

Learning Hijaiyah (Arabic) Letters by Using Hijaiyah Braille Media for the Visually Impaired Students

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to describe the application of Hijaiyah Braille based on the response of the visually impaired students. This research is development research using Research and Development (R&D) method and conducted limited to two visually impaired students. The data were collected through questionnaires to identify the responses. The average score obtained from the students' responses is 94%. The findings showed that Hijaiyah Braille is empirically appropriate to help visually impaired students learning hijaiyah letters.

Keywords: Learning Media, Hijaiyah Letters, Vision Impairment

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the major issues in the learning process for visually impaired students is the correct learning media to facilitate their needs for optimal potential development. The learning process including methods, tools/ learning media, and learning environment need to be adjusted for them [6]. Observation and interview from SMKN 7 Padang (Vocational High School) found that the visually impaired students encounter difficulties in memorizing Quran Braille due to their inability to recognize Arabic Braille. To solve this issue, they need an effective and attractive supporting tool to help them learn. Concrete learning media is proper for this problem as it functions to make the learning material understood easier for students.

In this case, the appropriate concrete learning media used is Hijaiyah Braille. Hijaiyah Braille is a tool that transforms kinesthesia into information for hijaiyah reading. Hijaiyah Braille is Arabic Braille media learning that consists of embossed codes to help visually impaired people identify hijaiyah letters and their harakat (short vowel marks). This learning media is classified into concrete learning media as it imitates the tangible experience from a manipulated tool.

Media is a channel to deliver information or messages from the sender to the recipient (Sadiman et al., 2010). The characteristics of media are unique. For instance, color attracts, captivates, motivates, and

intrigues one's interest. Media can replace physical limitations in the classroom when the learning objects are unavailable, involving difficult materials, or engaged in a wide concept that may hinder students' observation and understanding.

The questionnaire as the response from the application of Hijaiyah Braille media is derived from the ideal measures of learning media as suggested by [5] that have been developed and modified according to the needs. The measures are outlined as follows:

- a. Appropriateness and relevance. Learning media must be adjusted according to the needs, learning plan, purpose, and characteristics of the students.
- b. Easiness. Learning materials in the media should be easily learned and understood by the students, as well as easily operated.
- c. Attractiveness. Learning media should attract students' attention, such as its display, color choice, and content.
- d. The content of learning media needs to be incorporated with value and benefit for students' understanding.

Concrete media, according to its definition, are real objects. [9] argued that concrete materials are the most effective tools that can integrate senses in the learning process. Concrete learning media can attract students as it has different sizes and weights, a variety

of colors, and is sometimes embedded with movement and sound. Moreover, (Yuliani, N. S, 2009) asserted that an object that can be seen and touched will be received and remembered in children’s brains as long-term memory.

According to Moedjiono (1992) in [2], the advantages of concrete media are:

- a. provide direct experience,
- b. presented in concrete and avoid verbalism,
- c. display the object as a whole in both construction and operation,
- d. show a clear organizational structure,
- e. show a clear process flow.

Based on the explanation, this research aims to describe the application of Hijaiyah Braille. The results were obtained from responses of the visually impaired users. The application of Hijaiyah Braille as learning media is expected to be interesting and enjoyable for students. This means the learning process will be relaxing and effective at the same time. Thus, students can be active, interested in learning, motivated, and hence, improve their learning outcome.

2. THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE PROBLEM

As addressed in the introduction, this research concerns “Learning Hijaiyah Letters using Hijaiyah Braille Media for the Visually Impaired Students.”

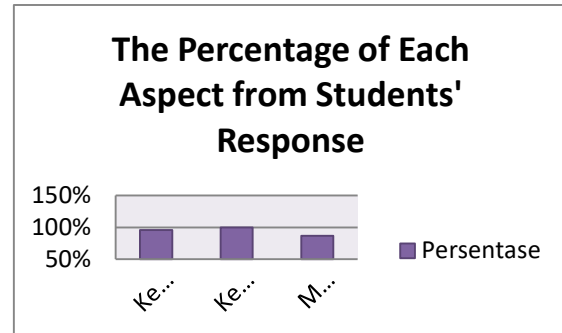
3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

One of the assessments for learning media appropriateness is practical appropriateness. Practical appropriateness refers to the easiness in teaching materials through learning media: (a) The media is familiar and easily operated, (b) easily used without special tools, (c) easily acquired without the expensive cost, (d) portable (high mobility), and (e) easily managed [7].

Questionnaire sheets were given to obtain the responses of the practical use from the visually impaired students. There are three aspects for the assessment of the media: easiness; attractiveness; usefulness. The responses from the two subjects in using Hijaiyah Braille scored at 94% which means the media is very practical. The responses of respective subjects during the application of Hijaiyah Braille to learn hijaiyah letters are described as follows:

3.1 The response of visually impaired students in using Hijaiyah Braille

The average result of responses from visually impaired students when using Hijaiyah Braille in each aspect is presented in figure 1:



Persentase: Percentage
 Kemudahan: Easiness
 Kemenarikan: Attractiveness
 Manfaat: Usefulness

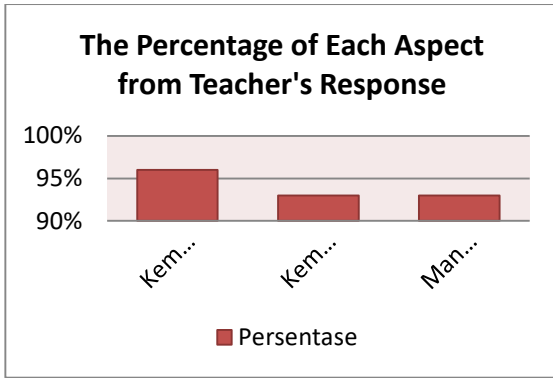
Figure 1. The average result of each aspect from students’ response

The result from figure 1 shows that the highest score is obtained by the aspect of attractiveness. The attractiveness of the media scored 100% and is categorized as very practical. The aspect of easiness acquired 96% and is categorized as very practical. The aspect of usefulness obtained 87% and is also considered very practical. As suggested by [6], that the application of correct learning media can carry students’ needs and help their potential development.

The total average score of responses given by the students in using Hijaiyah Braille is 94%, and hence, the media used is very practical. [3] affirmed that learning media for visually impaired students must hold two requirements: the media can be touched and consists of Braille letters. These requirements are meant to help the students who are visually impaired gain more information during learning activities and perceive the same understanding because tactile skills are easier to comprehend for them. Another purpose is to allow the learning process to become relaxing and not burdensome.

3.2 Teacher’s response to Hijaiyah Braille for the visually impaired students

The average percentage of teacher’s response to Hijaiyah Braille in each aspect is described in figure 2:



Persentase: Percentage

Kemudahan: Easiness

Kemenarikan: Attractiveness

Manfaat: Usefulness

Figure 2. The average results of each aspect from teacher's response

Figure 2 shows that the highest score is on the aspect of easiness with a score of 96% and is categorized as very practical. Meanwhile, the scores of both attractiveness and usefulness are 93% and categorized as very practical.

The total average score of the teacher's response is 94% and is categorized as very practical. The results support the argument by Lowenfeld as cited in [10] that visually impaired people can understand their environment more easily if the media given to them are tangible and touchable so they can have direct sense experience. Additionally, [4] also confirmed that the primary media that should be used for the visually impaired is tactile media to help them perceive the same perception.

4. CONCLUSION

The research was conducted on two visually impaired students using *Hijaiyah* Braille as media. The results found that *Hijaiyah* Braille is empirically practical as analyzed from the responses with an average score of 91%. This means *Hijaiyah* Braille has obtained positive assessments from the visually impaired students and developed according to their needs.

5. SUGGESTION

Based on the findings of this research, the researchers suggested further actions as follows:

- a. Religious teachers are suggested to use *Hijaiyah* Braille as learning media to introduce *hijaiyah* letters for the visually impaired students.
- b. Evaluation and effectiveness need to be examined for media improvement because the

current results of the research are only for a limited trial.

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