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IMPROVEMENT OF PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE OF ARABIC LANGUAGE TEACHERS GRADE 1 THROUGH TA'HIL TEACHERS TARBIYATUL MU'ALLIMAT AL-ISLAMIYAH PONDOK PESANTREN WALI SONGO NGABAR

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the ta'hil program in improving the professional competence of Grade 1 Arabic language teachers at Wali Songo Ngabar Islamic Boarding School and to analyze efforts to enhance the professional competence of Grade 1 Arabic language teachers through ta'hil for Tarbiyatul Mu'allimath Al-Islamiyah teachers.

Using field research methods and a descriptive qualitative approach, this study directly observes efforts to improve teacher competence through ta' hil Tarbiyatul Mu'allimat Al-Islamiyah. The research focus includes guidance on preparation, implementation, and evaluation of learning.

The results show that the ta'hil program contributes significantly to improving teachers' abilities in mastering four language skills (*maharah*) and learning evaluation techniques. Grade 1 Arabic language teachers who participated in this program demonstrated improvements in material readiness, classroom management, and the ability to deliver lessons effectively. Positive impacts were observed not only in teacher performance but also in students ability to absorb the material. This study concludes that the ta'hil program is an effective means for Wali Songo Ngabar Islamic Boarding School to develop the professional competence of Arabic language teachers.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The role of teachers in the learning process is crucial, making improving their competency essential. This is reflected in the situation at Tarbiyatul Mu'allimat Al-Islamiyah (TMt-I), where first-grade Arabic teachers are Islamic boarding school graduates who lack specialized education or adequate teaching experience. Given the positive correlation between teacher competency improvement and student progress, the need to improve the competency of Arabic teachers at TMt-I is urgent, especially since Arabic is the primary language of daily activities and education at the institution.

Mc. Clyland emphasized the importance of 'time consciousness' or awareness of the value of time as a fundamental competency that every effective teacher must have. (Hawi, 2013) This principle is relevant to TMt-I's efforts in organizing the ta'hil program, which aims to improve the professional competence of grade 1 Arabic teachers in a relatively short time, considering their still limited experience.

A holistic approach in improving teachers' professional competence, as implemented through the ta'hil program at TMt-I, is expected to increase teachers' authority and help ensure the achievement of the expected educational goals. This study aims to determine the efforts made by the Wali Songo Ngabar Islamic Boarding School in improving the professionalism of Class 1 Arabic teachers through the ta'hil program, in addition to knowing the results of the ta'hil program in improving the professional competence of Class 1 Arabic teachers at Tarbiyatul Mu'allimat Al-Islamiyah Wali Songo Ngabar Islamic Boarding School and also the implications of ta'hil in improving the professional competence of Class 1 Arabic teachers.

According to Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning teachers and lecturers, Article 1, paragraph 10, it is stated that

competence encompasses a set of knowledge, skills, and behaviors that must be possessed, internalized, and mastered by teachers or lecturers in carrying out their professional duties. Therefore, competence encompasses a combination of knowledge, attitudes, skills, and values demonstrated by a person in carrying out their work. (Sagala, 2013)

Professional competence refers to a teacher's in-depth mastery of the learning material in their field of study. This capability encompasses a broad and comprehensive understanding, enabling teachers to carry out their duties effectively and improve educational quality standards.

These competencies don't just emerge. By mastering these professional competencies, a teacher can demonstrate high-quality performance in carrying out their role as an educator. (Sopiatin, 2010)

Uzer Usman details professional competencies into several specific indicators:

- 1.) Mastery of the foundations of education, including understanding the goals of education, the function of schools in society, and the principles of educational psychology.
- 2.) Mastery of teaching materials, including primary and secondary education curriculum, and the ability to internalize teaching materials.
- 3.) The ability to compile teaching programs, which include setting learning objectives, developing teaching materials and strategies, selecting appropriate media, and managing the teaching and learning atmosphere and interactions.
- 4.) Ability to evaluate the learning process and results that have been carried out.

All of these aspects demonstrate that teacher professional competence is a complex combination of theoretical knowledge and practical skills in the world of education. (Rusdiyana, 2015)

Meanwhile, in the Tarbiyah Amaliyah book, a teacher must have 23 characteristics:

- 1) Have noble morals, be free from bad deeds (whatever type and form), and must be able to be the best example (role model) in all actions and situations.
- 2) Have sincere (pure) intentions in carrying out educational activities, as well as a strong desire to carry out educational tasks.
- 3) Having a strong and healthy body, as well as reason (sane mind) and the power of knowledge, professional, social and spiritual competence.
- 4) Apart from all forms of negative weaknesses (badness) that interfere with his work.
- 5) Mastering educational methodology and learning theories.
- 6) Mastering the science of psychology.
- 7) Enjoys exploring various sources of knowledge to become a teacher who is rich in knowledge (ghazirul madah).
- 8) Skilled in selecting (verifying) material that is guaranteed to be scientifically valid, as well as its suitability to the context of the needs of the times, and is relevant to the brain capacity (data capture) of students.
- 9) The ability to organize (design) lesson materials in a logical, systematic and gradual sequence, as well as the ability to compile I'dad Tadris documents (Teaching Modules/RPP).
- 10) Ability to convey teaching material to the head. (brain) of students and their efforts in making students understand the teaching material.
- 11) Mastering language competency (National and Foreign) or linguistic competency, public speaking, clarity of delivery, and fluency of pronunciation.
- 12) High enthusiasm in carrying out educational and learning tasks.
- 13) A radiant face (not sour), neat clothes, and a gentle and affectionate attitude towards students.
- 14) The ability to develop portfolio-based skills for students (children) through instruments that they have prepared, so that they have relevance to the fields of art and science that are developing and of interest to students.
- 15) Have strong and good preparation for educational and teaching work and the ability to provide encouragement (motivation) to students with an approach that respects students' emotions.
- 16) Able to raise students' enthusiasm and continuity of attention (listening to lessons) in focusing their attention on learning.
- 17) Ability to control the class, and ability to foster emotional relationships between teachers and students.
- 18) Be fair and wise in treating students, especially in giving rewards and punishments.
- 19) Having a keen eye (careful) and strong attention as well as readiness (courage in trying theories, approaches and methods) to achieve perfection.
- 20) Must be patient and loving to students.
- 21) Have a clear voice (firm, loud, and not stuttering) but with substance (authoritative), and full of passion in educating.
- 22) Have the ability to determine learning objectives for the lessons taught, and master the important points that must be taught to students.
- 23) Clean clothes and body (to be an example for students). (Zarkasyi, 2014)

Arabic plays a crucial role at the Wali Songo Ngabar Islamic Boarding School, particularly at TMT-I, as the language of daily communication and instruction. In Arabic teaching and learning activities, language experts have clearly outlined four foreign language skills:

- a. Listening skills or istima'

Listening skills (maharatul istim listening skill) are the ability a person possesses to understand words or sentences spoken by others or delivered through certain media. (Saepudin, 2012)

b. Speaking skills (al-muhadatsah)

A person is considered proficient in speaking when they can pronounce sounds in a language that the listener understands, master grammar (nahwu and shorof), and use appropriate vocabulary according to the context. (Skandarwassid, 2009) This skill also includes the ability to express thoughts, ideas, opinions, desires, or feelings to the person they are speaking to. (Saepudin, 2012)

c. Reading skills (Al-Qiro'ah)

These skills can be developed through various Arabic-language reading sources, such as magazines, books, and newspapers. Through reading, learners can enrich their vocabulary and grammar, which are useful for interactive communication. (Taubah, 2019)

d. Writing skills (Al-Kitabah)

Writing is the final skill among several language skills. (Lady Farah Azizah, 2020) Mastering this skill requires a good grasp of previous language skills. This is because writing is the act of expressing one's thoughts in written form, with the goal of being understood by readers who, of course, are not present or even in the same context as the writer. (Lady Farah Azizah, 2020)

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a field research type. The qualitative method was chosen to provide a deeper understanding of the improvement of the professional competence of Grade 1 Arabic teachers through the ta'hil program at Tarbiyatul Mu'allimat Al-Islamiyah, Wali Songo Ngabar Islamic Boarding School. Location and Time of the

Research The research was conducted at Tarbiyatul Mu'allimat Al-Islamiyah, Wali Songo Ngabar Islamic Boarding School, Ngabar Village, Siman District, Ponorogo Regency, East Java Province. The research period lasted from June 2023 to June 2024. The research subjects included the director of Tarbiyatul Mu'allimat Al-Islamiyah and the Principal of MTs. Wali Songo Ngabar, mu'ahil (supervisor teachers), boarding school teachers who teach Grade 1 Arabic and also Grade 1 students of Tarbiyatul Mu'allimat Al-Islamiyah. Data collection techniques, namely data were collected through three main methods:

- a. Participatory observation: Researchers are directly involved in ta'hil activities to observe the processes and dynamics that occur.
- b. Unstructured interviews: Conducted with key informants to gather in-depth information about the implementation of the ta'hil program and teacher professional competencies.
- c. Documentation: Collecting and analyzing documents relevant to the research

To ensure data validity, this study employed several techniques, including extended participation, persistent observation, source triangulation, and auditing techniques. This study is expected to provide a comprehensive overview of the improvement of Arabic language teachers' professional competence through the ta'hil program in Islamic boarding schools.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Results

This study identified four main efforts made in the teacher ta'hil program to improve the professional competence of grade 1 Arabic teachers at Tarbiyatul Mu'allimat Al-Islamiyah (TMT-I):

1. Cultivating the Spirit of a Teacher

The ta'hil program emphasizes the importance of "ruhul mudarris," or the

soul of a teacher, as the primary foundation of professional competence. The Director of TMT-I, Ustadz Hadi Wiyono, stated that everything begins with intention. Good and sincere intentions are believed to produce positive outcomes in the teaching and learning process. This concept is instilled in new teachers through an intern program, aimed at equipping them with an understanding of the essence of being a true teacher and how to be a role model for their students.

2. Understanding and Reinforcement of Teaching Materials

Ta'hil focuses on strengthening understanding of Arabic language materials. Ustadzah Zakiyah Darojah, as the mu'ahil, emphasized the importance of mastery of the material for first-grade Arabic teachers, given their crucial role in building the students' basic understanding. The program also emphasizes mastery of four language skills: *istima'*, *kalam*, *qira'ah*, and *kitabah*. Specifically for first-grade students, greater emphasis is placed on *istima'* as a foundation for other language skills.

3. Preparation of I'dad Tadris (RPP)

TMT-I Grade 1 Arabic Language Teachers will be guided in preparing a systematic learning plan or *i'dad tadrīs* using the Herbartian approach which is used as a reference in teaching and learning activities. These steps include *muqaddimah* (introduction), *'ard* (presentation), *rabt* (association), *istimbat* (conclusion), and *tatbiq* (application). The preparation of this *i'dad tadrīs* helps grade 1 Arabic teachers prepare lessons in a structured and effective manner.

4. Evaluation of Teaching and Learning Activities

Ta'hil provides an opportunity for teachers to reflect on and evaluate their teaching practices. Ustadzah Zakiyah Darojah, the mu'ahil, emphasized the importance of learning evaluation, both to gauge student understanding and to identify areas for improvement in teachers' teaching methods.

Meanwhile, the results of efforts to improve the professional competence of grade 1 Arabic language teachers through teacher ta'hil in various aspects are as follows:

1. Teaching Preparation

The ta'hil program helps grade 1 Arabic teachers to prepare *i'dad tadrīs* (learning plans) that are in accordance with the learning steps, improve understanding and mastery of the material comprehensively, minimize the potential for errors in teaching and instill a sense of professionalism in teachers.

The Ta'hil program has had a positive impact on the teaching preparation of first-grade Arabic teachers. Through guidance in preparing *i'dad tadrīs* (teaching materials), teachers can develop more structured lesson plans tailored to students' needs. Improved understanding and mastery of the material helps teachers gain confidence in teaching, while thorough preparation helps minimize errors in delivering the material. Equally important, the program also successfully instills a sense of professionalism in teachers, which is crucial for their long-term career development.

2. Implementation of Learning

The ta'hil program contributes to the ability of first-grade Arabic teachers to implement learning in accordance with the steps of *tarbiyah*

amaliyah, using varied and enjoyable learning methods to create a communicative and interactive learning atmosphere. In terms of learning implementation, the ta'hil program has helped first-grade Arabic teachers to apply the tarbiyah amaliyah method effectively. The use of varied learning methods, such as the use of songs in delivering material, demonstrates the teacher's creativity in creating a fun learning atmosphere. The ability to create a communicative and interactive learning environment is very important in language learning. The integration of the use of Arabic in formal and informal contexts helps students become more familiar with the language in everyday life.

3. Learning Evaluation

The ta'hil program helps teachers understand the importance of evaluation as a benchmark for learning success, develop the ability to create evaluation questions that are appropriate to the material, improve skills in assessing students' academic and personality development, and use evaluation results to improve the quality of learning.

The Ta'hil program has successfully improved first-grade Arabic teachers' understanding of the importance of evaluation in the learning process. The ability to create evaluation questions relevant to the material taught helps accurately gauge student understanding. Improved skills in assessing students' academic and personality development demonstrate a holistic approach to evaluation. Most importantly, teachers also learn to use evaluation results as feedback to

improve the quality of their future teaching.

This study also identifies the implications of Teacher Ta'hil in improving the professional competence of grade 1 Arabic teachers, namely:

1. For teachers and institutions, it is able to improve teachers' understanding and mastery of material, improve teaching skills, create a professional learning culture at TMT-I and improve the overall quality of learning.
2. For the Community/Religion, namely producing quality teachers who are ready to teach in various institutions, increasing the reputation of TMT-I as an institution producing quality teachers.
3. For students in class 1 of TMT-I, it can improve mastery of maharah istima' and kalam, make learning more effective and enjoyable and build a strong foundation for learning Arabic at an advanced level.

3.2. DISCUSSION

The implementation of ta'hil for first-grade Arabic teachers at the Wali Songo Ngabar Islamic Boarding School has shown significant results in efforts to improve teacher professional competence. This program focuses on mastery of learning materials, preparation of lesson plans (I'dad Tadris), and development of Arabic language skills, especially maharah istima'. The ta'hil process involving mu'ahil (mentors) has helped first-grade Arabic teachers in strengthening their understanding of the material, developing skills in preparing i'dad tadris, and improving their learning evaluation abilities.

The analysis results show that ta'hil aligns with national education standards and relevant educational theories, including the concept of ghaaziirul maddah from KH. Imam Zarkasy and the indicators of teacher

professional competence according to Uzer Usman. This program has helped teachers update their knowledge, strengthen their understanding of the material, and develop Arabic language skills that cover the four maharah (istima', kalam, qiro'ah, and kitabah).

Despite facing several obstacles such as teacher absences and scheduling conflicts, the Islamic boarding school continues to strive to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of the ta'hil program. As a result, the professional competence of first-grade Arabic teachers has improved, positively impacting the foundation of Arabic language proficiency for students.

Teachers who have participated in this program report improvements in their understanding of the material, their delivery to students, their mastery of Arabic language rules, and their ability to maintain their competence as teachers. This has a positive impact on the learning process, with students finding it easier to understand the material

and feeling more comfortable during Arabic lessons.

The implications of the ta'hil program are felt not only by teachers and students, but also by educational institutions and the wider community. TMT-I can utilize human resources more effectively and efficiently, and has teachers who are continuously developing. The community also benefits from having teachers who are ready to participate in the learning and education process, even though they are only graduates but already have five years of teaching experience.

Overall, ta'hil has proven to be an effective effort in improving the quality of Arabic language teaching at the Wali Songo Ngabar Islamic Boarding School. However, ongoing efforts are needed to address existing obstacles and ensure consistent program implementation, so that its benefits can be optimized for improving teacher competency and the quality of Arabic language education at the Wali Songo Ngabar Islamic Boarding School.

4. CONCLUSION

- 1) The teacher ta'hil program is effective in improving the professional competence of grade 1 Arabic teachers through four main efforts: instilling the teacher's spirit, strengthening teaching materials, preparing i'dad tadaris (RPP), and evaluating teaching and learning activities.
- 2) The results of the ta'hil program are visible in three main aspects: a. Teaching preparation: Improving the ability to develop lesson plans and mastery of material. b. Learning implementation: Improving the ability to apply varied and interactive learning methods. Learning evaluation: Improving understanding of the importance of evaluation and the ability to implement it.
- 3) This program has positive implications for teachers, institutions, communities, and students, including improving the quality of learning, the institution's reputation, and providing students with a strong foundation in mastering Arabic Balsa. Teacher Ta'hil plays a crucial role in preparing competent and professional first-grade Arabic teachers, which in turn contributes to improving the overall quality of education at TMT-I.

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