



Arabic Language Learning for Non-Native Speaker Beginner Learners in *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah*

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ABSTRACT

This study discusses learning Arabic language proficiency at *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* as a category of non-speakers and beginner level, namely the integration of *istima* (listening), *kalam* (reading), *qiraah* (speaking), and *kitabah* (writing) skills. As for learning Arabic, it cannot be equated with learning the mother tongue, in its implementation, foreign language learning requires appropriate strategies and materials and is different from the mother tongue learning strategy. This underlies this research to explore phenomena in the practice of teaching and learning Arabic language skills at *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* where students at this school level are children aged 6-12 years with special characteristics and require special media. The essence of learning in outline is the teacher, students, and teaching materials which then how these three things can be related in its implementation. Likewise, in learning Arabic, this study further discusses how the teaching materials are presented according to the curriculum and student learning abilities, how to attract students' interest in learning, how teachers present relevant materials and media to use, as well as evaluations carried out.

Keywords: Arabic learning, Language proficiency, *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah*, Non-native speakers.

1. INTRODUCTION

The importance of Arabic as an international language has received international attention. Arabic is one of the official languages of the United Nations and is the language spoken by hundreds of millions of people around the world (Nassif, Elnagar, Shahin, & Henno, 2021) (Maulani & Faqih, 2021). Arabic is one of the official languages that recognized internationally. At present, Arabic learning is mostly carried out in schools. Where in Indonesia Arabic was initially studied only in madrasahs. From time to time the learning of Arabic spread more widely in schools. Among them are schools labeled as integrated Islam or *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* (Ikbal, 2018). There are many things that make Arabic very different from Indonesian, both in terms of morphology, phonology, or syntax. Because of these differences, foreign language learning, including Arabic, needs special attention in its learning practice.

Recently, people's religious passion has become livelier and the need for understanding Arabic to support their religion has also increased. People's attention to learning Arabic for children is getting bigger. In addition, Arabic is a language that must be studied in Madrasah or Islamic schools. This was also followed by various

development efforts carried out by linguists and language teachers (Kurniawan, 2018).

Arabic learning for children is learning Arabic as a foreign language, not as a mother tongue. This means as an additional language that is learned by someone outside the original language which is the language of daily communication.

It should be noted that the abilities and skills of children in learning Arabic are certainly different. Their development in learning and learning acquisition is also not the same. Some of them have very high learning motivation and develop faster than others. However, there are also those whose learning motivation is low, and their learning development is slow or gradual, so that their development is slower than their other friends.

Learning Arabic at the elementary school level has not developed towards actual Arabic language skills. In the basic education curriculum at public elementary schools, Arabic lessons have not yet received a position as subjects that must be studied and are only inserted in religious lessons. Meanwhile, in elementary schools with Islamic characteristics such as *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* (MI), Arabic lessons have become a compulsory subject

to learn, but the learning has not been maximized in terms of the competencies desired from the learning outcomes, and in teaching it is more the provision of Arabic language rules that are actually not relevant to their age level and are not in accordance with the theory of language learning in children (Tajuddin, 2017).

Basically, learning Arabic must be based on several principles. The basic principles that must be considered are in accordance with the characteristics of the child. Some of these principles are as follows: First, it is based on the world of children, which revolves around family, home, school, toys, and playmates. Second, departing from something that is already known and something that is closer to the child that is easily accessible by children, such as from home outside the house, then to friends' homes and the school environment (Syimah, 2014).

Learning Arabic taught at *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* also has its own scope of discussion according to its level. The Arabic language material at *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* has a scope in the form of themes, namely: introduction/ta'aruf, school equipment, professions, addresses, family, body members, at home, in the garden, at school, in the laboratory, in the library, in the canteen, hours, daily activities, home, and recreation. All of these themes are things that are in the environment of students, and they can also know more about the context. It also has similarities with the characteristics of Arabic at the elementary school level which focuses on four skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing which are the foundation of language (Mahmudah, Masyitah, & Zubaidah, 2018). Then the Arabic language material in *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah*/elementary schools must be prepared so that children can speak Arabic with four language skills that are taught integrally, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing (Fathoni, 2021).

Based on the concept of learning Arabic in elementary schools, this study examines the scope, namely (1) examines teaching materials with curriculum and student learning abilities, (2) examines the methods used by teachers in terms of teaching materials and student development, (3) examines the media used by the teacher in terms of teaching materials and student development, (4) assessing the suitability of the learning evaluation with the learning objectives.

2. METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach using descriptive analysis by looking at the phenomenon of learning Arabic at *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* more naturally and comprehensively.

Participants

The participants in this study were students of *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* Ciwahangan Ciamis with a

population of the fifth grade, and the number of samples that were participants was 30 students.

Data collection

Observation: the observations made are not just observations, but with systematic recording of the objects being studied. As this method is used by researchers to determine the characteristics of social and religious character values in students.

Interviews: interviews were conducted, namely direct meetings and dialogues conducted by the research team with students with the aim of exchanging information so that it becomes a conclusion. In the interview, the researcher determines the interview schedule for the interviewees and asks questions with a 5W+1H pattern (what, when, why, where, who, and how).

Data processing

Data processing is carried out in several stages, namely: data reduction, namely data collected from various sources, namely: observation, interviews and documentation, display data, namely data presented and verified whether in accordance with the problem formulation or research problem focus, also triangulation as a reinforcement of the previous steps.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Arabic Teaching Materials for Madrasah Ibtidaiyah

At this point, it is taken from the curriculum and teaching materials as well as evaluation materials carried out by schools, teachers, and becomes a student handbook. The procedures for language proficiency materials are as follows.

- 1) Special material. Students listen carefully to the words or sentences spoken by the teacher while paying attention to the text available in the textbook, and students pay attention to the *makhrāj* letters and intonations that are exemplified by the teacher.
- 2) *Kalam* material. students pronounce *hiwar* texts in a loud voice, students pronounce by completing *hiwar* according to the examples in the text, students practice *hiwar* with friends in pairs, memorize *hiwar* they have learned.
- 3) *Qira'ah* material. Students read the *qira'ah* text properly and correctly, students answer questions according to the content of the discourse.
- 4) *Kitabah* material. students write while composing sentences correctly, students write by asking questions with the answers provided, translating sentences from Indonesian to Arabic, students copy writing well according to examples.

Regarding the basic competencies in each skill, there are differences between the basic competencies for *istima*, *qiraah*, *kalam* and *kitabah*. If in *istima*, *qiraah*, and *kalam*

skills, each of them has two basic competencies for each discussion theme, it is different with the book which has only one basic competency, namely compiling words into perfect claims, making simple essays. Regarding the basic competence of the book, it is not written down the basic competence that students write words, sentences with *imla*, as well as in the *tarkib* of textbooks, it is not devoted to student practice with *imla*. students need to be trained to be able to write letters or words and sentences using the IMLA method in practice.

In addition to the suitability of the material with the curriculum, there are some things that are not right in presenting the material in the textbook, one of which is about the presentation of *mufradat*. *Mufradat* presented in textbooks is mixed between *isim* and *fi'il* (*mufradat* is written in the research results). Presentation and learning or memorization of *mufradat* are also listed in the syllabus and are included in learning activities. In addition, mastery of *mufradat* will have an effect on learning whether it is learning *istima*, *kalam*, *qiraah* or *kitabah* skills.

Combining these two things in one material on *mufradat* is feared to hinder students from remembering *mufradat* in the *isim* or *fi'il* category. This is also based on the presentation of theory in the material. To learn the theory, students must first understand and be able to distinguish about *isim*. *Mufradat* grouping is considered necessary because researchers see that in learning activities students still find it difficult and confused to mention objects or verbs or descriptions in Arabic. Regarding the problem of classification of *mufradat*, these include:

- a) Word selection
- b) Difficulty level
- c) Classification of words in) Presentation of word material

The material presented for the fifth grade of MI students contains *tarkib* material with a very complicated pattern for the ages of MI students. This discussion is more primarily contained in the skills of *qiraah* and the book, namely the discussion of the patterns.

- 1) *Mubtada* (an introductory word in a sentence) + *khobar* (a word or sentence explaining *mubtada*) (could be adverbs)
- 2) *Khobar* muqaddam (a word or sentence explaining *mubtada*, but placed before *mubtada*) + *mubtada* muakhar (*mubtada* placed after *khobar*) + *na'at* (adjectives)

The problem of *tarkib* being taught to elementary school-aged children is the concern of researchers. Because from the observations of research in the field, with the discussion of this pattern, it becomes the basic and first obstacle for teachers in conveying material to students, as well as students who find it difficult. *Tarkib* material does need to be taught, but there are many things that need to be considered. The portion of *tarkib* learning is often an obstacle, teachers seem confused if they are

not taught, but the curriculum content and books are clearly written and will affect further learning.

In learning and understanding Arabic is quite difficult, especially for students who are not good at reading the Qur'an, so that it affects students' learning motivation which results in a lack of response given by students during learning activities (Novita & Munawir, 2022).

Regarding the problem of learning Arabic for elementary schools by loading *nahwu* learning, there are things that need to be considered:

- 1) Do not overdo it or focus on learning *nahwu*. Do not complicate self by studying in detail the ins and outs.
- 2) Learning *nahwu* should not be made into a discipline with special books and hours, except for higher levels.
- 3) Not relying on teaching methods that give more attention and portion to grammar.
- 4) Learning grammar that is functional or urgent for learners in expressions and conversations.
- 5) The teaching of *nahwu* must not sacrifice other goals of the language itself.
- 6) The examples given should not be separated from context or meaning, but will be more appropriate through the context of sentences in the texts or writings given according to the ability of the learner, or learning in meaning that can enrich vocabulary, expressions, and can help improve language skills and proficiency.
- 7) Avoiding the use of *nahwu* terms in teaching unless it is absolutely necessary.
- 8) It is recommended not to give *nahwu* lessons unless the payment is proficient in distinguishing between sounds and pronouncing vocabulary.
- 9) More practice.

3.2. Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Arabic Teaching Method

In learning Arabic, teachers can use various existing methods that have been researched by several educational figures in their books which are expected to have a positive impact on learning Arabic at *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah*. However, in the process of learning Arabic at MI, teachers are often faced with problems that are influenced by internal and external factors. Factors that come from within students or internal factors including intelligence, motivation, interests and also students' emotions. While factors from outside the students are economic conditions, teacher methods and also the student learning environment (Hidayah, Parihin, Rusandi, & Nurlaeli, 2022).

During the observation, the method used by the teacher can be said to be in accordance with the teaching material. In teaching materials presenting discourse, *hiwar* and *tarkib* material then the teacher conducts

learning with methods that are adapted to the indicators and learning objectives in each material. In learning *kalam* and *istima*, sometimes the teacher uses the audio-visual method with the use of an in-focus/LCD tool.

In the *tarkib* explanation, the teacher's difficulty in conveying appears in the classroom, the method used tends to be the *qowaid wa tarjamah* method, the impact is that in addition to teachers who find it difficult to explain, students also find it difficult to understand the material presented. One of the obstacles seen in learning is that students do not memorize too much of the vocabulary, this hinders students from understanding the material presented. Regarding this problem, the method of playing games, picture cards, or singing is not used to just memorize vocabulary in every meeting.

The position of the teacher in finding the right method is a must. Therefore, teachers need to know broadly about the types and uses of a method. Knowledge of the method can be a solution. Maybe this can be good input for teachers, schools, or related parties so that they continue to seek insight into various types of methods, with understanding and mastery of methods, teachers should not be too burdened with material, besides that students will easily understand the lessons and interests of students. tends to increase in learning.

The researchers found that during the *tarkib* explanation the teacher's difficulty in conveying appeared in the classroom, the method used tended to be the *qowaid wa tarjamah* method. The impact was that in addition to the teacher who found it difficult to explain, students also found it difficult to understand the material presented. One of the obstacles seen in learning is that students do not memorize too many *mufradat* numbers. This hinders students from understanding the material presented. Regarding this problem, unfortunately, the game method, picture cards, or singing were not used to simply memorize the *mufradat* at every meeting. If a lot of playing or singing methods are used in learning, especially when memorizing *mufradat*, this can help the teacher not to be too tired and complicated in conveying the material. Mastery of *mufradat* will have an impact on learning language skills. *Mufradat* is the basic thing in every language proficiency learning.

Of course, the use of the method will be more effective if it is used based on the development of students in the class with differences in student learning abilities. If we look at the results of observations and interviews of students regarding their learning abilities and interest in learning, the teacher should use methods that involve playing games or singing.

3.3. Arabic Teaching Media at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah

Well-designed learning media can stimulate the emergence of a kind of "internal dialogue" in students. So

that there will be communication between students and the source of the message. Things like this can be said that the process has occurred in students which will eventually lead to changes in student behavior (Sukamto, Elfizar, & Asriyani, 2017).

The media used by teachers in teaching and learning activities tend to be conventional media, namely by using blackboards and textbooks. In-focus/lcd media is used for learning *kalam* and *istima* skills, usually cartoons or other videos are presented in Arabic. However, the number of media used for learning is by using conventional media in the form of blackboards, textbooks, and for special skills using the teacher's voice and the use of in-focus/lcd is not carried out at every learning meeting, the limited availability of in-focus/lcd is the reason for not using the media in every learning meeting.

In the problem of the weakness of *mufradat* as a support in learning Arabic language skills, it does not appear in the classroom that there is media that can help students remember the *mufradat*. In addition, there is no supporting media such as picture cards, or other media other than the use of whiteboards and textbooks. In some aspects of skill, the media used by the teacher is effective in learning, but in some aspects of other skills, the same media used by the teacher tends to be less effective. Conventional media such as blackboards and textbooks are effectively used for *kitabah* skills, the use of projector/LCD is effective in learning *istima* and *kalam* skills, and textbook media that provide effective discourse for *qiraah* skills.

Broadly speaking, the learning media used are conventional, namely the use of blackboard media, textbooks, and teacher voices. And occasionally use audio-visual media, namely by using in-focus/lcd to play cartoon videos or Arabic films. But on the other hand, from research observations, innovative and creative media are needed for the smooth running of teaching and learning activities and students tend not to be bored and bored so that they can foster student interest in fun Arabic learning. The continuity of learning is not only influenced by the factors of teachers, students, methods but is also influenced by the media used to deliver learning materials. Then looking at the use of media in the research field, researchers found the lack of use of innovative learning media.

The lack of use of innovative media seems to hamper the smoothness of learning and does not overcome student boredom and attracts students to prefer learning Arabic. Researchers did not find picture card media, or other visual media in learning, this had an impact on student interest (as explained earlier in the research results and discussion of methods), while the previous theory stated that students were easy to learn around 83% of what was seen, and to remember about 50% anyway of what is seen. Back again to *mufradat* that this learning will be effective if using visual media, including using

picture cards or so on. Departing from the results of research in the field, the learning media used in learning language skills is only *kalam* and *istima* skills that use audio-visual media. In addition, the tendency to use conventional media has become a tradition and is carried out every time learning. This should be a homework for related parties, be it teachers, schools, universities or the government to conduct some training on media development or methods to support teacher skills in creating innovative learning.

Back again to the condition of students, students who are involved in the teaching and learning process have different backgrounds which are determined by the social environment, cultural environment, learning style, economic situation, and level of intelligence. Characteristics of students and learners refer to: (1) mental maturity and intellectual skills, (2) physical condition and psychomotor skills, (3) age, and (4) gender (the same thing happened in the field, the fifth grade of MI students have a different social environment, learning style, economic level and intelligence. Conditions like this cannot be avoided, but the skills of teachers as learning directors also cannot be avoided in seeking creativity to overcome problems that occur in the classroom.

Discussing media, researchers also discuss infrastructure as a place or support for the existence of media. The absence of a language laboratory may make it difficult for teachers or students to find a comfortable and focused place in learning, especially for learning special skills. The condition of the class which is adjacent to the highway is also adjacent to other classes with class conditions that are not soundproof, resulting in the class being often noisy and noisy with the sound of vehicles and the noise of students in other classes. Again, the teacher's skills are tested, especially when learning *istima*, *kalam*, *qiraah*, the teacher often uses sound as a medium in reading discourse very loudly, the impact is that the teacher gets tired quickly and may get bored. The problem of learning infrastructure is explained that facilities have an important meaning in education.

To overcome this, a school should have adequate infrastructure for learning foreign languages, but if this is not possible, the teacher can take other media, namely by using semi-game learning models, picture cards or quizzes to attract students' focus and activeness in learning so that not easily disturbed by the surrounding noise.

The researcher concludes from these findings that learning foreign languages, in this case Arabic, will be more effective if activities outside of school are carried out that support students' language development, be it extracurricular activities or religious school activities. Furthermore, the school can work together with the religious school to help each other, as well as the parents in the aspect of parental attention being a factor that

influences student interest not only in learning Arabic, but in learning other subjects.

3.4. Evaluation of Arabic Learning at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah

The evaluation tool used by the teacher in assessing or measuring teaching and learning activities is by using a test. The tests are in the form of formative tests and summative tests. Formative tests are carried out during the lesson at every meeting and every discussion. The teacher gives practice questions as an illustration and reference to see the success of learning or students' understanding of the material previously explained. Form test Formative test on *kalam* skills, namely by being given practice questions in the form of conversational exercises between students by practicing and memorizing *hiwar* which is available in books and reads before by the teacher. For example, when the material with *hiwar* is themed "*al-madrasah*". The formative test on *qiraah* proficiency is by answering questions that are appropriate to the discourse. For example, when the material with the themed discourse "*al-madrasah*". The formative test on the proficiency of the book is by copying words, sentences and arranging words into perfect sentences.

Evaluation time with formative tests is carried out at the end of each material explanation, in the form of practice questions in class. In addition, the test is also in the form of homework (Homework) and the summative test is carried out in the middle, namely UTS (Middle Semester Examination) and at the end of the semester, namely UAS (Semester Final Examination).

Judging from the form of the questions, the teacher should not target higher results to students, do not expect students (especially the initial level) to answer questions with perfect answers, sometimes they hesitate or ask them to repeat. Then, for teachers related to motivating students, they should write sentences of appreciation in the student exercise book not only on training in the skills of the book, but also on the skills of *istima*, *kalam*, and *qiraah*. And in the practice of the book, a form of evaluation can also be applied to rewriting what the teacher said, that is, this will make it easier for the teacher to review how the students' ability to listen and put it into writing.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and discussion that have been stated previously, the researchers found, analyzed, and studied the problems of learning Arabic language skills that occurred in the field, appearing in several aspects, both from the curriculum and schools, Arabic language proficiency teaching materials for teachers as well as students. Then learning Arabic language skills is a unit, learning Arabic will automatically include four language skills, if students

learn *istima* then they will also learn *qiraah* and *kalam*, as well as when explaining what students hear they pour it into writing, then simultaneously they have learned *istima*, *kalam*, *qiraah* and the book. Therefore, in the four skills, problems arise that are interrelated to each other between the learning between these skills, starting from the relevance of the material to the curriculum and student learning abilities, the way the teacher delivers the material and the media used as well as how the teacher evaluates the learning outcomes.

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