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# Application of Audiolingual Method in Active Arabic Language Learning for Visually Impaired Students

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### Abstract

*This study investigates the effectiveness of the Audiolingual Method in teaching Arabic to visually impaired students at Tahfidz Sam'an Boarding School in Darussudur Cimenyan, Bandung. The method, focusing on listening and speaking skills, is adapted to suit the unique needs of visually impaired learners. Using a qualitative approach with participant observations and interviews, the researchers assess the impact on students' language proficiency. Preliminary findings suggest positive outcomes, enhancing engagement, fostering inclusivity, and promoting a more interactive Arabic language learning environment. The study also incorporates teachers' perspectives, offering valuable insights for adapting language teaching methods to cater to the specific requirements of visually impaired students, ultimately contributing to effective Arabic language education in Islamic boarding schools.*

**Keywords:** *Application of Audiolingual Method, active Arabic learning, teaching visually impaired students*

### Abstrak

Penelitian ini menyelidiki efektivitas Metode Audiolingual dalam pengajaran bahasa Arab kepada siswa tunanetra di Pondok Pesantren Tahfidz Sam'an Darussudur Cimenyan, Kabupaten Bandung. Metode ini, yang berfokus pada keterampilan mendengarkan dan berbicara, disesuaikan dengan kebutuhan unik pembelajar tunanetra. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan observasi partisipan dan wawancara, penelitian ini menilai dampaknya terhadap kemahiran berbahasa siswa. Temuan awal menunjukkan hasil yang positif, meningkatkan keterlibatan, mendorong inklusivitas, dan mendorong lingkungan pembelajaran bahasa Arab yang lebih interaktif. Studi ini juga menggabungkan perspektif guru, menawarkan wawasan berharga untuk mengadaptasi metode pengajaran bahasa untuk memenuhi kebutuhan spesifik siswa tunanetra, yang

pada akhirnya berkontribusi terhadap pendidikan bahasa Arab yang efektif di pesantren.

**Kata Kunci:** Penerapan Metode Audiolingual, Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab aktif untuk siswa tunanetra, Cara mengajar siswa tunanetra.

## INTRODUCTION

Education is the foundation for a nation because, with education, it is expected that great generations will be born who have a strong soul and spirit in supporting and carrying out national development and can also continue the noble ideals of national education from an early age we realize that education for children is critical. Education can start early in childhood and adolescence and continue until later when they grow and develop into adulthood. Education is a process of transformation and internalization of ESQ to students for them to become human beings with humanity.

Education is intended for typical children and those with unique physical, emotional, mental, and social needs. Even visually impaired children are entitled to education according to their interests, talents, and potential.

Talking about visual impairment has a broad meaning that includes individuals with visual impairment (Foley-Nicpon, 2016). The visually impaired can be divided into two categories: first, having a visual perspicacity of 20/200 or less in the best eye. It is obtained after correction with glasses. Second, having a visual perspicacity of 20/200, the ophthalmic field is narrowed to such an extent that the angle of view is no greater than 20 degrees (Hallahan et al., 2020). Irham Hosni describes several characteristics of the visually impaired to recognize them easily. First, they only recognize shapes and objects with their little remaining vision. Second, they can only count fingers from various distances. Third, they cannot see the moving hands. Fourth, they can only distinguish dark and light and can point to the source of light. Fifth, they have no light perception or total blindness (Bandura, 1986; Wiener et al., 2010).

Children with special needs in vision have difficulty understanding concepts, stimuli, and objects outside themselves that are not obtained holistically. The process is due to the child not having perception, understanding, impression, memory, and a visual form of understanding of the object under study. It is what makes it difficult for children to learn, memorize, and understand, which ultimately makes visually impaired children mentally disturbed, bored, and easily discouraged in the process of teaching and learning.

Since these visually impaired children experience the above problems, a conclusion emerges that adequate facilities and infrastructure are needed to support a learning process, as well as the role of a teacher and effective and efficient methods. Two of the most critical things in implementing learning are facilities and infrastructure. When interpreted etymologically (language), infrastructure intends indirect tools to achieve the goals in education. At the same time, facilities mean direct tools to achieve educational goals, let alone facilities and infrastructure intended for visually impaired children where educational services for visually impaired people must pay attention to several principles to achieve effectiveness in learning actions. Service principles must pay attention to, among others, the principle of individual service, concreteness and contrast,

developing independent activities, utilizing braille reading and writing media and enlarging the size of writing (Fast, 2018).

After these facilities and infrastructure are adequate and suitable for operation, the teacher's human resources are highlighted next. In running their duties, teachers are not limited to being educators who teach knowledge. However, teachers must also participate in helping students' growth and development. In general, there are at least three tasks of teachers as a profession, namely to educate, to teach and to train (Ahmadi-Azad et al., 2020; Ainin et al., 2021; Arlin, 1999; Bhargava & Pathy, 2011; Bramwell et al., 2011; Mansyur, 2021). To educate means continuing and developing life values; to teach means continuing and developing knowledge; to train means developing skills for student life. After these two aspects have been fulfilled, an effective and efficient learning method is equally important in transforming lessons. Effective means that the material delivered is suitable on target and has an impact, while efficient means that the material provided is effective precisely and carefully.

One of the educational institutions for the visually impaired that prioritizes the above aspects is the *Sam'an Darusshudur Tahfidz* Boarding School. This Islamic educational institution prioritizes Boarding Human Impairments-based learning. This boarding school develops the potential of its students optimally, especially in the fields of *Tahfidz* Al-Qur'an and Arabic Language, because the main vision of this boarding school is to make visually impaired students a generation of *Qur'ani* who are *mutqin* in memorizing, have faith according to *ahlussunnah*, and spread light in the darkness from this vision it is hoped that every student who studies at the boarding school can practice the knowledge of the Qur'an he has and become a lamp amid a dark life. In addition, to support the students in memorizing the Qur'an, the students were equipped with Arabic language learning, which is expected that the students could memorize the Qur'an properly and correctly. Therefore, the learning applied in Arabic language learning is active language learning, which emphasizes listening and speaking skills because, in essence, ideal learning requires a theoretically strong foundation or footing so that it can stand firm, intact, and run optimally with the process of learning Arabic as a foreign language. Arabic or other foreign languages require a robust theoretical footing that is born from the concept of psycholinguistics. The second theoretical basis concerns the elements of language that concern linguistic elements. The language here is related to the appropriate learning methodology for visually impaired students in learning Arabic at the *Sam'an Darusshudur Tahfidz* Boarding School.

Language learning, especially Arabic, will closely relate to the four language skills areas: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Dajani et al., 2014; ElHawari, 2020; Hakim & Kamal, 2018). It is in line with what was stated that language skills are divided into four, namely: listening skills (*maharat al-istima'/listening skill*), speaking (*maharat al-muhadathah* or speaking skill), reading (*maharat al-qiro'ah* or reading skill), and writing (*maharat al-kitabah* or writing skill). Of these language skills, listening skills (*istima'*) receive less attention proportionally. Learning *istima'* sometimes needs a place or adequate time allocation, even though these skills are vital in learning foreign languages, including Arabic. Both skills, namely listening and speaking, are very relevant to the conditions of visually impaired language learners, considering that the eyes alone do not function, while

hearing and speaking function well. Therefore, the author wants to apply audiolingual and communication methods for visually impaired students at the *Saman Darusshudur Tahfidz* Boarding School.

The previous research relevant to this topic includes the following: first, a study by Ritonga et al. examined the effect of using the audiolingual method in Arabic language learning on students' speaking ability (Ritonga et al., 2023). Second, a study by Alvi and Alvi evaluated the effectiveness of the audiolingual method in improving students' speaking ability (Alvi & Alvi, 2020). Third, a study by Al-Mahrooqi et al. evaluated the effectiveness of the audiolingual method in improving students' reading ability (Al-Mahrooqi et al., 2015; Lu & Throssell, 2018). The subsequent two studies are related to the researchers' theme. The first research is conducted by Saputri Dwi Astuti, entitled "Learning Arabic for Blind Students in Class VIII MTs Yaketunis Yogyakarta Academic Year 2009/2010", focusing on the process of learning Arabic for visually impaired students in class VIII MTs Yaketunis (Gunaryo et al., 2021). Maftuhaturohmah writes the second, entitled "The Implementation of Inclusive Education in Arabic Learning for Blind Students", where she focuses on the effectiveness of teachers' methods in Arabic learning (Maftuhaturohmah, 2020). The author's research focus will be on the non-linguistic problems experienced by visually impaired students in learning Arabic at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training and the efforts made by lecturers to overcome these problems. It differs from the focus of the above research.

This research examines the effect of using the audiolingual method in Arabic language learning on the speaking ability of visually impaired students at *Saman Darusshudur Tahfidz* Boarding School, Cimenyan, Bandung. The novelty offered by this research is using the audiolingual method in active Arabic language learning for visually impaired students. This research is expected to contribute to developing active Arabic language learning methods for visually impaired students.

Interested in researching visually impaired students, the author assumes that, based on the theory states, listening has become the ultimate language skill. Feyten claims that over 45% of communication time is spent listening. It clearly shows the importance of this skill in overall language ability. Traditionally, listening is a skill that has been taught separately or in combination with speaking tasks; therefore, listening skills, when applied to people with visual impairments or visual disabilities, are very relevant. Given that people with visual disabilities, when learning foreign languages, especially Arabic, rely entirely on the five senses of hearing, this is also what is applied in the *Saman Darusshudur Tahfidz* Boarding School for the visually impaired students, Cimenyan, Bandung. From January to February 2023. Thus, the author combines the audiolingual method with active Arabic language learning communication for the *Sam'an Darusshudur Tahfidz* Boarding School students.

## **METHOD**

### ***Research Design***

This research uses a qualitative research approach that uses descriptive studies in which this research seeks to build a systematic, factual, and accurate description of the facts and relationships between the studied phenomena.

According to Moleong, qualitative research is conducted to understand the phenomena experienced by research subjects, such as their behaviors, perceptions, motivations, and actions holistically, by using descriptions in words and language in a particular context and using various natural methods (Moleong, 2015). This research will describe the application of Arabic learning methods for visually impaired children at the *Sam'an Darusshudur Tahfidz* Boarding School.

**Data Collection and Analysis Technique**

This research was conducted at the *Sam'an Darusshudur Tahfidz* Boarding School for visually impaired students and related to Arabic learning methods for visually impaired children. The reason why the researcher chose the *Saman Darusshudur Tahfidz* Boarding School as the research location is because in the boarding school, the Arabic teacher, who is also a visually impaired man, is eager to find out how Arabic learning methods are implemented for visually impaired children. Research data were obtained from several respondents, documentation, and relics that exist and relate to the object of research. Respondents respond or answer all researchers' questions both orally and in writing. Data were obtained from utterances, words, or sentences from several respondents when describing the application of the learning method for visually impaired children, in this case, they were the Head of the *Saman Darusshudur Tahfidz* Foundation, Arabic language subject teachers, as well as documents that exist and relate to the object of research.

**Table 1**

No.	Initial Name	Type of data source	Position
1.	SHO	Primary	Chairman of the Foundation
2.	SHA	Secondary	Arabic Language Teacher

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

***Audiolingual learning method for the visually impaired (Blind)***

Arabic instructors/teachers used the audiolingual method to implement Arabic language learning. The method was selected as the initial base for subsequent learning. The assumption is that most participants with limited vision in learning can perceive the audio well. As explained, instructors/teachers present learning materials through sound with varied techniques. The audiolingual method itself is a method that relies on the function of hearing (Nagaraj, 1996). The application of the audiolingual method for the visually impaired is mainly directed at the ability to hear unique vocabulary in the learning process. Thus, the trainees become accustomed to hearing, and they will create a product in the form of speaking by using expressions in Arabic.

As explained above, the language learning process using the audiolingual method must fulfil several principles (Abidin, 2017). The active Arabic language learning students must listen, speak, and compose. Grammar and structure are presented in the sentence patterns form on some gambits of everyday situation topics. Drill must follow the sequence of operant conditioning, and there must be

rewards. All grammar essentials must be presented, from easy to hardest. In addition, mistakes must be avoided when giving responses.

A visually impaired person is someone who has visual impairment without hearing impairment. Many researchers believe that a visually impaired child's language skills are similar to those of a typical sighted child. The main difference is how they learn to acquire the language or information. The visually impaired can only receive information through their hearing besides feeling and smelling senses, whereas a sighted person can maximize all five senses. Therefore, active Arabic language learning for visually impaired people is based on the belief that language acquisition happens through the habit of repetition or drill. This habituation is one of the techniques in the audiolingual method, where the purpose of this habituation exercise is so that trainees can be taught automatically.

The audiolingual method at its practical level has derivatives in the form of several learning techniques, for example, the drilling technique. The repetition of specific sentences or expressions, such as greeting, leading a learning prayer, ending learning, and some command sentences, are commonly used in the classroom (Schwartz, 2013). It is one of the advantages of audiolingual. Using audiolingual methods in active Arabic learning can make visually impaired students skilled in making sentence patterns as they have been drilled. Besides, they have excellent and correct memorization. In addition, the students do not remain silent but constantly respond to stimuli given by the teacher or language instructor.

Another learning technique derived from the audiolingual method is the singing technique. Singing techniques can be used in certain materials, such as materials to recognize *isim damir* and memorize *fi'il madhi* and *fi'il mudhari* verbs. The singing technique is considered a derivative of the audiolingual method applied in training because visually impaired students listen more and follow the songs taught by the instructor. Another technique derivative of the audiolingual method is the game technique in the form of charades. These lessons were brought in the charades game with vocabulary related to their hearing, tasting, touch/feeling, and smelling senses.

Ideally, other senses will be optimally utilized when one of the senses is impaired. Especially for the visually impaired person, the maximized senses are generally the senses of hearing and touch. Therefore, the audiolingual method is considered relevant for visually impaired language learners. This result aligns with the field observations of visually impaired students participating in active Arabic language learning. About 70% of trainees rely on the sense of hearing through recordings (tape recorders), while the remaining 30% use the sense of touch (braille writing).

Based on the analysis of the effectiveness of the audiolingual method in the application of active Arabic language learning for the visually impaired, this method is considered successful in improving the Arabic language skills of the trainees. The audiolingual method can be used as an initial method and also an introduction to using subsequent methods. This method is considered suitable to be applied to learners who are beginners, especially for people with disabilities (visually impaired). The descriptive success rate is presented in the form of field analysis results. The observation shows visually impaired students can repeat the

opening sentence before learning. The trainees can also repeat simple sentences that are usually done every day. In addition, they can also repeat vocabulary related to certain senses and can lead prayers, both before and after learning to use Arabic.

### ***Communicative Learning Methods for The Visually Impaired***

Speaking is one of the main competencies in language learning. This ability can be acquired through the habituation process. While a person's visual impairment does not hinder his verbal ability, more stimulation from the surrounding environment will encourage him more to speak. Active Arabic language trainees from their instructors and fellow trainees will gain the stimulation process. The interaction between them during the training is an effective way to improve their speaking abilities.

Not only that, but people experiencing visual impairments can also still hone their skills to get better in several other languages at once, including Arabic. It was already proven by a visually impaired Russian poet who has mastered ten languages besides Russian. However, there needs to be support from various aspects to have such abilities.

One of the aspects which significantly affects the ability to learn a language is the accuracy of the learning method being used. Methods that align with the learners' circumstances and needs will accelerate the mastery of one's foreign language.

Based on the needs analysis of active language learners of Arabic, it is known that about 18 out of 20 visually impaired trainees who participated in active Arabic language training recognized the need for speaking skills as the main aspect. Approximately 90% of the trainees admitted that the methods they had received from learning elsewhere were more focused only on the structure or grammar of sentences. They considered that the learning they received before tended to be boring. Machmud Yunus highly stresses the firmness of this learning method in his expression: *al-tariqah ahammu min al-maddah*, which means that the method is more important than the lesson itself. Any lesson, when delivered with a suitable method, will be well accepted. Conversely, any material that has been carefully delivered will be empty without the support of a suitable delivery method (Mustofa et al., 2021).

Because of this reality, instructors/teachers tried to apply this communicative method to solve the existing conditions (Richards, 2006). As Richard stated, some learning objectives with communicative methods are, *first*, awareness of the function and purpose of language. The second is identifying when formal and informal, written and spoken language is used. The third is recognizing how to create and understand texts, such as narrative texts, reports, interviews, and conversations. The fourth is distinguishing how the communication process can be created without being limited by the knowledge of the language itself. Thus, language learning is not restricted by the language system. The communicative method is a method that emphasizes the ability of the learners to listen and speak appropriately and purposefully, which is only known as cohesion and coherence (McLeod & Treuer, 2013). The willingness and confidence of trainees who initially experienced mental blocks were finally helped by presenting material through communicative methods applied by active Arabic language training inspectors.

Based on the collaborative learning approach, the communicative method can be derived from some techniques, including practical dialogue, and learning techniques. The learners were asked to practice simple dialogue with their friends through questions and answers in practical dialogue. At the same time, the collaborative learning technique is a language learning technique that prioritizes discussion patterns. This technique is conducted between peers experiencing gaps in their understanding of the lessons' material. Implementing this technique is guided by one of the students who first mastered the material taught. In the collaborative learning technique, trainees can freely ask their friends. Other trainees act as facilitators who evaluate the material that the instructor has taught.

The communicative method is derived from the assumption that every human has an innate ability called a "language acquisition device". Hence, one's language ability is a creative process, and it is more determined by internal factors. So, with a stimulus-response-enforcement training model, the relevance and habituation activities are carried out (Ma'ali et al., 2022). Since this method emerged in the 1940s and dominated foreign language teaching until the late 1960s, teaching Arabic also uses it as part of the principles of this approach. In 1957, Noam Chomsky heralded his reform against the thinking of structuralist behaviorists. He was attacking the structuralist behaviorists for viewing language only formally and externally.

Chomsky calls for cognitive/ mental/ intellectual/ and functional language study. He pays attention to language competence, not just limited to external discussion. He explains that the language learning process with communication methods cannot comprehend the purpose of communication for language. He linked the grammatical structure of the language with the ideal speaker's knowledge. He said linguistic theory concerns the ideal speaker-listener (Johnson, 2004). Although Chomsky did not initially pay attention to the teaching aspect, applied linguists used his views in the development field, especially in the language field. Therefore, they pay attention to the formation of language competence for foreign language learners.

In contrast to Chomsky's theory, active Arabic learning methods using a communication approach are beyond practical when spread to visually impaired learners. Combining direct methods (Abidin, 2017; "The Direct Method," n.d.) and communication in active Arabic language training creates a harmonious blend. It is because visually impaired trainees rely on hearing, and then they will try to respond with sound in the form of Arabic gambits with each other. Thus, Chomsky's opinion that structuralist behaviorism is not an essential matter since, in reality, visually impaired learners require more drills through auditory stimulus- responses.

However, other linguists viewed that the language competence issued by Chomsky and his followers is merely grammatical competence. This competence is limited to knowledge of language rules only. Thus, they call for communicative competence, which includes the knowledge of the origin of speech and its methods while paying attention to the characteristics of the people being spoken. It also includes the ability to vary sentences according to the demands of the situation, for example, sentences for request, apology, gratitude, and invitation. The main aspect that must be addressed is knowing the rules of language and language systems,



both syntactic systems, morphology, and phonetic systems, and using these rules correctly according to language and socially accepted.

Based on this understanding and the need for communication with other languages, there is a need for a worldwide program, which is language learning for communication (Mahboob & Tilakaratna, 2012). Language teaching is based on the principle of comprehensive communication. Teaching serves to understand the meaning and know the rules of the language. In addition, language teaching is also helpful in knowing the ways or traditions of communication prevailing in society and then forming an unlimited number of sentences. Sentence formation is linguistically correct, socially acceptable and does not rely on memorized conversations from contrived situations.

Some previous methods, such as the direct method, the listening method, and teaching language by teaching examples of situations to students, needed to be considered insufficient to form language skills. Therefore, the communicative approach, which views language as a tool for communication, was born. The purpose of language teaching towards students is to achieve communication competence. It is understood that more than formally learning a second language will enable the needed development of communicative skills effectively in the second language.

It leaves visually impaired learners the same opportunity as other students to learn Arabic actively. Second language learning involves correcting errors and memorizing grammar rules. Regarding relevance, the communicative method suits the needs of visually impaired learners, both trainees with and without learning disabilities.

## **CONCLUSION**

After a comprehensive discussion and analysis to answer the main problem in the research conducted, several things become the emphasis as conclusions in this discussion. The Arabic language learning system and methods at *Saman Darussudur Tahfidz* Boarding School are carried out through a communicative approach. With this approach, it will come down to the methods used, audiolingual and communicative. This learning hierarchy is emphasized for students, so that they are skilled in hearing and speaking Arabic and make it easier for them to learn Arabic. It is known that the senses that can be used optimally for visually impaired people are hearing, so with the application of this method learning can be done well.

The obstacles faced in applying audiolingual and communicative learning methods include the form of visual response to understanding the object in question being less well conveyed. The expected target of the subject matter is less than the maximum, which is due to children who have special needs are unable to understand or follow the learning appropriately according to the time allocation given. There is also a lack of educators who understand unique methods intended for visually impaired students. The lack of understanding of the students is due to the need for more understanding of the hijaiyah letters. It also includes many students who need the essential resources to understand the Qur'an.

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