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ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

Implementation of the *Tahfidzul Kutub* Method of Alfiyah Ibnu Malik in Improving Students' Nahwu Understanding

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the implementation of the Tahfidzul Kutub method in memorizing the book Alfiyah Ibnu Malik to improve students' understanding of Arabic grammar (nahwu) at Darul Muta'alimin Islamic Boarding School, as well as to identify its supporting and inhibiting factors. This research employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive study design. Data were collected through participatory observation, in-depth interviews with the head of the boarding school, teachers (ustadz), and students, as well as documentation. Data analysis used the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data validity was ensured through source and technique triangulation. The results show that the implementation of the Tahfidzul Kutub method is carried out through systematic stages: talaqqi/bandongan (teacher-led reading), memorization (tikrar), submission (sorogan), review (muroja'ah), and periodic evaluation. This method has proven effective in improving students' understanding of nahwu, as reflected in their increased ability to memorize verses, read classical Islamic texts (kitab kuning), and analyze sentence structures (i'rab) up to the analytical level in Bloom's taxonomy. Supporting factors include a conducive boarding school environment and the competence of the teachers, while inhibiting factors include differences in cognitive abilities and students' consistency in conducting muroja'ah.

Keywords: Tahfidzul Kutub, Alfiyah Ibnu Malik, Understanding of Nahwu, Salafiyah Islamic Boarding School.



ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis implementasi metode Tahfidzul Kutub kitab Alfiah Ibnu Malik dalam meningkatkan pemahaman ilmu nahwu santri di Pondok Pesantren Darul Muta'alimin, serta mengidentifikasi faktor pendukung dan penghambatnya. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis studi deskriptif. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi partisipatif, wawancara mendalam dengan pimpinan pesantren, ustadz, dan santri, serta dokumentasi. Analisis data menggunakan model interaktif Miles dan Huberman, meliputi reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Keabsahan data dijamin melalui triangulasi sumber dan teknik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa implementasi metode Tahfidzul Kutub dilaksanakan melalui tahapan sistematis: talaqqi/bandongan, hafalan (tikrar), setoran (sorogan), muroja'ah, dan evaluasi berkala. Metode ini terbukti efektif meningkatkan pemahaman nahwu santri, yang tercermin dari peningkatan kemampuan menghafal bait, membaca kitab kuning, dan menganalisis struktur kalimat (i'rab) hingga tingkat analisis dalam taksonomi Bloom. Faktor pendukung meliputi lingkungan boarding system yang kondusif dan kompetensi ustadz, sementara faktor penghambat meliputi perbedaan kemampuan kognitif dan konsistensi muroja'ah santri.

Kata Kunci: Implementasi, Tahfidzul Kutub, Alfiah Ibnu Malik, Pemahaman Nahwu, Pondok Pesantren Salafiyah.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Pesantren (Islamic boarding schools) constitute the oldest Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia, playing a central role in preserving classical Islamic scholarship. One of the fundamental branches of knowledge is the science of nahwu (Arabic grammar), which serves as the key to understanding Arabic texts, including the Qur'an, Hadith, and classical Islamic literature (Fauzi, 2021). As emphasized by Shaykh Al-Imrithi, the science of nahwu deserves to be studied first because Arabic without nahwu cannot be properly understood (Al-Imrithi, 2022). Mastery of nahwu is an absolute requirement for students (santri) to be able to interpret classical texts (*kitab kuning*) accurately and avoid falling into interpretations based on personal desires (Nugroho & Hasanah, 2023).

However, in practice, many santri experience difficulties in understanding the abstract and theoretical concepts of nahwu. Learning that tends to be textual and lacking in applicative context often leads to boredom and low learning interest (Abdullah, 2022). This challenge is further compounded by the use of the book Alfiah Ibnu Malik, a poetic composition (nazham) consisting of one thousand verses that systematically summarizes nahwu rules (Ibnu Malik, 2020). Although it serves as a primary reference, the linguistic complexity of Alfiah often makes it difficult for santri to understand it deeply (Rahman & Siregar, 2024).

The gap between the reality of students' difficulties (das Sein) and the expectation of competent nahwu mastery (das Sollen) encourages pesantren to seek effective learning methods. Pondok Pesantren Darul Muta'alimin Sumber Agung implements the *Tahfidzul Kutub* method, a method of memorizing classical texts as a means of internalizing knowledge. This method aims not only to memorize the text but also to serve as an entry point for understanding its content and meaning

through repetition, study, and in-depth explanation from teachers (Yusuf, 2021). Preliminary research indicates indications of increased nahwu understanding among santri who follow this method (Zahid, 2023).

This research is important because it provides an overview of the relevance and effectiveness of traditional methods amidst the challenges of modern learning. Unlike previous studies that focused more on moral aspects (Saleh, 2025) or reading ability (Mudzakkir & Umam, 2022), this research comprehensively examines the implementation of the *Tahfidzul Kutub* method, learning outcomes, and the supporting and inhibiting factors. The objectives of this research are to analyze the implementation of the method, the results of improved nahwu understanding, and the factors that influence it at Pondok Pesantren Darul Muta'alimin. The hypothesis of this research is that the *Tahfidzul Kutub* method of Alfiyah Ibnu Malik is effective in improving students' understanding of nahwu.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive type. This approach was chosen because it aims to explore and understand in depth the process of implementing the *Tahfidzul Kutub* method in a natural setting without variable manipulation (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The research was conducted at Pondok Pesantren Darul Muta'alimin, Sumber Agung Village, Waysulan District, South Lampung Regency, from January to March 2026.

The research subjects were determined through purposive sampling, including: (1) the head of the pesantren as a key policy informant, (2) three ustadz (teachers) who teach the Alfiyah book, and (3) twelve Ulya-level santri who participate in the *tahfidz* program. Data collection techniques used participatory observation, where the researcher directly participated in learning activities; semi-structured in-depth interviews with flexible question guides; and documentation of the pesantren profile, activity schedules, student memorization data, and activity photographs.

Data analysis refers to the interactive model of Miles and Huberman (2014), including: (a) data reduction through selection and focusing of raw data, (b) data presentation in the form of descriptive narratives and tables, and (c) conclusion drawing and verification. Data validity was ensured through source triangulation (comparing information between informants), technique triangulation (comparing observational, interview, and documentation data), and member checks to ensure the alignment of the researcher's interpretation with the informants' intent.

3. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Based on the research results obtained through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation at Pondok Pesantren Darul Muta'alimin Sumber Agung, several findings were identified regarding the implementation of the *Tahfidzul Kutub* method of Alfiyah Ibnu Malik in improving students' understanding of nahwu. These findings are systematically presented in three sub-sections below, without including interpretation or theoretical discussion.

Implementation of the *Tahfidzul Kutub* Method of Alfiyah Ibnu Malik

This research found that the *Tahfidzul Kutub* method for the Alfiyah Ibnu Malik book is implemented through five systematic, structured, and continuous learning stages. These five stages are the result of identification from daily learning practices that take place at the pesantren.

Stage of *Talaqqi* and *Bandongan* (Initial Material Delivery), At this stage, the ustadz recites the verses of Alfiyah Ibnu Malik, translates them into Indonesian or Javanese (*makna gandul*), and explains the *nahwu* rules contained in each verse. Learning is conducted collectively where all santri listen, take notes, and provide meanings in their respective books. This stage serves as the initial foundation for students to understand Arabic language structure before entering the memorization stage.

Stage of *Tahfidz* (Memorization) with *Tikrar* Method (Repetition), After obtaining basic understanding, students enter the stage of memorizing verses gradually. The memorization process is conducted intensively, especially at night (8:00 PM - 10:00 PM), using repetition techniques (*tikrar*). Each student memorizes at least 2-4 new verses per day, then repeats them until they are truly memorized. This *tikrar* technique is applied both independently and in groups. Stage of Memorization Submission (*Sorogan*), Once memorization is considered sufficient, students submit their memorization individually to the ustadz. At this *Sorogan* stage, the ustadz provides correction on three aspects: (a) fluency of memorization, (b) accuracy of recitation (especially in terms of *tajwid* and *i'rab*), and (c) precision in remembering the order of verses. Memorization submission is conducted every morning after dawn prayer or after Maghrib prayer, depending on each student's schedule.

Stage of *Muroja'ah* (Memorization Review). *Muroja'ah* is the activity of regularly reviewing memorization that has been submitted, both independently and in groups. This activity is conducted every day after Asr prayer (3:30 PM - 4:30 PM) and before bedtime. *Muroja'ah* becomes an important component in maintaining the quality of students' memorization; without consistent *Muroja'ah*, memorization tends to be easily forgotten. The researcher observed that students who are disciplined in *Muroja'ah* show much better memorization retention compared to those who are not.

Stage of Periodic Evaluation. Evaluation is conducted periodically in two forms: (a) semester oral examinations that test students' memorization and understanding of Alfiyah verses, and (b) direct observation by ustadz of students' ability to apply *nahwu* rules when reading other classical texts. The evaluation results are used to determine grade promotion and the continuation of the *tahfidz* program.

The five stages above are integrated with other traditional pesantren learning methods such as *halaqah* (study circles) and small group discussions, so that the learning process is not partial but holistic, encompassing cognitive (knowledge), affective (attitude), and psychomotor (reading and memorization skills) aspects.

Learning Outcomes of the *Tahfidzul Kutub* Method in Improving Students' Understanding of Nahwu

Learning outcomes in this study were measured through three main indicators: (1) ability to memorize Alfiyah verses, (2) ability to read and understand classical texts (*kitab kuning*), and (3) ability to analyze Arabic sentence structure (*i'rab*). The findings show that the *Tahfidzul Kutub* method contributes positively to improving students' nahwu understanding on all three indicators.

Ability to Memorize Alfiyah Verses

Based on memorization submission data for the first trimester period (January-March 2026), from the 25 Ulya-level students who were the research subjects, memorization achievement showed the following distribution:

Table 1. Memorization Achievement of Ulya Level Students for January-March 2026 Period

Memorization Range (verses)	Number of Students	Percentage	Category
> 200 verses	8 students	32%	Very Fluent
170-200 verses	10 students	40%	Fluent
150-169 verses	5 students	20%	Sufficient
< 150 verses	2 students	8%	Insufficient
Total	25 students	100%	

Based on the table above, 18 students (72%) achieved the fluent to very fluent category with memorization achievement above 170 verses out of the target of 300 verses per trimester. A total of 5 students (20%) were in the sufficient category, and only 2 students (8%) were still in the insufficient category. This achievement indicates that the *tahfidz* method implemented is effective in encouraging students to achieve memorization targets gradually.

Additionally, historical data from the pesantren archives shows an increase in memorization achievement from year to year. In 2024, the average memorization achievement of students only reached 150 verses per trimester, while in 2025 it increased to 165 verses, and in the first trimester of 2026 it reached an average of 180 verses. This indicates a consistent improvement along with the strengthening of method implementation.

4. DISCUSSION

This research found that the implementation of the *Tahfidzul Kutub* method of Alfiyah Ibnu Malik at Pondok Pesantren Darul Muta'alimin is carried out systematically through five continuous stages. First, the *talaqqi* and *bandongan* stage, where the ustadz recites the Alfiyah text, translates it, and explains the nahwu rules. Second, the *tahfidz* (memorization) stage with the *tikrar* (repetition) method conducted intensively at night. Third, the memorization submission stage (*Sorogan*) individually to the ustadz for correction of fluency and accuracy. Fourth, the *Muroja'ah* (regular review) stage both independently and in groups to maintain memorization quality. Fifth, periodic evaluation through semester oral examinations.

The findings of this research reinforce behavioristic theory, where the *tikrar* (repetition) process functions as reinforcement that strengthens students' long-term memory (Skinner, 1957; in Lestari & Wijaya, 2023). This aligns with the research (Aditya Kurniawan Saleh, 2025) which found that memorization of Alfiyah not only improves academic ability but also shapes moral attitudes such as *tawadhu'* (humility) and sincerity. However, this research goes further by showing that the *Tahfidzul Kutub* method also encourages conceptual understanding to the analytical level, not just mechanical memorization.

The integration between *bandongan*, *Sorogan*, and *tahfidz* methods demonstrates an integrative learning model that combines teacher-centered and student-centered approaches. This is relevant to constructivist theory (Vygotsky, 1978), where students actively build knowledge through social interaction with ustadz and peers within the zone of proximal development (Puspita & Hidayat, 2024). This finding is also consistent with the research (Shidqi Mudzakkir et al., 2022) which reported that the Alfiyah memorization method at Tebuireng was able to improve the ability to read classical texts up to the interpretation level.

The results show a positive correlation between the intensity of *Muroja'ah* and the level of understanding, supporting the findings (Aulia Rahmi Nur Fadhilah, 2025) that the frequency of *Muroja'ah* has a positive and significant relationship with students' linguistic intelligence (contributing 71.5%). The practical implication is that the *Tahfidzul Kutub* method can serve as an effective learning model for pesantren education based on classical texts (*turats*). However, the limitation of this research lies in its focus on a single pesantren, so generalization must be done cautiously. Future research is advised to use mixed methods with a broader sample and test the effectiveness of this method through experimental design.

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings and discussion, it can be concluded that the implementation of the *Tahfidzul Kutub* method of Alfiyah Ibnu Malik at Pondok Pesantren Darul Muta'alimin is carried out systematically through the stages of *talaqqi/bandongan*, memorization (*tikrar*), submission (*Sorogan*), *Muroja'ah*, and periodic evaluation. This method has proven effective in improving students' understanding of nahwu, characterized by improved memorization ability, reading classical texts, and analyzing sentence structure up to the analysis cognitive level. The main supporting factors include the dormitory environment, ustadz competence, and schedule discipline, while inhibiting factors include differences in cognitive abilities and consistency of *Muroja'ah*. The development prospect of this research is the testing of the *Tahfidzul Kutub* method in the context of modern pesantren and its integration with digital technology.

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