



Teaching Strategies for Quran Teachers to Improve Students' Quran Reading Skills at the Quran Education Centre

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Abstract

The ability to read the Qur'an is a fundamental skill that every student must master as the foundation for understanding, memorising and practising the teachings of Islam. The Qur'anic Education Centre plays a role in developing this skill through a systematic and continuous learning process. However, the implementation of learning at still faces various challenges, including differences in students' initial abilities, low motivation to learn, limited learning time, and the need for learning strategies suited to the characteristics of the learners. Therefore, this study aims to analyse the learning strategies applied by Quran teachers in improving students' Quran reading skills at the Al-Quran Education Centre. This study employs a qualitative approach using a case study design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations and document analysis involving Quran teachers, students and administrators. The research findings indicate that the learning strategies employed by Quran teachers include: (i) mapping students' initial abilities; (ii) applying a gradual, systematic and student-centred approach to Quran teaching, (iii) fostering reading habits through repeated practice and individual guidance, (iv) conducting regular learning assessments, (v) strengthening learning motivation through a communicative approach and patience, (vi) recognising the progress of students. This strategy contributes to improvements in reading fluency, the accuracy of articulation points, mastery of the rules of tajwid, and the students' self-confidence. This study implies that teachers' competence is a key factor in realising adaptive, effective, and student-centred Qur'anic learning, and can therefore serve as a reference for the development of Qur'anic learning models in non-formal Islamic educational institutions.

INTRODUCTION

The ability to read the Quran is a fundamental competency that is the basis for Muslims to understand, appreciate, and practice Islamic teachings correctly. This competency is not only related to reading fluency, but also includes the accuracy of the pronunciation of letters, the application of the rules of tajwid, fluency (*technology*), and etiquette in reading the Qur'an (Fadlillah, 2024; Zulaihah et al., 2025).

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Mastery of the competence of reading the Qur'an from an early age is one of the indicators of the success of Islamic education because it contributes to the formation of religious character, increasing religious literacy, and the readiness of students to study more complex Islamic sciences. In Indonesia, the Qur'anic Education Centre (TPQ) is one of the non-formal Islamic educational institutions that has a strategic role in providing basic Qur'an education to children. TPQ not only functions as a place to learn to read the Qur'an, but also as a vehicle for instilling Islamic values, habituating worship, and forming morals. However, various studies show that the process of learning the Qur'an at TPQ still faces a number of challenges, such as the heterogeneity of students' initial abilities, limited learning time, variations in learning motivation, a less than ideal teacher-student ratio, and differences in teachers' pedagogical competencies in managing learning (Shohib & Aziz, 2024). This condition causes the achievement of students' Al-Qur'an reading competencies to not develop optimally and requires learning strategies that are more effective and adaptive to the needs of students.

From an educational perspective, learning strategies are a crucial component in determining the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process. Learning strategies are not only related to method selection but also encompass lesson planning, classroom management, media use, feedback, learning differentiation, and evaluation of learning outcomes. Quran teachers are required to design learning strategies that are appropriate to the developmental characteristics of students so that the learning process is active, enjoyable, and oriented towards achieving comprehensive Quran reading competency (Alfani, 2022). Therefore, teacher pedagogical competence is one of the main factors determining the success of Quran learning in TPQ (Islamic Junior High School). Various previous studies have examined Quran learning methods, such as the Iqra', Qiraati, Tilawati, Ummi, and Tartil methods, which have been shown to contribute to improving Quran reading skills. However, most of these studies focus more on the effectiveness of specific methods rather than examining in depth how teachers integrate various pedagogical strategies into the daily learning process (Warsono & Ubaidilah, 2026). Furthermore, research exploring the ongoing learning practices of Quran teachers, from planning and implementation, individual mentoring, evaluation, and strengthening students' learning motivation, remains relatively limited, particularly in the context of Qur'anic Education Centre (Taman Pendidikan Al-Qur'an), a non-formal Islamic educational institution. This research gap highlights the need for studies that not only assess learning outcomes but also uncover the pedagogical processes underlying the successful improvement of students' Quranic reading competence (Ihsan & Ikhlas, 2022).

Based on the description, this study aims to analyze the learning strategies applied by Al-Qur'an teachers in improving the Al-Qur'an reading competence of students at the Al-Qur'an Education Park. This study is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of Islamic education pedagogy studies, especially in Al-Qur'an learning in non-formal Islamic educational institutions. In addition, the results of the study are expected to provide practical contributions for Al-Qur'an teachers, TPQ managers, and Islamic education policy makers in designing more effective, adaptive learning strategies, and oriented towards improving the Al-Qur'an reading competence of students.

METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design to gain a deep understanding of the learning strategies of Al-Qur'an teachers in improving the Al-Qur'an reading competence of students at the Qur'anic Education Centre (TPQ).

The selection of research locations and participants was carried out systematically *purposive* based on the consideration that informants have experience and direct involvement in the Qur'an learning process (Wijayanti & Astuti, 2024; Engkizar et al., 2026). The research participants consisted of Qur'an teachers as the primary informants, supported by TPQ managers and students as supporting informants. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, participant observation during the learning process, and documentation studies of learning tools and other supporting documents. All data were analyzed using thematic analysis through the stages of data organization, coding (*coding*), category grouping, theme identification, and interpretation of findings by linking them to pedagogical theory and previous research results. Data credibility is maintained through source triangulation, technique triangulation, *member checking*, as well as the preparation *audit trail* to ensure the consistency and validity of the research results. The application of this procedure allows the research to produce a comprehensive description of the learning practices of Al-Qur'an teachers and the factors that support the improvement of the Al-Qur'an reading competence of students in the context of non-formal Islamic education (Rupawan & Wardfi, 2024; Susanti et al., 2025; Mutathahirin et al., 2026).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study indicate that the learning strategies of Al-Qur'an teachers in improving the Al-Qur'an reading competence of students at the Qur'anic Education Centre k (TPQ) are implemented through six main, complementary strategies. These six strategies are not implemented separately, but rather form a systematic learning series, starting from identifying the students' initial abilities to providing appreciation for learning development. A more detailed explanation of the six teaching strategies employed by Quran teachers to improve the students' Quran reading skills can be seen in Figure 1.

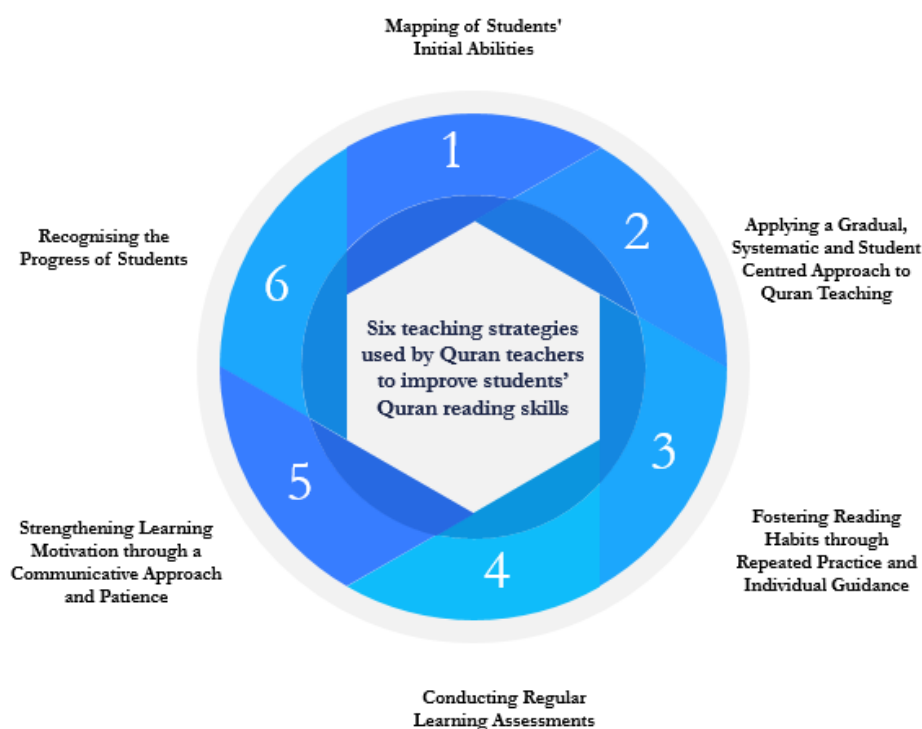


Fig 1. Qur'an teachers' teaching strategies for improving students' Qur'an reading skills

Mapping of Students' Initial Abilities

The research results show that mapping the students' initial abilities is the first step undertaken by Quran teachers before beginning the learning process. Teachers identify each student's reading ability through direct observation, reading tests, and individual interactions at the beginning of the lesson. The aspects mapped include recognition of the hijaiyah letters, accuracy of pronunciation of makhraj, mastery of basic tajweed rules, reading fluency, and the ability to distinguish between long and short readings. Based on the mapping results, teachers group students according to their competency level so that the material, methods, and learning targets can be tailored to the needs of each group (Fathurrahman et al., 2020; Yunadi et al., 2025). This approach allows teachers to provide more targeted learning services because each student receives material according to their level of mastery. These findings indicate that Al-Qur'an teachers have implemented learning principles that are oriented to the needs of students. Initial ability mapping not only serves as a process for identifying academic abilities but also as a basis for designing adaptive learning strategies. From a pedagogical perspective, diagnostic assessment is a crucial part of the learning process because it provides information about students' learning readiness before entering new material. This information enables teachers to determine learning objectives, select appropriate methods, and anticipate learning difficulties that students may encounter during the learning process (Basir et al., 2024).

The application of initial ability mapping also reflects the implementation of differentiated learning, an approach that adapts the learning process to the characteristics, abilities, and learning needs of students (Hanafi & Pohan, 2024). In the context of Quranic learning, each student has a different background, both in terms of learning experience, intensity of practice at home, family support, and cognitive abilities. Therefore, the implementation of uniform learning has the potential to create gaps in learning outcomes. Students with high abilities will feel less challenged, while students who are still in the initial stages will experience difficulties in following the learning (Wulandari et al., 2022). By mapping abilities from the beginning, teachers can minimize these gaps by providing materials, exercises, and mentoring that are appropriate to the needs of each student group. The results of this study also show that the mapping process provides benefits for teachers in determining the appropriate form of learning intervention. Students who still have difficulty recognizing the hijaiyah letters receive more intensive mentoring through basic reading exercises, while students who have mastered basic reading are directed to perfect tajwid, fluency, and reading fluency. Thus, the learning process takes place gradually according to the development of each student's competency. This approach is in line with the concept which emphasizes that every student has the opportunity to achieve competence if given time, strategies, and guidance that suit their needs (Hermawan & Asnawi, 2023).

From the perspective of constructivism theory, mapping prior knowledge is an important step in connecting new knowledge with the learning experiences that students have had. Prior knowledge serves as a foundation for building new understandings, making the learning process more meaningful. Teachers serve not only as transmitters of material but also as facilitators, helping students develop their Quranic reading competencies based on their initial abilities. This approach makes learning more active, contextual, and focused on student development. Furthermore, research findings show that mapping initial abilities contributes to increased classroom management effectiveness (Supriadi et al., 2022). Teachers find it easier to organize study groups, determine learning targets, and provide feedback tailored to each student's developmental level. Competency-based grouping also creates a more

conducive learning environment because students learn with peers of relatively similar ability levels. This reduces feelings of inferiority among students with lower abilities and increases their confidence in practicing Quranic reading without feeling left behind by their peers.

Applying a Gradual, Systematic and Student Centred Approach to Quran Teaching

The results of the study indicate that Al-Qur'an teachers apply a learning method that is designed in stages, systematically, and centered on students as the main strategy in improving the competence of reading the Al-Qur'an. The learning process begins with mastering basic skills, such as recognizing the hijaiyah letters, correct pronunciation of makhraj, mastering harakat, to understanding the rules of tajwid gradually before students are directed to read the verses of the Al-Qur'an in full (Sahmad & Zamri, 2024). Teachers do not provide uniform material to all students, but rather adjust the level of difficulty of the material to the abilities that have been mapped in the initial stages of learning. This approach allows each student to follow the learning process according to their learning capacity, so they do not experience pressure or difficulty in understanding the material presented. The implementation of learning in stages shows that teachers apply the principles of continuity and progressivity in the Al-Qur'an learning process (Hasibuan et al., 2025). Each competency that has been mastered becomes a prerequisite for mastering the next competency so that the learning process takes place continuously. The teacher does not continue the material until the majority of students have mastered the previous material. This strategy provides students with the opportunity to build understanding in stages, starting with phonetics and continuing to the ability to recite the Quran in tartil. Thus, learning is not solely focused on completing the material but rather emphasizes achieving correct and high-quality reading skills.

Research findings also show that systematic learning is realized through structured planning. Teachers arrange the sequence of material based on its level of complexity, determine learning objectives for each meeting, select methods appropriate to the characteristics of the material, and establish measurable indicators of success. Systematic learning planning makes it easier for teachers to monitor students' learning progress and ensure that all basic competencies are optimally achieved (Salmia & Yusri, 2022). Furthermore, structured learning helps students understand the relationships between materials, making the learning process more meaningful and less partial. A student-centered learning approach is one of the important characteristics found in this study. Teachers provide opportunities for students to participate actively through reading activities in turns, individual reading practice, discussions about reading errors, and questions and answers during the learning process. Teachers no longer dominate the learning process as the main source of information, but act as facilitators who guide, direct, and provide feedback on the development of students' reading skills (Nasihin & Sopianito, 2025). This condition creates a more interactive learning atmosphere so that students are encouraged to develop their ability to read the Qur'an independently.

The implementation of student-centered learning is also evident in teachers' ability to adapt learning strategies to individual needs. Students experiencing difficulties receive more intensive support through re-explanations, pronunciation demonstrations, and additional practice, while students who have achieved certain competencies are challenged with more complex reading materials (Jaafar et al., 2025). This differentiation of learning demonstrates that teachers understand the diversity of learning abilities in the classroom and strive to provide equitable learning services tailored to the needs of each student. This strategy not only increases

learning effectiveness but also reduces the ability gap between students. From a pedagogical perspective, these findings reflect the implementation of Lev Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) theory. This theory explains that students will achieve optimal development if they receive assistance or guidance. Appropriate to their ability level. In the context of this research, teachers provide support through reading examples, direct corrections, repetition of material, and individual guidance until students are able to read independently. This support is gradually reduced as students' Qur'an reading competence improves. Thus, the learning process is oriented not only toward delivering material but also toward the gradual and continuous development of learning abilities (Hakim et al., 2022).

Furthermore, the learning strategies implemented by teachers align with the concept of mastery learning introduced by Benjamin Bloom, which emphasizes that every student can achieve competency if given the appropriate time, guidance, and learning experience. Teachers ensure that students truly master one competency before moving on to the next (Wulandari et al., 2025). This approach is highly relevant in Quranic learning because errors at the basic stages, such as makhraj or tajwid, can affect the quality of recitation in subsequent stages. Therefore, gradual learning is an effective strategy for building comprehensive Quranic reading competency. From an Islamic educational perspective, gradual learning also reflects the principle of *al-tadarruj* (gradual), namely an educational process tailored to the readiness and development of students. This principle indicates that behavioral changes and mastery of knowledge cannot be achieved instantly, but require a systematic, continuous process, accompanied by habituation (Rohmaniah et al., 2025). Therefore, the application of gradual learning in Quranic education not only has a pedagogical basis but is also in line with the principles of Islamic education that emphasize ease (*taysir*), continuity (*istimrar*), and gradual development (*tadarruj*) in the learning process.

The findings of this study indicate that the success of improving Qur'an reading competence is not only influenced by the use of certain methods, such as Iqra', Tilawati, Ummi, or Qiraati, but is more determined by the teacher's ability to manage learning in a gradual, systematic, and student-centered manner. Learning methods will provide optimal results if supported by careful planning, flexible implementation according to student needs, and pedagogical interactions that encourage active student involvement. Thus, teacher pedagogical competence is a strategic factor in creating effective Qur'an learning and oriented towards achieving comprehensive reading competence.

Fostering Reading Habits through Repeated Practice and Individual Guidance

The results of the study show that Al-Quran teachers implement the habit of reading through repeated practice (*drilling*) combined with individual guidance as the main strategy in improving the students' Qur'an reading competence. Habituation is carried out consistently at each meeting by providing students with the opportunity to read the verses of the Qur'an repeatedly, both in class and individually (Mubarokah et al., 2025). During this process, the teacher observes each student's reading, identifying errors in pronunciation of letters, the application of tajweed rules, the length of the reading (*mad*), and reading fluency. Students who still experience difficulties receive individual guidance through demonstrations of correct reading, direct correction, and repetition of exercises until they reach the desired level of accuracy. This approach makes the learning process more personalized and allows teachers to provide assistance tailored to each student's individual needs. Habituating repeated reading is a pedagogical strategy aimed at developing automatic Quranic

reading skills (Zanjabila et al., 2023). Good reading skills are not only achieved through understanding the concept of tajweed but also require continuous practice to develop fluency, accuracy, and consistency in reading. Through repeated practice, students gradually develop coordination between visual abilities in recognizing letters, phonological abilities in pronouncing letter sounds, and cognitive abilities in applying Tajweed rules simultaneously (Afriani et al., 2023). Therefore, habituation is an important process in internalizing Quranic reading skills so that they can be performed correctly without relying on teacher direction.

Research findings indicate that repetitive practice is not carried out mechanically, but is combined with the provision of feedback (*feedback*) directly. Any errors made by students are immediately corrected through makhraj corrections, explanations of the correct tajweed rules, and examples of correct reading. Direct feedback allows students to identify errors, understand how to correct them, and immediately practice the corrected reading (Supriyadi & Julia, 2019). Thus, the practice process not only strengthens reading skills but also improves students' understanding of the rules for reading the Quran correctly. In addition to repeated practice, this study found that individual guidance is an important component of Quran learning. Teachers pay special attention to students who have difficulty reading by assisting them directly, listening to individual readings, and providing guidance tailored to the difficulties they face. An individual approach allows teachers to identify the characteristics of each student's errors, as each student has different ability levels, learning speeds, and obstacles. Thus, the learning solutions provided are also individualized, making them more effective than a purely classical approach (Latif et al., 2020).

From a pedagogical perspective, this strategy reflects the application of the scaffolding concept proposed by Lev Vygotsky. The teacher acts as a facilitator, providing temporary assistance to students when they experience difficulties in reading the Quran. This assistance takes the form of reading examples, direct corrections, repetition of material, and individual guidance. As reading ability improves, the intensity of assistance is gradually reduced so that students are able to read the Quran independently (Demina et al., 2022; Nuzulah et al., 2024). This process demonstrates that learning success is determined not only by the delivery of material but also by the quality of interaction between teacher and students during the learning process. This finding is also in line with behaviorist theory, which explains that skill development occurs through repetition and strengthening. In the context of learning the Qur'an, repeated reading practice strengthens the connection between the stimulus in the form of the Qur'anic text and the response in the form of correct pronunciation. When the teacher provides correction and reinforcement for correct reading, students are encouraged to maintain correct reading behavior and reduce errors in subsequent opportunities. Thus, repeated practice not only improves the technical aspects of reading, but also forms positive habits in reading the Qur'an. From the perspective of Islamic education, habituation is one of the main principles in the process of character formation and skill mastery (Kistoro, 2021; Arifudin et al., 2023). The ability to read the Qur'an well cannot be achieved instantly, but requires continuous practice. Therefore, teachers not only teach tajweed theory but also cultivate the habit of reading the Quran daily so that reading skills develop into a habit. This habit also instills a love for the Quran, so that reading is not only seen as an academic obligation but also as a form of worship performed with awareness and sincerity.

Conducting Regular Learning Assessments

The research findings indicate that Quran teachers conduct regular learning evaluations as an integral part of the learning process. Evaluations are not only conducted at the end of the program or after completing specific material, but are also carried out continuously at each meeting through listening to readings, assessing reading practice, observing students' development, and recording learning outcomes. Teachers use the evaluation results to determine students' mastery of makhraj, tajwid, reading fluency, and their ability to apply the material they have learned (Anoum et al., 2022; Hussin & Mohamad, 2024). This information serves as the basis for determining follow-up learning, whether in the form of material reinforcement, remedial courses, or providing challenges for students who have achieved the expected competencies. The implementation of regular evaluations demonstrates that teachers view evaluation as part of the learning process, not simply a tool to measure learning outcomes. Evaluations provide comprehensive information regarding students' competency development, allowing teachers to adjust learning strategies based on students' actual needs (Shukri et al., 2020). Thus, evaluation functions as a means of reflection for teachers to assess the effectiveness of the methods used as well as a diagnostic tool for learning difficulties experienced by students.

The research findings also indicate that the evaluation was conducted authentically, focusing on the students' actual ability to read the Quran. Teachers assessed reading ability through direct practice, so that aspects evaluated included accuracy of pronunciation, application of Tajweed rules, fluency, reading fluency, and etiquette when reading the Qur'an (Fitri et al., 2020). This approach provides a more accurate picture of reading competence than evaluations that only measure tajwid knowledge. Thus, the evaluation results truly reflect the students' ability to apply the knowledge they have learned. In addition to serving as an assessment tool, periodic evaluations also serve as a medium for providing feedback constructive feedback. The teacher conveys the evaluation results directly to the students by explaining reading errors, providing examples of correct pronunciation, and directing necessary corrective steps. This feedback helps students understand their strengths and weaknesses so they can gradually improve their reading quality (Windariani et al., 2024). This approach demonstrates that evaluation is not intended to provide mere assessment, but rather becomes part of the learning process that encourages continuous competency improvement.

From the perspective of Assessment for learning theory, formative evaluation is a crucial instrument to support the learning process because it provides information on student development throughout the learning process. This information enables teachers to adjust learning methods, materials, and strategies to better meet student needs. In this study, teachers used evaluation results as a basis for determining reinforcement materials, providing individual guidance, and designing learning for subsequent meetings. This demonstrates that evaluation has functioned as an instrument for learning development, not merely as a tool for measuring outcomes. From the perspective of Islamic education, evaluation has a broader meaning than just academic assessment. Evaluation is a reflective process aimed at continuously improving the quality of learning. Teachers not only evaluate students' reading abilities but also reflect on the learning strategies that have been implemented. This approach creates a culture of continuous improvement which is one of the characteristics of quality Qur'an learning.

Strengthening Learning Motivation through a Communicative Approach and Patience

The results of the study indicate that Quran teachers implement learning motivation reinforcement as an integral part of the learning strategy to improve students' Quran reading competence. Motivation reinforcement is carried out through a communicative approach characterized by warm interactions, the use of polite language, providing constructive advice, and creating a conducive and enjoyable learning atmosphere (Azmi et al., 2024; Fatah et al., 2025). In addition, teachers also display exemplary behavior in reading the Qur'an with tartil, maintaining etiquette towards the Qur'an, and demonstrating consistency in worship so as to become a real example for students. The combination of effective communication and role models is able to build a positive emotional relationship between teachers and students, thereby increasing students' enthusiasm, self-confidence, and commitment in studying the Qur'an (Rahman et al., 2024). The communicative approach applied by teachers shows that the process of learning the Qur'an is not only oriented towards the transfer of knowledge and reading skills, but also emphasizes the formation of harmonious interpersonal relationships. Teachers strive to create two-way communication by providing opportunities for students to ask questions, express difficulties faced, and obtain explanations openly without fear or pressure. This positive interaction creates a more inclusive learning climate so that students feel valued as individuals who are learning (Surmiyanti et al., 2026). This condition encourages the growth of intrinsic motivation because students participate in learning based on awareness and a desire to improve their ability to read the Qur'an, not solely because of demands from the teacher.

Research findings also show that teachers consistently provide psychological support through positive words, appreciation for every effort made by students, and guidance when they experience reading difficulties. Teachers avoid forms of communication that blame or embarrass students in front of their peers (Abdullah et al., 2024; Amelia, 2026). Instead, reading errors are seen as part of the learning process that must be corrected through practice and guidance. This approach fosters psychological safety in the learning process, namely a condition where students feel safe to try, make mistakes, and learn without fear of negative treatment. This learning environment has been shown to increase students' courage to read the Quran in front of teachers and classmates. In addition to effective communication, this study found that teacher role models are a very influential factor in building students' learning motivation. Teachers not only teach the theory of tajweed and the techniques of reading the Qur'an, but also demonstrate the correct reading practice through the correct pronunciation of makhraj, consistent application of the laws of tajweed, tartil voice, and respectful attitude towards the Qur'an during the learning process (Hasan & Inayati, 2025). Students not only acquire knowledge verbally, but also observe directly how a teacher treats the Qur'an as a holy book that must be read with full manners and reverence. This example becomes an effective learning medium because it provides concrete examples that can be imitated by students in their daily reading activities.

In the perspective of Social Learning Theory developed by Albert Bandura, individuals learn behavior through the process of observation, imitation, and modeling. Teachers function as role models observed by students, so that the behavior, reading methods, attitudes, and values displayed by teachers have the potential to be internalized by students. In the context of learning the Qur'an, the teacher's ability to demonstrate correct reading, maintain etiquette towards the Qur'an, and demonstrate a love for tilawah activities becomes a stimulus that encourages students to imitate these behaviors. Therefore, the success of learning the

Qur'an is not only influenced by the teacher's ability to explain the material, but also by the quality of the example shown during the learning process. The findings of this study can also be explained through the Self-Determination Theory developed by Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan. This theory explains that intrinsic motivation develops when three basic psychological needs of students are met, namely autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Muslim et al., 2023). The communicative approach applied by teachers provides space for students to actively participate in learning, the guidance provided helps improve reading skills, while the warm relationship between teacher and student creates a sense of belonging and emotional attachment. When these three aspects are met, students are motivated to learn to read the Quran out of an internal awareness, not simply to earn grades or avoid punishment. This intrinsic motivation tends to be more lasting and contributes to improving the quality of learning.

In the perspective of Islamic education, exemplary behavior is one of the most effective educational methods in shaping student behavior. Al-Quran teachers are seen not only as teachers, but also as educators who is responsible for guiding the spiritual, moral, and intellectual development of students. Therefore, the teacher's behavior in reading the Qur'an, maintaining morals, being patient, and treating students with affection is part of the educational process itself (Nurhaliza & Sulastri 2026). This exemplary behavior strengthens the internalization of Islamic values because students witness firsthand the implementation of the teachings conveyed by the teacher in everyday life. Thus, learning the Qur'an does not stop at mastering the cognitive and psychomotor aspects, but also forms the affective dimension which is the main goal of Islamic education. The results of this study indicate that students' learning motivation develops through a combination of humanistic communication and consistent teacher role models. These two strategies complement each other in creating a learning environment that supports the development of Qur'an reading competence. Effective communication builds emotional closeness and self-confidence, while role models provide behavioral models that students can emulate. The synergy between the two produces a more meaningful learning experience so that students show higher enthusiasm, are more active in practicing reading, and have a stronger commitment to improving the quality of their reading of the Qur'an.

Recognising the Progress of Students

The results of the study indicate that providing appreciation for the development of students is one of the learning strategies consistently applied by Al-Qur'an teachers in improving the competence of reading the Al-Qur'an. Appreciation is given in various forms, such as verbal praise, motivational expressions, giving simple awards, opportunities to be a role model for their friends, and recognition of every improvement in reading ability achieved by students. Teachers not only provide appreciation to students who achieve the best results, but also to students who show progress compared to previous abilities (Hayi et al., 2025; Jarimah, 2025). This approach reflects that teachers emphasize the learning process more than just the final result, so that each student has an equal opportunity to receive recognition for the efforts and progress achieved. The research findings show that providing appreciation can create a more positive and conducive learning atmosphere. Students feel that every effort they make receives attention and recognition from the teacher, so that they feel confident to continue practicing reading the Al-Qur'an. These conditions encourage students to be more active in learning, to be more willing to read in front of their teachers and peers, and to persevere when faced with difficulties in correcting pronunciation or applying Tajweed rules (Budi & Richana, 2022; Fahrudin et al., 2026). Thus, appreciation serves not only as a form of

recognition but also as a pedagogical instrument that strengthens students' engagement in the learning process.

Giving appreciation also shows that teachers understand the importance of the affective aspect in learning the Qur'an (Dany et al., 2025; Mahyani, 2026). Learning success is not only determined by mastery of cognitive and psychomotor aspects, but is also influenced by the psychological condition of the students. Students who receive recognition for their learning progress tend to have a higher motivation to maintain and even improve the quality of their reading. Conversely, if every effort made does not receive positive feedback, learning motivation can decrease, resulting in a low intensity of Qur'an reading practice. Therefore, appreciation is a form of emotional support that can strengthen students' enthusiasm for learning continuously. The results of this study also show that teachers apply the principle of development-oriented appreciation (Abdussalam et al., 2019; Maghribi & Mujahadah, 2025). Teachers do not compare abilities between students, but assess each individual's development based on improvements achieved over time. Students who previously could not pronounce the hijaiyah letters correctly still receive recognition when they show improvement, even though they have not reached the same level of competence as other students. This approach creates a more inclusive learning because each student feels valued according to their efforts and learning process. This strategy also reduces unhealthy competition and develops a culture of mutual support in the Qur'an learning environment. From an educational psychology perspective, this finding is in line with the operant conditioning theory developed by B. F. Skinner. This theory explains that behavior followed by positive reinforcement will tend to recur with greater frequency. In the context of this study, praise, appreciation, and recognition given by teachers serve as positive reinforcement for correct Quran reading behavior. When students experience positive experiences after demonstrating learning progress, they are encouraged to repeat the behavior through more consistent practice (Yusoff et al., 2021; Hadi, 2026). Thus, appreciation contributes to the formation of a sustainable Quran reading habit.

Furthermore, the research findings can also be explained through Self-Determination Theory developed by Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan. This theory explains that individuals will have stronger motivation when they feel recognized for their competencies. In this study, teacher appreciation increased students' perceptions of their own abilities, so that they become more confident to continue learning and improve the quality of their Qur'an reading (Muhalli & Pathollah, 2025; Zahroh et al., 2025). However, the appreciation given by teachers is not materialistic or excessive, but rather emphasizes recognition of the learning process and effort. This approach is important to maintain intrinsic motivation and does not depend entirely on external rewards or awards. From an Islamic education perspective, giving appreciation is firmly grounded in the principle of *targhīb*, which is to provide encouragement, appreciation, and hope to students so that they are always motivated to do good. In learning the Qur'an, the form of appreciation given by teachers is not only intended to improve academic achievement, but also to foster a love for the Qur'an as a guide for the lives of Muslims. Therefore, teachers provide appreciation while maintaining the values of sincerity, humility, and avoiding the emergence of an attitude of *riya'* or feeling superior to their friends (Tisnawati et al., 2025). This approach shows that rewards in Islamic education are directed at building character and strengthening the intention to worship, not merely pursuing recognition or achievement.

The findings of this study also indicate that providing appreciation contributes to the creation of a supportive learning climate. When teachers consistently provide appreciation for learning progress, the relationship between

teacher and students becomes more harmonious, students' self-confidence increases, and a culture of mutual support emerges. This positive learning environment encourages students to practice more actively, remind each other to improve their reading, and feel less afraid of making mistakes (Sjamsudin et al., 2024). Thus, appreciation not only improves individual competence but also strengthens the quality of social interactions in the learning process.

Overall, the research findings confirm that providing appreciation is a pedagogical strategy that significantly contributes to improving students' Quran reading competence. Appreciation given appropriately, proportionally, and developmentally oriented can increase learning motivation, strengthen self-confidence, form positive learning habits, and foster a love of the Quran. Therefore, Quran teachers need to integrate appreciation as part of a sustainable learning strategy. Awards should not only be given to students who achieve the highest achievements, but also to every student who demonstrates effort, perseverance, and progress in the learning process. This approach is believed to be able to create a more humanistic, inclusive Quran learning that is oriented towards optimally developing the potential of each student.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that improving the Qur'an reading competence of students at the Al-Qur'an Education Park (TPQ) is the result of implementing comprehensive, adaptive, and student-centered learning strategies. The results of the study identified six main strategies that are mutually integrated, namely mapping the initial abilities of students as a basis for preparing learning, implementing Al-Qur'an learning methods in stages and systematically according to the level of student development, habituating reading through repeated practice combined with individual guidance, implementing periodic learning evaluations as a basis for improving the learning process, strengthening motivation through educational communication and teacher role models, and providing appreciation for student development as a form of positive reinforcement. The synergy of these six strategies has been proven to contribute to improving the accuracy of makhraj, mastery of tajwid rules, reading fluency, self-confidence, and student learning motivation. These findings confirm that the success of Al-Qur'an learning is not only determined by the use of certain methods, but also by the teacher's pedagogical competence in designing learning that is responsive to student needs, building educational interactions, and creating a conducive learning environment oriented towards continuous competency development. This research contributes to the development of Islamic educational pedagogy studies, particularly on Quranic learning in non-formal Islamic educational institutions, and serves as a reference for teachers, TPQ managers, and policymakers in designing more effective teacher competency development programs and innovative learning strategies. Further research is recommended to test the effectiveness of this learning strategy model in various contexts of Islamic educational institutions through a quantitative approach order to produce a more comprehensive, measurable and widely implementable Al-Qur'an learning model.

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