



AL- BAGHDĀDĪ TEACHING TECHNIQUE FOR
QUR'ĀN RECITATION: A CASE STUDY OF AL –
BAGHDĀDĪ LEARNING CENTRE, SEKSYEN 7,
SHAH ALAM, SELANGOR.

BY

‘AINUN MARDHIAH BINTI ISMAIL

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degree of Master of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and
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ABSTRACT

In general, Malaysia is one of the Islamic developing countries in the world. It is a fact that it is compulsory on every student is compulsory to learn religious subjects in their school, either in primary or in secondary school or both especially with regard to learning the Qur'ān. The most widely used technique in teaching the Qur'ān is the Iqra' technique. However, there are still a large number of students with Qur'anic illiteracy. Thus, this research attempts to discover the problems that cause Qur'anic illiteracy and introduce the alternative way in overcoming Qur'anic illiteracy in Malaysia. The findings show that 0.6% of the student were at the poor level while 38.2% at the very poor level. It was also concluded that the students' ability to recite the Qur'ān was satisfactory, whilst their ability to apply the rules of the Qur'ān recitation was merely satisfactory. It shows that the students' ability to recite the Qur'ān is good enough to reach the qualification standard that they should have reached. Therefore, there is a need to pay more attention on these issues as the weaknesses will affect their learning and understanding of the Islamic subject as a whole. This research promotes several methods in order to understand al-Baghdādī's teaching techniques of the Qur'ān such as the critical analysis, survey, interview and data analysis in order to understand the general perceptions on Qur'anic illiteracy to al- Baghdādī's Qur'anic teaching technique, particularly at Baghdādī Learning Centre Section 7, Shah Alam, Selangor.

ملخص البحث

ماليزيا هي واحدة من البلدان الإسلامية النامية في العالم. وتلزم الطلاب المسلمين معرفة الموضوعات الدينية في مدرستهم سواء أكان في المدرسة الابتدائية أم في المدرسة الثانوية، خاصة فيما يتعلق بتعلم القرآن الكريم. وفي واقع الأمر نجد المنهج الأكثر استخداماً في تعليم القرآن هو منهج "اقرأ". ومع ذلك، لا يزال هناك عدد من الطلاب بمستوى الأمية في القرآن. وهذا البحث يكتشف المشكلات التي تسبب الأمية بالقرآن، ويقدم البديل لمعالجة الأمية بقراءة القرآن في ماليزيا. وقد تبين من إحدى الدراسات أن ٣٨,٧% على مستوى ضعيف جداً في قراءة القرآن وأن البقية ٦١,٢% وصلوا الحد الأدنى، فإنه يستنتج أن قدرة الطلاب في تلاوة القرآن كانت غير مرضية، وأما في قدرتهم على تطبيق قواعد تلاوة القرآن فكانت غير مرضية كذلك، ومن هنا نجد ضرورة، إيلاء المزيد من الاهتمام على هذه القضايا، لأن نقطة الضعف هذه ستؤثر على تعلم الطلاب وفهمهم للإسلام إجمالاً. واستخدمت الباحثة العديد من الطرق لفهم وجهة النظر للمنهج البغدادي في تدريس لتلاوة القرآن مثل التحليل النقدي، والمسح الميداني، والمقابلة والبيانات من أجل فهم من التصورات العامة حول مشكلة الأمية بالقرآن إلى وجهة نظر مركز البغدادي في تلاوة القرآن خاة في مركز تعليم البغدادي سيكشين ٧، شاه علم، سيلانغور، وتبين من البحث أن ٥٠% من الكبار استفادوا من مركز البغدادي، وأن ٤٣,٣ م الأطفال استفادوا من المركز وكانت قراءتهم للقرآن بسلاسة ويسر.

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.....
Sofiah binti Samsuddin
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.....
Mohd. Shah b. Jani
Examiner

This dissertation was submitted to the Department of Qur'ān and Sunnah and is accepted as a fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage (Qur'ān and Sunnah).

.....
Muhammad Adli Musa
Head, Department of Qur'ān and
Sunnah

This dissertation was submitted to the Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences and is accepted as a fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage (Qur'ān and Sunnah).

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This dissertation is dedicated to my beloved parents

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I thank the Almighty Allah [SWT] for giving me the courage and the determination, as well as guidance in conducting and completing this study. Peace be upon his Messenger and his family who is the torch bearer of right path and the greatest benefactor of the humanity.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In Islam, the Qur'ān, as in Arabic 'al-Qur'ān', is the miraculous word of the One and Only God, Allah. It was revealed to Prophet Muḥammad (SAW) through the angel *Jibrīl*, gradually over a period of approximately 23 years. The Qur'ān is therefore believed to be the finest, and indeed, the final revelation from Allah, serves as a completion and confirmation of previous scriptures like *Taurah* (revealed to Prophet Musa (AS)), *Zabūr* (revealed to Prophet Dāwud (AS)), and *Injīl* (revealed to Prophet 'Isā (AS)). Owing to this fact, the Qur'ān becomes the central religious text of Islam, and thus is considered holy by all Muslims.

Reading and reciting the Qur'ān is deemed fundamental by Muslims. It is compulsory to recite it with proper '*tajwīd*' and '*tartīl*'. Nowadays, due to globalisation, Muslim societies are getting preoccupied with unfinished worldly matters resulting in them losing interest in exploring the Qur'ān, let alone, spending time pondering over it. Many Muslims, therefore, are being less exposed to the Qur'ān rendering them unable to understand the Arabic letters, needless to say, the verses and chapters in the holy book. These points lead to the increasing rate of Qur'ān illiteracy among Muslims. This phenomenon continues unabated, and hence should be taken seriously by various parties. There are many factors causing Qur'ān illiteracy such as laziness, low self-esteem, a complete ignorance of the importance of Qur'ān literacy and the advantages of the Qur'ān, a dismissive notion that it is too late to learn the

Qur'ān due to a busy lifestyle and age aspect, and above all, a lack of willingness to learn.

There is a study conducted among 320 students entitled “*Keupayaan Bacaan al-Quran dalam Kalangan Pelajar Tingkatan Empat: Kajian di Beberapa Buah Sekolah Menengah Terpilih di Negeri Terengganu*”. The statistical calculations of the study showed that of 320 students who participated, a total of 171 students (53.4%) achieved an excellent level of performance, 25 students (7.8%) achieved a good level, 2 students (0.6%) remained at the basic level and 122 students (38.1%) were at a unsatisfactory level. This very weak level is reflected by their inability to read the Qur'ān in its entirety or in short, known as “Qur'ān illiterate.” The finding showed that student's ability of reciting the Qur'ān is at a worrying level.¹

In Malaysia, the most widely used technique for teaching the Qur'ān is the *Iqra'* technique. This technique was introduced to the kindergarten and primary school children officially by the Ministry of Education, Malaysia since 1995². Usually, the teaching delivery of Qur'ān recitation is conducted at the community's mosque or private schools and homes. It was reported that about 70% of the students acquired Qur'ān reading skills using this technique.³ However, another 30% still fell into Qur'ān-illiterate category.⁴ Thus, Al-Baghdādī technique was invented to overcome this problem by introducing a convenient and effective approach to promoting Qur'ān reading skills. The overwhelming popularity of Al-Baghdādī technique for teaching and learning the Qur'ān has encouraged the public to consider implementing this

¹ Yusoff, M. Y. Z. H. M., & Mohd, S. Keupayaan Bacaan al- Qur'ān di Kalangan Pelajar Tingkatan Empat: Kajian di Beberapa Buah Sekolah Menengah Terpilih di Negeri Terengganu. *Al – Bayan Journal of Al- Qur'ān & al- Hadith*, vol. 6, (2008): 53-85.

² Ministry of Education (MoE), *Bekalan Al- Qur'ān dan Buku Iqra*. Malaysia, <http://www.moe.gov.my>. (Accessed on 2013).

³ Al-Baghdādī Technique, Website address: <http://www.albaghdadi.com.my>, (accessed on 26th July 2016).

⁴ Yusoff, M. Y. Z. H. M., & Mohd, S. Keupayaan Bacaan al- Qur'ān di Kalangan Pelajar Tingkatan Empat: Kajian di Beberapa Buah Sekolah Menengah Terpilih di Negeri Terengganu, 53-85.

teaching technique. Moreover, it provides an alternative for Muslims who have difficulty using other existing techniques to learn the proper way to read the Qur'ān.

Basically, Al-Baghdādī Qur'ānic teaching technique was introduced by Ustaz Jalaluddin Hassanuddin in mid-2009⁵ where it started as a training technique used by parents and teachers to teach their children the proper way to read the Qur'ān. Within three years, this technique spread widely across Malaysia due to its effectiveness and innovativeness. Later in 2012, there were about 13 Al-Baghdādī Training Centres (ATCs) and 521 Al- Baghdādī Learning Centres (ALCs).⁶

The equipments that have been used in Al- Baghdādī technique are Tamhīd Al- Baghdādī book, Al- Baghdādī tapping device, Al- Baghdādī playtime and Al- Baghdādī flash cards. Al- Baghdādī technique is a combination of reading and tapping movement (psychomotor). The simultaneous operations of both sides of the brain can help students improve their concentration in studies. Referring to Al- Baghdādī technique, students are trained to read each word and letter displayed on the device they are using while tapping their fingers on it. Students have to synchronize their reading practice and tapping movement every time they use the device. Apart from this, word repetition technique is highly practised where within five minutes of class, each word is repeated at least 100 times. In cases where the pronunciation and the tapping sound generated by the device are not matched, students will immediately realise that they have misread the word. Considering that young students tend to have a shorter attention span and are easily distracted during class, an additional set consists of Al-Baghdādī Playtime Kit and Al-Baghdādī Flash Cards is also provided to primary school students. Through teachers' creativity, young students will be able to enjoy the playtime and the flash cards while learning important aspects of Qur'ān recitation

⁵ Al- Baghdādī Technique, Website Address: <http://www.albaghdadi.com.my>, (accessed 26 July 2016).

⁶ Ibid.

without easily getting bored, and they may as well find the lessons interesting. On top of that, Al-Baghdādī technique is believed to be effective when a five-year-old girl was able to read the Qur’ān in just three weeks after having been introduced to the technique.⁷

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Based on the studies conducted by academic scholars and the Ministry of Education, Malaysia as mentioned previously in the last section, a lot of Malaysian Muslims fail to pronounce Arabic alphabet correctly, resulting in the incompetence in proper Qur’ān recitation among the Muslim population. Owing to this matter, this research aims at investigating the view of Al- Baghdādī Qur’ān teaching technique in overcoming Qur’ānic illiteracy in Malaysia.

Previous studies have been done by focusing on the major problems faced by students of different ages in the process of learning the Qur’ān, for instance, the inability to master Qur’ān recitation skills in accordance with proper ‘*tajwīd*’ rules, ‘*makhraj*’, ‘*ṣifah*’ and ‘*faṣāḥah*’. This is exactly the problem faced by students either in school, college, and university. It was evident that a lot of students were unable to recite the Qur’ān properly even though they went through six years of learning in primary school.

Based on a research done by the Curriculum Development Centre under the Ministry of Education, Malaysia (1986), it was reported that there were students who have finished their studies in primary school but were still unable to recite the Qur’ān, failed to perform daily prayers, and acted morally wrong. The Inspectorate of Federation Schools (1992) also reported that there were Form One students in

⁷ Ibid.

secondary school who still did not know how to recite the Qur'ān. In a nutshell, the previous research findings were as follows:

- i. Students were unable to recite the Qur'ān smoothly.
- ii. Students lacked knowledge of 'tajwīd' rules.
- iii. Students had difficulty in pronouncing Qur'ānic letters accurately.

It is hoped that through this study, the researcher will be able to deeply investigate the effectiveness and significance of Al-Baghdādī technique for the purpose of solving the problems as mentioned, and hence, reducing Qur'ān illiteracy rate among Muslims particularly in Malaysia.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study intends to answer the questions as follows:

1. What is the view regarding Qur'ān illiteracy among Muslim youth?
2. What is Al-Baghdādī teaching technique?
3. How effective is Al- Baghdādī teaching technique practised by Al-Baghdādī Learning Centre, Seksyen 7, Shah Alam?
4. What is the result from the case study of Al-Baghdādī Learning Centre, Seksyen 7, Shah Alam?

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This proposed study attempts to achieve the following objectives:

1. To study problem of the Qur'ān illiteracy among the Muslim youth.
2. To explore Al-Baghdādī teaching technique for Qur'ān recitation.
3. To evaluate the effectiveness of Al-Baghdādī teaching technique practised by Al-Baghdādī Learning Centre, Seksyen 7, Shah Alam,

4. To analyse data collection on Al-Baghdādī teaching technique practised by Al-Baghdādī Learning Centre, Seksyen 7, Shah Alam.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The researcher aims at conducting this study in light of the proposed title, “Al-Baghdādī Teaching Technique for Qur’ān Recitation: A Case Study of Al-Baghdādī Learning Centre, Seksyen 7, Shah Alam, Selangor.” This study is deemed important as it is believed to be able to call attention to the problem of Qur’ān illiteracy among Muslims especially younger generations so that Muslim societies can take a more proactive role in preventing and combating the phenomenon.

1.6 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Al-Baghdādī technique is claimed as the latest technique for Qur’ān teaching which has been used widely across Malaysia due to its effectiveness and innovativeness. The technique is believed to help solve Qur’ān illiteracy problem in the Muslim world. This study is therefore deemed important to investigate if the assertion is strongly well-grounded or otherwise.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research adopts both qualitative and quantitative methods of research:

1. Analytical method:

This study will conduct a critical analysis on the divine book, the Qur’ān, by focusing on the discussion of Qur’ān illiteracy problem and its potential solutions. Besides, this study will identify other primary sources, documented data and published works such as *tāfsīr* and *hadīth* of Prophet

Muhammad (SAW) which emphasise the importance of Qur'ān learning and recitation, as well as the consequences of being neglectful of acquiring Qur'ānic knowledge.

2. Quantitative research methods:

This study carries out a survey among students of Al-Baghdādī Learning Centre in Seksyen 7, Shah Alam, Selangor in regard to their general perceptions on Qur'ān illiteracy problem and their view of Al-Baghdādī Qur'ān teaching technique. The survey will be conducted through a questionnaire distributed to the students for the purpose of collecting relevant information that can provide and ascertain the best answer to each research question.

3. Interview

Primary data will be collected through an interview with the founder of Al-Baghdādī Teaching Technique which shall be conducted in accordance with certain guidelines and regulated protocols.

1.8 LITERATURE REVIEW

The researcher has surveyed the database of a few higher learning institutions in Malaysia and found out that no one has yet written about Al-Baghdādī Qur'ānic teaching technique in great detail.

CHAPTER TWO

QUR'ĀN ILLITERACY AMONG MUSLIM YOUTH

2.1 THE UNDERSTANDING OF READING

Education aims to produce literate individuals. Thus one of the main aspects that should be considered is reading skill, which is considered a huge topic, potentially beset with myriad difficulties not easily addressed in a book of this length.¹

According to Brindley, “Reading is a complex area. We can use the term to mean the process itself, or a response to literary text. It can mean the retrieval of information in a non-literary text, or take on wider meaning like ‘reading the situation.’” Reading is not confined to printed materials. It is central to the debate about meaning and the construction of the reader. It is linked to issues of standards in education, and to one of the functions of education itself – the production of a literate society. Reading is the process of constructing meaning from written texts. It is a complex skill requiring the coordination of a number of interrelated sources of information.²

Reading is a way to master a language. However, to be competent at reading skill, it needs an appropriate teaching and learning methods. These methods should parallel with the culture and nature of the language itself. Thus, it seems like reading skill emphasises three main aspects such as approaches, methods, and techniques to generate the theory of effective reading skill. The most important factors that lead to

¹ Geoff Dean, *Teaching Reading in Secondary Schools*, (London: David Fulton Publishers, 2000), 21.

² Brindley S., *Introduction in Teaching English*, (London: Open University Press), 35.

further understanding of a language start from the teaching and learning method of reading.³

Self motivation is not meant to “win” but to improve one’s weaknesses so that one would be able to succeed and meet all the challenges. An important characteristic of a good reader who is well-versed in Qur’ān recitation, is the ability to recite the Qur’ān with the application of proper basic and intermediate *tajwid* rules.

2.2 DEFINITIONS OF QUR’ĀN ILLITERACY

The “Qur’ān” is the arabic word means speech (*Kalam*) of Allah which He revealed to Muhammad SAW in wording and meaning, and which has been preserved in the *mushafs*, and has reached us by *mutawatir* transmissions, and is a challenge to mankind to produce something similar to it.⁴

The Qur’ān describes itself in various places throughout its verses as the word of Allah. Since it is originated from the Divine Source, Allah who is the creator of the entire universe, the entire Qur’ān in wording or meaning, are transcendental in nature. Muhammad SAW is not the author of the Qur’ān. He was the last Messenger upon whom Allah has revealed the Qur’ān. As a Messenger, he was entrusted to deliver its universal messages and teachings to humanity.

The Qur’ān is a complete source for Muslim around the globe. Linguistically, Qur’ān means ‘read’, the word which originates from the Arabic word Qira’ah which means a combination of letters and words that produces speech.

The Qur’ān states the importance of itself as the guidance of life in one of the verses:

³ Yahya Othman, *Mengajar Membaca: Teori dan Aplikasi Panduan Meningkatkan Kemahiran Mengajar Membaca*, (Pahang: PTS Publications & Distributors Sdn. Bhd, 2004).

⁴ Al-Zarqani, *Manahil al-Irfan fi Ulum al-Quran*, (Mesir: Dar Haya’ Al-Kutub ‘Arabiah, 1953), 19.

إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِي لِلَّتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمُ وَيُبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا كَبِيرًا (٩)

Indeed, this Qur'ān guides to that which is most suitable and gives good tidings to the believers who do righteous deeds that they will have a great reward. [Al-Isra: 9]

Besides, Prophet Muḥammad SAW encourages Muslims to read, learn, and understand the Qur'ān. It is a book of guidance and a revelation that contains knowledge and free from error or changes till the end of the day as promised by Allah. Therefore, Muslim needs to learn, understand the Qur'ān and its knowledge. The Qur'ān contains lessons and guidance for humanity that help them face material and moral crises by providing principles and complete guidance. Thus, Muslim is obliged (farḍu 'ain) to read and understand the Qur'ān in the right way as the Prophet Muḥammad SAW and his companions preached to the mankind.

It was narrated from Aishah that the Messenger of Allah (SAW) said:

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَتْ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - "الْمَاهِرُ بِالْقُرْآنِ مَعَ السَّفَرَةِ الْكِرَامِ الْبَرَّةِ وَالَّذِي يَقْرَأُهُ يَتَتَعْتَعُ فِيهِ وَهُوَ عَلَيْهِ شَاقٌّ لَهُ أَجْرَانِ اثْنَانِ"

"The one who is proficient with the Qur'ān will be with the noble and righteous scribes (the angels), and the one who reads it and stumbles over it, finding it difficult, will have a double reward."⁵

That is to say, the Qur'ān is the comprehensive guidance covering all aspects of human life that can help people encounter different types of obstacles and persevere through hard times. Man who lives without being guided by the Qur'ān will get caught up in various problems, and hence yields a forfeited life.

Allah mentions in the Qur'ān:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ (٩)

⁵ Abī al-Husain Muslim ibn al-Hajjāj al-Qusyairi al-Naysābūrī, *Sahih Muslim*, ed Muḥammad Tām, (Qāherah: Dar al-Hadis, 2010), 241.

“Indeed, it is We who sent down the Qur’ān and indeed, We will be its guardian.”

While in a hadith, Uthman bin Affan reported: The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said, “The best of you are those who learn the Qur’ān and teach it.” Source: Sahih Bukhari 4739.

The Qur’ānic method of learning and understanding is divided into five elements such as reading, writing, memorising, understanding, and appreciating. These elements help and improve the process of understanding whatever contains in the Qur’ān.⁶

The Oxford Encyclopaedic English Dictionary defines “illiterate” as unable to read and uneducated.⁷ Thus, the word “Qur’ān illiterate” means someone who does not know how to read the Qur’ān and even recognise the letters of Arabic alphabet, as well as the pronunciation of the letters. Moreover, they are less likely to have any knowledge about the rules of Qur’ān recitation.

Reciting the Qur’ān even without understanding, is already considered a virtue in Islam. Muslims who try to read the Qur’ān with sincerity, even though with difficulty due to the lack of recitation skill, will be honoured by Allah.

Qur’ān illiteracy in our community is uncertain. According to the survey conducted by Mohd Abbas Bin Abdul Latiff and Farihatun Nadia Binti Yusof, on the fluency in Qur’ān recitation,⁸ majority of the respondents recited the Qur’ān moderately 55.6%. While students who could read the Qur’ān beautifully were 39.4% and a small group from the respondents carrying 5.1% represented those who were

⁶ Maimunah Ismail, *Kemahiran Membaca al- Qur’ān Di Kalangan Pelajar Tingkatan Satu Di Sebuah Sekolah Di Daerah Gombak: Satu Kajian kes*, (Master Tesis, Sarjana Universiti Malaya, 1995).

⁷ *The Oxford Encyclopedic English Dictionary*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).

⁸ Mohd. Abbas Bin Abdul Latiff & Farihatun Nadia Binti Yaacob, *Persepsi Pelajar Terhadap Program, Membudayakan Al- Qur’ān Dalam Meningkatkan Tahap Keupayaan Pembacaan Al- Qur’ān Mengikut Hukum Tajwīd. Satu kajian di SMK Dato Bentara Luar*. Fakulti Pendidikan. Laporan Projek Ijazah Sarjana Muda. (Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, 2000)