

## Analysis of the use of the Miftah Lil Ulum Method in Learning the Kitab Kuning for Children

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### Abstract

As the oldest educational institution in Indonesia, one of the characteristics of Islamic boarding schools is the implementation of studies on Islamic religious sciences based on Arabic books compiled in the Middle Ages, better known as the kitab kuning (kutub at-turats). The Miftah Lil Ulum method is one of the many methods that offer the convenience of students to understand the contents of the kitab kuning. By providing interesting packaged material to be remembered by the students. In exploring the success of this method at the Diniyyah Raudlatus Shalihin madrasah, researchers used qualitative methods which intended to understand phenomena about what was experienced by research subjects, for example, behaviors, perceptions, motivations, and actions. This research seeks to reveal how Madrasah Diniyyah Raudlatus Shalihin teaches the Miftah Lil Ulum method as an alternative method of learning Arabic to understand the Kitab kuning.

**Keywords:** Child, Kitab Kuning, Method in Learning, Miftah lil ulum

### INTRODUCTION

Islamic boarding schools as classical Islamic educational institutions that still exist in Indonesia. Teaching and systems that are still simple offer a lot of hope for the concept of sound moral education. Even since its establishment, Islamic boarding schools have shown their role in spreading Islamic religion and science.

According to H.M Arifin, (240: 2000) defines Islamic boarding schools as an Islamic religious education institution that grows and is recognized by the surrounding community, with a boarding system where students receive religious education through a recitation system or madrasah which is entirely under the sovereignty of someone's leadership. Or several kyai with distinctive characteristics that are charismatic and independent in all respects.

Meanwhile, KH Imam Zarkasyi (4: 2009) defines Islamic boarding schools as Islamic educational institutions with a dormitory or boarding system, the Kyai as the central figure, the mosque as the centre of activity that animates it, and the teaching of Islam as the main activity followed by students under the guidance of the Kyai. Islamic boarding schools have the following functions: (1) Educational institutions that carry out the transfer of religious knowledge (*Tafaqquh fiddin*) and Islamic values, (2) Religious institutions that exercise social control, and (3) Religious institutions that carry out social engineering. One of how Islamic boarding schools carry out learning is by translating and understanding the contents of the *kitab kuning*, books or manuscripts of Islamic religious sciences from Arabic into Indonesian. This is done to facilitate the process of transferring religious knowledge by pesantren.

*Kitab kuning* is the primary literature exploring the main points of learning material in Islamic boarding schools. *Kitab kuning* in PMA No. 18 of 2014 concerning Islamic Boarding School academic units is an Arabic Islamic book that references the Islamic scientific tradition in Islamic boarding schools.

With the times, in understanding the contents of the *kitab kuning*, each Islamic boarding school has its method. Such as the *Amtsilati* method at the Matholiul Falah Islamic boarding school, Jepara, the *Tamyiz* Method at the Tukdana Indramayu Islamic Boarding School, and the *Miftah Lil Ulum* Method at the Sidogiri Islamic Boarding School, East Java. With so many methods of understanding the contents of the *kitab kuning*, the author has a strong interest in researching one of the *kitab kuning* learning methods, namely *Miftah Lil Ulum*. This method is considered attractive because this method has issued several books as a guide in studying it, and many educational institutions apply it.

The *Miftah Lil Ulum* method is learning to read the *kitab kuning* compiled by A. Qusairy. The effort to develop this method was a response to direct criticism from the public, who saw that the education system was experiencing a decline. One of the uniqueness of this method is the implementation of targets for new students or *santri*. One institution that has implemented and used the *Miftah Lil Ulum* method is Madrasah Diniyyah Raudlatus Sholihin Pejagoan, Kebumen. The madrasa is a madrasa that organizes primary salaf education. Materials and methods have much in common in pesantren. So that the *Miftah Lil Ulum* method helps make it easier for teachers to teach and understand the *kitab kuning*. Not only that, many graduates of Madrasah Diniyyah Raudlatus Sholihin are also accepted and recognized for their abilities by pesantren and madrasah because they have advantages in memorizing Nahwu and Shorof which are used as the basis for reading the *kitab kuning*.

## METHODS

In this study, researchers used a continuous descriptive research methodology approach continuity description which has the characteristics of qualitative research. Continual description research is descriptive research work carried out continuously on an object of research (Moh. Nazir, 2005: 56). So in researching the use of the *Miftah Lil Ulum* method in learning the *kitab kuning* at Madrasah Diniyyah Raudlatus Sholihin, researchers will conduct ongoing research and systematically describe the descriptions, facts and characteristics of existing phenomena.

Research approach on this study uses a descriptive approach. That is related to the description of research results in an objective and comprehensive manner. While the relation between the researcher and the topic (*subject matter*) is to make the researcher a co-creator of the course of the research, typically obtained through interviews (Suharsimi Arikunto, 1992: 84). Data Source uses field-work data source

That is information from several respondents, informants, events, situations and facts obtained from research objects in the field. Respondents came from school principals, teachers, caregivers, and students. Fieldwork data will be used as the primary source in this study (Soegiyono, 2009:35). Documentation to get information comes from library materials in the form of encyclopedias, books, and articles of scientific works published by mass media such as magazines, newspapers, scientific journals and research reports. Library data and documentation sources will be used as a starting point in understanding and analyzing the results of learning Arabic with the edutainment method. It is a data collection technique by collecting and analyzing documents, both written documents and graphic or electronic documents. This technique is used to view documents on the results of learning Arabic using the *Miftah Lil Ulum* method.

Data Analysis Technique data Collection Techniques to get accurate and reasonable data, researchers will take several ways, including. Observation is carried out to gain direct access to the object under study. So observation is used to see the teaching process in the classroom directly. Interview conversation between two or more people whose questions are posed by the researcher to the subject or group of subjects to be answered. In practice, interviews were conducted using a scheduled questionnaire or interview guide, where the interviewer brought guidelines that only outlined the matters to be asked. In this study, this interview was used to find more detailed data regarding teaching content. Data analysis is a continuous process with regularity patterns, explanations and proportions. In this cycle, the researcher begins to move with the components of data analysis and data collection during the process. Data reduction is made by clarifying similar data and coding. The description of the presentation of the data is carried out according to the subject matter.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *Kitab Kuning Study*

In terms of terminology, the term "*kitab*" comes from Arabic: *Kataaba (fi'il madhii) - Yaktubu (fi'il mudhori) - Kitaaban (masdar)*, which means: writing, book. Therefore the word "*kitab*" can be used in general for anything in the form of writing or books, both in Arabic and *Ajam* (other than Arabic). While the word "*kuning*" in the phrase "*kitab kuning*" indicates one of the types of colours, such as blue, red, black and others. The addition of colour elements to a noun, among other things, is intended to provide unique characteristics or criteria so that the noun can be more easily recognized and distinguished from similar objects, for example, a red car with a blue car. Both types of cars have differences in colour; one is red, and the other is blue. Etymologically, *kitab kuning* are books written by scholars printed on yellow paper. Among the Islamic boarding schools themselves, besides the term "*kitab kuning*", the term "classical book" is also circulating to refer to the same type of book. These books are generally not given a vowel/*syakl*, so they are often called "*kitab gundul*". Some call them "classical books" because of their long history since they were compiled/regulated until now (Ministry of Religion, Islamic Boarding Schools and Madrasah Diniyah, their growth and development, 2000, p. 32).

According to Zamakhsyari Dhofier and Nurclolish Madjid, the *kitab kuning* learning method includes the *sorogan* and *bandongan* methods. At the same time, Husein Muhammad added that, apart from the *wetonan* or *bandongan* method, and the *sorogan* method, the discussion method (*munadzarah*), evaluation method, and memorization method are also applied (Siradj, 2004:223). The definition of these methods are as follows:

#### 1) *Wetonan* or *Bandongan* Methods

This learning method usually occurs in one line (monologue). As an example the kyai reads, translates, and sometimes gives comments. At the same time, the santri or students listen attentively while noting the literal meaning and giving *i'rob* symbols (word positions in sentence structure). (Barizi, 2002:65).

Armai Arief reveals in his book that the *bandongan* method is that the cleric uses the local language, the kyai reads, translates, and explains sentence by sentence the book he is studying, and students carefully follow the explanation given by the

cleric by providing specific notes in their respective books with a code particular code so that the book is called the book of beards (*kitab jenggot*) because of the many notes that resemble the beard of a kyai (2002: 154).

#### 2) *Sorogan* Method

A *sorogan* method is a form of an assembly which is a request from one or several students to their kyai to be taught certain books, *sorogan* recitation is usually only given to students who are quite advanced, especially those who are interested in becoming kyai (Madjid, 1997: 28). Zamakhsyari Dhofier further explained that: The *sorogan* method is for a student to come to the teacher who will read a few lines of the Koran or Arabic books and translate word for word into a specific language which in turn students repeat and translate word for word as best they can maybe like what the teacher did (1994: 28).

#### 3) Discussion Method (*Munadzarah*)

The discussion method can be interpreted as solving a problem requiring several alternative answers that can approach the truth in teaching and learning (Arief, 2002:149-150). In this discussion forum or *munadarah*, the students usually start as students at the secondary level, discussing a case in everyday people's lives to then look for a solution. The santri do not only learn to map and solve a legal problem, but in the forum, the santri also learn democracy by respecting the plurality of opinions that appear in the forum (Nafi' et al, 2007:69).

#### 4) Memorizing Method

A technique used by an educator by calling on his students to memorize many words (*mufrodat*), or sentences or rules. This technique's purpose is for students to remember known lessons and train their cognition, memory and fantasy (Muhaimin, 1993:276). Memorization can also be interpreted as students' learning activities by memorizing a particular text under the guidance and supervision of a kyai or ustadz.

### **History of *al-Miftah lil Ulum***

It was explained in Bahron's research (2019: 26) that *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum* is the name of a method for learning to read classical books (*kitab kuning*) quickly and effectively, which was compiled by *Batartama* (*Badan Tarbiyah Wa Ta'lim Madrasy*) Sidogiri Islamic Boarding School. *Batartama*, as is already popular in the Sidogiri Islamic Boarding School, is the agency responsible for regulating the quality of the curriculum to the implementation system of education at the Sidogiri Islamic Boarding School, especially education at Miftahul Ulum Madrasah.

*Al-Miftah Lil Ulum* itself was compiled by a team chaired by Kyai Qusairy Ismail (one of the teacher's councils) as a response and answer to the arrival of direct instructions from Sidogiri Islamic Boarding School caretakers (KH.A.Nawawi Abdul Jalil), in this case viewing that the education system that existed at the Sidogiri Islamic Boarding School at that time experienced orientation degradation. This can be seen from the decrease in the value of student learning outcomes in *Imda* (*Imtihan Daudi*) or *kwartal*. So it is necessary to have the concept of *tajdid* (reform system) in strengthening the curriculum, strategy, and education system that can restore the enthusiasm and interest of students in studying at PPS.

The subjects at Madrasah Miftahul Ulum PPS (Sidogiri Islamic Boarding School) are in the form of *kitab kuning*. So what needs to be improved is the method

of reading the book. With this in mind, if the reading of the santri book is excellent and correct, God willing, the santri will find it easier to understand all the subjects. Because of that, a fast method was made to be able to read the *kitab kuning*, which was named *al-Miftah lil Ulum*.

The arrangement of the *al-Miftah Lil Ulum* method is in response to the great attention and concern of PPS caretakers for the students. So that the students can really master all the subjects and books taught in *ma'had*. Therefore, the caregiver appointed *Batartama (Badan Tarbiyah wa Ta'lim Madrasy)* as the person responsible for compiling the module, which consisted of four volumes equipped with *Nadzom* and *Tasyrif*. To test its product, PPS made an *I'dadiyah* tarbiyah madrasah as a place for implementing this method (Bahron; 2019: 34).

The advantage of the *al-Miftah lil Ulum* method is that it is simple, short and concise because it only has four volumes. The material still refers to the nahwu books, widely used in Islamic boarding schools in general, such as *Matan al-Ajurniyah*, *Nadhom al Imrithi*, and *Alfiyah*, so it does not introduce new languages and terms. No less important, the presentation of this book is set according to the character and needs of the child, in a fun colourful font, as a right brain stimulant, and packed with songs, such as "*Balonku, Indung-indung Kepala Indung, Sayonara*" etc. The target students are able to read the book *Fathul Qorib* with the *Nahwu-Sharaf* argument and memorize *Matan Taqrib*.

### Discussion in *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum*

The book of the *al-Miftah lil Ulum* method contains the motto "*Easy to learn to read the book*". The main goal is to give the mindset that learning the *kitab kuning* is easy and can be applied to children. Most of the material composition is adapted from the *Jurniyah* book and added some information from *Alfiyah Ibn Al-Malik* and *Nadzm Al'Imrity*. So, can be sure that this method does not change the terms or materials that are popular in Islamic boarding schools (Bahroon, 2019: 42)

There is a systematic formulation of material to find the form or position of certain words (*kalimah*). This can be seen in the main formula, namely *isim* and *fi'il*, such as the material table. The explanation is also conveyed in the form of a concise and concise description and is relevant to each example. For example, regarding letters, it is explained in the module that "*letters are words other than isim and fiil and do not have signs*". For example, the pronunciation of "في".

The material is delivered in Indonesian with simple and practical formulations, equipped with tables, schemes and training models. The cover design is also attractive, and the learning method combines songs suitable for children's ages.

As for more details, some of the methods used in the module are as follows;

#### a) Song Learning Method

To further strengthen the students' memory, the author uses the method of popular songs, such as the example song for the material above;

No	Name Song Al-Miftah	Song Orgin	Vocal/Ket
1	<i>Rukun Kalam</i>	<i>Aku yang dulu</i>	Tegar
The pillars of the kalam are divided into four, in the form of lafadz and in Arabic. You must be able to understand it			
Those are the pillars of kalam			

b) The 5-finger method

The 5-finger method is used when entering volume 2 material, which discusses most *fiil* sentences. In this five finger method, the material is presented that is easy to understand and memorize *dhomir*. Both in terms of *waqi'* and classification of *isim* forms.

c) *Takror* Method and Questions Answers

The *takror* method is used for students at the final level (*taqrib* class). In this method, students are asked to read the book *Fathul Qorib*, which does not have a harakat or position mark. Then students will be given questions about lafadz related to the material in volumes 1 - 4. Questions are allowed individually or in groups depending on the system that the teacher will teach.

d) Innovative Game Method

To provide a variety of complex nahwu learning systems in the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum* method, it is also permissible to use learning while playing the system. The games used are based on the material in volumes 1-4. Such as true-false games, nahwu whispers, stories about nahwu, and so on. But this kind of game depends on the innovation and creativity of the teacher.

### **Implementation of the *Miftah Lil Ulum* Method at Madrasah Diniyyah Raudlatus Shalihin**

In 1985 Hisny Thamrin founded the Roudlatus Shalihin Jemur Waqf Foundation while at the same time he was chairman of the foundation. This foundation accommodates mosques, prayer rooms, educational institutions (*MI*, *MTs*, *Diniyyah*) and others. Then in 1996, Husny Thamrin died, and the institution was a bit vacuum, but other activities were still running.

Furthermore, the foundation's leadership was continued by his deputy, H. Machasin. While Madrasah Diniyyah is held by Abdullah Mu'thi Hashona and Umar Hashona. For some reason, Abdullah Mu'thi lives in Pasuruan, resulting in less than optimal management. So the management was entirely handed over to Umar Hashona after graduating from the Sharia Faculty of IAIN Walisongo in 2000.

After a few years in 2008, the Madrasah Diniyyah was growing, and the TPQ teaching model was even developed. In the same year, Madrasah Diniyyah Raudlatus Shalihin received the help of a teacher assigned from PPS Sidogiri Pasuruan. Since then, Madrasah Diniyyah and TPQ Raudlatus Shalihin have applied the *Miftah lil Ulum* method to understand the *kitab kuning* concept. As time goes by, the public's interest in entrusting their children to the Diniyyah madrasah is increasing. So four years later, another teacher was added.

In the educational process between curriculum, teachers, students, objectives, methods, and evaluation are interrelated with one another, and they cannot be separated, as stated by Karti Suharto (2010: 35) that learning is a systematic effort in the process of designing, implementing, and evaluate the entire learning process. This follows the teaching and learning activities at the Madrasah Diniyyah Raudlatus Shalihin using the *al-Miftah lil Ulum* method.

In its application at Madrasah Diniyyah Raudlatus Shalihin the teacher makes a careful plan and then carries out learning by explaining the main points of discussion. Furthermore, the role of the santri is directly to practice *the al-Miftah lil*

*Ulum* method according to the current level and material. So the application of this method requires both ustadz and students to be active. So that there is a dialogic relationship between Ustadz and students and even with fellow students, this is important, considering that the material being studied is Arabic grammatical knowledge (*nahwu and sharraf*) which requires direct practice after understanding the material.

Santri activities in memorizing the material, using the method of singing and limb movements. These activities can result in changes to the condition of students. This follows the theory put forward by Darsono (2011: 23), according to which learning is a means and way of how a generation learns. Students who like and are popular with songs will automatically remember and memorize them quickly.

The following method is that the ustadz holds a question and answers directly to the students or asks Javanese questions between students. This practice is classified as an effective method to make it easier to understand the material as Winarno (2014: 17) argues that the question and answer method is a way of presenting lessons in the form of questions that must be answered. This activity can make students more sensitive, understand and memorize more quickly because of interaction.

After holding a question and answer session, the ustadz asked the students to practice directly by reading the book bald "*kitab gundul*" (without a vowel). Next, the students were asked to determine the type of sentence, the number (composition of the sentence) and the position of the sentence. This activity is routinely carried out to train students' memory and the ability of students to understand sentences in the *kitab kuning*.

At the final stage, the evaluation is carried out based on the indicators or conditions that the students have successfully achieved. The evaluation of the *kitab kuning* with the *al-Miftah lil Ulum* method is divided into two stages. *First*, the written test includes observation, memory, understanding and application. *Second*, the oral test, namely the practice of reading the *kitab kuning* with the accuracy of the reading, as well as the arguments for the *nahwiyah* and *sharfiyah*.

## CONCLUSION

From the description above, learning to read the *kitab kuning* using the *al-Miftah lil Ulum* method shows that there are tiered classes for mapping students' abilities. The precepts used by the Madrasah Diniyyah Roudlatus Sholihin include memorizing by singing, or asking and answering questions. After this method is carried out, the next step is the practice of reading the *kitab kuning* with the rules and material that has been memorized. The final stage carried out by the Diniyyah Roudlatus Sholihin madrasah is evaluation. Evaluation to measure the ability of students to read and apply *al-Miftah lil Ulum* material..

## Suggestion

For the implementation results to be well realized, the authors suggest holding pieces of training for other ustadz so that there is habituation to help practice the method. The training can be in the form of training in making learning media or developing methods with other theories. In addition, guardians of students should

also be part of the success of the method by participating in supervising and paying attention to the education of students both at madrasah and at home.

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