

The Habitual Pattern of Memorizing Short Surahs for Children Using the Verse Linking Method at the Age of 4-5 Years in Group A at RA Al Qodir

Laili Aulia Febri Nastiti¹, Akhtim Wahyuni^{2*}

^{1,2}Islamic Education for Early Childhood, Sunan Ampel State Islamic University Surabaya, Surabaya, Indonesia



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ABSTRACT

Objective: This research aims to analyze the effectiveness of the Verse-Linking Method in habituating early childhood (ages 4-5) to memorize short Quranic verses at RA Al Qodir. The study explores the planning, implementation, and evaluation stages of this method. **Methods:** A qualitative descriptive approach was employed, involving 25 students at RA Al Qodir. Data were collected through observations, interviews with teachers and the principal, and document analysis. The analysis process followed Miles and Huberman's model, including data reduction, presentation, and interpretation. **Results:** The research identified three key stages in the memorization process: planning, implementation, and evaluation. During the planning stage, a specialized mentor guided the students, and during implementation, children engaged in a structured routine of reciting and memorizing short verses. The Verse-Linking Method proved effective in improving focus and concentration, although challenges such as inconsistent memorization times across children were noted. Evaluation involved individual assessments to confirm memorization proficiency. **Novelty:** The novelty of this study lies in applying the Verse-Linking Method to early childhood Quranic education, highlighting its potential to enhance memorization efficiency while fostering a conducive learning environment. This method, coupled with teacher and parent involvement, provides a comprehensive approach to Quranic education for young children.

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood is a group of children who are in a unique process of growth and development, meaning they have specific patterns of growth and development (fine and gross motor coordination), intelligence (thinking ability, creativity, emotional intelligence, and spiritual intelligence), socio-emotional aspects (attitudes, behavior, and religion), language, and communication that are tailored to the child's stage of growth and development [1], [2].

Early childhood education is the most fundamental education, where it is highly recommended that every parent is able to provide the best and appropriate education at an early age [3]. This is because, at an early age, children are in a very good condition to receive education and guidance from their parents as preparation for future education. The education provided by parents to their children can be done personally and can also be done by enrolling the child in formal and non-formal early childhood education levels commonly referred to as ECE [4], [5].

Learning the Quran at an early age is also a necessity, because the Quran is the guide for the lives of the faithful. The Word of Allah SWT is unmatched. This Word of Allah SWT was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad SAW and conveyed through the intermediary of the angel Jibril AS. It was then written down in the mushafs to be transmitted to the people through the mutawattir method, where reading and studying the contents of the Quran is considered one of the acts of worship to Allah SWT. The Quran itself begins with the recitation of Surah Al-Fatihah and ends with Surah An-Naas. Allah explains that the purity of the Quran is always preserved by Him. The Quran is different from other books that Allah has revealed, which have been altered from their original form through human intervention. In accordance with the Word of Allah Swt. which says.

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

Meaning: "Indeed, We are the ones who sent down the Qur'an, and indeed, We will be its guardian". (Q.S. Al Hjr/15: 9).

The learning of the Quran at an early age, especially in the current era, still plays an important role in the development of religious values, including monotheism, ethics, worship, and social interactions, into the child's soul from an early age [6], [7]. Parents are the most fundamental social institution for realizing the development of human quality with noble character, especially in early childhood.

Memorizing the Quran at an early age will be easier to understand and can provide a good stimulus for the child's life. Memorizing during childhood will be more detailed, faster, and more ingrained in their memory. Because when children are introduced to the Quran at an early age, it will be easier for them to understand and comprehend the Quran during their teenage years.

The Verse Connection Method is about reconnecting something that has been severed. Verse is a series of sentences that form a single unit of meaning as part of a surah in the Qur'an [8], [9]. Additionally, verse is also a word in singular form with the following meanings: a) Address or sign, b) A series of sentences that form a single unit of meaning as part of a surah in the holy book of the Qur'an, c) A series of sentences that form a single unit of meaning as part of a chapter in a law.

The continuation of verses is done by one child reciting one verse, while the other child listens and then continues with the next verse. The purpose of the child paying attention to their friend is so they don't fall behind when it's their turn to recite the next verse [10]. The advantage of the verse-linking method is that it makes the memorization of the students more focused and concentrated, more efficient, and more challenging, while the disadvantage of this method is that the children cannot yet visualize which verse they will memorize when using the verse-linking method.

The importance of habituating children to memorize short surahs using the verse-linking method can facilitate the memorization process and improve children's concentration. At the stage of getting used to memorizing short verses, it indeed feels very difficult, but there are several factors that can act as triggers to support memorizing

short verses, namely: Teacher guidance, which involves guiding children in the process of memorizing short verses and the teacher paying more attention to the children.

The short verse memorization activities at RA Al Qodir are quite interesting because they are carried out by children aged 4-5 years. The children at RA Al Qodir are very enthusiastic about participating in the short verse memorization activities. The children never give up on memorizing the short verses; if they make a mistake, they always start over from the beginning. The children also participate in the short verse memorization activities, not only learning to memorize the short verses but also learning about tajwid and the length and shortness of the verses in the short verses. The discipline that children exhibit in the short surah memorization activity is when they listen to each verse recited by the teacher one by one. The verses recited by the teacher one by one help the children understand the reading, tajwid, and the length of the verses being recited.

In carrying out the short verse memorization activities, RA Al Qodir uses the verse continuation method. Actually, there are many methods used to memorize short surahs for early childhood, but at RA Al Qodir, the focus is on the verse connection method. The verse connection method refers to the technique of memorizing verses in the Quran by linking one verse to the next gradually. This method is suitable for use by all ages, including young children, in memorizing short verses. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to understand and analyze the method of habituating the memorization of short verses using the verse-linking method for children aged 4-5 years.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research used by the researcher is descriptive qualitative research. Descriptive qualitative research is research that analyzes data in the form of words, images, not numbers obtained from interview transcripts, field notes, and other documents [11]. This research was conducted at RA Al Qodir involving 25 students who participated in the short surah memorization activities. The data sources used in the research include primary data, which is obtained directly from the field, and data from sources that provide relevant and up-to-date information about the interaction of memorizing short verses using the verse connection method for children aged 4 to 5 years. Secondary data, in the form of additional data such as documentary data.

The data collection technique used is observation, where data is taken from the results of observations by directly recording during field activities according to the observation instruments that have been prepared beforehand. Interviews, where data is taken from the question-and-answer sessions with the principal, the principal, and the class teacher with structured questions, according to the interview instrument sheet created by the researcher to discuss the habit of memorizing short verses in children using the verse-linking method for ages 4-5 years. Data analysis is conducted continuously by obtaining data from the field using data collection techniques, data reduction, data presentation, and finally data interpretation. The data techniques used by the researchers can be seen in Figure 1.

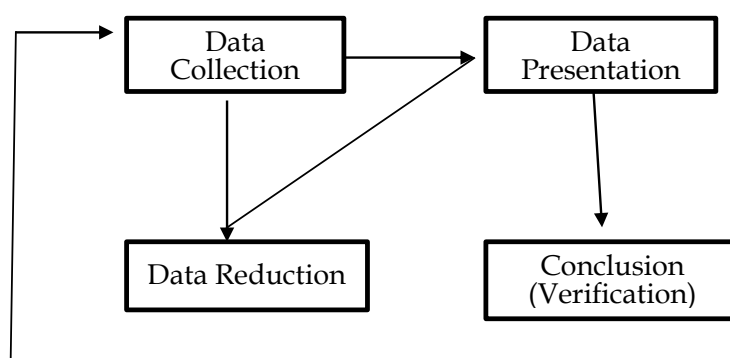


Figure 1. Data analysis techniques Miles and Huberman.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Based on the results of data reduction, data presentation, and data verification regarding the habituation of memorizing short verses for children using the Verse Linking Method at the age of 4-5 years at RA Al Qodir, the data obtained consists of three stages: Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation. Based on the results of field research, it can be described as follows:

The planning stage for memorizing short verses using the verse-linking method began after an agreement between the head of the Al Qodir Foundation and the school principal, leading to the creation of short verse memorization activities for early childhood. In studying the Qur'an, someone who understands the rules of Tajwid and articulation points of Arabic letters is needed, so there is one female Islamic teacher who serves as a mentor during the short surah memorization activities at the institution, and also serves as a special teacher for the Final Learning Evaluation (EBTA). Based on the results of the researcher's interview with the principal, it was found that the number of teachers and mentors has remained the same since the establishment of the short surah memorization program, so the appointment of teachers cannot be arbitrary; they must be able to read the Qur'an correctly and properly.

In addition, in studying and memorizing short letters, there are certainly special learning methods, especially in the application of learning for early childhood to make it easier for children to study and memorize short letters. In the learning process, there are certainly special methods applied as learning tools.

The implementation stages are the stages where three activities are carried out: the opening activity, the core activity, and the closing activity. Based on field observations, it is known that the recitation of short verses is carried out before the children start learning in the classroom, specifically from 07:00 AM to 08:00 AM. In their research state that the stages that a teacher must apply in a learning process include the initial or opening activity, the core activity or the formation of competence and personality, and the final or closing activity, from which it is expected that the learning objectives can be achieved as desired.

First, the Opening Activity begins with the teacher gathering the children in front and having them sit on the carpet. The lesson starts with a prayer after the teacher opens with a greeting, followed by a joint review of one or two surahs each day. Surah that is classified in the short surahs starting from Surah Al-Kafirun, it will be recited once a day during the group Muraja'ah, while the long surahs from Surah At-Takasur to Surah An-Naas can be chosen as one or two surahs for a single group Muraja'ah. The selection of surahs is done from Surah At-Takasur to Surah An-Naas. Based on field research, it was found that during the opening activity, the Muraja'ah process of Surah An-Naas and Al-Falaq was conducted according to the surah selection schedule for that day. Group review is conducted at the beginning before the children enter the classroom to engage in the activity of memorizing short verses.

The two main activities, after the children do Muraja'ah together, the children will sit upright to the side, then the teacher will start by giving instructions to the children to collect the short surah memorization assessment books and prepare the children for the group Muraja'ah. Each female Islamic teacher will hold the Final Learning Evaluation (FLE) book, which will later be given to the children as a card for them to conduct their memorization FLE. Based on the results in the field, the implementation of the core activities is carried out according to each child's memorization achievements. If the child has reached the memorization target, then the child will take an exam with the teacher.

Thirdly, during the closing activities, the teacher evaluates the children as they recite their memorization. After all the children have recited their memorization, the teacher organizes the children neatly. Before concluding the short surah memorization activity, the teacher conducts a review and evaluation of the children's memorization results as a final touch by inviting the children to revise a selected surah through a simple game (continue the sentence). The teacher stated that the selection of surahs was done considering the average memorization of surahs by each child. The memorization activity was concluded with the recitation of the Expiation of the Gathering prayer and ended with a greeting.

The process of memorizing short verses is done privately, so the role of the female Islamic teacher in memorizing short verses using the verse-linking method is to guide each child. The teacher creates a conducive classroom environment so that the children can concentrate during the process of memorizing short verses. To focus the child's concentration, the teacher corrected the child's position by having them sit cross-legged directly facing the teacher. The teacher began to pay attention to and observe the recitation of each verse pronounced by the child in relation to the knowledge of Tajwid and articulation points of Arabic letters.

The implementation of Quran memorization through the method of connecting verses is carried out by the female Islamic teacher explaining the pronunciation of letters to correct the children's reading, which may be inaccurate, in one verse of Surah Al-Kafirun that is appropriate and correct through loud verbal articulation while paying attention to the level of difficulty and ability of each child.

Memorizing short surahs using the verse-linking method is done with examples from the teacher to avoid and reduce mistakes in pronouncing each letter in one verse of Surah Al-Kafirun. The teacher demonstrates the reading by reciting one verse repeatedly until the child memorizes it. An interview with the female Islamic teacher stated that in verse 1 of Surah Al-Kafirun, the female Islamic teacher can demonstrate one verse repeatedly while paying attention to the rules of tajwid and articulation points of Arabic letters so that the child's reading is correct. If the child is capable and has a talent for fluency, they can do it 5 to 6 times, but for a child who is rarely guided at home and often loses focus during memorization sessions, it can take 11 to 20 times for one verse. For the female Islamic teacher, the most important thing is that the child listens to her when she demonstrates the recitation of verses, and the female Islamic teacher continues to demonstrate it even if the child is not focused.

With the verse continuation method, the child repeatedly imitates the reading that has been demonstrated and guided by the female Islamic teacher. Based on field observations, during the recitation of short surahs, the teacher always motivates the children to speak fluently when mimicking the verse recitation. The narrative of the interview with the female Islamic teacher states that in motivating young children, the female Islamic teacher uses analogies that are easy for the children to understand.

In Surah Al-Kafirun, the recitation of each verse is distinguished by using fingers as a sign that there is a similar recitation in Surah Al-Kafirun. for example, in verses 3 and 5 indicated by the thumb and index finger, they are the same verse, so the use of fingers is made as a guide that serves as direction and assistance for children in memorizing the order of verses in a surah.

The goal of conditioning the child is so that the child can listen to the reading example repeatedly. Based on field observations, the female Islamic teacher always pays attention to the child's position and comfort while reciting memorization privately. Unbeknownst to the child, who is busy playing and not facing the female Islamic teacher directly, they can still listen to and hear what the female Islamic teacher says, and then the child can imitate it.

At the end of the short surah memorization, the teacher will conduct a final assessment as a requirement to determine the child's success in memorizing the short surah. The final assessment is carried out by holding an exam and confirmation, where the child chooses one surah from among the categories of long surah, medium surah, and short surah. The final assessment includes two criteria: fluent and not fluent. However, it is still said that the short surah memorization program using the verse continuation method is successful, even though there are some children who are not fluent and have not completed their memorization.

Discussion

Based on the results of observations, interviews, and short verse memorization activities using the verse continuation method at RA Al Qodir. Memorize from the word memorizing means a saying in memory / close the book. Memorizing the Quran is an

activity that involves a process of placing information into memory [12]. Meanwhile, memorization is an effort to apply in the mind so that one always remembers and memorizes. The aim is to repeat and strengthen the memory again so that one can understand the content and recitation of the Quran. Meanwhile, memorization is an effort to apply in the mind so that one always remembers and memorizes. The aim is to repeat and strengthen the memory again so that one can understand the content and recitation of the Quran [13]. The principles of memorization are as follows: 1) The surah to be memorized should be easy for children to understand, practiced directly / read every morning at school before starting lessons, 2) The surah to be memorized should be used continuously, applied in prayer recitations to make it easier to remember, 3) Factors that need to be considered in memorization are 1) Age determines a person's proficiency in memorization, 2) The surrounding environment affects a person's psyche as it plays an important role in a person's success in memorization, 3) The nature of the subjects differs therefore, memorization is adjusted according to each subject [14]. Factors that support the memorization level of short verses in early childhood are determined by: 1) Physical and mental health, 2) A never-give-up spirit, 3) A creative teacher. Factors that support the memorization level of short verses in early childhood are determined by: 1) Physical and mental health, 2) A never-give-up spirit, 3) A creative teacher [15].

Method is a tool applied in education to convey a subject [16]. The learning method used in memorizing short verses greatly affects the effectiveness and interest of children in learning. The verse continuation method is one of the strategies considered effective in helping early childhood children memorize short verses. This method involves an interactive approach where the teacher reads one verse or part of a verse, and then the children continue or complete with the next verse.

Besides the supervising teacher, parents also provide regular guidance to their children to teach them through the review of readings. In studying the Qur'an, especially for young children, intensive guidance is necessary to ensure their memorization is maximized. The presence of parents is not only applicable at home but also during the process of memorizing short verses at the institution, where parents also participate in accompanying and guiding their children before submitting their memorization to the supervising teacher. In addition, parents also play a role in providing balanced nutrition from the food and drinks consumed by the child, which can affect the child's ability to memorize. Therefore, with adequate nutrition, it is hoped that the child's brain can develop well. This is supported by research from Mahardika, Nazarina, et al., which states that nutritional status affects health, intelligence levels, and the body's endurance, as well as all aspects that promote the continuation of an individual's life from the nutritious food consumed daily [17].

In its implementation, besides supporting factors, there are also inhibiting factors. The inhibiting factors often encountered in the implementation of the Al-Qur'an Quran memorization program come from within (internal factors) and from outside oneself (external factors) of each individual with different characteristics in memorizing the Al-

Qur'an. Internal factors are related to the child's condition, such as frequent yawning and being noisy, which indicate that the child's body is tired during the short surah memorization activities. Meanwhile, external factors that can hinder the short surah memorization process include parents who are not fluent in reading the Al-Qur'an. In achieving concentration in memorization, several factors need to be considered, namely an environment that must be quiet and free from loud noises that can disturb tranquility and hearing during memorization, comfortable air free from pollution and odors, and an ambient temperature that supports comfort in memorization activities [18].

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding : This research demonstrates that the Verse Linking Method is effective for helping children aged 4-5 years memorize short surahs from the Quran. By connecting verses progressively, children engage in a focused, interactive memorization process that enhances both their concentration and retention. **Implication :** The findings suggest that early introduction to Quranic memorization, particularly using the Verse Linking Method, supports the development of religious and cognitive skills in early childhood. This approach offers a structured, engaging method for children, enhancing their ability to memorize and understand the Quran at an early age. **Limitation :** This study is limited to the context of RA Al Qodir, and the sample size of 25 children may not represent broader trends. Additionally, the research did not fully account for parental involvement outside the classroom. **Future Research :** Future studies could expand on this research by exploring the long-term effects of the Verse Linking Method on children's religious and cognitive development, as well as investigating how different environmental factors or parental involvement influence the memorization process. Additionally, research could examine the effectiveness of this method across different age groups and educational settings.

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Laili Aulia Febri Nastiti

Islamic Education for Early Childhood, Sunan Ampel State Islamic University Surabaya, Surabaya, Indonesia

Email: lailiauliafn@gmail.com

***Akhtim Wahyuni (Corresponding Author)**

Islamic Education for Early Childhood, Sunan Ampel State Islamic University Surabaya, Surabaya, Indonesia

Email: akhtimwahyuni@uinsa.ac.id
