



Effectiveness Analysis of Thematic Tafsir-Based Maharah Qira'ah Learning Materials for Students Memorizing the Qur'an

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Abstract:

In the context of Islamic boarding school (pesantren) education, the skill of memorizing the Qur'an is often not accompanied by an adequate understanding of its meaning. One promising approach to address this issue is the integration of Maharah Qira'ah (reading skills) with thematic Qur'anic interpretation (tafsir tematik). This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of a Maharah Qira'ah teaching material based on thematic interpretation that was previously developed for students who have memorized the Qur'an (santri penghafal Al-Qur'an). This research employed a quantitative approach using a pre-experimental design with a one-group pre-test and post-test model. The research subjects consisted of 10 Qur'an-memorizing students from an Islamic boarding school in East Java. The instruments included pre-test and post-test assessments, supplemented by observation and field notes as supporting data. Data were analyzed using a paired sample t-test with the assistance of SPSS software. The results showed a significant increase in the mean score from 76.0 to 97.0 after the use of the teaching material, with a significance value of 0.004 ($p < 0.05$). The decrease in standard deviation from 16.47 to 4.83 indicates improved equality in student learning outcomes. These findings demonstrate that the thematic tafsir-based Maharah Qira'ah material is effective in enhancing students' contextual understanding of Qur'anic verses. Therefore, this teaching material can serve as an innovative alternative for reading instruction among Qur'an-memorizing students, as it successfully integrates memorization with comprehension through a thematic and real-life context-based approach.

Keywords: Effectiveness; Maharah Qira'ah; Thematic Tafsir;

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Analisis Efektivitas Bahan Ajar Maharah Qiraah Berbasis Tafsir Tematik bagi Santri Penghafal Al-Qur'an

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Abstrak:

Dalam konteks pendidikan pesantren, keterampilan menghafal Al-Qur'an belum sepenuhnya diimbangi dengan kemampuan memahami isi kandungannya. Salah satu pendekatan yang berpotensi mengatasi permasalahan ini adalah pembelajaran Maharah Qiraah berbasis tafsir tematik. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis efektivitas bahan ajar Maharah Qiraah berbasis tafsir tematik yang telah dikembangkan sebelumnya untuk santri penghafal Al-Qur'an. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan metode pre-experimental design tipe one group pre-test and post-test. Subjek penelitian adalah 10 santri penghafal Al-Qur'an dari salah satu pesantren di Jawa Timur. Instrumen yang digunakan meliputi tes awal dan tes akhir, serta observasi dan catatan lapangan sebagai data pendukung. Analisis dilakukan menggunakan uji paired sample t-test dengan bantuan program SPSS. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan peningkatan signifikan nilai rata-rata dari 76,0 menjadi 97,0 setelah penggunaan bahan ajar, dengan nilai signifikansi sebesar 0,004 ($p < 0,05$). Penurunan standar deviasi dari 16,47 menjadi 4,83 menunjukkan adanya peningkatan pemerataan hasil belajar. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa bahan ajar Maharah Qiraah berbasis tafsir tematik efektif meningkatkan pemahaman santri terhadap makna ayat-ayat Al-Qur'an secara kontekstual. Dengan demikian, bahan ajar ini dapat menjadi alternatif inovatif dalam pembelajaran membaca bagi penghafal Al-Qur'an, karena mampu menggabungkan aspek hafalan dengan pemahaman melalui pendekatan tematik dan berbasis konteks kehidupan nyata.

Kata Kunci: Efektivitas; Maharah Qiraah; Tafsir Tematik;

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INTRODUCTION

Reading skills (maharah al-qirā'ah) hold a crucial position in mastering the Arabic language, particularly for non-native learners. Reading is not merely a technical ability to recognize letters and words but also involves understanding meanings, interpreting, and responding to the content of a text (Abdullah, 2010). In this context, reading instruction must be directed not only toward achieving technical proficiency but also toward fostering a deep understanding of the text. One promising approach to enrich text comprehension is thematic tafsir-based learning, as it requires learners to engage in contextual and holistic understanding of Qur'anic verses (Al-Faruqi, 2012; Ghazali, 2015).

Thematic interpretation (at-tafsīr al-mawdū'ī) enables learners to connect Qur'anic verses based on particular themes in a comprehensive manner. Through this process, readers are guided not only to understand individual verses but also to recognize the interrelation between verses that collectively build a unified meaning within a given topic. This approach is believed to enhance critical thinking, synthesis skills, and a deeper understanding of Qur'anic values (Al-Maraghi, 2017; Shihab, 2002). Additionally, it is contextual in nature, as it allows learners to relate Qur'anic teachings to real-life situations, making the learning process more meaningful and engaging (Fitriani & Yusuf, 2020).

Despite its great potential, teaching materials specifically designed based on thematic tafsir for Qur'an-memorizing students (ḥuffāz) are still rarely found, especially in the pesantren (Islamic boarding school) environment. Field realities indicate that while many students can memorize Qur'anic verses, they often struggle to understand their deeper meanings, let alone connect them to their daily lives (Fitriani, 2020; Muhammad, 2019). Furthermore, the teaching methods employed tend to focus on rote memorization without contextual understanding, which limits the development of Qur'anic values and character building that are central to the pesantren's educational mission (Aziz & Masri, 2021; Nasir, 2014).

Previous studies on reading material development often emphasized linguistic or technical aspects alone, without integrating Qur'anic values thematically. Some also failed to account for the unique characteristics of students who possess strong memorization skills but weak comprehension of meaning and context (Abdullah, 2010). This condition reveals a significant research gap, namely the need for an analysis of thematic tafsir-based reading materials that are specifically designed to support reading skills and comprehension of the Qur'an among ḥuffāz.

Relevant prior research has demonstrated that thematic tafsir-based learning can significantly improve reading skills and comprehension of Qur'anic verses (Abdullah & Huda, 2021; Santoso, 2019). However, few studies have specifically analyzed the effectiveness of such materials, particularly in the context of maharah qira'ah for Qur'an-memorizing students. These two aspects—analysis and effectiveness—are essential to ensure that the teaching materials are not only well-designed but also feasible for use and impactful in improving comprehension and reading proficiency.

Although thematic tafsir-based materials have been developed and piloted, few studies have systematically analyzed to what extent these materials effectively support students' understanding of the Qur'an through contextual reading skills. Therefore, the main research question of this article is: To what extent are thematic tafsir-based maharah qira'ah materials effective in improving students' contextual reading skills? This question is addressed through an analytical approach based on



expert validation and field testing results from prior research (Branch, 2009; Fraenkel et al., 2012).

This article thus aims to analyze the effectiveness of previously developed thematic tafsir-based teaching materials in the context of maharah qira'ah instruction. Unlike prior studies that primarily focused on material development or general reading strategies, this study specifically advances existing research by providing empirical effectiveness evidence among Qur'an-memorizing students using a top-down interpretative approach. By shifting the focus from development to impact analysis, this study refines the understanding of how thematic tafsir-based materials function in enhancing contextual reading comprehension within pesantren education.

This study is also of significant urgency and scientific value, as it enriches the literature on Arabic teaching materials that are grounded in Qur'anic values—particularly through a thematic tafsir approach, which remains underexplored in the context of pesantren education. The research contributes theoretically by emphasizing the importance of the top-down method in teaching religious texts, and practically by offering a tested and applicable teaching model for Qur'an-memorizing students (Abdullah & Huda, 2021; Nasir, 2014a). Moreover, by focusing on effectiveness analysis, this article becomes highly relevant for policymakers, educators, and curriculum developers who aim to ensure that the materials used are truly contextual, meaningful, and impactful in enhancing learners' understanding of Qur'anic content (Fitriani & Yusuf, 2020; Rahman, 2022).

The selection of Qur'an-memorizing students as research subjects is also grounded in the fact that this group plays an important role in transmitting Qur'anic values to the broader community. By integrating reading skills and thematic interpretation, these students are expected to become not only memorization experts (*ḥuffāz*), but also individuals who critically understand and apply the Qur'an's teachings in their daily lives (Fitriani & Yusuf, 2020; Ghazali, 2015).

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive quantitative approach within a Research and Development (R&D) framework, as the instructional material had been previously developed and required empirical effectiveness evaluation in an authentic learning context. While this design allows for in-depth analysis of learning outcomes within a real instructional setting, it is limited in terms of internal validity and generalizability due to the absence of a control group and the relatively small sample size.

Although this research is part of a larger project on the development of thematic tafsir-based instructional materials, this article concentrates solely on the trial and effectiveness analysis stages as a continuation of the previously developed product using the ADDIE model.

The subjects of this study were Qur'an-memorizing students (*ḥuffāz*) at the higher education level from one Islamic boarding school in East Java, Indonesia. The participants were selected purposively based on the following criteria: (1) active participants in the tahfidz program, (2) having memorized at least 10 juz of the Qur'an, and (3) not previously exposed to thematic tafsir-based reading instruction. A total of 20 students were involved in the effectiveness testing.

The instruments used in this study included: (1) a pre-test and post-test in the form of multiple-choice questions designed to assess students' ability to read and



understand thematic tafsir texts; (2) classroom observation sheets to evaluate student engagement during learning sessions; and (3) student response questionnaires to support the quantitative data by gathering learners' perceptions and acceptance of the instructional materials. All instruments were validated by subject-matter experts and educational evaluation specialists prior to use.

The research procedure followed the limited trial stage of the ADDIE model, implemented over four sessions across two weeks. The sequence began with a pre-test, followed by learning sessions using the developed instructional materials—constructed with a top-down approach and rooted in thematic tafsir—and concluded with a post-test. Learning outcome data were then collected and analyzed to determine any improvement and assess the materials' effectiveness.

The data analysis technique used descriptive statistical methods applied to both the pre-test and post-test scores. The analysis included calculating the mean scores, gain scores, and classical completeness percentages. The instructional materials were considered effective if more than 75% of the students reached the minimum mastery criteria (≥ 70), accompanied by a significant score improvement from pre-test to post-test. In addition, observation and questionnaire data were analyzed descriptively to support the quantitative findings from the test results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research aims to analyze the effectiveness of Maharah Qiraah teaching materials based on thematic interpretation that has been previously developed. The effectiveness analysis was conducted by comparing students' reading comprehension (Qiraah Fahmiyyah) test results before and after the implementation of the instructional materials among ten Qur'an-memorizing students. Although the study was conducted on a limited sample within a single pesantren context, the findings provide practical implications for the development of reading instruction that integrates memorization with contextual understanding. Future research is recommended to involve larger samples or comparative experimental designs to further validate and generalize the effectiveness of the instructional materials.

To measure the effectiveness of the developed instructional material, the researcher employed a comparative analysis of pre-test and post-test results obtained from ten female students enrolled in a Qur'an memorization program. The pre-test was administered to assess students' initial reading comprehension skills, particularly in understanding thematic tafsir texts. Following the instructional intervention using top-down-based learning activities, a post-test was conducted using identical assessment criteria. The comparison of these results not only demonstrates measurable learning gains but also provides an analytical basis for discussing how the instructional approach contributes to improved comprehension performance. The following table displays the results of both tests for each student:

No.	Name	Pre-Test	Post-Test
1	AI	100	100
2	BNS	60	100
3	RFM	60	100
4	ARA	80	90
5	M	80	100



6	HRS	80	100
7	ST	50	100
8	WNS	100	100
9	BRKZ	70	90
10	NA	80	90

A. Normality Test (Shapiro-Wilk)

Type	Statistic	df	Sig. Value
Pre-Test	0.919	10	0.351
Post-Test	0.594	10	0.000047

The Shapiro-Wilk test showed that the Sig. value for the pre-test was 0.351 (> 0.05), indicating a normal distribution. Meanwhile, the post-test Sig. value was 0.000047 (< 0.05), indicating a non-normal distribution. However, since the dataset reflects paired differences within the same group, a paired sample t-test is still appropriate and valid for measuring the improvement in performance after the implementation of the instructional material.

B. Paired Sample Descriptive Statistics

Pair	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre-Test	76.0	10	16.47	5.21
Post-Test	97.0	10	4.83	1.53

These descriptive statistics reveal a significant improvement in student performance after the use of the instructional material. The mean score increased from 76.0 to 97.0, with a reduction in standard deviation from 16.47 to 4.83, indicating greater consistency and homogeneity among student scores post-intervention. The standard error also decreased from 5.21 to 1.53, supporting the precision and stability of the data.

C. Correlation Between Pre-Test and Post-Test

Pair	N	Correlation (r)	Sig. Value
Pre/Post	10	-0.028	0.939

The Pearson correlation test yielded a very low and negative correlation coefficient ($r = -0.028$) with a Sig. value of 0.939 (> 0.05), indicating no significant relationship between pre-test and post-test scores. This suggests that students with initially low scores showed marked improvement, while those with high scores continued to progress—demonstrating the material's effectiveness across varying ability levels.

D. Paired Sample T-Test

Pair	Mean Difference	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pre/Post	21.0	17.29	5.47	3.84	9	0.004

The paired sample t-test indicated a statistically significant difference ($p = 0.004 < 0.05$) between the pre-test and post-test scores, confirming that the



instructional material had a notable impact on improving students' reading comprehension skills.

E. Descriptive Statistics Summary

Type	N	Range	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Pre-Test	10	50	50	100	76.0	16.47	271.11
Post-Test	10	10	90	100	97.0	4.83	23.33

These descriptive statistics indicate a narrowing performance gap, reflecting improved Arabic reading competence facilitated by thematic tafsir integration, which supports learners' cognitive processing through contextual and top-down comprehension strategies. While pre-test scores ranged widely (50–100), post-test scores converged (90–100), indicating a more uniform level of achievement after using the instructional material. The reduction in variance from 271.11 to 23.33 further affirms this finding.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to analyze the effectiveness of Maharah Qiraah instructional materials based on thematic tafsir specifically developed for Qur'an-memorizing students. Based on the quantitative data analysis of ten trial participants, the results indicate that the instructional materials effectively enhanced students' reading comprehension of thematic tafsir texts. This is evidenced by a significant increase in the average test scores from 76.0 (pre-test) to 97.0 (post-test), with a significance value of 0.004 ($p < 0.05$) as shown by the paired sample t-test.

In addition, the findings also reveal that the use of these materials helped reduce disparities in learning outcomes among students. This is reflected in the decrease in standard deviation from 16.47 to 4.83, indicating that the instructional materials not only improved overall learning outcomes but also contributed to more equitable achievement across the learner group.

In conclusion, the Maharah Qiraah instructional materials based on thematic tafsir are proven to be effective for use in teaching reading comprehension of tafsir texts to Qur'an-memorizing students. These materials address the need for learning tools that integrate memorization with meaningful understanding of the Qur'an's content in both contextual and thematic dimensions.

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