

Effective Techniques of Memorizing the Quran: A Study at *Madrasah tahfiz Al-quran*, Terengganu, Malaysia

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Abstract: Until today, memorization is still one of the methods used in the process of preservation of al-Qur'an. This article aims to review and analyze the methods and approaches used by a Centre of Tahfiz al-Qur'an, namely *Madrasah Quran*, Terengganu, Malaysia in the process to produce the students that can memorize the whole al-Qur'an. This study used the methods of documentation, observation and interviews in order to obtain the data. Through the analysis, this study found that there are four basic methods of memorizing al-Qur'an. The methods are *Sabak method*, *Para Sabak*, *Ammokhtar* and *Halaqah Dauri*. By using these four methods, the students could recite the whole Qur'an by memorization, within 15 hours without seeing the *mushaf*. These methods of memorization could be applied in all Quranic memorization centers in order to produce the *huffaz* who can fully remember the whole Qur'an.

Key words: Memorization of Al-Quran • Methodology of Memorization • Tahfiz Al-Quran • Huffaz • Malaysia

INTRODUCTION

Memorizing is one of the techniques used by ancient scholars in preserving knowledge, especially in the preservation of the Quran. There is no doubt that in this modern age there are many methods used to ensure the reservation of al-Quran. However, memorizing method is still used to ensure that the Qur'an remains intact in the hearts of its followers. This approach is fortified with a variety of rewards will be given by Allah for those who memorize the Quran. It is found through many of the saying by the Prophet Muhammad s.a.w.

Memorizing the Quran is not an easy thing to be done by every Muslim. Quran memorization process requires the person to have some skills beforehand; that was to recite Qur'an well, with proper *tajwid* [1] and smooth reading. Only then someone began to

memorize the Quran. To produce a good and strong memorization and be able to remember all 30 *juzu'* of the Quran, the Muslim individual must follow the specific rules to ensure his memorization is really stick well in his mind.

This study was conducted to uncover the methods used in Madrasah Tahfiz al-Quran Kubang Bujuk, Terengganu Malaysia. The students in this school are able to read 30 *juzu'* of the Quran by memorizing, from 5.00 am and will be end at 10 pm [2]. The students will only have a short break to perform their prayers and take some food and drinks. On the average, the students will take around 15 hours to recite 30 *juzu'* of the Quran by memorizing. This means that the students will take about 30 minutes to read a *juzu'* of the Qur'an and the whole 15 hours is equivalent to all 30 *juzu'* of the Qur'an [2].

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MATERIALS AND METHODS

In completing this study, three methods were used to obtain the relevant materials with the objectivity of the study. These methods are the method of documentation, observation and interviews. Through these three methods, the findings will be compiled and analyzed precisely.

Documentation method is used to obtain data related to Madrasah Tahfiz al-Quran Kubang Bujuk. This method is also to obtain the figures related to the number of students who have recited 30 *juzu* of Qur'an in one day; that was equal to 15 hours of memorization and recitation.

Observation method is used to identify the approach and techniques used by the school in order to produce the *hafiz* who can recite the Quran by memorizing, in 15 hours without seeing the *mushaf* of the Qur'an.

Interview method was used to interview the students and teachers at this school for their views related to the techniques used in this institution.

RESULTS

Based on the analysis made, there are four basic methods used in Madrasah Tahfiz al-Quran Kubang Bujuk. The method was named as *Sabak*, *Para Sabak*, *Ammokhtar* dan *Halaqah Dauri*[5]. By practicing this method, the student can read all 30 *juzu* by memorization, without looking at the *Mushaf* of al-Quran [3].

Sabak is a term used in this school to describe a new memorization of the students. Each new verses being recited to the teacher referred as *sabak* [5]. The students are required to memorize based on their ability. They start from half of page, until they reach approximately four pages of Qur'an *Rasm Uthmani*. Normally, the students will memorize about one to two pages only. For students who are weaker, they will memorize about only half of page [2].

Through this technique, the students are required to memorize verse after verse up to the point specified by the teacher. To start memorizing, the students will begin to memorize from *juzu* '30, then followed by *juzu* '29, 28, 27 and 26 respectively and only then the students will start memorizing from the front, that was *juzu* '1 up until *juzu* '25 [5]. This will make it easier for students because the last five *juzu* have shorter verses, simple and most of the verses are common verses (*Ar. Ayah Lazim*)[7].

In this method, the students are required to launch a repeated reading of verses as much as 40 times before they memorized in particular. This is very important to

ensure that the student can excellently pronounce the verses and thus later facilitate the memorization of the Qur'an. According to Ustaz Hasbullah [2] after reading for 40 times with *mushaf*, the students need only a short time to transfer the verses into their memory.

Before they recite their memorization to the teachers in the group, they are required to recite first with their friends on their side. This is to ensure that the readings are accurate and correct with the verses of the Qur'an [8]. In addition, it was to improve the smoothness of the memorization when they read in front of their teachers. The students were told to read more than 10 times [2].

For students who are ready to recite their memorization, they will sit in front of the teacher. Teachers will record their progress in special books. On the whole, the students have about four hours to memorize starting from 5.00 am until 9.00 am. This shows that the students have a long time in ensuring that new verses being memorized really well and will remain in their hearts [9].

The second stage in this method is called as *Para Sabak*. *Para Sabak* is read by recite one *juzu* in the back of the new memorization (*sabak*) [5]. It is also termed as weekly memorization'. *Para Sabak* is starting from 9.30 am until 11.30 am. The student is allocated about two hours to review and repeat *Para Sabak*[2].

The students need to smooth this *Para Sabak* recitation before being read in front of their teachers [10]. Students are usually given about half an hour before being recited in front of the teachers. In carrying out this stage, the teachers divided the students with their partners. Normally the pair is in the same level, or nearly the same level. It is important to ensure compatibility between them [9].

Next, all the students and also their partners will be called to sit oppositely, in front of the teachers of the groups. A student will read a *juzu* and his partner will check for the reading by looking at *mushaf*. The partner will calculate for the number of mistakes and after that it will be reported to the teacher [10]. The process continues with the other person. In the same time, the teachers of the group are constantly watching for the progress to run smoothly. Normally the number of students in each group is in round numbers, in order to facilitate the *Para Sabak* with their partners [9].

The third stage of this method is known as *Ammokhtar*. *Ammokhtar* is the verses of the Quran that had been memorized and they are more than one *juzu* in the back of recent verses [5]. According to this method, the students will be given time from 2.30 pm to 4.00 pm for repeating of *Ammokhtar* [3].

In terms of implementation, the students will be given about half an hour to run *Ammokhtar* reading before being called in front of the teacher, as in the method of *Para Sabak* in order to recite the verses together with their partners [7]. Usually, the teacher will determine whether they will have the same partners or different partners. And as usual, the canning stimulus will be given if the students did forget or make mistakes in the reading.

Ammokhtar method should be in a full round of all the past memorization of verses / *juzu*'. Every day, the students are required to read a *juzu*' of this *Ammokhtar*. For example, if a student is to memorize the *juzu*' of 15, so he needs another 14 days with a rate of one *juzu*' a day reading *Ammokhtar*. *Ammokhtar* reading should be in the order and actual arrangement of the Qur'an [2]. This is very important to ensure that the memorization is not easily lost from the memory of the students [3].

The next technique which is the last technique is *Halaqah Dauri*. *Halaqah Dauri* is a group that involved the students that already finished memorizing the whole Qur'an [5]. All the students who completed their memorization will enter this *Halaqah Dauri* in order to repeat the verses that have been memorized. It will be monitored by a teacher that ensures all students repeated their memorization as being planned [2].

Normally, the students will take from six months up until two years to go through this whole *Halaqah Dauri* [3]. For the students who do not fluent at any part in the Quran, they are required to read the verses by *Sabak* technique once again. For this *Halaqah Dauri*, the students will not read the *juzu*' in the exact order [6]. The whole of the Qur'an will be divided into three parts. The first 10*juzu*', the second 10 *juzu*' and and the final 10*juzu*' [5]. The first day, the students will read the first *juzu*'. The second day, they will read the 11th *juzu*' and the 21st *juzu*' for the third day. As for the fourth day, they will go back to the first part that was the second *juzu*', the 12th *juzu*' for the fifth day and so forth until they complete the reading for several times [2]. The method of *Halaqah Dauri* is also similar to *Ammokhtar*, where the students will be divided into pairs and being recited in front of teachers.

The teachers in *Halaqah Dauri* will monitor the performance of the students. From a *juzu*' a day, the students will speed to three *juzu*' a day, with the instructions from the teachers. The students will read the first *juzu*', the 11th *juzu*' and also the 21st *juzu*' and then for the next day, they will recite the second *juzu*', the 12*juzu*' and also the 22*juzu*'. This will continue until the students are doing really well [3].

Following the teacher's instructions, the students will move to the level of five *juzu*' per day. At this level, the students will read the complete sequence of the Qur'an. The first day, they will read the first *juzu*' until the fifth *juzu*'. The second day, they will read the *juzu*' of 6 to 10 and the third day will be the *juzu*' of 11 to 15 and will continue until the 30 *juzu*'. This means that the students will recite the whole Qur'an in six days [2]. Having reached to this level and the teachers are satisfied with their performance, the final examination will be held to these students [3].

The students will recite by memorization all the 30 *juzu*' of the Quran without *mushaf* starting from 5.00 am and finish the recitation at 10.00 pm [2]. On average, the students will take about 30 minutes to read a *juzu*' and takes about 15 hours for the entire 30 *juzu*' of the Qur'an. The students will take some short breaks; only to perform the prayers and take the light foods and drinks. The memorization test will be monitored by three teachers and the students cannot do mistakes for more than 10 times for all 30 *juzu*' being recited [2]. If the student committed the mistakes for more than 10 times, this test will be canceled and the student is asked to re-enter the *Halaqah Dauri* [5]. Based on information from the school, there are 137 students who attended this method properly and successfully within 2005-2011 [4].

According to the observations, the result from the implementation of this method is that the students are able to remember/memorize the whole Qur'an properly. The students' memorization and their resistance are also strong and good. Based on interviews conducted, the teachers and the students [6, 11, 12, 13] said that after using this method, though they not to repeat for a year, they still managed to become an *imam* for *tarawih* prayers and still can read all 30 *juzu*' of the Qur'an properly [14]. As a result of observation, this is where the strength of this method lies, which can produce the *hafiz* of the Qur'an with strong memories [15].

CONCLUSION

As a result from this study, these four methods that have been applied at the Madrasah Tahfiz al-Quran Kubang Bujuk, Terengganu, Malaysia should be used as a reference by each institution that related to memorization of the Qur'an. Methods applied in this school should be practiced in other *tahfiz* centers. These can be the best role models in the production of *huffaz* that can remember the whole Quran in a short

period of time. The ability to read all 30 *juzu* of the Qur'an in 15 hours by heart proves that this method is very suitable for any *Tahfiz* Quran institutions.

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