The Application of the Qur'anic Sign Language Method

Khodijah Fitria Nurullah¹
¹Institut Daarul Qur’an Jakarta. E-mail: khodijahfitria2001@gmail.com

Article History:
Received: 18-07-2024
Revised: 27-07-2024
Accepted: 28-07-2024

Abstract: The development of the Al-Qur'an sign language in Indonesia is based on the Arabic sign language. This writing aims to describe the method of translating the Indonesian Al-Qur'an into sign language, which is currently developing and transforming into the Kitabah Method and Recitation Method. This method has enabled Indonesian People with Hearing and Speech Sensory Disabilities (PDSRW) to be able to read and understand (communicate) the meanings and intentions of the Al-Qur'an, hadith and other Islamic teachings so that they have an essential role in strengthening spiritual and religious ties. Data collection uses qualitative research methods in the form of library research or library research using the Tahlili method, which is extracted and sourced from various libraries. This research shows that the Al-Qur'an sign language, Kitabah method and Tilawah method can make it easier for Indonesian PDSRW people to understand the Al-Qur'an. However, standardization is still needed to facilitate access to PDSRW.

Keywords: deaf speech, PDSRW, sign language, Al-Qur'an.

Introduction
Sign language is known as movement language (Isma, 2018; Potter et al., 2013; Siregar et al., 2021). The Indonesian Language Congress (2018) defines signing as using the hands, arms and head to make a sign (Sultan et al., 2022). Body language is a general term used to identify communication signals, gestures, signals and other body signs in communicating unspoken information about identity, relationships, thoughts, moods, motivations and desires (Setiamy & Deliani, 2019).

The Egyptian Islamic Law Research Center, Darul Ifta' Al-Mishriyah (Egyptian Fatwa Institute), has stated that sign language is a language that allows Persons with Deaf and Speech Sensory Disabilities (PDSRW) to understand religious issues and symbols, and this must be done by understanding the meanings of the Al-Qur'an as the primary source of Sharia (nuonline, 2023). Translating the Al-Qur'an into sign language to help PDSRW understand its meanings and intentions is permitted. It is not a problem for someone to translate the Al-Qur'an into sign language for people in need; this is a very commendable act and is part of the da'wah of conveying the teachings and laws of Allah in the Al-Qur'an (Khoirunnisa et al., 2023).

According to Shaikh Nawawi, in the book Kasyifatus, sign language is the only language that can help PDSRW understand the laws in the Al-Qur'an. This makes it possible to convey God’s laws in the Al-Qur'an, so translating it is not only recommended but mandatory. "So it is obligatory to help the weak, even for a fee.” (Zuhr, 2018).

In the case of Arab Muslims PDSRW, Arabic sign language is used to read the Al-Qur'an by signing letter by letter in the Al-Qur'an. PDSRW Arab Muslims do not put punctuation or harakat when referring to the Al-Qur'an. Because linguistically, they know how to read the indicated words. However, it is different from in Indonesia, where the majority of Indonesian Muslim PDSRW do not understand Arabic. So, the Arabic sign language method for learning the Al-Qur'an can be to sign only the hijaiyah letters in the Al-Qur'an without knowing the actual reading. The development of the Al-Qur'an sign language in Indonesia transformed, so it developed in various methods. The methods currently being developed are the Kitabah method and the Tilawah method.

ICECOMB: JOURNAL OF MULTI-DISCIPLINES SCIENCE
this research discusses the development of the transformation of the distribution of the *Al-Qur'an* sign language in this method (Pentashihan et al., 2015).

Various research has been carried out on the Islamic language of the *Al-Qur'an*. Research by Faradisya & Sopandi (2019) discusses efforts to improve abilities by recognizing hijaiyah letters using *Arabic* Sign Language. Furthermore, research by Eka Oktavia et al. (2023) discusses the application of Hijaiyah Letter Signs in improving the ability to read the *Al-Qur'an* for deaf children. Meanwhile, research on translating the Indonesian sign language of the *Al-Qur'an*, which is currently developing and transforming into the *Kitabah* method and *Tilawah* method, is still limited. This research is needed to provide an overview to the community to enable Indonesian People with Hearing and Speech Sensory Disabilities (PDSRW) to be able to read and understand (communicate) the meaning and intent of the *Al-Qur'an*, hadith and other Islamic teachings so that they have an essential role in strengthening ties and religious.

**Method**

This research uses qualitative methods. The research approach was carried out descriptively using written or spoken words and the observed people's behaviour (Mubarok et al., 2024; Zahira et al., 2022). A descriptive approach explains the Indonesian *Al-Qur'an* sign language translation method, which is currently developing and transforming into the *Kitabah* and *Tilawah* methods (Afda et al., 2023; Fatmawati, 2019). Furthermore, the data in the study was obtained using a library approach. The study was also discussed using a method called tahlili which was compiled, explored, clarified and sourced from various libraries, credible journals, and personal documents (Rokim, 2017).

**Results and Discussion**

**Qur'anic Sign Language**

*Arabic* sign interaction only focuses on two forms of words, nouns or adjectives, which function in explaining a situation around or describing an object or subject and even in expressing one's feelings about something. Meanwhile, *Arabic* sign language in verbs functions to help convey an action, activity or event in communication (Khoirunnisa et al., 2023). *Sign Arabic* begins with learning the *Hijaiyah* letters. *Hijaiyah* letters are key to learning sign *Arabic* (Huda, 2019). In essence, there are 29 hijaiyah letters. The *Hijaiyah* letters are a part of the Arabic language, which is used as the main language in the *Al-Qur'an* and *Hadith* (Huda, 2019). Therefore, the method of learning signed Arabic is close to the method of learning Arabic in general. The sign approach refers to Arabic alphabet signs as standard hijaiyah letter signs with components of the hand as the performer, place/space, and movement.

Learning *Al-Qur'an* sign language has four stages (Pamungkas et al., 2023): introduction of sign hijaiyah letters. It was second, parsing and arranging letters. Third, read and memorize the *Al-Qur'an*. Fourth, rewrite the verses of the Koran that have been memorized. As an illustration, the introduction of Hijaiyah letters and how to string letters or read the *Al-Qur'an* can be seen in Figure 1.
In the Guidelines for Reading Al-Qur’an Signs for PDSRW published by the Department of Religion, it is stated that two methods are used for Al-Qur’an sign language in Indonesia, namely the Kitabah method and the Tilawah method. Each method has its own rules without reducing the value and meaning of the Al-Qur’an verses that are read (Tim PDSRW, 2022).

First, the Kitabah method is a sign system based on writing or the book. They are, namely, every letter, barakat, and punctuation is indicated as written in the Indonesian Standard Mushaf. In hinting at the letters of the Al-Qur’an, a pause is needed between words so that the letters being hinted at are not connected as a whole so as not to confuse the meaning. Tajwid laws such as ikhfa’ (vague), idzhar (clear), idgham (buzzing), iqlab (entering), qalqalah (bounce) and others, which are commonly applied in the reading of the Al-Qur’an that people hear (reading with sound), not implemented in this method. In other words, PDSRW only refers to the writings in the mushaf.

Second, the Tilawah method spells out letter by letter and the barakat and punctuation marks through finger and hand movements according to pronouncing them by following the indicated laws of recitation and recitation. This recitation method is almost the same as the Kitabah method; only the output reference emphasizes the laws of recitation and recitation as far as that may be implied.
One concrete example of the difference between the methods of Kitabah and Tilawah is the sign of the letter lam in words containing al-syamsiyah. The letter lam does not appear in the sign reading using the recitation method. This is because the recitation method emphasizes the laws of recitation and tajwid. As is known, the lam letters in al-syamsiyah will merge and be replaced with the tasydid did letters, which fall after them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO</th>
<th>CONTOH</th>
<th>KITABAH</th>
<th>TILAWAH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Awal ayat</td>
<td>Al-rahumani</td>
<td>Al-rahumani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Akhir ayat</td>
<td>Al-alamin</td>
<td>Al-alamin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Alif lam</td>
<td>Ihidnas-sirata</td>
<td>Ihidnas-sirata</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2 Example of the difference between the Kitabah and Tilawah methods.

Problems of Learning Qur’anic Sign Language

Measuring fluency in reading the Al-Qur’an is done by measuring the time needed to complete a verse or letter in the Al-Qur’an and the number of errors in reading punctuation marks and words (accuracy and automaticity), articulating hijaiyah letters and words correctly. Moreover, eloquence and mistakes do not follow the rules of recitation (Zarif et al., 2014). In this case, fluency in reading the Al-Qur’an for PDSRW is defined as including two aspects, namely accuracy and automaticity, while ignoring the third aspect, namely expression.

The results of research conducted by Pentashihan et al. (2015) regarding the articulation abilities of PDSRW children show that the majority of vowel and consonant sounds in Arabic spoken by PDSRW children need to be more clearly articulated, making them difficult. Among the sounds with unclear articulation are apicoalveolar consonants, which consist of {z, r, s, ch}, pharyngal consonants, which consist of {غ, خ}, apicointerdental consonants, which consist of {ث, د, ج}, uvular consonants which consist of {ل}, dorsovelar consonants consisting of {ك, غ, خ}, and also labiodental consonants, namely the sound {ف}. Meanwhile, in vowel sounds, it occurs in most short vowel sounds (kasrah). Apart from that, PDSRW still cannot understand the long vowel sounds (mad), barakat sukun (dje) and tasydid.

Research conducted by Al Musawi et al. (2019) shows that PDSRW needs help mastering the middle hamzah’s written form. However, the most common errors indicate a general tendency...
to follow the phonological route of phoneme-graphene conversion when spelling. Their ignorance of the rules governing hamzah is also evident, as a higher percentage of errors occur in spelling low-frequency words despite following the standard spelling rules of hamzah.

Application of Al-Qur’an Sign Language in Indonesia

The use of Al-Qur’an sign language in 12 institutions or sign communities in Indonesia based on writing (Kitabah) is used only to show the writing of the letters of the Al-Qur’an without accompanying sounds. Two institutions that consistently use it are Iqro’ Deaf (Taskimalaya) and Jati Wangi Deaf House (Majalengka). Initially these two communities adopted The Little Hijabi, but later the sign system was developed and harmonized with the reading (Tilawati). The Al-Qur’an sign language used by three other institutions, namely Majlis Taklim Deaf Indonesia (Jakarta), TPQ Asy-Syakur (Kediri) and SLB-YPAC (Aceh) is still conventional and has not been specifically formulated, highlighting the varied levels of adoption and formulation among different institutions (Jaeni et al., 2021).

Darul Ashom Islamic Boarding School and Jamhariyah Islamic Boarding School. Both use the same sign system and have a path for using Al-Qur’an signs, as in Taif, Saudi Arabia. Gestures are used without being accompanied by the sound of reading the Al-Qur’an. Using signs only to indicate letter by letter of the Al-Qur’an is not without reason. The reason is that the majority of PDSRW prefer simple things. If they read the Koran using punctuation marks and must obey the rules of tajwid, it is seen as making it difficult and worrying that they will not want to read and interact with it. This is why the Darul Ashom Islamic Boarding School and Jamhariyah Islamic Boarding School only practices teaching the Al-Qur’an using letter signs. The level of success in learning the Al-Qur’an using the signs these two institutions apply is quite successful. Students or Santri, apart from reading and memorising the signs of the Al-Qur’an, can also write verse by verse of the Al-Qur’an (Pamungkas et al., 2023).

While signs are based on reading (Tilawati), which develops a sign system combined with harakat and other punctuation marks, each institution has various concepts and experiences. The research results (Jaeni et al., 2021) describe the Iqro’ Deaf Community and the Jatiwangi Deaf Community, two relatively new communities trying to create a sign system that can be used with reading. The equipment in the harakat provided by Rumah Tuli Jatiwangi and Iqro’ Deaf Community aims to help PDSRW who can still use oral medication. However, oral use is only as a support for those who still can do so. For those who do not have oral skills, just signing is enough. To make adapting to the oral language easier, letters written but not read (maktub gairu manţuç) are not implied, such as al-syamsiyah and several other laws. Apart from that, tanwin is a punctuation mark that is not indicated.

Another institution that also uses silent reading is Ibtisamah Mulia. The difference between the two previous institutions is in using harakat and sbakal. Ibtisamah Mulia has adopted harakat and other punctuation marks in the sign system, referring to the system that Wasle Hijabi has developed. This institution is quite active in developing Al-Qur’an literacy media, so it has become a reference for various deaf institutions and communities in Indonesia (Jaeni et al., 2021).

Using sign systems to indicate vowels and other punctuation marks varies between institutions. Some are limited in use, and some are complete. Our Learning House Banjarmasin uses a complete signal system (Apriani, 2022). He underwent the talahi process for seven months. This is one of the Qur’anic sign systems that have direct continuity from deaf figures in Mecca, which is different from the sign system obtained from the Taif area, Saudi Arabia, which is applied at the Darul Ashom Islamic Boarding School and the Jambariyah Islamic Boarding School, Yogyakarta. Using complete signs for all the rules for reading the Al-Qur’an in Our Learning House is not without reason. Everyone who reads the Al-Qur’an must fulfil all letter rights, including those related to reading and tajwid laws. Likewise, the Al-Qur’an must have signs for all punctuation marks and reading laws (Jaeni et al., 2021).
PDSRW considers the use of *Al-Qur'an* sign language in all its diverse forms more accessible. The convenience is because there is no demand or obligation to make sounds, which is their biggest obstacle (Permanarian & Anastasia, 2010). With *Al-Qur'an* signs, all PDSRW of all levels of deafness do not experience significant obstacles because sign language is a language that reflects their culture and identity. Reading the *Al-Qur'an* with sign language is like reading in their own culture, so it is more accessible and more practical (Gumilang, 2018). However, this diversity is a problem for communities that still need to choose. They still need to be convinced of the truth or validity of the *Al-Qur'an* instructions developed by several institutions. This diversity implies the absence of a correct standard for reading the Koran with signs because it is still subjective. Moreover, according to Nur Indah Harahap, leader of Ibtisamah Mulia, understanding the *Al-Qur'an*’s sign language in Indonesia is still new and relatively low. Therefore, it is necessary to involve experts in the Islamic world who have expertise in the sign language of the *Al-Qur'an* to carry out standardization (Jaeni et al., 2021).

Conclusion
PDSRW have several obstacles in their development (cognitive and moral; literacy, language and speaking), but they also have the same rights in reading and understanding the *Al-Qur'an*. The *Al-Qur'an* sign language used by PDSRW in reading the *Al-Qur'an* in Indonesia can be broadly grouped into two methods: *Kitabah* and *Tilawah*. Both are effectively used in several institutions. Even though several methods have been developed, they still refer to the same output as 'people hearing' reading the *Al-Qur'an*. However, even though *Al-Qur'an* sign language refers to the same signs (ASRLs), the output of *Al-Qur'an* signs that are practised varies. This diversity will undoubtedly limit the level of use of each signal being developed. *Al-Qur'an*ic signs can only be used for one's environment and not for other communities. As a result, the standard of correctness of reading using the *Al-Qur'an* signals becomes subjective and raises questions. On that basis, it becomes urgent that this diversity be combined in an acceptable formulation for all parties. Standardization by involving experts and practitioners is an effort that must be carried out in order to provide more accessible and more open access for PDSRW to the *Al-Qur'an*.

References


