

## BOARDING TEACHER'S METHOD IN OVERCOMING DIFFICULTIES IN READING KITAB KUNING AT DARUSSALAM ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL TEBO

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### Abstract

This study aims to determine the methods used by dormitory teachers to address students' difficulties in reading the kitab kuning at the Darussalam Islamic Boarding School in Tebo Regency. This research used a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study method. Data collection techniques included observation, in-depth interviews with dormitory teachers and students, and documentation of kitab kuning learning activities. The results indicate that dormitory teachers at the Darussalam Islamic Boarding School in Tebo Regency address students' difficulties in reading the kitab kuning using various learning methods, namely the Bandongan Method, the Sorogan Method, the Grammar Translation Method, and the Reading Aloud Method. Routinely using these methods in the dormitory improves students' reading skills in the kitab kuning, both in terms of grammar comprehension and sentence meaning and context.

**Keywords:** Method; Dormitory Teacher; Reading; Kitab Kuning.

### Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui metode guru asrama untuk mengatasi kesulitan santri dalam membaca kitab kuning di Pesantren Darussalam, Kabupaten Tebo. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan metode studi kasus. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui observasi, wawancara mendalam dengan guru asrama dan santri, serta dokumentasi kegiatan pembelajaran kitab kuning. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa guru asrama di Pondok Pesantren Darussalam Kabupaten Tebo mengatasi kesulitan santri dalam membaca kitab kuning dengan berbagai metode pembelajaran, yaitu Metode Bandongan, Metode Sorogan, Grammar Translation Method dan Metode Reading Aloud. Dengan menggunakan metode-metode di atas secara rutin di asrama dapat meningkatkan kemampuan santri dalam ketrampilan membaca kitab kuning, baik dari sisi pemahaman tata bahasanya maupun pemahaman makna kalimat dan konteks.

**Kata Kunci:** Metode; Guru Asram; Membaca; Kitab kuning

## INTRODUCTION

Education is a crucial process in developing intelligent, moral, and competitive individuals. In Indonesia, education faces various challenges, such as teacher quality, teaching methods, limited facilities, and disparities in access between regions. Meanwhile, advances in science and technology are driving innovation in the education system. In Islamic education, particularly in Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), the instillation of religious values is a primary focus, with the study of the yellow texts a key challenge. This requires mastery of Arabic and the science of Nahwu-Shorof (Arabic grammar). The role of teachers, teaching methods, and student motivation are crucial for the success of education in Islamic boarding schools.

In the era of globalization where the times are increasingly advanced, learning the Kitab Kuning is gradually becoming an activity that will fade, it is rare for students to have an interest and attraction to the ability to read the Kitab Kuning except for students who study at Islamic boarding schools.<sup>1</sup> Even students studying at Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) still face many difficulties in applying their reading skills. This can be caused by various issues facing the students, teachers, and educational institutions.

A kitab kuning is a book written in Arabic without vowels, often referred to as a "gundul" book, and generally printed on yellow paper. It is not uncommon for a Kitab Kuning to be arranged in separate pages without binding. The contents of a Kitab Kuning usually consist of a text (matan) and a commentary (syarah), with the text (matan) placed at the edges of the page, while the commentary (syarah) or explanation is in the center. Learning a Kitab Kuning plays a crucial role in Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), as its teaching is a key element in the establishment and development of Islamic boarding schools.

The kitab kuning are a crucial characteristic of Islamic boarding schools. They serve as a reference, the content of which is unquestionable. The fact that these books were written long ago and continue to be used over time demonstrates their proven validity over a long period of history. These books have been carefully formulated by scholars, relying on the Quran and the Prophet's Hadith..<sup>2</sup> All classical books taught in Islamic boarding schools can be classified into 8 groups: nahwu, sorof, fiqh, ulus fiqh, hadith, tafsir, tauhid, tasawuf, and other branches such as Tarikh and Balaghah. These books include short texts to texts consisting of thick volumes, namely regarding hadith, tafsir, fiqh, ushul fiqh and Sufism.<sup>3</sup>

One strategic element of learning that needs to be improved is the learning method. Selecting an appropriate method is crucial for successful learning. This aligns with the definition of a method as a procedure for doing something, which can help achieve a target.<sup>4</sup> Method is a tool to achieve goals supported by teaching aids, and method is a tool of unity in

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<sup>1</sup>Siti Naimah, Nurul Hidayah and Lailatul Mathoriyah, "Analisis Kemampuan Membaca Kitab Kuning di PP. At-Taufiq Jombang," *Al-Lahjah: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab dan Kajian Linguistik* 5, no. 1 (2022): 1-5, <https://doi.org/10.32764/al-lahjah.v5i1.1927>.

<sup>2</sup>Said A. Siradj, *Pesantren Masa Depan: Wacana Pemberdayaan dan Transformasi Pesantren* (Pustaka Hidayah, 1999), 236.

<sup>3</sup>Ar Rasikh, "Pembelajaran Kitab Kuning pada Pondok Pesantren Khusus Al-Halimy Desa Sesela Kabupaten Lombok Barat," *Jurnal Penelitian Keislaman* 14, no. 1 (2018): 71-84, <https://doi.org/10.20414/jpk.v14i1.492>.

<sup>4</sup>Dina M. Iswara and Pelita B. A, "Metode Pembelajaran Yang Sesuai Untuk Peserta Didik," *Karimah Taubid* 3, no. 5 (2024): 5984-6013, <https://doi.org/10.30997/karimahtaubid.v3i5.13270>.

an education system..<sup>5</sup> So, learning objectives should be like targets that must be achieved by using and selecting methods that are suitable and in accordance with the characteristics of the material to be delivered to students.

The Kitab Kuning learning method has unique characteristics that distinguish it from other texts. The Kitab Kuning is a distinctive feature and fundamental element of the Islamic boarding school education system. Learning the Kitab Kuning serves not only as a means of transmitting classical Islamic knowledge, but also as a medium for character development, religious understanding, and deepening of disciplines such as nahwu and sharf. Therefore, the ability to read the Kitab Kuning is a key competency that students in Islamic boarding schools must possess. Ideally, students living and studying in an Islamic boarding school environment are expected to be able to read, understand, and study the Kitab Kuning well and independently under the guidance of a teacher or ustaz in the dormitory.

However, the reality on the ground shows that many students still experience difficulties in reading kitab kuning, especially bare books that lack vowels. These difficulties include weak mastery of the rules of grammar and grammar, a lack of ability to determine word meaning and sentence structure, and low student interest and motivation in learning. This condition is also found at the Darussalam Islamic Boarding School in Tebo Regency, where some students are unable to read kitab kuning fluently despite regular instruction.

In practice, dormitory teachers play a strategic role in helping students overcome these difficulties. A dormitory teacher is the person tasked with looking after, educating, and caring for the students (students) residing in the dormitory. The teacher acts as a mentor, instructor, and guide.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, the learning methods implemented by dormitory teachers play a crucial role in supporting students' success in improving their ability to read the kitab kuning. The ideal method should be tailored to the students' conditions and needs, foster active participation in the learning process, and be accompanied by ongoing support.

However, preliminary observations indicate that the methods used by dormitory teachers to address difficulties in reading the kitab kuning are still dominated by conventional approaches and are not fully able to accommodate the diverse abilities of students. Furthermore, previous studies generally focused on general Kitab Kuning teaching methods, such as sorogan and bandongan, without paying specific attention to the role of dormitory teachers' methods in addressing students' difficulties in reading the kitab kuning. This represents a research gap in this study.

## METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive approach. Descriptive is defined as the activity of collecting data by describing it as it is, without any review, perspective, or analysis from the author. A qualitative approach, in this case, is essentially a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behavior. Therefore, the data collected is in the form of words, sentences, or images (not numbers).<sup>7</sup> According to Abdussamad, qualitative research

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<sup>5</sup>Abdul Adib, "Metode Pembelajaran Kitab Kuning di Pondok Pesantren," *Jurnal Muhtadiin* 7, no. 1 (2021): 232-246, <https://journal.an-nur.ac.id/index.php/muhtadiin/article/view/73>.

<sup>6</sup> Syaiful B. Djamarah and Aswan Zain, *Strategi Belajar Mengajar*, (Rineka Cipta, 2006), 10.

<sup>7</sup>Dimas A. Trisliatanto, *Metedologi Penelitian: Panduan lengkap penelitian dengan mudah* (CV. Andi Offset, 2020), 213.

focuses on exploring specific phenomena, generating descriptive data in the form of written narratives based on observations of individual or group behavior.<sup>8</sup>

This study took samples from grade 5 (five) of the Darussalam Islamic Boarding School in Tebo Regency. The data collection methods used were interviews, observation, and documentation. The author used the Miles and Huberman data analysis model. This data analysis consists of three interrelated components: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification.<sup>9</sup>

The three components above are implemented to ensure that the conclusions generated through the data analysis process can be scientifically justified. Conclusions are drawn by identifying patterns that emerge from the reduced and presented data. The conclusions obtained are then directed toward answering the research objectives established by the author.

Triangulation was carried out to strengthen the validity of the data, namely, structured interviews, participatory observations, and complementary documentation between one data collection technique and another.<sup>10</sup>

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Boarding school teachers have a strategic role in overcoming the problem of students' difficulties in reading kitab kuning through the application of several intensive and sustainable learning methods. The kitab kuning studied by 5th grade students are Fiqh (Fathul Qarib), Nahwu/Sharaf (Imrithi), Hadith (Bulughul Maram), Tafsir (Jalalain), as well as the books of Tauhid (Aqidatul Awam) and Akhlak (Ta'limul Muta'allim). Darussalam Islamic Boarding School, Tebo Regency. The author found that boarding school teachers at Darussalam Islamic Boarding School, Tebo Regency overcome students' difficulties in reading kitab kuning with various learning methods:

### 1. Bandongan Method

In practice, the teacher reads or explains the text first, then the students repeat and imitate the teacher's reading or understanding of the text. This method focuses on memorization, accuracy, and gradual comprehension. The teacher will identify students who are having difficulty reading and then explain the meaning and context. Finally, the students are guided to read the text independently.

The bandongan method is an effective classical approach in transferring understanding of classical Arabic texts to students.<sup>11</sup> The bandongan is a system taught by a kyai or ustadz reading the book being studied, then the students listen and pay attention to what is read by the kyai or ustadz.<sup>12</sup> Alfinur noted that the bandongan method strongly supports the learning

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<sup>8</sup>Nur Hanifansyah and Menik Mahmudah, "Enhancing Arabic Vocabulary Mastery Through Communicative Strategies: Evidence from Malaysia," *Al-Ta'rib Jurnal Ilmiah Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Arab IAIN Palangka Raya* 12, no. 2 (2024): 263-278, <https://doi.org/10.23971/altarib.v12i2.9082>.

<sup>9</sup>A. M. Yusuf, *Metode Penelitian: Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan Penelitian Gabungan* (Kencana, 2017), 407.

<sup>10</sup>Anang Walian, Abdurrahmansyah and Kusnadi, "Innovative Approaches and Traditional Methods: Constructing Qiroatul Kutub Learning in South Sumatran Islamic Boarding Schools," *Al-Ishlah: Jurnal Pendidikan* 17, no. 3 (2025): 4020-4031, <https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v17i3.7308>.

<sup>11</sup>M. M. D. H. Al Ghazali and M. S. Kusen, "Implementasi Metode Sorogan Bandongan Berbasis Tpack pada Pembelajaran Kitab Kuning," *Jurnal Multidisiplin Inovatif* 9, no. 9 (2025): 10-17, <https://sejurnal.com/pub/index.php/jmi/article/view/9263>.

<sup>12</sup>Arif Syamsudin, "Application Of The Bandongan Method At Islamic Boarding School", *Syahadat: Journal of Islamic Studies* 1, no. 3 (2024): 13-18, <https://doi.org/10.70489/syahadat.v1i1.309>.

of books based on evidence and arguments, because it provides a systematic structure for understanding.<sup>13</sup> The bandongan method is able to help students understand Arabic grammatical structures and the context of classical Islamic science.<sup>14</sup>

The bandongan method is a traditional learning approach that remains relevant, particularly in the context of Islamic boarding schools (pesantren). This method is positioned as an effective means of transferring understanding of classical Arabic texts to students. Alfinur's opinion strengthens the argument by stating that bandongan supports the learning of books based on evidence and argumentation, because the material is delivered in a structured and systematic manner by the teacher. Furthermore, the bandongan method not only helps understand the text's content but also strengthens mastery of Arabic grammatical structures and the context of classical Islamic scholarship, so that students gain a comprehensive understanding, both linguistically and substantively. Essentially, the bandongan method is a classical learning approach that is effective in helping students understand classical Arabic texts systematically, both in terms of grammar, evidence, and the context of Islamic scholarship.

## 2. Sorogan Method

In this method, the dormitory teacher emphasizes one-on-one, personalized learning. The teacher guides students individually, reading the text at a slow pace, then provides direct correction and explanation. For students who have difficulty reading the yellow text, the teacher will re-explain the meaning of words and sentences. He also emphasizes thoroughness and patience, as even small errors can affect comprehension.

According to Husna, the sorogan method has proven to be very effective as a first step for students aspiring to become scholars. This method allows a teacher to supervise, assess, and guide Arabic language students.<sup>15</sup> Zuhairini stated that the sorogan method is an effective medium for bringing students closer to the text and teacher simultaneously, which is very important in the process of understanding classical books.<sup>16</sup> The sorogan method is a traditional method applied in Islamic boarding schools to help students read and understand kitab kuning.<sup>17</sup> So It can be concluded that the sorogan method is more effective in the ability to read books<sup>18</sup> (kitab kuning).

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<sup>13</sup>Muhammad F. Alfinur, "Kitab Kuning dan Tradisinya Di Indonesia," *Siwayang Journal: Publikasi Ilmiah Bidang Pariwisata, Kebudayaan, dan Antropologi* 3, no. 1 (2024): 13–20, <https://doi.org/10.54443/siwayang.v3i1.2277>.

<sup>14</sup>Khaerul U. Fawazi, Rina D. Rahmawati and Didin Sirojudin, "Implementasi Metode Bandongan Terhadap Pemahaman Siswa dalam Membaca Kitab Kuning Di Smk Plus Moch. Luthfi Al-Manan Lombok Timur," *ALSYS: Jurnal Keislaman dan Ilmu Pendidikan* 5, no. 5 (2025): 1788-1807, <https://doi.org/10.58578/alsys.v5i5.6888>.

<sup>15</sup>Dia F. Jannah, Fauzia A. Wati and Nurul Mubin, "Kitab Kuning: Metode Sorogan dan Bandongan di Pondok Pesantren," *Jurnal An Najah: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam dan Sosial Keagamaan* 4, no. 4 (2025): 225-230, <https://journal.nabest.id/index.php/annajah/article/view/573>.

<sup>16</sup>Muhammad Y. Salam, Suharmon and Muhammad H. Shidqi, et al. "Tradisi Keilmuan Pesantren Melalui Integrasi Sorogan dan Bandongan dalam Pembelajaran Kitab Kuning di Sumatera Barat," *At-Tasyrih Jurnal Pendidikan dan Hukum Islam* 11, no. 2 (2025): 27-46, <https://doi.org/10.55849/attasyrih.v11i2.336>.

<sup>17</sup>Nur Rohmah, "Peran Metode Sorogan dalam Meningkatkan Kemampuan Santri Membaca Kitab Kuning," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam Al-Affan* 5, no. 1 (2024): 80-87, <https://doi.org/10.69775/ipia.v5i1.272>.

<sup>18</sup>Miftahuddin dan Muhammad Nuruddin, "Comparative Study of the Sorogan Method and Deliberation Method to Improve Kitab Kuning Reading Ability," *Nidhomiyah: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 5, no. 1 (2024): 26-37, <https://doi.org/10.38073/nidhomiyah.v5i1.1205>.



The sorogan method is one of the traditional Islamic boarding school learning methods that plays an important role in the learning of kitab kuning. According to Husna, sorogan is seen as very effective as an initial stage (first level) in shaping students who want to become pious, because this method requires the active involvement of students and allows teachers to carry out direct supervision, assessment, and guidance, especially in mastering Arabic. Zuhairini's opinion complements this argument by emphasizing that sorogan is able to bring students closer to the text and teacher simultaneously, so that the process of understanding classical books becomes more intensive and in-depth. Overall, the sorogan method is described as an effective individual approach in improving the ability to read and understand kitab kuning. In essence, the sorogan method is a traditional Islamic boarding school method that is effective as an initial stage in learning kitab kuning, because it allows direct guidance from teachers and strengthens students' closeness to the text and Arabic.

### 3. Grammar Translation Method

In practice, the boarding school teacher emphasizes understanding the structure of the language (nahwu-sharf), word-by-word translation and analyzing word by word. For students who still have difficulties, this is overcome by explaining and practicing language patterns, vocabulary, and sentence structures that are not yet understood.

The Grammar Translation Method is suitable for use in classical text-based learning contexts. In Arabic language instruction based on the kitab kuning, students are required to understand the message literally, which can only be achieved with a strong mastery of the rules.<sup>19</sup> The Grammar Translation Method is very effective and efficient in increasing the success of students in learning Qira'ah, as evidenced by the increasing number of students who are able to read kitab kuning according to Arabic language rules and translate them according to the applicable rules.<sup>20</sup> This method is effective in improving reading skills and analyzing text structure.<sup>21</sup> And according to Afriati, that grammar and translation methods have advantages in terms of understanding language structure and access to classical texts.<sup>22</sup>

The Grammar Translation Method is highly suitable for learning Arabic based on classical texts, particularly the kitab kuning. This method emphasizes mastery of grammatical rules and the ability to translate literally, which are the main prerequisites for accurately understanding the messages of classical texts. The effectiveness of the Grammar Translation Method is demonstrated through the improvement of students' abilities in learning qira'ah, especially in reading kitab kuning according to Arabic rules and translating them correctly. In addition, this method also contributes to improving text structure analysis skills, so that students are not only able to read but also understand the language constructions used in

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<sup>19</sup>Mustafa, "Dinamika Metode Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab," *Loghat Arabi: Jurnal Bahasa Arab dan Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 1, no. 2 (2020): 56–71, <https://doi.org/10.36915/la.v1i2.17>.

<sup>20</sup>Ahmad A. Romadhoni, Syarifuddin and Syaifullah, "Implementasi Metode Qawaid dan Terjemah dalam Pembelajaran Maharah Qira'ah Santri Pondok Pesantren Tarbiyatul Qur'an (TQ) Darussalam Talang Watugung Prigen," *Jurnal Mu'allim* 5, no. 2 (2023): 355-368, <https://doi.org/10.35891/muallim.v5i2.4135>.

<sup>21</sup>Nur A. Rahmawati, "Analisis Teoritis terhadap Keunggulan dan Kelemahan Metode Tata Bahasa-Terjemah dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab," *Al-Zayn: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial & Hukum* 3, no. 3 (2025): 3122-3129, <https://doi.org/10.61104/alz.v3i3.1787>.

<sup>22</sup>Intan afriati, Zuhir Ratmansyah and Ardiman Fadhil, et al. "Grammar and Translation Methods in Arabic Language Learning: Theory and Practice," *Madina: Journal of Islamic Studies* 2, no. 1 (2025): 1-8, <https://doi.org/10.62945/madina.v2i1.741>.

classical texts. Thus, the Grammar Translation Method is effective in learning kitab kuning because it strengthens mastery of Arabic rules and translation skills, thereby improving skills in reading and analyzing classical texts accurately.

#### 4. Reading Aloud Method

In this method, the dormitory teacher encourages students to read texts aloud in front of the teacher or peers. The goal is to practice pronouncing Arabic letters and words, improve reading fluency, and refine intonation and comprehension. Each student reads in turn, while the teacher assists to correct any pronunciation or intonation errors. Sometimes, the teacher explains difficult vocabulary and provides brief explanations.

The Reading Aloud method is known as an effective technique in language learning, including in improving reading skills and text comprehension.<sup>23</sup> According to Setiawan, reading aloud activities carried out regularly can help children to want to read, be able to read, and ultimately become fond of reading.<sup>24</sup> Reading aloud is necessary for all students because it helps students understand a reading and continuously remember the expression of words, recognize new words in other contexts.<sup>25</sup> According to Desipriani, read-aloud is an effective reading method for children as it could adjust a child's brain to associate reading as a fun activity and create knowledge that forms the basis for the child's and builds vocabulary.<sup>26</sup>

The Reading Aloud method is an effective language learning technique for improving reading skills and text comprehension. This method emphasizes regular reading aloud activities, which according to Setiawan can gradually foster students' interest in reading, starting from the desire to read, reading ability, to a love of reading. In addition, reading aloud helps students understand the contents of the reading more deeply and strengthens their memory of the pronunciation of words. This method also plays an important role in enriching vocabulary, because students can recognize and understand new words in various contexts of use. So, the Reading Aloud Method is effective in improving students' reading skills and interest by helping with text comprehension, strengthening pronunciation, and introducing new vocabulary continuously.

#### CONCLUSION

Based on the previous explanation, the author concludes in this study that the boarding school teachers at the Darussalam Islamic Boarding School in Tebo Regency overcome the difficulties of students in reading kitab kuning with various learning methods, namely the Bandongan Method, Sorogan Method, Grammar Translation Method and Reading Aloud Method. By using the above methods routinely in the boarding school, it can

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<sup>23</sup>Yurita Nihe, "Penerapan Metode Reading Aloud Untuk Meningkatkan Pemahaman Bacaan Basmallah dan Hamdallah Pada Siswa Kelas 1 SD IT An-Nahl Kotamobagu," *Al-Minhaj: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 6, no. 3 (2023): 558-568, <https://journal.iaingorontalo.ac.id/index.php/alminhaj/article/view/5495>.

<sup>24</sup>Farida A. Arianti, Badruli Martati and Deni A. Putra, "Analisis Metode Reading Aloud Dalam Pembelajaran Literasi Siswa Sekolah Dasar," *Jurnal Perseda* 4, no. 2 (2023): 142-151, <https://doi.org/10.37150/perseda.v6i2.2101>.

<sup>25</sup>H Hisyam Zaini, *Metode Pembelajaran Efektif* (Bumi Aksara, 2008), 123.

<sup>26</sup>Endah W. Rahayu and Ali Mustadi, "The Read-Aloud Method to Develop Reading Literacy at the School's Educational Park," *Jurnal Prima Edukasia* 10, no. 2 (2022): 104-113, <https://doi.org/10.21831/jpe.v10i2.47331>.

improve the ability of students in reading kitab kuning, both in terms of understanding grammar and understanding the meaning of sentences and context. In addition, the role of boarding school teachers in overcoming students' difficulties in reading kitab kuning is very helpful for students and makes a big contribution in solving the problems of students' difficulties so far.

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