



Arabic Language Teachers' Strategies in Improving Students' Maharatul Kalam Competence

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the difficulties and strategies of Arabic language teachers in improving the Maharatul kalam competence of students at MTs Hikmat Sepang. The research method is a qualitative research that is descriptive in nature. Based on the objectives of this study, the data is in the form of interview results from informants, then analyzed using three stages, namely; 1. Data reduction, 2. Data presentation, 3. Data verification and drawing conclusions. The results of this research show that the difficulties of students in improving the Maharatul Kalam competence of class VIII students at MTs Hikmat Sepang are 1. The difficulties of students in improving Maharatul Kalam competence include: 1) Difficulty memorizing Arabic vocabulary 2) Difficulty composing Arabic sentences 3) Difficulty finding interlocutors in Arabic, 2. Arabic teacher strategies in improving Maharatul Kalam competence for class VIII students at MTs Hikmat Sepang are 1) Providing language vocabulary Arabic 2) Providing guidance and motivation to students 3) Using the tarjamah method 4) Using digital-based learning media 5) Practicing conversation through providing Arabic conversation texts.

Keywords: Teacher Strategy; Maharah kalam; Arabic

Introduction

Arabic is one of the foreign languages that has recently been widely studied and studied by the community, both those oriented towards a normative and spiritual approach with the belief that Arabic is a religious language because the Qur'an was revealed in Arabic, or through an educational and consumer approach, which assumes that Arabic is a language that deserves to be studied in depth to find out its historical and aesthetic studies (Taufik, 2020). Language is basically used by its users as a messenger that they want to convey to others. The need for language users is to be able to refer to objects in the real world,

for example being able to mention names, conditions, events and characteristics of objects with these words into sentences so that they are able to compose propositions, namely a series of words that form predictions about objects, people or events (Aziza and Muliansyah, 2020).

According to the Regulation of the Minister of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia Number 02 of 2008, Arabic language subjects in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah have been taught to students since grades IV-VI. In the Competency Standards (CS) for learning Arabic in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, it has been mapped into four Competency Standards, namely: listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. In reality, of the four skills, the most dominant is only passive skills (reading and writing) rather than active skills (listening and speaking) (Mahmud and Hamzah, 2020). However, of the four components, the problem of learning Arabic in Madrasahs and Schools is often faced with major challenges that affect students' ability to speak Arabic. Of the four components of learning, the problem that most often arises is the weak ability of students to speak Arabic, especially in the passive and active aspects. This phenomenon cannot be separated from the limitations of teachers in mastering learning materials and the lack of understanding of strategies, methods, media, and language games that are effective in learning.

Speaking (Khoiroh, 2024) is part of the skills learned by learners so that speaking skills are considered a very basic part in learning a foreign language including Arabic. Speaking is an active language activity of a language user in using language to express themselves verbally in speaking skills (*maharatul kalam*) which emphasizes content and meaning in conveying messages. There are various forms and methods that can be done according to the level of language proficiency that has been possessed by the learner. The form of teaching speaking (in Arabic) can include the use of spoken language with a level of difficulty (Setiadi, 2021).

From the analysis that has been described, the researcher is interested in conducting a study that investigates Arabic language skills learning entitled Arabic language teacher strategies in improving the *maharatul kalam* competence of class VIII students at MTs Hikmat Sepang, Luyo District, Polewali Mandar Regency.

This study aims to find solutions to academic problems often faced by Arabic language learners, especially related to the weak ability of students in Arabic, both in passive and active aspects. Thus, it is hoped that this study can provide a significant contribution in improving the effectiveness of Arabic language learning in various educational institutions.

Method

This study uses a qualitative method approach based on the formulation of the problem that we have made previously. Qualitative research is a type of research that produces findings that cannot be achieved using statistical procedures or by quantifying the life of society, history, behavior, nationalization functions, organizations, social movements, or kinship relationships.

Bogdan and Taylor stated that qualitative methodology is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words and people and observed behavior. In qualitative research, the researcher is the key instrument. Therefore, researchers must have a broad theoretical background and insight so they can ask, analyze and construct the objects studied to be clearer. This research emphasizes more on meaning and is bound by values (Putri, 2019).

The type of research in this study is included in field research. The data collection techniques used in this study are observation and collecting data through interviews with research informants. The research informants in this study were Arabic language teachers of class VIII MTs Hikmat Sepang and several students of class VIII A MTs Hikmat Sepang. After collecting the data, the researcher then analyzed the data using 3 stages, namely: 1) Data reduction, 2) Data presentation, and 3) verification and drawing conclusions.

Results and Discussion

Difficulties of Grade VIII Students in Improving Their Speaking Skills Competence at MTs Hikmat Sepang

Every student has challenges and difficulties in the learning process, this can happen due to environmental influences and the use of inappropriate

learning strategies or methods, for that reason as researchers we want to find out what difficulties students experience in improving their Maharatul Kalam competence.

Based on the results of interviews conducted by researchers with Arabic language teachers regarding the difficulties experienced by students, he said that:

The difficulties experienced by students in Arabic, especially in improving their speaking skills, can be influenced by various factors, one of which is that the students are alumni of elementary schools who have never studied Arabic before (Muhammad, 2024).

Through interviews with students, researchers found several difficulties they experienced, especially in learning Arabic, especially in improving Maharatul Kalam skills. Below are the difficulties of students in improving Maharatul Kalam skills at MTs Hikmat Sepang.

a. Difficulty Memorizing Arabic Vocabulary

Vocabulary is a very important foundation in speaking Arabic, this is because with a large vocabulary they will indirectly use it in daily activities, but because students easily forget the new vocabulary they have learned from teachers, it makes it difficult for them to speak Arabic.

The difficulties experienced by students in improving their Maharatul Kalam competence arise due to the lack of repetition (*muraja'ah*) of new vocabulary that has been given by educators.

Based on the results of interviews conducted by researchers with students, he said that:

One of the reasons for the difficulties we face in improving our Arabic speaking skills is that we easily forget new vocabulary that has been given by the teacher because we never study it again after being given the vocabulary (Nurmadina, 2024).

b. Difficulty in constructing Arabic sentences

Difficulty in constructing Arabic sentences is a common thing experienced by students, especially for students who are new to learning

Arabic. This is made worse by the lack of Arabic vocabulary which makes students unwilling to pronounce it directly.

Based on the results of the researcher's interview with students at MTs Hikmat Sepang, he said:

One of our difficulties in speaking Arabic is because we don't know how to construct sentences. We only know a few Arabic sentences but we don't really understand how to construct them (Nurpadila, 2024).

c. Difficulty in finding a conversation partner using Arabic

Interlocutors are a very supportive factor in improving Arabic speaking skills. Difficulty in finding interlocutors in speaking makes it easy for students to forget Arabic vocabulary because there is no direct application.

Based on the results of interviews conducted by researchers with students at MTs Hikmat Sepang, he said that:

The difficulties we face in improving our ability to speak Arabic, apart from the vocabulary that is difficult to memorize, another factor that causes us to be less able to speak Arabic is the lack of Arabic conversation partners because we prefer to speak regional languages compared to Arabic (Nurmadina, 2024).

Based on the data obtained by researchers through interviews, it was found that the difficulties faced by students in improving their Maharatul Kalam competence were, firstly, the lack of vocabulary among students because they had difficulty memorizing Arabic vocabulary, secondly, it was difficult to construct Arabic sentences, and it was difficult to find Arabic interlocutors because they preferred to use regional languages.

Below we present data on students' difficulties in improving their Arabic language competence:

No	Students' difficulties in improving their Arabic language competence
1.	Difficulty Memorizing Arabic Vocabulary

2.	Difficulty in Composing Arabic Sentences
3.	Difficulty in Finding a Conversation Partner Using Arabic

Table 1. Students' difficulties in improving their maharatul kalam competence

Arabic Language Teachers' Strategies in Improving the Maharatul Kalam Competence of Grade VIII Students at MTs Hikmat Sepang

Every teacher has strategies and methods to improve students' learning abilities, including in Arabic language learning, especially in improving the competence of maharatul kalam because by using the right strategy, the teaching and learning process will be more effective.

Through interviews with researchers regarding what strategies teachers use to increase Maharatul Kalam competence at the MTs Hikmat Sepang school, in the results of interviews with educators he said:

Regarding the strategies and methods used, of course each teacher has their own method so that speaking skills can improve. We ourselves as teachers, armed with knowledge and experience, use the qira'ah and tarjamah methods to improve students' ability to speak Arabic (Muhammad, 2024).

Furthermore, in an interview conducted by the researcher with students of MTs Hikmat Sepang regarding the strategies used by teachers to improve Maharatul Kalam competence, he said:

Regarding the strategy used by the Arabic language teacher, he always gave Arabic vocabulary to be memorized and always repeated the vocabulary until we knew how to pronounce it correctly (Nurmadina, 2024).

Based on the data obtained by the researcher through interview results, the researcher found that the strategy of Arabic language teachers in improving the competence of maharatul kalam of class VIII students at MTs Hikmat Sepang used the eclectic method, namely a combination of two or more methods to improve students' Maharatul kalam abilities.

The following are the strategies of Arabic language teachers at MTs Hikmat Sepang in improving students' Maharatul Kalam Competence:

a. Providing Arabic vocabulary

The strategy of Arabic language teachers in improving students' maharatul kalam competence by using vocabulary refers to the approach and methods used by teachers to help students expand and master Arabic vocabulary effectively, so that they can speak more fluently, accurately, and confidently with a large vocabulary.

Based on the results of interviews with Arabic language teachers regarding learning activities at Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) Hikmat Sepang to improve students' maharatul kalam competence, he said that:

For the strategy from the past until now that we have used in improving the competence of students' maharatul kalam, we usually provide Arabic vocabulary related to student activities which are expected to increase vocabulary, at least we usually do this activity two to three times a week, then students practice it in daily activities, especially in the school environment. The provision of vocabulary is not only done in class but also usually done outside the class, for example in the prayer room (Muhammad, 2024).

In an interview conducted by the researcher with students at MTs Hikmat Sepang, he said that:

One of the strategies of Arabic language teachers in improving Maharatul Kalam competence is by providing Arabic vocabulary and then asking us to memorize it (Nurpadila, 2024).

b. Providing guidance and motivation to students

Coaching and providing motivation to students is a very important effort in improving the learning abilities of students, especially in improving the competence of Maharatul Kalam. This needs to be done so that students get the motivation to learn and students will increasingly deepen their Arabic language because of the support and motivation from the teacher concerned.

Based on the results of interviews with Arabic language teachers regarding the development of Arabic language learning, he said that:

As a teacher, it is important to provide guidance to students, especially in improving the competence of Maharatul Kalam. This needs to be done to teach them how to create and speak Arabic. Of course, students must have a vocabulary and practice it directly (Muhammad, 2024).

c. Use of the Translation Method

The use of the translation method is an effort that is usually made to measure students' speaking ability both in terms of pronunciation and training students' memory of previously memorized vocabulary. This method needs to be applied so that students not only listen and hear the material but there is an effort made so that students can directly apply the vocabulary that has been learned previously to then be translated into Indonesian or from Indonesian to Arabic.

Based on the results of interviews with Arabic language teachers regarding the use of the translation method in Arabic language learning, he said that:

Regarding the translation method, we usually give Arabic vocabulary or sentences to children and then we ask them to translate them into Indonesian, and vice versa, we give them Indonesian vocabulary and then translate them into Arabic (Muhammad, 2024).

d. Use of Digital-based Learning Media

The use of digital-based learning media is a very important effort so that the teaching and learning process in the classroom is not boring and attracts the attention and interest of students. This needs to be done to increase students' interest and attention in learning which of course leads to improving students' listening and speaking skills, especially the use of audio visuals. Digital learning media used such as the use of LCD Projectors to help display learning materials in the form of short videos on a larger and wider screen for all students.

Based on the results of interviews with Arabic language teachers regarding Arabic language learning media, he said that:

There is no special method that we use other than translating and reading Arabic texts, but we usually play a short video that teaches students how to speak or communicate in Arabic (Muhammad, 2024).

e. Practice speaking by providing Arabic conversation texts

In the researcher's interview with the Arabic language informant teacher at MTs Hikmat Sepang, the teacher also sometimes gave a text containing simple Arabic conversations, the aim of which was to practice the vocabulary that had been learned and add other new vocabulary to be used in communicating with friends.

As quoted from his interview, he said that:

In addition to other strategies such as providing vocabulary and using media, we also usually provide a text containing simple Arabic conversations to practice in communicating with friends, as well as being a way to add other new vocabulary (Muhammad, 2024).

No	Arabic language teacher strategies in improving the competence of maharatul kalam
1.	Arabic vocabulary provision
2.	Conducting Coaching and Providing Motivation to Students
3.	Use of the Translation Method
4.	Use of Digital-based Learning Media
5.	Practice speaking by providing Arabic conversation texts

Table 2. Language Teachers' Strategies in Improving the Competence of Maharah Kalam

Conclusion

Based on the results of the research and discussion that have been presented previously regarding the difficulties of students in improving their maharatul kalam competence and what strategies Arabic language teachers

apply to improve maharatul kalam competence at MTs Hikmat Sepang, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Students' difficulties in improving Maharatul Kalam competency
 - a. Difficulty memorizing Arabic vocabulary
 - b. Difficulty constructing Arabic sentences
 - c. Difficulty finding someone to talk to in Arabic
2. Arabic Language Teacher Strategy in improving Maharatul Kalam Competence
 - a. Providing vocabulary
 - b. Provide guidance to students
 - c. Use of tarjamah method
 - d. Using learning media
 - e. Practice speaking by providing Arabic conversation texts

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