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Teaching the Qur'anic Recitation with Harakatt: A multimedia-based Interactive Learning Method

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Abstract— Today, the construction of knowledge from each chapter and verse, some rules of the Quran is integrated with the assistance of multimedia. This study aims to address the current problems faced by teachers' in teaching Qur'anic recitation in Malaysian primary schools. The main issue is related to pronouncing the Qur'anic sentences with correct recitation including all the Harakatt. Therefore, this study provides a suitable pedagogical model for teaching Qur'anic recitation among Malaysian primary students. The implication of the multimedia based interactive learning method envisaged here is to help students enjoy the learning process and improve their level of achievement.

Index Terms— Learning strategies, Qur'anic knowledge representation, ICLP, tacit knowledge.

1 Introduction

Arabic is the main language used in the Qur'an. This language becomes even more appealing if it is complemented with tarannum recitation. In adopting tarannum when reciting the Qur'an, one has to do it according to the correct principles of Tajweed, or Arabic elocution and in a melodious voice, while observing the meaning of the Qur'an effectively that the recitation can embrace one's body and soul. Thus, it is appropriate for Qur'anic teachers to develop not only students with a basic reading of Qur'an, but also those who are able to perform the tarannum in a good manner.

Tajweed is an Arabic word that means correct pronunciation of Quranic verses during recitation by different people at a moderate speed. Rules for recitation must be considered in order to ensure the correct meaning of the Quranic verses.This process is considered an art because not all recitors will pronounce the Quranic verses in the same way and at the same speed (Tabbal, El Falou, & Monla, 2006) (Bashir, Rasheed, Awais, Masud, & Shamail, 2003).

Educational institutions have now linked their educational programmes, including: preparation programmes and teacher training with modern technology as their strategy for development. The Malaysian education system requires a pre-service teacher training program mainly in the use of modern communication technology in the field of teaching Qur'anic recitation.

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2 Problem Statement

A number of researchers have addressed various challenges people face when dealing with the Arabic language in the Quran, due to differences between that which is written and how it should be recited. The Qur'anic Arabic alphabets consist of 28 letters, known as hijaiyah letters (from alif until ya) (Ahmad, Ismail, & Samaon, 2004; Razak, Ibrahim, & Idna Idris, 2008; Vergyri & Kirchhoff, 2004)

In Malaysia, the teaching of Qur'anic recitation is usually learned in the mosques and other specialized learning institutions. It was pointed out that there are some weaknesses in the recitation of the Qur'anic verses by the Malaysian students and teachers Berita Harian (2003). However, when focusing on the problem of reciting the verses in the Quran, among students who read the Quran in all phases of their public education. Many weaknesses have been identified via scientific studies. "The implementations of religious education at National Schools have a lot of weaknesses because there are still many students who can't read the Al Quran and write Jawi although they had attended six years of primary school (Berita Harian, 2003 cited in Che Noraini Hashim & Hasan Langgulung p.14)".

Studies by Maimun, et al. (2011) and Tabbal, et al. (2006) were conducted in different Malaysian primary schools,and they have revealed that there are still many students who are unable to perform the Qur'anic tarannum correctly or even to perform it basically following the standard way. Such weakness may be due to teachers lacking knowledge of the proper way to teach the Qur'anic tarannum and also the failure of teachers' to apply suitable pedagogical tools that fit learner needs. It is important to note that students' ability to master the tajweed and tarannum of the al-Qur'an is very dependent on several attributes of the teacher in the Malaysian primary schools (Maimun, et al., 2011).

3 Objectives

This paper is proposes a pedagogic model to help Qur'anic recitation teachers pronounce the correct Quran verses correctly.

4 LITERATURE REVIEW

Different studies have been conducted to investigate the effects of definite teaching or learning methods on the teaching and learning performance based on the adaptation of various learning tools. Razak, et al. (2008) addressed the differences in teaching Quranic sentences in different voices. They acknowledged that Quranic sounds probably differ from one person to another depending on the way it is recited. They also agreed that the same combinations of letters in the Quran may be pronounced in a various ways depending on the use of Harakatt during recitation. They then compared different related works and proposed a Quran Arabic verse recitation recognition model.

Another study was conducted by Maamouri, et al. (2006) to justify the problems faced by teachers' while teaching students the Quranic tarannum. Their research had applied quantitative methods by involving 100 teachers from two Islamic schools in the city of Padang, West Sumatra, Indonesia. During the learning process, a questionnaire was administrated to teachers for data collection. They found that teachers had moderate difficulties in teaching the Qur'anic tarannum. The result also showed that the level of administrative and management problems were high during the teaching of the Qur'anic tarannum. They concluded that the weakness of teachers' to understand pedagogy was at a high level along with their attitude towards it.

Samir et al. (2007) describe a model for a speech-enabled Computer Aided Pronunciation Learning (CAPL) that was developed for teaching Qur'an recitation rules and Arabic pronunciations to non-native speakers. They introduced modifications that were done on the baseline system to reduce the amount of enrolment time while keeping system accuracy at the same level. They also addressed the results of some experiments that measure the correlation between the judgments of the HAFSS system and the judgments of human experts based on the model shown in Figure 1.

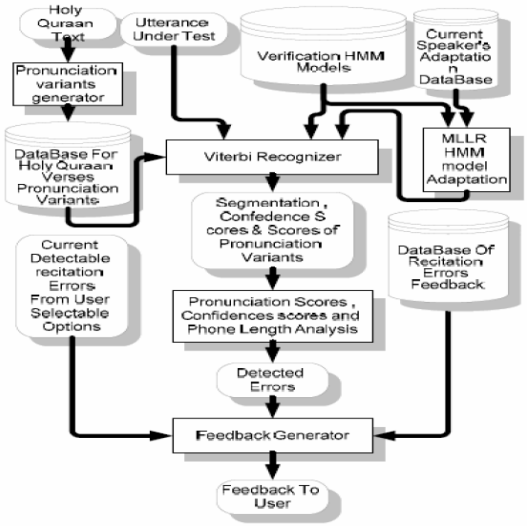


Fig .1.HAFSS baseline system block diagram

Haron, Ahmad, Mamat, & Mohamed (2010) describe different research findings conducted in Malaysia. They found that Malay learners were weak in learning Arabic along with the speaking skills although they spend a long periods of time to learn this language. Based on the reviewed studies, they estimated that using certain learning strategies may help to enhance Malay learners' speaking skills. This assumption is based on several theories in language learning strategies which postulate that learners' success in language learning or lack of it is attributable to the various strategies which different learners bring to tasks and does not solely rely on the environment per se. They also explained that learners' understanding based on the investigation conducted for Arabic speaking skills learning strategies of selected Malay good Arabic speakers and Malay poor Arabic speakers at the University of Malay. They also addressed Malay learners' perception of Arabic speaking skills in terms of the importance of Arabic speaking skill for Malay learners, the required level of Arabic speaking skills for Malay learners and the prerequisites to become good Arabic speakers.

Ismail, Diah, Ahmad and Rahman (2011) described a speech-enabled Computer Aided Pronunciation Learning (CAPL) system. This system was developed for teaching Arabic pronunciation to non-native speakers. A challenging application of the HAFSS is to teachcorrect recitation of the verses in the holy Qur'an. The study used a state of the art speech recognizer to detect errors in user recitation. To increase accuracy of the speech recognizer, only probable pronunciation variants, that cover all common types of recitation errors, were examined by the speech decoder. Figure 2 shows the system user interface for pronouncing the common Arabic letters.



Fig.2. CAPL user interface

Abdou, et al. (2006) highlighted the main requirements for performing competitive tajweed among both learners and the teachers. They introduced the design and development process of engaging multimedia application for encouraging learners' while performing the tajweed. The developed application consists of presenting "Izhar Halqi" of the tajweed. They adapted several strategies such as storytelling sessions, quizzes and games designed in a single application for a rich learning environment that engages learners in the learning process. They found that the learning process becomes easier for students to learn the tajweed.
There is, however, no study conducted to provide a multimedia base for teaching Qur'anic sentences (recitation) including all the Harakatt along with the necessary prolongation which this paper proposes to address.

5 Methodology

Based on prior research conducted on learning and teaching Qur'anic recitation, it is apparent that teachers of Qur'anic studies are required to apply a definite teaching mechanism that follows a definite teaching style. Therefore, this study established a pedagogical teaching model based on the recommendations of Ismail, Diah, Ahmad and Rahman (2011) and Samir et al. (2007) as shown in Figure 3 below. The model was constructed based on the formation of the ICPL which involves the learning performance, knowledge, and attitude used to establish and observe teachers' willingness towards teaching Qur'anic recitation.

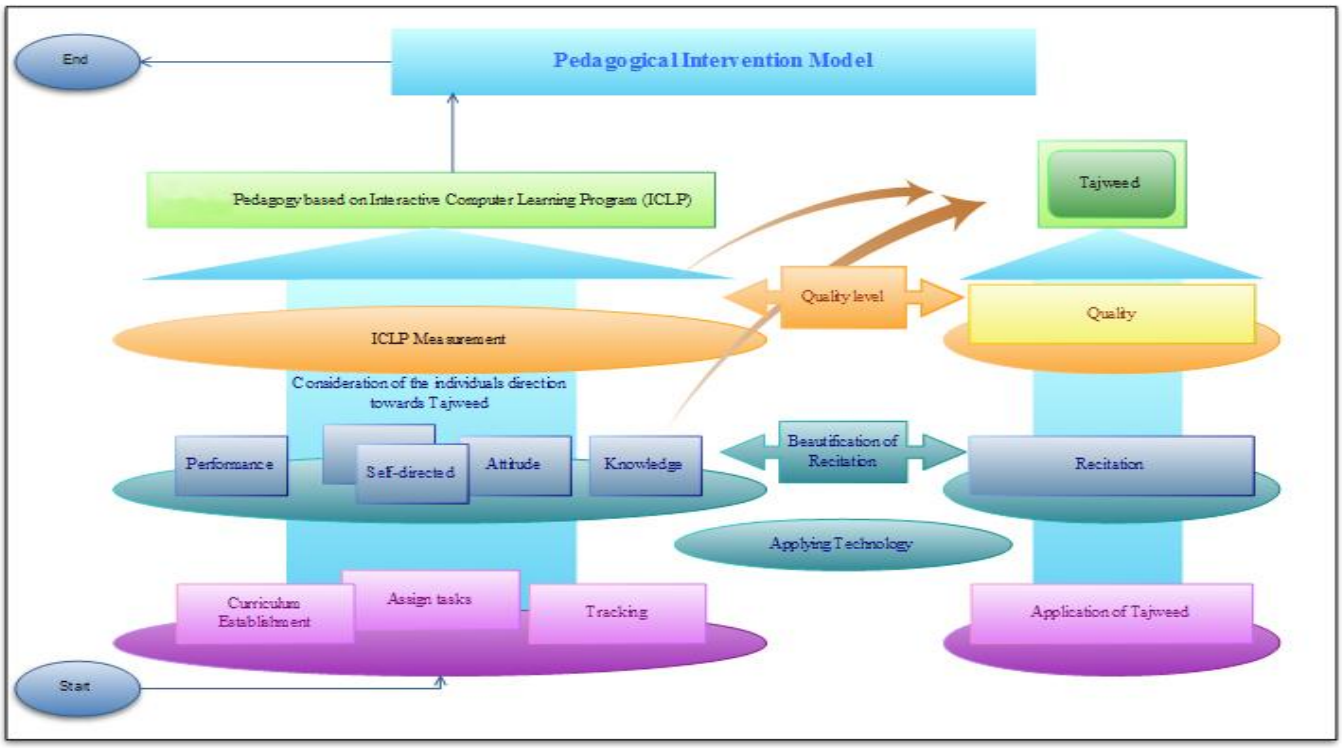


Fig. 3. Pedagogical model based on multimedia-based Inte active Learning Method

6 EXPECTED Result

This pedagogical model will provide the following:

1. Increase learners' learning skills to recite the Qur'an.
2. Motivate learners to recite Qur'anic verses in an interactive learning style.
3. Help to develop students' self-directed learning, understanding, motivation, and attitude of teachers after using the program

7 Conclusion

Understanding religious texts such as the Qu'ran is not a trivial task. Religious texts usually encompass a lot of hidden knowledge; possess a peculiar style of narration, which are sometimes confusing. In Malaysia, students as well as teachers face difficulties in reciting the Qur'anic verses, which mostly is due to the lack of learning and teaching materials in learning institutions. Therefore, this study has constructed a new pedagogical model to help primary school teachers in Malaysia teach Qur'anic recitation. The proposed model would help to increase learners skills, attitude, motivation, grade, and knowledge while learning how to recite the Quran.

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