An Action Research on the Effectiveness Uses of Flash Card in Promoting *Hijaiyah* Literacy among Primary School Pupils

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Abstract

Hijaiyah literacy skills is important for every primary school pupil in learning Islamic education subject a foundation to enable pupils to read Iqra and mastering reading the Quran. This study aimed to identify the effects of flash cards use in improving Hijaiyah literacy among primary school pupils. The study was conducted in three schools around the state of Selangor and the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur. The subjects were 41 pupils in a class who are in counselling Iqra 'of the three schools. An action research design was used in this study. In order to observe the objective, researcher used observation and oral test. The results showed that, the use of flash cards able to increase pupils' Hijaiyah literacy. Flash card is encouraged to be used among primary teacher because it helps weaker pupils to recognize letters and bragged single hijaiyah more easily and effectively.

Keywords: Flash Card, Islamic Education, Quranic Teaching, Method of teaching.

1. Introduction

Islamic education aims to produce good and civilized individuals, who believe and practice with their knowledge, capable of taking responsibility as a servant of Allah and His *khalifah* to build own self, family, community and country physically, spiritually, emotionally and intellectually based on Islamic principles restate from the Quran and the Sunnah (Muhaidi et, all. 2016a). The Quran is an important source in the life of Muslims (Muhaidi, Mohd Al"Ikhsan, Siti Salwa 2015a, 2015b, Siti Salwa, Muhammad Zahiri 2013; Muhaidi et, all. 2016b). Quranic education is one of the educational field aims to build a righteous and just society based on love, compassion, brotherhood, tolerance, responsibility, open-minded, democracy without cruelty, modest and follows according to Quranic guidelines (Ahmad Mohd Salleh, 1997). The main objective of Islamic education is to educate people in this globalized world to devote themselves to Allah. Learning and memorizing the Quran will be able to form Islamic minds that will create a generation of hafiz, religious, dai'e and professional, and this meets the goals of Quranic education(Muhaidi, Mohd Al"Ikhsan, Siti Salwa 2015c).

Beyond the modern world today, the young generation must be educated and trained to love the Qur'an so that their life will be blessed by Allah s.w.t (Muhamad Zahiri, Siti Salwa, Zarqo' , Siti Zuraidah, 2015).Thus, a teacher should strive to teach (Siti Salwa, Muhammad Zahiri & Mohd Al'Ikhsan, 2014) and disseminate knowledge related to the Quran well enough in order to improve the pupils' quality of reading the Quran, including strengthening the basic literacy skills like recognizing the single letters of *Hijaiyah* starting from primary one.

Hijaiyah letters are the Arabic letters consist of 29 letters starting with *alif* letter and ending with *ya* letter. These letters can be read with only 3 lines which are called *"fathah"* or upper line, *"kasrah"* or bottom line and *"dhommah"* or front line. In the Quranic lesson, firstly, the pupils must be able to remember, identify, recognize and articulate all 29 letters correctly to enable them to read Iqra '1 book until Iqra' 6 book and they can read the Quran fluently afterward.

Children must be introduced with *hijaiyah* letters in their life as early (Azlina, Norazura Ezuana, Siti Salwa, 2013, Supriyadi. n.d). as possible similarly when their parents introduce them with roman letters so that they can recognize and pronounce *hijaiyah* letters very well and later on, they can read the Quran fluently and correctly.

2. Flash Cards as Teaching Aids

Flash cards are one of the effective medium in educational world which represent the visual resources, it is neither a new trend nor recent idea. Flash cards and teaching is correlated and it is an approach of ensuring the teaching process becomes a meaningful learning to pupils. Throughout years, there are many studies which being conducted related to flash cards and teaching. A study conducted by Ode (2014) shows that that the use of teaching aids have significant influence on the teaching and learning in secondary schools at Makurdi, Nigeria. However, Ode (2014) gave attention to the use of flash cards in teaching which does not completely deny the important role in using it, but in a general manner since its focus more on kinds of audiovisual means. According to Klasone (2013) who study about pictures when teaching prepositions in English lessons, he found that flashcards are most suitable teaching aids for representation of a single concept, such as an object or an action."

Overall, the direct instruction flashcards were not very effective for the participant, but the reduction of the set size and time per session showed a slight increase in performance (Kane et al, 2015). Based on Mansourzadeh (2014), the used of flash can able to enhance students ability in learning English language -According to Harris et al. (2015) when flashcards were employed in learning, students participations will increased." Kane et al. (2015) and Harris et al. (2015) both focusing on direct instruction flash cards in teaching, but differ in terms of participants and subject or course involved.

Moreover, Bechtolt et al. (2014) also study about direct instruction flashcards in teaching, but focus on developmental disabilities pupils. Based on Romjue et al. (2011) discover that flashcards were effective in increasing sight word reading among students Besides, Glover et al. (2010) mentions that flash card is suitable and affordable teaching aids for teachers. Furthermore, according to Pfaff et al. (2013) math racetrack and instruction using flashcards and were effective in increasing the accuracy, fluency and retention in learning language.

In addition, result from another study concludes that flash card can contribute towards the improvement of vocabulary learning among pupils(Komachali & Khodareza, 2012). Apart from that, Rokni and Karimi (2013) found that, the effective way for learning vocabulary is through flash cards. Study of Rokni and Karimi (2013) focus on the using of the flashcard and real objects in representing the visual instruction. In short, the previous study had found many benefits in using flash card as medium of instruction between teacher and pupils regardless of subjects in educational realm.

3. Research Objective

This study aimed to identify the effects of flash cards use in improving *Hijaiyah* literacy among primary school pupils. Specifically;
1. To identify the significant different result before and after pupils used flash card in reading Jawi.
2. To examine the significant different result of Jawi proficiency before and after pupils used flash card.
3. To investigate the ability of flash cards in improving *Hijaiyah* literacy among primary school pupils.

4. Focus of the Study

This study focused on the skills of recognizing the single letters of *Hijaiyah*. This study is very important to be implemented in order to realize the objectives of achieving pupils' proficiency in recognizing *hijaiyah* letters and reading Iqra' 1 until Iqra 6 books fluently and correctly. If they are unable to master these skills, it is difficult for them to read the Quranic verses which are quite difficult to read. This situation will give negative impacts toward themselves and they will continuously consider the Quran as a tough lesson to learn and lose their interest in learning. It will become more challenging as they will continue facing problems in Quranic lesson in the next few years. Therefor, this study was done to identify the effects of flash cards use in improving *Hijaiyah* literacy among primary school pupils.

5. Methodology

5.1 Observation

Observation is one of the research methods used to obtain the research results. Observation is also an alternative in collecting information or data besides questionnaire and interview. Through observation, researchers can observe the behaviour of a subject based on identified variables. The role of the researcher is to observe the changes in behaviour, from a far or close distance. By using this method, the researcher or observers have to observe the samples within

particular time. In this study, observation was carried out during Iqra′ 1 reading activity in the Quranic lesson. This process is carried out through stages involving two pupils only to get the accurate results. Pupils were required to read Iqra′ 1 book and their reading have been recorded. During their reading activity, the teachers have identified the letters that the pupils were unable to articulate. The reading results of the pupils were also evaluated to identify the pupils′ level of proficiency in identifying single *hijaiyah* letters.

5.2 Oral examination

Oral exam is the process of questioning and answering directly between a teacher and his pupils. Question and answer activity is also a method to determine the pupils′ mastery level in a particular subject. This process has been done gradually by questioning pupils individually through the use of "flash card" of single *hijaiyah* letters. Pupils will be asked by the teachers who showed the "flash card" randomly. Through this method, the teachers were able to know the pupils′ mastery level of single *hijaiyah* letters precisely.

5.3 Sample of the Study

A sample of seven pupils of Year 1, Ulu Yam Lama Primary School, Batang Kali consists of three females and four males, 16 pupils of SJK (C) Kwong Hon Sg Besi consists of nine males and seven females and 18 pupils of Sungai Besi Primary School consists of ten males and eight females were selected. All of them were 41 pupils. They have a low proficiency level in Quranic lesson in which they were unable to recognize the single *Hijaiyah* letters completely and have difficulties in reading Iqra′ 1 book fluently.

6. Findings

Based on the results on the use of "flash card" which was given to 41 Year 1 pupils to take home and will be asked by the teachers during the next day to articulate the letters until they can master and recognize the letters, it can be deduced that the "flash card" helped pupils to remember difficult letters accurately and consequently, they were able to read Iqra' 1 to Iqra' 6 books fluently and recite the Quran correctly.

6.1 The reading test of Iqra '1 (difficult articulated letters) before and after

Table 1: The reading test of Iqra 1 result before and after
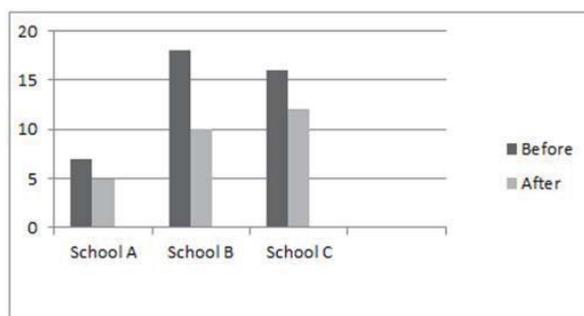
Before the used of flashcard in learning, it was found that 41 pupils failed to regcornize Hijaiyah letter. However the result change after Flashcard being introduced. Table 1 above, indicated that 5 out of 7 pupils from the School A were able to recognize letters ص, ض, ط, ظ , ع and غ , and read the Iqra'1 book well whereas 10 out of 18 pupils from the School B were also able to recognize the letters ص, ض, ط, ظ , ع and غ and read the Iqra'1 book well. Similarly, 12 out of 16 pupils of School C have shown positive changes after being given flash cards of single *hijaiyah* letters.
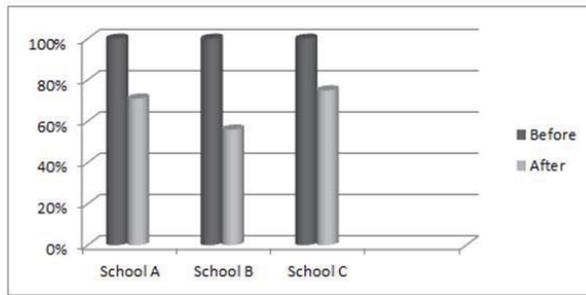
Figure 1: Pupils' reading proficiency level

Figure 1 above shows the pupils' reading proficiency level who could articulate the single *hijaiyah* letters randomly. It has been found that 71% pupils (5 out of 7) of School A were able to articulate and recognize single *hijaiyah* letters shown randomly by their teachers in which they were not fully mastered before. Besides, 76% pupils (10 out of 18) of School B were able to articulate the letters shown by their teachers at random correctly where they were not fully mastered before. Similar with the performance of pupils in School C in which 75% pupils (12 out of 16) were able to master or articulate the single *hijaiyah* letters shown randomly where they were not fully mastered before.

6.2   The percentage of pupils who have and have not mastered Iqra '1 book
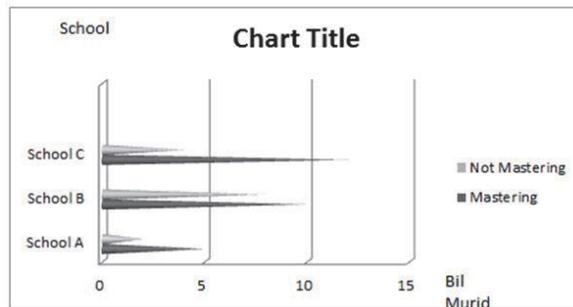

Figure 2: Percentage of pupils who have and have not mastered

According to Figure 2 above, only 2 out of 7 Year 1 pupils of School A were unable to read Iqra' 1 book fluently. Meanwhile, 8 out of 18 pupils of School B were still unable to read Iqra' 1 book fluently. In School C, only 4 out of 16 pupils have not mastered Iqra' 1 book. Based on the above Figure, it can be concluded that the use of "flash card" can help to improve Iqra '1 reading skills and recognize single *hijaiyah* letters.

        Based on the main research objective, it is clear that "flash card" application has helped pupils to improve their mastery of recognising single *hijaiyah* letters. Pupils were given the opportunity to take the flash cards to their home as drills and enrichments. From that method, they can improve their understanding and avoid confusion in recognizing single *hijaiyyah* letters effectively. Although pupils from SJK (C) were facing difficulties because of time constraints with only 2 hours a week compared to National Primary Schools (SK) which have 3 hours a week besides burdened with tuition and a lot of school work, the use of "flash card" is one way to help pupils to recognize some difficult and confusing single *hijaiyah* letters such as the letters of ص, ض, ط, ظ, ع and غ especially for pupils with medium and weak levels.

7.   Data Analysis

It has been proven that the use of "flash card" in schools and giving pupils flash cards to bring back to their homes have given favourable findings. Of 41 respondents, 27 of them have successfully improved in which they have successfully

articulated, recognized and remembered difficult letters like ع, ظ, ط, ض, ص and غ.

According to Haliza & Joy (2009), teaching and learning process is no longer a teacher-centered learning but it is a student-centered learning either individually or collectively. Giving pupils flash cards to bring back to their homes as drills is an example of student-centered learning. Pupils were given the opportunity to have their own enrichment exercises monitored and cooperated by their parents.

8. Conclusion and Recommendation

During the study on the challenges in identifying and remembering single *hijaiyah* letters among Year 1 pupils, this research has prompted that the weak pupils should be given more attention than other pupils. Teachers should always be critical, creative and innovative in their teaching session. The use of "flash card" really helped pupils to become more familiar and easy to remember the *hijaiyah* letters. Cooperation from parents is also important in the effort to improve their ability to recognize and remember single *hijaiyah* letters so that their children are able to read Iqra ' 1 book and the Quran afterwards, very well. After this, it is hoped that teachers can provide beautiful "flash card" in order to attract pupils' interest in the Quranic lesson generally, and particularly, able to read Iqra '1 book fluently. The use of "flash card" has helped weak pupils to master difficult articulated letters like letters ص, ض, ط, ظ, ع and غ and make them easier. It is hoped that the use of "flash card" can be used by teachers to both excellent and weak pupils who are interested in learning the Quran, especially the Iqra '.

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