interview" (MTs PPM Al-Ikhlash Lampoko, July 31, 2024).

²¹ Sulpadli, "Interview."

Students' difficulties in reading Arabic texts are not only due to a lack of fluency in pronouncing Arabic letters and letter recognition, but also other challenges. As stated by an Arabic language teacher in grade VIII A at MTs PPM Al-Ikhlash Lampoko in an interview, he said:

Some students struggle to understand long Arabic texts. This is due to their limited vocabulary, which makes reading Arabic difficult. In addition to understanding, students often struggle to read long Arabic texts because they are not accustomed to reading long Arabic texts.²²

To support the above statement, the author also interviewed a grade VIII A student at MTs PPM Al-Ikhlash Lampoko. He stated:

The main difficulty I experience when reading Arabic texts is understanding the meaning of unfamiliar words. Sometimes, the texts are too long and contain many unfamiliar words, making it difficult for me to grasp the meaning.²³

To support the above statement, the author also conducted an interview with another grade VIII A student at an Islamic Junior High School (MTs). He stated:

As a grade VIII A student at an Islamic Junior High School (MTs), I often experience difficulty reading and understanding long Arabic texts. I often feel confused and overwhelmed when I encounter many unfamiliar words that I have never heard before. This makes it difficult for me to fully understand the text.²⁴

Based on interviews with research informants, it was concluded that students often experience difficulties reading Arabic texts. Some students struggle to read and understand long texts, especially when the texts are still unfamiliar to them. This is due to students' limited vocabulary, which makes it difficult for them to understand the text. As explained by an Arabic language teacher in an interview with the researcher, he stated:

Students' lack of understanding in reading Arabic texts is due to some students' limited vocabulary.²⁵

Based on interviews with Arabic language teachers and grade VIII A students at MTs PPM Al-Ikhlash Lampoko, several major difficulties were identified in learning Arabic. First, many students have difficulty recognizing Arabic letters due to their lack of Quranic reading skills. Second, students experience difficulty pronouncing Arabic letters or are not yet fluent. Furthermore, students also experience difficulty understanding long

²² Sulpadli.

²³ Salwasaswana, "Interview" (MTs PPM Al-Ikhlash Lampoko, July 31, 2024).

²⁴ Mumtazah, "Interview" (MTs PPM Al-Ikhlash Lampoko, July 31, 2024).

²⁵ Sulpadli, "Interview."

reading texts due to limited vocabulary. These difficulties hamper the effectiveness of learning and reduce student interest in learning.

Below, the author presents data on student difficulties in reading Arabic texts in tabular form. The following table lists student difficulties in reading Arabic texts:

No.	Student Difficulties in Reading Arabic Texts
1	Difficulty recognizing Arabic letters
2	Difficulty pronouncing Arabic letters (impossible to pronounce)
3	Difficulty reading and understanding long reading texts

Table 1. Student Difficulties in Reading Arabic Texts

Teachers' Efforts to Overcome Student Difficulties in Reading Arabic Texts

In Arabic language learning, challenges often arise that can hinder learning progress, particularly in reading Arabic texts. These difficulties often reduce the effectiveness of learning. Therefore, teachers must take immediate steps to address this issue to optimally achieve learning objectives.

Based on observations, students in grade VIII A at MTs PPM Al-Ikhlash Lampoko often face difficulties reading Arabic texts, such as recognizing letters, pronouncing them correctly, and understanding long texts. These difficulties require teacher efforts to improve their Arabic reading skills. In an interview with the Arabic teacher of grade VIII A at MTs PPM Al-Ikhlash Lampoko, he stated:

To overcome students' difficulties in reading Arabic texts, practice is by listening to them repeatedly, at least three times, and then repeating until they can pronounce them fluently.²⁶

Further explanation from the Arabic teacher of grade VIII A at MTs PPM Al-Ikhlash regarding teachers' efforts to address students' difficulties in reading Arabic texts, he stated:

Teachers should not only ask students to practice reading Arabic texts directly, but also require prior exposure from the teacher. This is important because the skill of reading Arabic texts, known as *qira'ah*, requires understanding and practice before students can perform it effectively.²⁷

Based on the interview results above, it is an effort made by teachers to overcome the difficulties faced by students who struggle to recognize and pronounce Arabic letters

²⁶ Sulpadli.

²⁷ Sulpadli.

(not fluently) when reading Arabic texts. This effort is very effective for students who are not yet proficient in pronouncing Arabic letters and who still have difficulty recognizing letters, especially when they are connected to other letters. As he stated:

Having students listen to the pronunciation repeatedly is more effective than simply practicing and memorizing without any guidance from the teacher. Repeatedly listening to the letters ensures students avoid mistakes and develop listening skills, or *istima'* (*istima'*). Furthermore, it can help students who struggle to recognize or differentiate letters when connected to other letters, as the teacher repeatedly requires them to see and pay attention to the reading.²⁸

The Islamic boarding school also attempts to address students who are not yet proficient in reading, such as those who struggle to recognize letters, pronounce them, or are not yet fluent. An interview with a grade VIII A Arabic teacher at MTs PPM Al-Ikhlash Lampoko stated:

For students who are not yet proficient or still having difficulty reading the Quran, the Islamic boarding school provides an Iqra' tutoring class for those struggling with Arabic script. Students who are already able to distinguish letters are enrolled in tahsin classes to improve their reading and pronunciation skills, enabling them to become fluent in reading the Quran and Arabic script.²⁹

In addition to the efforts mentioned above, Arabic teachers also employ other measures to address students' reading difficulties, particularly in understanding the meaning of the text. An interview with an Arabic teacher revealed that:

Before giving students Arabic reading texts, vocabulary should be provided so that they can more easily understand the text, as the vocabulary has been previously taught and repeated.³⁰

He further explained efforts to address difficulties in understanding reading texts. He stated that many students still struggle with comprehension. He stated:

To understand the texts to be read, it is best to provide them with texts that are relevant to everyday life or the context of Islamic boarding schools and dormitories before giving them the texts.³¹

Based on the data obtained by the author in this study through interviews, it can be concluded that teachers employ various efforts to address the difficulties experienced by students in reading Arabic texts. The efforts undertaken are as follows:

²⁸ Sulpadli.

²⁹ Sulpadli.

³⁰ Sulpadli.

³¹ Sulpadli.

- a. The primary effort made by the teacher is to listen to the text repeatedly or *istima'* (repeated listening) before students attempt to read it themselves. This effort can help students pronounce the letters.
- b. The teacher prepares students by introducing vocabulary before they read the text. This makes it easier for students to understand the content of the reading text, especially for those who have difficulty comprehending long texts.
- c. The teacher also emphasizes the importance of selecting reading texts that are relevant to students' daily lives, especially those related to their surroundings. This effort not only improves students' understanding of the reading text but also makes learning more contextual and meaningful for them, because the text presented relates to their daily lives.

Conclusion

Based on the research results and discussion regarding the difficulties students face in reading Arabic texts and how teachers address these difficulties in class VIII A of MTs PPM Al-Ikhlash Lampoko, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Difficulties experienced by students in reading Arabic texts can hinder the learning process. The most common difficulties experienced by students when reading Arabic texts include difficulty recognizing letters, difficulty pronouncing letters (not fluently), and difficulty reading and understanding long texts.
2. Efforts made by teachers to address students' difficulties when reading Arabic texts include: first, teachers listen to the text repeatedly before students attempt to read the text themselves. Second, teachers provide vocabulary to students before giving them the reading text. And third, teachers strive to provide students with reading texts that are relevant to their daily lives.

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