EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES OF ARABIC LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN SALAFI ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOLS TO ENHANCE STUDENTS' NAHWU AND SHARAF PROFICIENCY

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Abstract

This study aims to explore effective strategies in the teaching of Nahwu (Arabic syntax) and Sharaf (Arabic morphology) at Salafi Islamic boarding schools in West Aceh Regency. The research focuses on the methods and techniques used by teachers to enhance students' Arabic language proficiency. This study identifies the challenges faced in teaching Nahwu and Sharaf and evaluates various strategies employed, including the use of Nadham (poetic form), instructional media, and curriculum design. Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation, and analyzed thematically. The findings indicate that teaching strategies involving Nadham, local language integration, and religious context are effective in improving students' understanding of Nahwu and Sharaf. This study is expected to provide valuable insights for developing Arabic language teaching methods in Salafi Islamic boarding schools.

Keywords: Strategi pengajaran; Nahwu; Sharaf; Pesantren salafi; Kabupaten Aceh Barat.

INTRODUCTION

Nahwu (Arabic syntax) and Sharaf (Arabic morphology) are two essential disciplines in Arabic language learning, especially within the context of Islamic boarding school (pesantren) education. Nahwu focuses on Arabic grammar, while Sharaf refers to morphology or the study of word forms and transformations in Arabic. These disciplines form the foundation for a deep understanding of religious texts, including the Qur'an and Hadith, which are central to Salafi pesantren education (Anam et al., 2024).

Salafi pesantren, as one of the Islamic educational institutions oriented towards the teaching of classical Islamic texts (kitab kuning), plays a strategic role in preserving and fostering the classical Islamic scholarly tradition. In West Aceh Regency, Salafi pesantren are instrumental in equipping students with proficient Arabic language skills, essential for accessing primary sources of Islamic knowledge (Khasanah et al., 2022; Tohir, 2020). Consequently, the teaching strategies employed by Arabic language teachers in these pesantren are critical in the learning process of Nahwu and Sharaf (Kasim et al., 2023).

However, numerous challenges emerge in the effort to improve students' mastery of Nahwu and Sharaf. Ineffective teaching methods, inadequate learning media, and unsuited curriculum design can hinder students' understanding and proficiency in these disciplines (Tohir, 2020). Therefore, this study is essential to

thoroughly examine how Arabic language teachers in Salafi pesantren in West Aceh Regency design and implement effective teaching strategies.

This research will focus on several key aspects: the teaching strategies employed by teachers, the methods and media applied in instruction, the textbooks used as learning resources, and the curriculum design for teaching Nahwu and Sharaf. Utilizing purposive sampling, this study will select specific Salafi pesantren in West Aceh Regency to obtain a comprehensive picture of the Nahwu and Sharaf teaching strategies at these educational institutions.

The research questions addressed in this study include: (1) What teaching strategies do Arabic language teachers employ to enhance students' mastery of Nahwu and Sharaf? (2) What learning methods and media are utilized, and how effective are they? (3) How is the Nahwu and Sharaf curriculum designed in Salafi pesantren, and what impact does it have on students' proficiency? This research is expected to contribute to the development of Arabic language teaching methods in pesantren, particularly in fostering students' mastery of Nahwu and Sharaf.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach (Subadi, 2006) to explore the teaching strategies used by Arabic language teachers in Salafi pesantren to improve students' mastery of Nahwu and Sharaf. A qualitative research method was chosen for its ability to provide an in-depth portrayal of the teaching and learning processes occurring in the field. Below is an explanation of the research design, study location and subjects, data collection methods, and data analysis utilized in this study.

Research Design

This study uses a case study design (Rahardjo, 2017; Yin, 2008), focusing on an in-depth exploration of Nahwu and Sharaf teaching strategies at select Salafi pesantren in West Aceh Regency. The case study method allows for a detailed examination of the specific context in which the teaching process occurs and enables understanding of the interactions between various elements in the educational process, including teaching methods, media, and curriculum.

Study Location and Subjects

The research was conducted at several Salafi pesantren spread across West Aceh Regency. The locations were selected based on specific criteria, such as pesantren with a traditional focus on Nahwu and Sharaf using the Salafi approach. The study's subjects include Arabic language teachers responsible for teaching Nahwu and Sharaf and students participating in these lessons. Purposive sampling was used, selecting subjects who could provide the most relevant and in-depth information on the phenomenon under study. In this case, teachers chosen were those with several years of experience teaching Nahwu and Sharaf, and students who had attended these lessons for at least one year.

Data Collection Methods

Data collection was carried out using several key techniques (Fadilla & Wulandari, 2023; Jailani, 2023). First, in-depth interviews were conducted with Arabic teachers to understand their teaching strategies, including the media used and the curriculum design and implementation for Nahwu and Sharaf. These interviews also

included students to gather their experiences in learning Nahwu and Sharaf and their views on the effectiveness of the teachers' methods.

Second, participatory observation was employed to directly observe the teaching process in classrooms. The researcher observed teacher-student interactions, applied teaching methods, media use, and students' responses to the material. This aimed to obtain more objective data regarding the implementation of teaching strategies in the field. Third, documentation was conducted by collecting various relevant documents, such as syllabi, lesson plans, and teaching materials used in Nahwu and Sharaf instruction. These documents were analyzed to understand the structure and content of the curriculum implemented in the pesantren.

Data Validity

To ensure data validity, several techniques were meticulously employed. One method was source triangulation, where data from different sources—interviews, observations, and documentation—were compared to ensure consistency and identify potential biases or errors (Jailani, 2023; Rahardjo, 2017; Subadi, 2006). Additionally, member checks were conducted, a process where interview results and preliminary findings were confirmed with respondents to ensure that the researcher's interpretations accurately reflected the respondents' intentions and perspectives.

Lastly, an audit trail was maintained, preserving detailed records of all research steps, including data collection and analysis, allowing the study to be traced and evaluated by other researchers. This technique enhances research transparency and validity and facilitates the replication or verification of results in future studies. With this research methodology, it is expected that an in-depth understanding will be gained regarding Nahwu and Sharaf teaching strategies in Salafi pesantren and how these methods impact students' Arabic language mastery.

Data Analysis

Data from interviews, observations, and documentation were thematically analyzed following structured steps (Fadilla & Wulandari, 2023; Jailani, 2023). The process began with data reduction, where collected information was classified and simplified to facilitate analysis, retaining only data relevant to the research focus to keep the analysis on critical issues. Next, the reduced data was presented in systematic narratives or tables to clearly represent the research findings, making it easier to interpret and understand the results. Finally, conclusions were drawn based on patterns emerging from the presented data. These conclusions were aligned with the research questions and cross-checked with data from multiple sources to ensure the findings' validity. This process ensures that data analysis is accurate and provides in-depth insights into the study.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Learning Objectives of Nahwu and Sharaf in Salafi Islamic Boarding Schools

This study reveals various strategies employed by Arabic language teachers in Salafi pesantren to enhance students' mastery of Nahwu and Sharaf. A prominent strategy is the use of nadham, or rhythmic poetry, in teaching these subjects. Teachers utilize nadham to facilitate students' memorization of Arabic grammar rules. Comprising verses that encode Nahwu and Sharaf rules, nadham aids retention through

rhythm. Some teachers adapt these verses using the students' native language, such as Acehnese, to clarify meanings and concepts, helping students relate terms in nadham to familiar concepts in daily life.

Memorization-based teaching is another dominant approach. Teachers stress the importance of memorizing Nahwu and Sharaf rules as a foundation before students apply them to understand religious texts. This method progresses gradually, beginning with basic Nahwu and Sharaf principles through classical texts such as Ajurumiyah and Alfiyah Ibn Malik. Students memorize the verses outlining grammar rules, followed by oral exams where they must recite and explain the rules and their applications.

The use of local languages, like Acehnese, has proven effective in teaching Nahwu and Sharaf. Recognizing that not all students have a strong Arabic background, teachers leverage local languages to bridge comprehension gaps. These languages are used to explain nadham and provide relatable examples, assisting students in understanding how Nahwu and Sharaf rules apply in familiar contexts. Teachers also integrate religious context into the instruction. Each rule is linked to Qur'anic verses, Hadith, or other religious texts, reinforcing the importance of Nahwu and Sharaf in comprehending Islamic teachings. This approach boosts students' motivation and underscores the practical relevance of grammar for their lives as Muslims. Students analyze grammatical structures in religious texts, fostering their belief that mastering Arabic grammar is key to understanding primary sources of Islamic teachings (Syamsuar, *et al.*, 2024).

Observations showed that teachers strive to actively involve students in the learning process. Students participate in group discussions where they can share insights and support each other in overcoming learning difficulties. Guided by teachers, these discussions allow students to debate and ask questions, enhancing their engagement and developing critical and analytical thinking skills. Additional strategies include deep comprehension-based memorization. Students are not only required to memorize basic rules but also to understand the material thoroughly. Each session begins with tests to assess memorization, understanding, and application of the material. Sentence analysis is performed to study each sentence in depth, followed by material review and exams to solidify comprehension.

The "memorize, review, and apply" method is used, where students memorize material, repeatedly review it, and apply it in practice. Visual aids like blackboards are used effectively, especially for explaining concepts difficult to grasp from textbooks alone.

The curriculum in Salafi pesantren is designed in progressive stages according to students' skill levels, starting from the ibtida'iyah (beginner) level to aliyah (advanced). At the basic level, students study texts like Jurumiyah, Zammun, and Tashref. Advanced levels include more complex texts like Mutammimah Jurumiyah and Kailani, and at the aliyah level, students study advanced texts such as Sharh Khalid Ibn Naja and Salsul Madkhal. This curriculum is structured for students to master Nahwu and Sharaf gradually, with curriculum adjustments based on student assessments conducted every three months.

Routine evaluations through trimester exams assess students' abilities to parse sentences and identify word patterns. Regular material reviews are conducted through group discussions and individual teacher-student interactions. Extracurricular activities like Alfiyah nadham recitation competitions, Fahmil Qutub (text understanding competitions), and Qiraatul Kutub (reading competitions) are organized to motivate students in mastering Nahwu and Sharaf. Students' engagement is closely monitored, with those struggling to master material required to repeat classes. Evening sessions are held to reinforce memorization of Nahwu and Sharaf rules. Teachers regularly check attendance and involve students in Q&A sessions to gauge comprehension.

Overall, this research shows that Nahwu and Sharaf teaching strategies in Salafi pesantren are diverse and creative. Emphasis on nadham, memorization techniques, local language use, integration of religious context, and active student engagement effectively support students' mastery of Arabic grammar rules. These findings highlight the importance of adapting teaching methods to students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds and adopting a holistic approach to Nahwu and Sharaf instruction in Salafi pesantren. Interviews with Arabic teachers in West Aceh Salafi pesantren revealed additional strategies to enhance students' understanding of Nahwu and Sharaf. The main approach emphasizes memorization with deep comprehension, requiring students to not only memorize fundamental rules but also thoroughly grasp their applications. Each session begins with tests to assess memorization and understanding, allowing teachers to evaluate students' mastery and practical application.

The "memorize, review, and apply" approach is consistently employed. Students first memorize material, periodically review it, and eventually apply it in real-world practices, such as sentence analysis using Nahwu and Sharaf rules. Common exercises include parsing (i'rab) sentences and identifying word patterns in Sharaf rules. Students also practice applying these rules in reading fiqh texts, where they parse sentences and explain word patterns discussed. Teachers use simple media, such as blackboards and markers, to provide visual aids that help students understand sentence structures and applied rules. Despite limited technology, this method proves effective as students absorb material better with direct visualization in the classroom. When explanations are challenging to grasp from books alone, blackboards serve as effective visual aids.

In-depth Arabic grammar rules are taught, such as restrictions on beginning sentences with indefinite nouns (except when conveying specific meanings or benefits). For example, in the sentence "أعند زيد نَمِرَةُ," "نَمِرَةُ," "نَمِرَةُ" (an indefinite noun) cannot serve as a mubtada' (subject) since it must be a definite noun, unless positioned as khabar (predicate) and conveying a specific meaning. Understanding such rules helps students read and analyze Arabic texts more comprehensively.

The curriculum design progresses with student abilities, from ibtida'iyah to aliyah levels. In basic levels, students study texts like Jurumiyah, Zammun, and Tashref. At advanced levels, more complex texts like Mutammimah Jurumiyah and Kailani are introduced, and in the aliyah level, students study texts like Sharh Khalid Ibn Naja and Salsul Madkhal. This curriculum structure enables students to master Nahwu and Sharaf gradually, with curriculum development based on evaluations conducted every three months.

Routine evaluations include trimester exams assessing students' sentence parsing and word pattern identification skills. Material review is regularly conducted through group discussions and individual teacher-student interactions. Extracurricular

activities, such as Alfiyah nadham memorization contests, Fahmil Qutub, and Qiraatul Kutub competitions, are organized to further motivate students to master Nahwu and Sharaf. These activities assess not only memorization but also the practical application of knowledge in reading classical texts. Teachers actively ensure that students deeply understand Nahwu and Sharaf rules. This approach successfully produces students who can read unvoweled Arabic texts (kitab gundul) and accurately parse sentences, achieving the primary educational goal of Nahwu and Sharaf in Salafi pesantren.

Teaching Strategies for Nahwu and Sharaf in Salafi Pesantren in West Aceh

The findings on teaching strategies for Nahwu and Sharaf in Salafi pesantren in West Aceh connect closely with relevant educational theories. The use of nadham (rhythmic poetry) and the local language in teaching Nahwu and Sharaf aligns with the principles of Multimodal Learning (Firmansyah, 2019). Nadham functions as a mnemonic tool, helping students memorize grammar rules by presenting information in an engaging and easily remembered form. This approach corresponds with Mayer's Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, which posits that information presented in various formats can enhance understanding and retention (Ginting, 2022). Additionally, the use of the local language to explain nadham and provide relatable examples reflects Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) Theory, emphasizing that instruction tailored to students' backgrounds and prior knowledge promotes easier comprehension (Sari, 2018).

The stepwise memorization method used in West Aceh's Salafi pesantren is also in line with Repetition Theory. This method introduces students to the basics of Nahwu and Sharaf by memorizing verses from classical texts like Ajurumiyah and Alfiyah Ibn Malik, allowing them to build a strong foundation before applying their knowledge practically. This approach aligns with Piaget's Constructivist Theory, which underscores the importance of building new knowledge upon existing knowledge through consistent practice and repetition (Pribadi & Sjarif, 2010).

The integration of religious context in teaching Nahwu and Sharaf demonstrates the application of Contextual Learning Theory. By linking grammar rules to religious texts such as the Qur'an and Hadith, teachers provide practical reasons for studying grammar, which boosts students' motivation and engagement. This is consistent with the theory suggesting that learning connected to students' experiences and values is more effective (Hasanah, n.d.).

Active student involvement through group discussions and interactive activities in West Aceh's Salafi pesantren reflects Bandura's Social Learning Theory. Group discussions allow students to share knowledge and support each other, reinforcing understanding through social interaction. This approach also aligns with Collaborative Learning Theory, which highlights the benefits of group learning in developing critical and analytical thinking skills.

The curriculum adjustments and the use of exams as evaluative tools in West Aceh's Salafi pesantren relate to Formative Evaluation Theory. Formative evaluation allows teachers to assess and modify teaching methods and curricula based on students' needs. Regular curriculum adjustments and evaluations ensure that learning remains relevant and effective while tracking students' progress continuously.

Overall, the Nahwu and Sharaf teaching strategies in West Aceh's Salafi pesantren demonstrate the application of various relevant educational theories. The use of nadham, local language, religious context integration, and active student involvement exemplifies how combining methods and theories can effectively enhance Arabic language mastery. This study affirms the importance of adaptation and innovation in teaching practices to achieve optimal educational outcomes, particularly in the context of Salafi pesantren in West Aceh.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that teaching strategies for Nahwu and Sharaf in Salafi pesantren in West Aceh demonstrate the application of various innovative and adaptive methods. The use of nadham as a memorization aid, integration of the local language, and contextualization of material with religious aspects have proven effective in enhancing students' understanding. The stepwise memorization method and oral evaluations support a deeper learning process. Active student involvement in interactive activities and curriculum adjustments based on evaluations indicate that diverse and contextual approaches can improve learning outcomes. These findings provide a valuable contribution to the development and implementation of more effective Arabic teaching strategies within Salafi pesantren environments.

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