Al-Qur'an Literacy: A Strategy and Learning Steps in Improving Al-Qur'an Reading Skills through Action Research

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Abstract. There was an 11% increase in Qur'an illiteracy from 2015 to 2018 although Indonesia is a Muslim majority country. This fact sparks a question on the Islamic Education Studies (Pendidikan Agama Islam, PAI) implementation as a mandatory curriculum in Indonesia, which is still incapable of solving problems related to Qur'an illiteracy. This research was conducted in collaboration with several parties to designate practical steps aim at improving Al-Qur'an literacy in high school students in Bandung, West Java through an action research design 1,975 students. The research results suggest seven practical steps in solving Qur'an reading skills issues as critical reflections in improving students' Al-Qur'an reading skills. These steps are abbreviated into LITERAT, which summarizes the syntax in reading the Qur'an. Its implementation is proven to have significantly improved students' Qur'an reading skills. This research concludes that LITERAT is a relatively effective learning method in improving students' Qur'an literacy. This finding is believed to contribute to the succession of Qur'an illiteracy eradication in West Java.

Keywords: reciting skills; Qur'an; action research; learning method

1. Introduction

For Indonesia, as a country with the largest Muslim population globally (Adiong et al., 2018), the Qur'an reading skill is still relatively low. Similarly, Arifin (2017) found that 54% of the Indonesian Muslim community were categorized as Qur'an illiterate in 2015 in which the number rose to 65% in 2018 (Intan, 2018). Sadly, this figure did not decrease in 2021. Syafruddin, as the chairman of Yayasan Indonesia Mengaji (Foundation of Qur'an Recitation), as published in Republika news, reported that out of 87.2% (227 million Indonesian Muslims), only 35% of them

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could read the Qur'an, in meaning that 65% were categorized as not yet able to read Qur'an (Mukhtar, 2021; Roji, 2021). Seeing this fact, the West Java Provincial Government launched a literacy program in 2019 to improve Qur'an literacy (Lukihardianti, 2019). The low rate of Qur'an literacy, particularly in West Java, was a wake-up call since Islamic Education Studies (PAI) is a mandatory curriculum given primary to university levels. In Indonesia, the average time taken to complete elementary to high school is 12 years with 6-3-3 system (Mukminin et al., 2017, p. 37). Ironically, with such a long period, the PAI implementation has not yet succeeded in providing basic skills to Muslims in reading their holy book. Thus, it is essential to conduct practical steps to improving the students' Qur'an reading skill.

Research concerning efforts to improve the Qur'an reading skill has been reviewed. Hanafi et al., (2019) developed a Learning Management System (LMS) for Qur'an learning through E-BBQ (electronic information system BBQ or e-BBQ). frecTheir research suggested that the E-BBQ method was a learning innovation to solve traditional method, which was found ineffective. It concluded that E-BBQ was user-friendly and helpful for students and instructors as it improved Qur'an reading skills. In addition, Hanafi (2019) developed QURANI, an application media to teach Qur'an reading intended for deaf students. The findings suggested that there was a strong relationship between the use of media applications and students' reading skills. Furthermore, Taib et al. (2020) developed a learning media to accommodate *tajwid* teaching and learning of Surah Yasin. The findings suggested that there was an urgency to integrate traditional and modern learning systems aim at producing more effective and efficient teaching and learning system for Surah Yasin.

In contrast, this research was urged to improve the high school students' Qur'an reading skills in West Java by providing direct critical-reflective actions through the integration of traditional and modern learning systems. This is crucial because the strategies used to undermine the Qur'an reading inability have not yet been viewed successful in reducing Qur'an illiteracy rate. With the application of actions adapted to the current situations, it is possible to create new methods to diminish Qur'an reading inability (Supriyadi & Julia, 2019). Thus, this research seeks to find proper and fast steps in improving Qur'an reading skills and contributing to government's effort to eradicate Qur'an illiteracy. It is expected that the steps developed in this research can be implemented by teachers as alternative method to make students proficient in Qur'an reading.

2. Theoretical Framework

Islamic belief affirms that reading the Qur'an is an obligation (Shihab, 1994), which shows logical consequences for a Muslim to learn Arabic by understanding Qur'an (Nasier, 2018). For most non-Arabic students, reading the Qur'an is challenging due to lack of understanding of Arabic pronunciation (Zarif et al., 2014) and the potential of phonological interference that can change its meaning (Teh et al., 2012; Muhammad et al., 2012; Supriyadi et al., 2019). Therefore, mastering Qur'an reading, apart from the *tajwid* rules mastery, makes the phonetic rules in *al-ashwat* important (Adriana, 2017; Supriyadi et al., 2020).

In addition, the Arabic literacy tradition plays a pivotal role among Muslims in building Islamic knowledge (Romdhoni, 2012). Accordingly, a Muslim needs to master Arabic literacy, which conceptually goes beyond reading and writing.

Literacy is defined as the skill to access, digest, and use information intelligently (UNESCO, 2003). The reading culture growth is a construct to measure school and community members who are literate and use references in solving various life problems (Suherman et al., 2020). In accordance, the primary key to Qur'an literacy skills is Qur'an reading skill (Romdhoni, 2012).

Seen from the educational concept, there are three objectives of Qur'an learning: (1) Making students able to read the Qur'an properly and precisely, (2) Making reading Qur'an a habit, (3) Enriching the beautiful vocabulary and sentences that touch the heart (Yunus, 1990). Thus, improving students' Qur'an reading skill cannot be separated from six important references: the introduction of *hijaiyah* letters (the Arabic alphabet), precise pronunciation of *hijaiyah* letters, the forms and functions of punctuation marks, *waqf*, *qira'at*, *nagham*, and reading Qur'an ethics (Darajat, 2008).

In his hadith, the Prophet added that there are virtues for Muslims who learn and teach the Qur'an, which making them classified as decent human beings (Bukhori, 1992 no 5027). Moreover, people who are proficient in reading the Qur'an will be gathered together with the noble angels. Those who are not proficient in Qur'an reading due to difficulties yet still continue to learn it will get two rewards (see Shohih Mulism, 1998, No 244). In accordance, one of the keys to success in the learning process is motivation development through rewards. The Prophet hadiths represent how Islam gives high appreciation to people who learn and teach the Qur'an as a motivation form.

3. Method
3.1 Design
Action Research (AR) was employed to explore practical problems to find solutions (Creswell, 2002) to solve issues in Qur'an reading skill since the basic action research concept is to find solutions of each problem through steps of critical reflection. Also, AR is used in solving problems in the pedagogic field (Gibbs et al., 2017; Niemi, 2018). Using this AR design, researchers investigated issues related to students' Qur'an reading skills, and then take a series of actions to formulate solutions to these problems.

3.2 Collaboration Aspect
Collaboration as a distinctive feature of AR design (Bruce et al., 2011) was done in this research. In building collaborations, this research referred to Heil's (2005) method by announcing what was needed and who had an interest in this project. Thus collaborations were done between the researchers and nine PAI teachers in Bandung. Their role is to ensure the students follow a series of actions and evaluate the results of the actions while contributing to formulating indicators of Qur'an reading ability. In addition, three lecturers with different expertise: an Arabic language expert, an expert in learning media, and a PAI expert, were

involved. A collaborative team consisting of prospective PAI teachers was formed to assist a series of actions given in this research. Teachers and lecturers were involved in formulating indicators of the Qur'an reading skills and steps of action plans through focus group discussions, which are presented below:

Table 1: The formulation of Qur'an reading skill levels developed by Supriyadi & Julia (2019)

No	Level	Indicators	Category
1	Beginner	a. Unable to recognize *hijaiyah* letters (Arabic alphabets) with single *syakal* (punctuation) b. Able to read separately yet still mistake one for another c. Able to read different *hijaiyah* letters but unable to read cursive letters	Not yet able to read
2	Elementary	a. Able to read cursive *hijaiyah* letters consisting of three to four letters b. Able to read cursive *hijaiyah* letters yet the still mispronounce one for another c. Slow and stuttering reading rhythm	Not yet able to read
3	Intermediate	a. A proper reading of cursive *hijaiyah* letters b. The relatively fluent reading rhythm of reading is c. Frequent tajwid mistakes	Not yet able to read
4	Advanced	a. Able to read Qur'an verses fluently and correctly b. Correct pronunciation of Qur'an letters c. Correct application of *tajwid* but only knows a little about the theory of *tajwid*	Able to read
5	Proficient	a. Meeting the indicators of advanced level b. Understand and can explain *tajwid* theories c. Reading the Qur'an with rhythm	Able to read

Table 1 shows that each level was intended to determine the necessary treatments with indicators used as a reference in formulating which treatment to be given. The categories developed above are the results of assessed indicators.

3.3 Description of Research Subjects and Site
This research involved 1,975 students from three high schools in Bandung, West Java Province. These schools were selected based on several criteria: being accredited A-grade (excellent) and located in the Greater Bandung. From each region, criteria were set for schools, including favorite schools that were of interest to many people and/or pilot schools.

3.4 Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected by through a survey, semi-structured interviews and observations. The survey was conducted to explore the subjects' experiences and motivations in Qur'an learning and their skills before treatments seen from the subjects' perspectives. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews were conducted to collect and deepen the data obtained from the survey, while observation was done to collect data related to the students' responses and attitudes during the implementation of treatments to understand self-practice and allow treatment development (Chiu et al., 2016; Lin et al., 2016).

3.5 Materials

This research utilized several information technology tools concerning the health protocols during the COVID-19 pandemic. Google Docs used to collect survey data (Brigham, 2014; Lin et al., 2016), which was self-made. Furthermore, Zoom was used as it is practical and popular during pandemic (Kohnke & Moorhouse, 2020; Nadezhda, 2020) for the interview and giving treatment.

3.6 Research Procedures

Three major procedures were executed in seven cycles. First, pre-treatment analysis and evaluation was done by analyzing low Qur'an reading skill by carrying out pre-treatment analysis based on the problems faced by students in Qur'an reading. Second, implementation of actions were done by giving treatments by implementing the designed action plan. Third, post-treatment analysis was carried out by evaluating the results of the treatments given. This developed procedures were done in the implementation action specified in seven stages.

4. Result

4.1 Pre-treatment Analysis and Evaluation

At this step, students' Qur'an reading difficulties were mapped through a questionnaire distributed virtually by PAI teachers. The Guttman scale was used to poll 1,975 students about their Qur'an experience and learning capacity, and their future Qur'an reading goals.

The polling showed that 1,882 students (95.29%) had learned to read the Qur'an completely. In semi-structured interviews with 30 students from three schools, they learned the Qur'an using the *Iqra* method from volumes 1 to 6. The *Iqra* method is a method of reading that the Qur'an is commonly used in Indonesia from kindergarten to elementary school (Humam, 2000) until today.

However, only 1,685 students (85.31%) were declared fluent in reading the Qur'an, while 290 (14.69%) were not fluent in Qur'an reading. There were 197 (9.98%) students who learned Qur'an reading but were not fluent. This can be due to a lack of interest in learning or unclear evaluation standards (Lieberman & Pointer Mace, 2008). Meanwhile, 93 (4.70%) students learned Qur'an reading but did not finish it. As a result, their Qur'an reading skill needs to be tested since their statements were personals.

Moreover, 1,288 students (65.21%) said their schools obliged them to read the Qur'an, but was not supported by the program's implementation. Learning to read Qur'an was not given specifically since the teacher only conduct the class based on the schedule of materials contained in the curriculum. This is based on a statement that 1,576 students (79.79%) stated that they did not receive a specific Qur'an learning program at school. There were only 399 (20.21%) students who received a specific Qur'an reading program at school. This fact generated concerns that schools were not taking Qur'an literacy for Indonesian Muslims seriously enough, and this demonstrated a lack of precise management in achieving Qur'an literacy. We could not demand the students to have proper Qur'an reading skill when they did not get specific Qur'an learning program.

To support our presumption, we conducted semi-structured interviews with school principals and PAI teachers. The three school principals were asked about the West Java Provincial Government's program to eradicate Qur'an illiteracy and the steps being taken. Principals (*Kepala Sekolah*, referred to as KS) 1, 2, and 3 recognized the program by explaining their implementations. The first KS required students to read the Qur'an 5-10 minutes before class. The second KS designed a program for each student to read the Qur'an in their neighborhood with PAI teacher assigned for the implementation and monitoring. Third KS gave PAI teachers complete authority. Hence, it can be inferred that schools improving students' Qur'an reading skill by habituation, collaboration with non-formal educational institutions, and assigning tasks to PAI teachers.

Then, we interviewed three PAI teachers from three different schools about their efforts to assess students' Qur'an reading skills and the teaching programs at schools. Three of them said the school did not hold an entrance test to determine students' skills to read Al-Qur'an as it was done in elementary to junior high school levels. One said that if students could not read the Qur'an yet, they should take a Qur'an reading course. They also agreed that teaching the Qur'an was still done with curriculum-based materials. They also assumed that their students can read the Qur'an, since many places where the Qur'an is taught are nearby the students' homes. Also, reading Qur'an is an issue in elementary school. After identifying the students' experience and Qur'an reading skills, a survey was conducted by asking the students to rate the statements based on their motivation to learn more about Qur'an reading.

The results showed that students' believed that the Qur'an learning in their schools was not helpful. Those who can read the Qur'an fluently learned to read it fluently outside of school, which mostly takes one to two years. This is reasonable because the cognitive development of students at every level of education affects the length of language acquisition (Hakimzadeh et al., 2021; Thompson, 2021; Wijnands et al., 2021). In addition, most students agreed that reading the Qur'an is a requirement for a Muslim and understanding the Qur'an is the first step towards applying its messages (Rahman et al., 2017; Supriyadi et al., 2020). Also, most students agreed that they needed to improve Qur'an reading skills by spending extra learning time outside school hours.

Based on the result of pre-treatment analysis, several results are identified below:

1. Several Qur'an reading tests needed to conducted, since there were statement inconsistencies of students' claim. Furthermore, students said that their school did not organize intensive programs in eradicating Qur'an illiteracy propelled the urge to recheck their Qur'an reading skill.
2. Based on the students' perspective, *Iqro* method was the standard of learning completeness. Someone is categorized to have completed the learning process if she/he has finished *Iqro* up to level 6. However, those claiming to have completed the process were still not fluent in reading the Qur'an.
3. There was a presumption that high school students must have been able to read the Qur'an because they studied it since the elementary level and there were many places that organized reading Qur'an nearby their house.

4.2 Implementations of Actions

Based on the findings above, the researchers and the collaborative team formulated critical steps to ensure the students' Qur'an reading ability. The results produce seven stages, under the LITERAT acronym (L=Listening, I=Investigation, T=Tutoring, E=Eradication, R=Reinforcement, A=Adaptation, and T=Test) by involving critical-reflective and practical steps. These seven stages are presented as follows:

Stage 1. Mapping the Students' Skills

During this stage, students' Qur'an reading skill was tested through Surah al-Fatihah and three randomly selected verses from Surah al-Baqarah. The test results related to students' Qur'an reading skills is presented in Table 2, which use indicators formulated in Table 1.

Table 2: Pre-Test Results

No	Level	Number	Percentage
1	Beginner	307	15.54%
2	Elementary	599	30.33%
3	Intermediate	673	34.08%
4	Advance	344	17.42%
5	Proficient	52	2.63%
Total Students		**1,975**	**100%**

Table 2 shows that only 396 students could read the Qur'an. The remaining 1,579 students (79.85%) could not yet read the Qur'an. The test results show nearly all student claims of skills and fluency in Qur'an reading, and undermining the teachers' assumptions about the student skills that were not supported by data. Hence, materials and strategies were designed for the next stage to increase students' Qur'an reading skills.

Stage 2. Designing Learning Materials

In this stage, teaching materials were compiled to provide treatments based on the investigation of student's skills. The minimum standard that students must achieve was the advanced level. Meanwhile, the students of the advanced level was required to achieve the proficient level.

Book Contents

Teaching materials were compiled into two books. Book 1 was intended to improve the students' skills to the advanced level. The Book 1 contents is presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Contents of Book 1

Level	Materials	Objective	Number of Meeting
Beginner	Proper and correct pronunciation of the sounds of separate and cursive letters of the Qur'an consisting of 3 to 5 letters for each word according to punctuation marks	To pronounce both separate and cursive letters in the Qur'an correctly	6
Elementary	Reading cursive letters of the Qur'an while reading prolonging letters, reading *laam qamariyya and shamsiyya.*	Distinguishing short and long readings, such as *laam qamariyya and shamsiyya*	4
Intermediate	Reading the rules of *nun sakinah* or *tanwin* which includes *izhar, idgham, ikhfa* and *iqlab* as well as the rules *mim sakinah*. Also reading *mim* and *nun* with *tasydid.*	Practicing the reading of *nun sakinah* or *tanwin*, *mim Sakinah*, and correct reading of *min* and *nun* with *tasydid.*	4

Book 2 was intended for advanced students to provide additional material on tajwid and the art of reading the Qur'an. Also, an Android app called Learn Quran Tajwid (LQT) was used to teach *tajwid* theories.
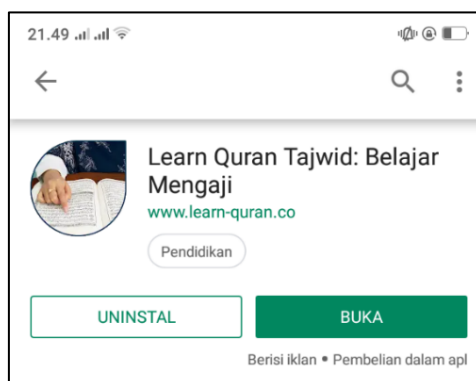
Figure 1: Learn Qur'an Tajwid Application

The Nahawand song was selected as the song material in Qur'an reading due to its allegro rhythm style, which is charming, interesting, and exciting (Munir, 1997). To make the learning process easier, the melody of the Nahawand song was arranged in form of a score sheet as shown in Figure 2:

Figure 2: Nahawand Melody

In Islam, it is recommended to read the Qur'an with a melodious voice, for example, زَيِّنُوا الْقُرْآنَ بِأَصْوَاتِكُمْ meaning "*adorn the Qur'an with your voices*" (H.R Ahmad, 2001 no 18994; Nasa'i, 1995 no 1024) and لَيْسَ مِنَّا مَنْ لَمْ يَتَغَنَّ بِالْقُرْآنِ meaning "*Whoever does not recite Qur'an in a nice voice, he is not from us*" (H.R. Ahmad, 2001 no 1512; Dawud, 1994 no 1469). The contents of Book 2 is presented in Table 4:

Table 4: Contents of Book 2

Level	Materials	Objective	Number of Meeting
Advance	Comprehension on the theory of *tajwid* and one form of *murottal* melody.	Able to mention the *tajwid* and practice songs in Nahawand	4

Learning Strategy

The teaching materials consist of (1) classical learning using aforementioned books suitable for the students and discussing one material per week and (2) peer tutoring learning strategies was done three times a week for 15-20 minutes to review instructor materials. Peer tutors were advanced or proficient students. The ratio of tutors to students was designed based on their initial skills level, with 1:5 for beginners and 1:10 for elementary and intermediate levels. Thus, the next stage was selecting and training the prospective tutors.

Stage 3. Selecting and Training Prospective Tutors

There were 396 students from the advanced and proficient levels trained to be tutors. Advanced students needed to master *tajwid* theories and song melodies, and students at the proficient level concentrated on strengthening. After all prospective tutors were proficient, they would need to master the materials in Book 1 to understand their roles as tutors.

The training of prospective tutors was carried out virtually using Zoom, which was divided into mastering the *tajwid* theories and mastering the song. At the first stage, the students were asked to apply Learn Qur'an Tajwid (LQT) to understand comprehensive subject material, covering the nature of the letters, various types of *waqf*, the rules of reading *nun sakinah* or *tanwin*, the rules of *mim sakinah* and more materials. This process was undergone in four meetings for two hours of meeting each week. To reinforce what they had learned, each student at the

proficient level formed a small discussion group of seven students with advanced students. A college student was employed to assist this reinforcement by monitoring five to six groups, and responsible for reporting the progress to the PAI teacher in each school.

In the stage of mastering the songs melody, students listened to samples of melodies with lyrics from the instructor and then repeated after them. A piano was played to assist and stimulate students' sense of musicality to facilitate the melody transformation process. After mastering the melody presented in Figure 2, students were guided to apply the melody in Qur'an reading. This stage was done in two meetings for 1.5 hours of a meeting. In every stage, several tests were given to these students. The *tajwid* test was in the form of questions, the melody application test in Qur'an reading was done by practicing the song in Qur'an reading and its recordings were sent via Google Classroom.

The findings showed that 371 students fulfilled the requirement to become tutors because of their mastery of *tajwid* theory and song melody. This involvement makes them knowledgeable on how to use Book 1. This also indicated an increase in ability from the advanced level to the proficient level of 319 students (92.73%) from 344 students (100%). In other words, the number of students who were at the proficient level increased to 371 (18.79%).

Stage 4. Conducting Treatment for Eradicating Qur'an Illiteracy
In this stage, a number of 1,579 students at the category *not yet able to read the Qur'an* were given treatments using Book 1. Classically, each level was focusing on mastering the sounds of the *hijaiyah* letters. Treatments were given at each level at a different time in a virtual classroom using Zoom. PAI teachers helped facilitate and coordinate the treatment implementation.

Association and transliteration methods were employed to master *hijaiyah* letters and sounds. The association method was done by resembling the letters based on the object shapes, e.g., the letters س and ش were associated to a toothbrush, letters ص and ض were associated to a scoop. In addition, it was done by associating them with the sound forms, e.g., the sound of the letter ح as in the pronunciation of "hug". The transliteration method refers to the guidelines issued by the Kementrian Agama (1987), for example the letter ث with "ts", and ش with "sy". In its implementation, these methods were inseparable as part of the treatments. The materials were combined with eight punctuation marks or *harakat,* such as *fathah* (َ) which reads /a/, *kasrah* (ِ) which reads /i/, *dammah* (ُ) which reads /u/, *tanwin* (ً) which reads /an/, (ٍ) which reads /in/, and (ٌ) which reads /un/, and the punctuation of *sukun* (ْ) or *tasydid* (ّ). These materials were classically delivered in six meetings for the beginner students.

The materials complexity was increased in form of reading cursive *hijaiyyah* letters, starting from three letters to six letters, combined with eight punctuation marks. After mastering the cursive letters, the material was upgraded into distinguishing long and short sounds. Long sounds consisted of 2-6 beats along with their characteristics, for example the presence of prolonging letters such as ا,و,ي with *sukun* as the *harakat*

These materials were delivered in four meetings for elementary level students with classical method. Next, the materials were upgraded to how to read the rules of *nun sakinah* or *tanwin* followed by other *hijaiyah* letters, *mim sakinah* followed by other *hijaiyah* letters, and *mim* and *nun* with *tasydid*. These materials were learned in four meetings and delivered to intermediate students.

Following the mastery of materials given classically in every meeting, a repetition program was conducted through assistance from peer tutors. They provided assistance for students as a form of reinforcement by completing the exercises in the book. This program organized after students completed all the lessons under PAI teachers supervision. Due to extra attention needed, one tutor assisted five to seven students at the beginner level. As for the other groups, one tutor assisted ten students. This activities were carried virtually using Zoom three times a week before the next classical meeting.

Stage 5. Conducting Reinforcement by PAI Teachers during PAI Lesson
This stage was conducted by collaborating with PAI teachers to carry out repetition materials to review the letters sounds, the sound lengths, and cursive letter mastery. To reinforce those aspects, the teacher initiated a habituation program as long as 5 -10 minutes before the PAI lesson began.

For the record, the letters in red are the letters that are not changed, while the letters in black can be replaced with other letters such as the letters خ, ح, ج, ث, ت, etc. that was performed with a melody. This is an central aspect in the learning process because the melody of a song can facilitate to recall the knowledge learned in the past (Konantz, 2012). The melody is presented in Figure 3:

Figure 3: Melody with the pattern of the letter *ba*

Additionally, the PAI teachers took other reinforcement action by appointing students to read one verse of the Qur'an related to the material delivered. This was also intended to obtain the information of students' Qur'an reading ability.

Stage 6. Creating Habituation of Reading Qur'an Culture at School
This stage has aim at building a culture of reading and listening to the Qur'an, since the previous stage results that emphasized the importance of a supportive learning environment of Qur'an reading, and provided stimulation and habituation for the students'. It is in accordance with Sofyan & Hosna (2019) who affirmed that Qur'an reading had impact on students' readiness in receiving materials. Therefore, the students were habituated to read the Qur'an 10 minutes before the learning process began led by students of advanced level in each class. Based on the observation results, this process continued naturally so that a culture of Qur'an reading grew in every class.

Stage 7. Evaluating Post-treatment Activity
In this stage, a total of 1,579 students were given a number of tests to measure their Qur'an reading skills by testing the transliterating of Qur'an reading and reading practice. The test instruments referred to those used in the first stage of the action implementation. The first test was collected in Google Classroom and the second test was carried virtually.

The findings showed that there was an improvement in students' Qur'an reading skills after given the treatment. This was marked by an increase of 1,462 students who succeeded in advancing to the advanced level. However, there were still 44 students who were able to level up but still had not reached the level of being able to read the Qur'an who were initially at the beginner level, 54 students who were initially at the elementary level, and 19 students from the intermediate level. In addition, 61 students did not show any improvement, which means after given treatment, they were still at the same level.

After investigating this issue, the results were due to internet network problems (29 students) and absenteeism (32 students). Apart from this lack of seriousness and motivation of the students concerned, the students failure was also influenced by technical problems so the students could participate well.

4.3 Post-Treatment Analysis
Overall, the results of the post-treatment showed an improvement in students' Qur'an reading skill, in which its visualization is presented in Figure 5 below.
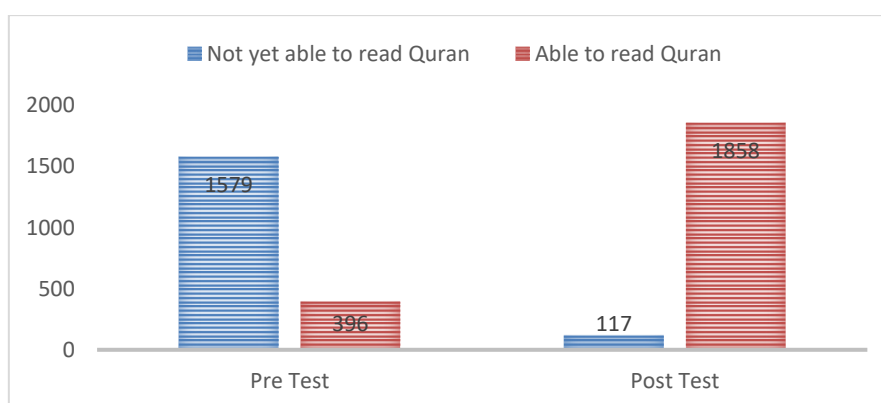

Figure 5. Comparison of Pre-Test and Post-Test Results

Figure 5 depicts that based on the comparison of pre-test and post-test results, a series of treatments given to the students were proven to significantly boost students' Qur'an reading skills. This is indicated by an increase in the number of students totaling 1,858 students (94.07%) who were able to read Qur'an in the post-test treatment. In other words, the seven treatment stages, namely LITERAT, were able to improve the students' Qur'an reading skills by 73.57%.

5. Discussion and Conclusion
This research presents a new understanding that improving students' Qur'an reading skills properly and correctly does not necessarily take a long time. This research shows that students who had hardly skill to read the Qur'an did not take

years to have a minimum standard skill in Qur'an reading. Within 16 weeks, the students' skills improved significantly.

According to Mssraty & Faryadi (2012), students' low literacy in reading the Qur'an was due to the implementation of traditional ways of teaching. The weakness of the traditional learning system lies in the limited time and teachers, when in fact teachers have a pivotal role (Hanafi et al., 2019). However, any learning systems, both traditional and modern, have their strengths and weaknesses (As'ad, 2018; Chilmi, 2015). Thus, this research presents a new strategy in Qur'an learning by combining traditional and modern systems to compensate any weaknesses of each learning method. In addition, the problem of Qur'an reading inability is closely related to the teacher professionalism in teaching. They tend to opt for hassle-free and process (Supriyadi et al., 2019), unaware of the complex process entailing their professional learning involving them cognitively and emotionally, requiring their ability and willingness, and the reading and actions to make improvement (Avalos, 2011).

In accordance, teachers need to continue reflecting themselves and striving to improve the learning quality, and also understanding teaching and learning styles. This means that teachers must be fully aware if the current learning steps taken in the learning process have not shown satisfactory results, hence it is necessary to design innovative and futuristic models, since the learning model can also be interpreted as an approach to deal adaptively and generatively with changes in student behavior (Alsarayreh, 2021; Bahri et al., 2021). Furthermore, a learning model can also assist students in attaining learning objectives (Sánchez-Cabrero et al., 2021; Tamur et al., 2021). The teachers' skills to develop learning models implies that they are also required to have literacy skills, as Kosasih et al. (2021) and Taja et al. (2021) studied how teacher learning is researched and propose or discuss models of teacher professional learning.

This research essentially presents empirical evidence that students' poor Qur'an reading skill was caused by the lack of attention from educational institutions, when in fact that Qur'an reading skill is a basic crucial skill for a Muslim to have. Also, the Qur'an learning method at the previous education level has not been able to assist students to read the Qur'an properly and correctly.

Through a series of critical-reflective treatments, along with a collaborative process between researchers, colleagues, high-achieving college students, PAI teachers and school principals, students who were categorized *not yet able to read the Qur'an* could improve their skills. The treatments to improve Qur'an reading skills were carried out in seven stages, LITERAT (L=Listening, I=Investigation, T=Tutoring, E=Eradication, R=Reinforcement, A=Adaptation, and T=Test). These seven stages were proven to have improved the students' Qur'an reading skills by 73.57%. Therefore, we recommend the government of West Java and other regions in Indonesia to implement this series of treatment to eradicate Qur'an illiteracy. This method is believed to help the succession of government program, support Qur'an learning programs at schools and help students swiftly improve their Qur'an reading skills.

6. Limitation

This research merely focuses on solving issues of Qur'an reading at high school level in Bandung area. Therefore, this research is recommended to be developed further on other focuses, such as memorizing the Qur'an, teaching rhythm in reading the Qur'an at the same level of education, and more.

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8. References

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