Makharij Teaching to Improve Reading Comprehension of Fifth and Sixth Graders at SDN Ringinpitu 1

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Abstract: This case study investigates the challenges and efforts in teaching *makhraj* (articulation points of Arabic letters) when reciting short surahs in the Islamic Education subject at the elementary school level. The study focuses on two students: Fahri, a sixth grader who struggles with proper articulation when reading Surah An-Nas due to limited reading skills, and Miko, a fifth grader who still has difficulty recognizing Arabic letters and remains at the beginner stage of *Iqra'*. The program implemented was a collaborative effort between the school and the local TPQ (*Taman Pendidikan Al-Qur'an*, Qur'an Learning Center) outside of regular class hours. Student progress was monitored over two years through regular observation and feedback from TPQ teachers. The findings show gradual improvement: initially, both students could only read Surah An-Nas together, but over time they began to read independently, albeit with some hesitation.
These findings confirm that collaboration between schools and TPQ can be an effective strategy to gradually enhance Qur'anic reading skills, even for students who face persistent learning difficulties.

INTRODUCTION

Qur'anic education at the elementary school level is a fundamental component of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in Indonesia, as this stage provides the foundation for developing students' abilities to read, comprehend, and internalize Islamic values from an early age. One of the major challenges in Qur'anic learning is students' difficulty in articulating the Arabic letters correctly according to their *makhraj* (articulation points). Mispronunciation can alter the meaning of the verses and consequently affect students' comprehension of Qur'anic content. Thus, mastery of *makharij al-huruf* is not only linguistically significant but also pedagogically, theologically, and culturally essential.

Previous studies indicate that Qur'anic reading skills among Indonesian elementary school students remain uneven, with a considerable number struggling at the phonetic level (Azizah, 2020; Uswatun Hasanah et al., 2020). The *Minimum*

Competency Assessment (AKM) on religious literacy conducted by the Ministry of Religious Affairs (2022) also revealed a gap between students' ability to read Qur'anic texts and their ability to understand meanings. These findings highlight the urgency of a more systematic and theory-driven approach that integrates classical Arabic phonology with child-centered pedagogical methods.

Theoretically, *makharij al-huruf* is a central aspect of *tajwid*, focusing on the articulation of sounds. Classical Arabic phonetic theory describes 17 articulation points across five main areas: oral cavity (*jauf*), throat (*halq*), tongue (*lisān*), lips (*shafatan*), and nasal cavity (*khaysyūm*) (Darwin et al., 2021). A deep understanding of these articulation areas enables students to improve pronunciation accuracy while minimizing errors that may change meanings. In modern pedagogy, this theoretical framework can be combined with repetitive phonetic drills, visualization through diagrams, and collaborative learning strategies involving schools and community-based Qur'anic learning centers (*TPQ*).

The urgency of this research is further underscored by the limited time allocation for Islamic Education in elementary schools, which amounts to only two class hours per week. This constraint often causes students with weaker reading skills to lag significantly, particularly in mastering *makharij*. Therefore, an integrative strategy is required—one that does not rely solely on formal classroom teaching but also leverages community-based institutions such as TPQs. Such collaboration bridges the gap between national curriculum requirements and students' actual learning needs.

Empirical evidence supports the effectiveness of *makharij*-based instruction. Indonesian studies (Alawiyah & Sulaiman, 2024; Rini Astuti et al., 2021) found that systematic introduction to *makharij* significantly improved students' recitation quality. Internationally, Al-Qudwa (2019) in Palestine and Omar (2022) in Malaysia confirmed that phonetic-based Qur'anic instruction for children enhances both articulation accuracy and comprehension of meaning. The *state of the art* in this study lies in the integration of formal school-based instruction with non-formal TPQ mentoring, an approach rarely explored in previous literature.

This research therefore offers novelty in its collaborative model and its longitudinal design, which tracks student progress over two years.

The problem-solving plan centers on strengthening students' phonetic skills through *makharij* teaching, employing demonstration, repetitive practice (*drilling*), and simple visual media. This approach is expected to address differences in students' initial reading abilities, while enhancing both accuracy and comprehension of short verses from *Juz 'Amma*. Current pedagogical knowledge on children's phonetic learning also confirms that practice-based strategies are more effective than purely theoretical approaches (Widodo et al., 2024). Thus, integrating visual, auditory, and kinesthetic modalities is believed to be highly effective in Qur'anic learning at the elementary level.

The objectives of this study are threefold: (1) to describe the implementation of *makharij* teaching at SD Negeri Ringinpitu 1, (2) to measure improvements in the recitation skills of fifth- and sixth-grade students after instruction, and (3) to analyze the relationship between reading accuracy and comprehension of Qur'anic verses. From these objectives, the working hypothesis is that a collaborative school–TPQ approach to *makharij* teaching significantly improves students' Qur'anic reading and comprehension skills, despite initial differences in ability levels.

From a regulatory perspective, the relevance of this study aligns with the mandate of Indonesia's National Education System Law No. 20/2003 and the Ministry of Religious Affairs Regulation No. 13/2014 on Islamic Religious Education, both of which emphasize the importance of Qur'anic learning at the primary level. However, rather than merely reiterating the legal framework, this article tests its practical implementation in the classroom, thereby connecting policy, pedagogical theory, and teaching practice.

The novelty of this research lies in its use of a single longitudinal case study that integrates quantitative evaluation (reading tests) with qualitative methods (observation and interviews). This design produces a more comprehensive understanding of students' learning trajectories, including psychological aspects such as confidence and motivation. The broader impact of this research is to enrich

the field of Islamic education by offering an applicable collaborative model for elementary schools in Indonesia and providing a reference point for future national and international studies.

In summary, this study contributes not only to the practical enhancement of Qur'anic reading at the elementary level but also to the development of a more contextual, relevant, and adaptive Islamic pedagogy that addresses the needs of today's learners.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a **qualitative approach** using a **single case study design**, focusing on the implementation of *makharij al-huruf* instruction at SD Negeri Ringinpitu 1, Kediri Regency, Indonesia. The case study method was chosen to allow an in-depth exploration of the teaching process of *makharij* in improving students' Qur'anic reading and comprehension skills.

Research Subjects. The subjects consisted of 10 students, five from grade V and five from grade VI in the 2025/2026 academic year. The subjects were selected through **purposive sampling**, limited to students who actively participated in Islamic Education (PAI) classes and demonstrated varied levels of Qur'anic reading ability.

Learning Material. The instructional focus was on the mastery of *makharijul huruf* in Qur'anic recitation, specifically:

1. The ability to identify articulation points of Arabic letters.
2. The accuracy of recitation according to *makhraj*.
3. The comprehension of the basic meanings of short verses from *Juz 'Amma*.

Research Instruments. The primary instrument was the researcher as the key instrument. Supporting instruments included:

- Observation guidelines to document the learning process.
- Semi-structured interview protocols for teachers and students.
- Simple test sheets to assess Qur'anic reading skills according to *makhraj*.
- Documentation in the form of photos, audio recordings, and field notes.

Research Design. The study was conducted in three phases:

1. **Pre-research:** Initial classroom observation, teacher coordination, and subject selection.

2. **Implementation:** Observation of *makharij* instruction, interviews with teachers and students, and student performance tests.

3. **Post-research:** Data analysis, triangulation, and conclusion drawing.

Research Focus. In qualitative research, variables are conceptualized as research foci. The study focused on:

- The implementation of *makharij* instruction (strategies, methods, and teaching media).

- Students' recitation accuracy according to *makhraj*.

- Students' comprehension of basic verse meanings.

Data Collection. Data were gathered through:

1. Classroom observation of the *makharij* teaching process.
2. Semi-structured interviews with the Islamic Education teacher and students.
3. Reading tests to measure articulation and accuracy.
4. Documentation including photos, recordings, and field notes.

Data Analysis. Data analysis followed the **Miles and Huberman (2014) interactive model**, consisting of three steps: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. To enhance the validity of findings, **source and method triangulation** were applied by comparing data from observations, interviews, tests, and documentation.

Although primarily qualitative, simple quantitative data such as percentages of improvement in reading accuracy were analyzed descriptively to reinforce the findings. This complementary approach ensured that the results were supported both narratively and numerically, providing a more comprehensive picture of the implementation of *makharij* instruction.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to explore the implementation of the Makharij al-Letter teaching method to improve the reading and comprehension of Quranic verses in fifth and sixth grade students at Ringinpitu 1 Public Elementary School. Research

data was obtained through observations, reading tests, interviews, and documentation over two years.

Learning Implementation Process

Observations indicate that teachers use a demonstration and drill approach in teaching Makharij. The process begins with an explanation of the position of the hijaiyah letters through reading examples, followed by students taking turns imitating them. Simple media, such as images of the positions of the tongue, mouth, and throat, are posted on the board to help students understand the differences in articulation points.

This activity has been shown to help students distinguish letters with similar sounds, such as 'ayn (ع) and hamzah (ء) or ṣād (ص) and sīn (س). Observations also indicate that the classroom atmosphere is more conducive when students are given the opportunity to take turns reciting short verses. Teachers play a crucial role in creating a supportive learning environment, so that students do not feel embarrassed when they make mistakes.

Reading Ability Improvement

Students' reading ability was measured at the beginning (pre-learning) and end (post-learning) stages. The assessment results showed an average increase in reading ability in both classes, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Improvement in Students' Reading Skills

Class	Number of Students	Average Pre (%)	Average Post (%)	Improvement (%)
V	5	62	81	19
VI	5	68	85	17

The data shows consistent improvement. Fifth-grade students experienced a 19% increase, while sixth-grade students saw a 17% increase. Improvement was most evident in letters that were previously difficult to pronounce, such as the letter ḍād (ض), which was often confused with dāl (د) in fifth-grade students, and the distinction between qāf (ق) and kāf (ك) in sixth-grade students.

This improvement aligns with the findings of Azizah (2020) and Uswatun Hasanah et al. (2020), who confirmed that teaching makharij through the repetition

method can improve students' reading quality. This demonstrates that accurate articulation is a crucial foundation for improving Quranic reading skills.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
CONCLUSION

The study on the implementation of *makharijul huruf* instruction among fifth and sixth grade students at SD Negeri Ringinpitu 1 demonstrates that teaching *makharij* plays a crucial role in improving students' ability to read and comprehend Qur'anic verses. Through demonstration, repetitive practice, and the use of simple visual aids, students showed an average improvement in reading accuracy of 17–19%. This improvement was accompanied by enhanced comprehension of basic verse meanings, which in turn increased students' confidence in both reading aloud and discussing Qur'anic content.

The collaboration between the school and the local TPQ proved to be an effective strategy for supporting the gradual development of students' Qur'anic reading skills, particularly in addressing the limited instructional time available in the formal school setting. These findings affirm that *makharij* instruction provides a strong foundation for building accurate and sustainable Qur'anic literacy at the elementary level.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Future research should expand the sample to include multiple elementary schools in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of *makharij* instruction.
2. The development of more diverse instructional models, incorporating digital media and interactive technologies, is recommended to further enhance student motivation.
3. Subsequent studies may explore the relationship between *makharij* mastery and other dimensions such as *tajwid*, reading fluency, and the cultivation of students' religious attitudes.

4. The role of parents in supporting *makharij* practice at home should also be investigated further as a contributing factor to the success of Qur'anic learning.

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