

Methods of Teaching al-Quran to The Hearing Disability Children

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ABSTRACT

This paper is discussing the importance of teaching al-Quran to the hearing disability children. In this paper, the discussion will be focusing on the hearing disability children. Their inability to hear has hindered them in reading al-Quran. Al-Quran is the Holy Book for all Muslims. It covers all aspects of Muslims life. However, teaching al-Quran to the hearing disability children will meet a lot of barriers because of hearing and communication problems. So, several aspects of teaching strategies and methods such as using visual approach, media of teaching, classroom management, acoustic classroom and assistance of the expert will be discussed in this paper. These methods that can be used in teaching al-Quran to the hearing disability children for the success of the process of teaching the Quran to disabled hearing children.

INTRODUCTION

Al-Quran is the holy Book for all Muslims. It covers all aspects of Muslim life. So, as a Muslim the hearing disability children also need to be taught al-Quran. However, teaching al-Quran to the hearing disability children is not an easy task, because of their hearing ability to hear is limited, and the major problem is communication. Teachers of hearing disability children face the challenge of communicating with their students and teaching them how to communicate. Hearing loss can affect the educational performance of children with hearing disability. They cannot pay attention, fail to follow verbal commands, always ask for repetition of particular words especially questions and they have problems in speech. This paper will explain on hearing loss, the characteristics of hearing disability children and how the hearing loss can affect the learning process for the hearing disability children. This paper also proposes some methods that can be used in teaching al-Quran to the hearing disability children.

AL-QUR'AN

The word al-Qur'an is a verbal noun derived from the root qira'ah. It literally means "reading" or "recitation" which happens in several Qur'anic verses (Al-Qur'an: al-Isra': 79; al-Qiyamah: 17; al-Qiyamah: 18)

Al-Qur'an is generally Allah's speech revealed to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) in Arabic with definite purposes and transmitted to us by continuous testimony (tawatur), which is collectively written in chapters consisting of 114 Surahs beginning with Surah al-Fathah and ending with Surah al-Nas, and whose recitation is accepted as a worship (Manna' Qattan). The definition of "whose recitation is accepted as a worship" means that the Quran is highly recommended to be read. It is not just an ordinary reading, it is a worthy reading and even will be rewarded.

This is explained further in the hadith of the Rasulullah SAW: Whoever reads a letter from the Al-Quran, he will have a reward. And that reward will be multiplied by ten. I am not saying that "Alif, Laam, Meem" is a letter, rather I am saying that "Alif" is a letter, "laam" is a

letter and “meem” is a letter.” (Al-Tirmidhi, 1987: 2919). Therefore, it is clear that children with hearing disability are also entitled to learn the Quran according to their ability levels.

HEARING LOSS

Hearing loss is any degree of impairment of the ability to apprehend sound. There are many terms used to correlate this situation to someone, some use the term deaf, hard of hearing and hearing problems. Hearing loss is often measured in decibel (dB), a measure of the loudness of sound. According to Friend (2008) if you can hear very soft sounds (0-15 dB, such as leaves rustling in the wind), you are considered to have normal hearing. However if you can only hear very loud sound (91 and above, such as sound of a lawn mower), you are considered to have profound hearing loss.

Figure 1: Classification of Hearing Loss

Decibels (dB)	Description
0 - 15 dB	Normal hearing
16- 25 dB	Slight hearing loss
26 - 40 dB	Mild hearing loss
41-55 dB	Moderate hearing loss
56 - 70 dB	Moderate severe hearing loss
71-90 dB	Severe hearing loss
91 dB and above	Profound hearing loss

Friend (2008)

According to Moores (1978) deaf are someone that has hearing troubles up to 70 decibels (dB) or more. People with hearing disability are those who are having trouble hearing from 35 db to 69 db. Gregory (1976) also prefers to use the term deaf to children who suffer from hearing loss who show their disability. This includes all the hearing problems whether less or more.

A report of the Conference of Educational Administrators Serving The Deaf (Brill, MacNeil & Newman, 1986), provided clarification of two important terms associated with the education of the deaf: prelingual hearing impairment and postlingual hearing impairment. Prelingual hearing impairment is present at birth or occurs before the individual develops speech or language, which is generally at about two years of age. Postlingual hearing impairment occurs after the child has developed speech or language.

CAUSES OF HEARING LOSS

There are three major classification of hearing loss: Conductive hearing losses, sensor neural hearing losses and mixed hearing losses (combination of the first two). (Hallahan & Kauffman, 1991).

i. Conductive

Conductive hearing losses caused by disruption of sound stimulation of the outer ear to the oval window in the middle ear space. The disorder causes the sound cannot move effectively.

Therefore, the sound will be slow and uncertain. This problem is usually temporary and can be reversed through medication or surgery.

ii. Sensor neural

Sensor neural hearing losses caused by disease in the cochlea, the auditory nerve or brain. This problem occurs when nerve cells do not function normally, where it face problem in sending the stimuli to the brain for interpretation. As a result, the brain cannot interpret the sounds received because they cannot clearly hear some of the sound. Those who encounter this problem can be helped with hearing aids.

iii. Mixed hearing loss

A mixed hearing loss involve both a conductive and sensor neural loss.

CHARACTERISTICS OF HEARING DISABILITY CHILDREN

Deaf and hearing disability children cannot be stereotyped. They are individuals with different learning styles and abilities, but they share one common characteristic: their ability to hear is limited. The severity of the hearing loss and the age at which the loss occurred determine how well a person will be able to interact to others orally. Another factor is whether the individual has cognitive impairments along with the hearing loss. Estimates are that about 25 percent of deaf and hard hearing children have additional disabilities (Smith D.D, 2001).

Hearing disability children are generally manifested with specific symptoms and characteristics. Although symptoms vary among children, certain traits and behaviors are characteristically indicative of hearing disabilities. Characteristics that are generally found on the children with hearing disability are communication difficulties and speech delays. According to Hallahan & Kauffman (1991), the problems faced by the educator of children with hearing impairments are formidable. As one would expect, the major problem is communication. Teachers of hearing impaired pupils face the challenge of communicating with their students and teaching them how to communicate.

The educational performance of children with hearing loss is often delayed in comparison to their peer. Due to the hearing loss, the children with hearing disability may be delayed in speech and languages because of lack of cognitive experiences. They may use alternate forms of communication, including gestures, sign language, finger spelling, telecommunication devices, writing or others means of communication that change verbal messages into other medium of messages.

Hearing loss can also affect a person's behavior characteristics. Hearing disability children cannot pay attention. They turn their head to the speaker. They failed to follow verbal commands, especially in group situations. They always ask for repetition of particular words especially questions. They have problems in speech, refused to engage in a group discussion, work better in small groups and using gestures. Hearing impaired children suffer from ear output (ear notch), using his mouth to breathe, always use a cotton swab in the ear and fatigue despite the early morning hours. They complain of ear pain, ringing and buzzing sounds in the ears, noise in the head, swelling in the ear, fevers and sometimes down with 'tonsillitis' (Shafiee, 2003).

HEARING LOSS AND ITS AFFECT ON LEARNING AL-QURAN

Children learn to talk by listening to speech. Children must be able to hear speech clearly in order to learn language. Permanent hearing loss will also affect speech and language development, especially if it is not detected earlier. The earlier a hearing loss is identified and treated, the more likely the child will develop speech and language skills on par with normally hearing children.

BARRIERS IN TEACHING QURAN TO THE CHILDREN WITH HEARING DISABILITIES

Children with hearing disabilities should be given equal opportunity to learn the Quran by the call of the al-Quran and the al-Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad. However there are obstacles in teaching children with hearing disabilities. Among them:

i. Could not hear

The main problem faced by every hearing impaired child is hearing disability. Children must be able to hear so that they can learn al-Quran. They are having problem in language and communication, while language and communication is the foundation of learning. For a teacher who teaches children with hearing loss they are facing the daunting task of teaching and imparting knowledge. Teaching requires that teachers have the skills in the mastery of knowledge in the field, teaching skills and proficiency in how to communicate to children with hearing problems.

ii. Difficulty to produce sounds

Teaching Quran is a very difficult topic of children who face hearing disability. Al-Quran teaching requires these kids to pronounce and read the Quran and this is their most important issue. Because they cannot hear, it will be difficult for them to reproduce the sounds, not to mention recitation verses of the Quran. So how pupils with hearing problems can study the Al-Quran, while they are having communication problems?

METHODS IN TEACHING AL-QURAN TO THE CHILDREN WITH HEARING DISABILITY

Important factors to be considered that may influence the making the choice are; degree of hearing loss, age of diagnosis (identification of hearing loss), level of family participation, child's intelligence, effectiveness of the child's amplification devices, hearing potential and amount of residual hearing.

Diagnosis or identification of hearing loss is an important factor to consider, so that the children can be given to an early intervention. The hearing potentials and amount of residual hearing also can provide opportunities for the hearing disability children to learn at early stage and will be a positive impact on their learning process. The teacher needs to know the hearing potentials and amount of residual hearing so that the teacher can teach them according to their ability level.

i. Communication Access

Given the barriers and the importance of communication, the author feels the need to have the communication access for children with hearing disability. Communications access is essential to ensure that students can get the maximum information and can read al-Quran. Communications access certainly take into account the following: the ability to listen, visibility, optimizing access / communication access, forms of communication to be used

a. Audibility

Working with children with hearing problems requires a thorough understanding of every aspect related to the ability of a child to hear. Every child has the capability of hearing, listening and unique understanding. It is this ability that will determine the potential of every child to access the world through hearing. Several factors are known to contribute to the development of hearing and hearing of a child, such as age of onset, age of identify and intervention, types and causes of hearing loss.

b. Visibility

Children with listening impaired depend on their visual abilities. With that, to avoid the problems to them, they need to be examined and identified their visual abilities.

c. Optimizing access / communication access

Some measures that can be implemented to optimize the use of communication access through the remnants of hearing and vision owned by children with hearing disability. The use of audio technology (Hearing aids, tactile aids, cochlear implant, FM System and so on) and visual technology (face-to-face communication, media, telephone, etc.) will be able to help improving their ability to communicate and obtain information.

d. Forms of Communication

The method of communication used by the children during the classroom is related to the philosophy that was introduced in an education system. An organization established by deaf people will struggle for sign language as their native language and want it to be the primary language of communication. Parents who are not deaf will fight for speech as the language of communication because they want their children to live in a multilingual society. And so on, each institutions have their educational philosophy.

ii. Communication Approaches

The following is a several different methods and approaches available for the children with hearing loss

- Auditory-Verbal Approach: Children can use their hearing potential to learn to talk and communicate through listening. Many children who are deaf or hard of hearing have usable hearing, and when amplified via hearing aids and cochlear implants; this enables them to hear spoken language and learn to listen and talk. A child's listening skills are developed. This approach can be used as a method in teaching al-Quran to the hearing disability children.
- Auditory-Oral Approach: Children use their residual hearing and use speech as their primary means of communication. Children use speech reading to aid listening skills and touch cues to aid in speech sound production. Appropriate amplification with hearing aids and/or cochlear implants is warranted to maximize the oral approach's effectiveness.
- Cued Speech Method: This oral method adds hand positions for each sound in each word spoken to assist in reading lips. Children using cued speech develop speech-reading skills,

recognize pronunciation, develop good reading skills, develop and understand how to pronounce sounds and read al-Quran. Cuing is always used in conjunction with speaking.

- Total Communication Approach: Use any and all ways of communicating that will enable the child with a hearing loss to learn language. Children use a combination of signs, gestures, speech, hearing aids, FM systems, speech reading and print. Children learn how to read al-Quran through sign language, commonly referred to as Bahasa Malaysia Kod Tangan (BMKT). Total communication involves simultaneously combining talking and signing.

iii. Classroom management

Apart from communication, classroom management is also very important to the learning process. The process of teaching and learning in a classroom is strongly influenced by the significant learning setting in the classroom. Therefore classroom management has a great impact on students' learning and teachers' satisfaction in order to achieve the objectives of teaching (Rashidi & T. Subahan, 1988). Every teacher must plan the strategies and methods that will be used to produce good teaching and learning process. For teachers who teach pupils with hearing problems, they also need to plan and choose the best method of classroom management. Berg (1976) has identified six categories needed by someone in the clinical management and education of children with hearing problems, such as: audiometric, otology, hearing aids, communication, environment and education.

In addition, the importance of classroom acoustics cannot be ignored. Nelson & Soli (2000) found that many of the children who had hearing problems learn in the classroom which is always noisy, echoing and full of activities. For these children, hearing problems faced by them in addition to the acoustic conditions of the classrooms will led to increasing problems when learning progress. Smith et.al. (2006) suggested that attention should be given to the provision of the acoustic environment in the classroom. Modifications should be made to complete the renovation of classrooms with acoustic ambience such as acoustic ceilings, carpets, thick curtains, rubber soles on chairs and tables as well as the maintenance of air systems, lighting, doors and windows.

iv. The practice of the teacher

Another important aspect of teaching and learning in the classroom is the practice of the teacher. According to Tenure (2001), studies conducted showed that the practice of education in the classroom has a huge impact on the success of their students, and the same thing applies to students with hearing problems. Ormrod (2003) suggest several methods of teaching that can be applied to help pupils learn and achieve success, such as: minimize the sounds that are not needed in the classroom; add instructions with visual shape descriptions and actual experience; take the necessary steps to maximize the ability to listen and lips reading on children; regularly check students comprehension by asking students to repeat what was said by the teacher; focus on the weaknesses of students in terms of the ability to read and speak.

v. Special education services

Another aspect that can help children with hearing disability is the help of experts who are in schools. In Malaysia, there are several special education schools that provide special education services centers that provide specialized services to working mothers and students with local specialties. There are several service centers in the country. Among the services available are: audiology services, sign language classes, speech therapy classes, counseling for parents and toy libraries and reference materials (Bahagian Pendidikan Khas, 2007).

CONCLUSIONS

Children with hearing disabilities seek to read Quran according to their own ability level. There are among those who have the ability to read. For those who have the ability to read must not ignore their ability to read the Al-Quran as other typical student. Communications, acoustics, appropriate methods and the assistant of expert are very important factors in teaching al-Quran to the hearing disabled children. Teacher also needs to diversify their teaching methods for teaching al-Quran so that the teaching process can be implemented properly.

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