

Character Education Through Arabic Textbooks at Modern Pesantren in Cirebon (Case Study at Al-Muqoddas Modern Pesantren)

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Abstract

Purpose - This study investigates the implementation of character education in Arabic language instruction at Al-Muqoddas Modern Pesantren in Cirebon through the use of the *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah* textbook. Rooted in the growing discourse on the integration of moral values within language learning, this research aims to analyze how Arabic learning can serve as an effective medium for character building in Islamic boarding school contexts. **Methods** - Employing a qualitative approach, data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, and analyzed using triangulation to ensure data validity and credibility. **Findings** -The findings reveal that the character values embedded in the *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah* textbook authored by Abdul Fatah Shabri and Ali Umar and published by Dār al-Ma'ārif, Egypt not only align with but also exceed the character education standards established by Indonesia's Ministry of National Education. The implementation of character education in Al-Muqoddas is integrated across various learning strategies, including expository, inquiry-based, contextual, and problem-based approaches. Furthermore, character internalization is reinforced through practical strategies such as modeling, habituation, experiential learning, direct advice, and disciplinary measures. **Research implications** suggest that Arabic language instruction, when enriched with cultural and moral content, offers a robust framework for instilling Islamic character values. However, this study is limited to one pesantren context and may not represent all Islamic educational settings. **Originality/value** of this research lies in its contextual exploration of how classical Arabic learning materials can effectively serve dual functions—linguistic proficiency and character development within a pesantren framework, reinforcing the inseparability of language and moral education in Islamic pedagogy.

Keywords: *Character education, Al-Muqoddas Islamic boarding school, Textbooks, Arabic learning, al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah.*

INTRODUCTION

The practicality of a calligraphy learning model lies in its ability to simplify and enhance the teaching and learning process while fostering creativity and skill development. As a delicate art form, calligraphy demands precision, patience, and creativity.¹ An effective learning model must accommodate the unique challenges of teaching this art, such as varied skill levels among learners and the need for a hands-on approach. A practical model ensures that learners can grasp essential techniques, practice efficiently, and gradually refine their skills, making the learning experience engaging and productive.

Character education is a necessity in educational institutions in Indonesia. Moreover, research results show that educational institutions have not provided an optimal impact on changing the behavior of Indonesian people.² As a result, the phenomenon of moral crisis has hit Indonesian society and the culture of incoherence between words and actions is considered common and ordinary. The practice of character education in educational institutions has drawn criticism. Educational institutions are considered not fully capable of overcoming the moral crisis.³ Education, which should aim to build a morally good society with noble character, is absent from its daily practice. Society sees Education as a means to fulfill financial needs, such as obtaining employment after completing their studies.⁴ Especially non-pesantren educational institutions, where teaching and learning activities cannot be fully designed according to the expected goals.⁵ Whereas character education has been recognized as an important component of the educational process, which aims to foster values, attitudes, and behaviors that are important for personal and social growth.⁶

Character education is a constitutional mandate. Noble morals are one of the goals of national education as stated in Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System where in principle the implementation of national education must be by noble norms. The implementation of this constitutional mandate is certainly not easy. Moreover, with the rapid development of sophisticated technology, producing moral children is much more difficult to do than just achieving cognitively.⁷ The swift march of technology as a significant catalyst in the erosion of students' values and

¹ T. T. Kao, H. S., Xu, M., & Kao, "Calligraphy, Psychology and The Confucian Literati Personality," *Psychology and Developing Societies*, 33, no. 1 (2021): 54–72.

² Ahmad Saifulloh and Jia Ying Neoh, "TQM Implementation in Character Education: Lessons Learned from Pesantren Gontor", published in *At-Ta'dib* Vol. 17. No 1, June 2022, p. 18.

³ Zubaidi, *Desain Pendidikan Karakter*, (Jakarta: Prenada Media Group, 2011), p. 2.

⁴ Safria Andy and Uqbatul Khoir Rambe, "Concept and Practice of *Tarbiyatun Nafs* in Formal and Informal Educational Institutions (A Comparative Study of UIN North Sumatra and Jabal Hindi *Thariqah*)", published in *At-Ta'dib*. Vol. 18. No. 2, Desember 2023, p. 232.

⁵ Firda Inayah, "Integrated Boarding Systems University: An Effective Formula for Creating a Good Man", dalam *At-Ta'dib*. Vol. 19. No. 2, Desember 2024, hlm. 315.

⁶ Hanafiah et al, "Character Education's Impact On Student Personality: Curriculum And School Practices Review", published in *At-Ta'dib*. Vol. 19. No. 1, Juni 2024 , p. 51.

⁷ Amirulloh Syarbini, *Buku Pinter Pendidikan Karakter*, (Jakarta: Asa-Prima Pustaka, 2012), p. 18.

morals. Technology emerges as a double-edged sword, indispensable for maintaining competitiveness yet wielding a profound impact on moral compasses.⁸

Pesantren is recognized as an original Indonesian educational institution that was established long before the colonial era.⁹ Pesantren is also considered a pioneer of character education in Indonesia and is relevant to be a model of character education in Indonesia.¹⁰ Pesantren education, as a cornerstone of Indonesia's educational system, plays a significant historical and cultural role in shaping religious understanding and national character.¹¹ This is because pesantren focuses on character development and character is the most important variable in the education pattern developed in pesantren. Even character education in pesantren is better than character education in other educational institutions where pesantren implements character education holistically, integrated, and sustainably.¹²

Research related to character education in pesantren has been widely conducted by researchers such as Mohammad Muslih,¹³ Ahmad Saifulloh,¹⁴ Herdi Gunawan,¹⁵ Abdul Muid,¹⁶ and Muhammad Fachrurrozi.¹⁷ However, their research has not touched on how character education is implemented through Arabic-language textbooks, considering that pesantren use many yellow books in Arabic where Arabic is the mainstream language of pesantren and Islamic knowledge in pesantren.

Mohammad Muslih's research examines how Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor (PMDG) Putri 1 in Mantingan implements character education during the

⁸ Hanafiah et al, "Character Education's Impact On Student Personality: Curriculum And School Practices Review", *At-Ta'dib*. Vol. 19. No. 1, Juni 2024, p. 54.

⁹ Siti Nur Hidayah, "Pesantren for Middle-Class Muslims in Indonesia (Between Religious Commodification and Pious Neoliberalism)", published in *Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies (QIJIS)*, Volume 9, Number 1, 2021, hlm. 212.

¹⁰ A. Muchaddam Fahham, "Pendidikan Karakter di Pesantren", dalam *Aspirasi* Vol. 4, No. 1, Juni 2013, p. 30.

¹¹ Abdul Hadi, Ishak Syairozi, and Marliza Oktapiani, "Revitalizing Pesantren Education to Foster Religious Moderation in Indonesia", published in *At-Ta'dib*. Vol. 19. No. 2, December 2024, p. 241.

¹² Mohammad Muslih, Muthmainnah Choliq, Ida Susilowati, Moh. Rofiq, "Eksistensi Pendidikan Karakter di Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Putri I Selama Pandemi Covid-19", published in *Journal TSAQAFAH*, Volume 17, Number 1, May 2021, hlm. 36. A. Muchaddam Fahham, "Pendidikan Karakter di Pesantren", published in *Aspirasi* Vol. 4, No. 1, Juni 2013, hlm. 29. Arif Suhendri, Meriyati, Yahya, "Implementasi Penanaman Nilai Pendidikan Karakter Melalui Metode Habitiasi di Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Putri Kampus 8", published in *Journal on Education* Volume 07, No. 01, September-Desember 2024, p. 750.

¹³ Mohammad Muslih, Muthmainnah Choliq, Ida Susilowati, dan Moh. Rofiq, "Eksistensi Pendidikan Karakter di Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Putri I Selama Pandemi Covid-19", dalam *Journal TSAQAFAH*, Volume 17, Number 1, May 2021.

¹⁴ Ahmad Saifulloh and Jia Ying Neoh, "TQM Implementation in Character Education: Lessons Learned from Pesantren Gontor", published in *At-Ta'dib* Vol. 17. No 1, June 2022.

¹⁵ Herdi Gunawan and Khaerul Fajri, "The Implementation Of Character Education Values In Islamic Boarding Schools In Banten", published in *2nd Annual International Conference on Islamic Education and Language (AICIEL)* 2023.

¹⁶ Abdul Muid, Muhammad Shohib, dan Anas Askarullah, "Character Development Strategy for Tolerance in Islamic Boarding Schools", published in *Tafkir: Interdisciplinary Journal of Islamic Education* Vol 5, No. 2, June 2024.

¹⁷ Muhammad Fahrurrozi, "Pendidikan Karakter di Pondok Pesantren", published in *TARLIM Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* Vol. 5 No. 1 Maret 2022.

Covid-19 pandemic era.¹⁸ Meanwhile, Ahmad Saifulloh's research focuses on the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) in the character education process at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor.¹⁹ Herdi Gunawan's research is on the implementation of character education at pesantren in Banten. Although he emphasized that there is no separate learning source for character education, his research has not linked Arabic language learning through the *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashidah* textbook.²⁰ Abdul Muid's research examines the character of tolerance and its development strategies at the Mathlabul Ulum Jambu Lenteng Sumenep Pesantren, where learning the values of tolerance is integrated into the formal curriculum and teaching of moral books.²¹ Finally, Muhammad Fahrurrozi's article focuses on the implementation of character education at the Ittihadil Ummah Karang Anyar Islamic Boarding School in Mataram City, which is formed through formal and non-formal activities.²²

There are many pesantrens in Cirebon. However, typologically, Islamic boarding schools in Cirebon consist of traditional and modern Islamic boarding schools. Modern pesantren were only established in Cirebon in the 20th century. Traditional pesantren, based on the Babad Cirebon, have existed since the early 14th century, when they were still called *padepokan*. The Babad Purwaka Caruban Nagari mentions that Sunan Gunung Jati followed in the footsteps of Syekh Nurjati by establishing special *padepokans* for studying Islam and spreading Islam in West Java. The *padepokan* then became pesantren that were continued by his descendants.²³ Meanwhile, modern Islamic boarding schools are generally identical to the Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor (PMDG) and its alumni pesantren. Pondok Pesantren Modern Al-Muqoddas is a modern pesantren in Cirebon which is an alumni pesantren from PMDG.²⁴ The founder of PMDG himself has a direct lineage with Sunan Gunung Jati, where the founder of the Old Gontor Pesantren, Sulaiman Djamaluddin, was the 4th descendant

¹⁸ Mohammad Muslih, Muthmainnah Choliq, Ida Susilowati, dan Moh. Rofiq, "Eksistensi Pendidikan Karakter di Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Putri I Selama Pandemi Covid-19", published in *Jurnal TSAQAFAH*, Volume 17, Number 1, May 2021.

¹⁹ Ahmad Saifulloh and Jia Ying Neoh, "TQM Implementation in Character Education: Lessons Learned from Pesantren Gontor", published in *Jurnal At-Ta'dib* Vol. 17, No 1, June 2022.

²⁰ Herdi Gunawan dan Khaerul Fajri, "The Implementation Of Character Education Values In Islamic Boarding Schools In Banten", published in 2nd Annual International Conference on Islamic Education and Language (AICIEL) 2023.

²¹ Abdul Muid, Muhammad Shohib, and Anas Askarullah, "Character Development Strategy for Tolerance in Islamic Boarding Schools", dalam *Tafkir: Interdisciplinary Journal of Islamic Education* Vol 5, No. 2, June 2024.

²² Muhammad Fahrurrozi, "Pendidikan Karakter di Pondok Pesantren", published in *TARLIM Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* Vol. 5 No. 1 Maret 2022.

²³ Fitri Meliani, Andewi Suhartini & Hasan Basri, "Dinamika dan Tipologi Pondok Pesantren di Cirebon", published in *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam Al-Thariqah*, Vol. 7, No. 2, Juli-Desember 2022, p. 303.

²⁴ <https://gontor.ac.id/daftar-lembaga-pendidikan-pondok-pesantren-yang-mendapat-guru-pengabdian-putra-gontor-alumni-tahun-2023/> accessed on Monday, January 6, 2025.

of the Cirebon Palace in the mid-19th century. While the founders of PMDG or New Gontor are the 7th descendants of the Cirebon Palace.²⁵

This research presents a study of character education through Arabic language textbooks in modern pesantren in Cirebon, with the locus at the Al-Muqoddas Modern Pesantren. Al-Muqoddas Modern Pesantren with the *Kulliyatul Mu'allimin al-Islamiyyah* (KMI) program where no less than 66% of the textbooks and language of instruction in KMI use Arabic.²⁶ Moreover, character education needs to start with knowing of good character presented in its textbooks. What character values are contained in the Arabic language textbook? And how is character education applied to students of the Al-Muqoddas Modern Pesantren through Arabic language textbooks?

METHOD

This research is qualitative research with the object of Al-Muqoddas Modern Pesantren Cirebon. As a case study, it is attempted for the researcher to be able to reveal completely and comprehensively in the form of analytical description to answer several research questions²⁷ and to be able to explain implementation character education through the Arabic language textbook *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah* at Al-Muqaddas Al-Muqoddas Modern Pesantren Cirebon.

This research uses a qualitative approach with a data collection method using in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. In-depth Interviews conducted with key informants, including pesantren heads, teachers, and students. Direct observations of pesantren activities were carried out, focusing on classroom interactions, extracurricular activities, and daily routines that reflect the integration of the character education with the Arabic language textbook *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah*. And documentation collected materials include curriculum documents, teaching materials, and policy guidelines related to character education.

The data collected through observation, interviews, and documentation were analyzed qualitatively by being arranged comprehensively and systematically based on triangulation by dialoguing data from interviews, observations, and document studies in order to obtain complete and valid information. After the data and information were collected through data collection instruments, data analysis was carried out using an interactive model applying three main steps, including data reduction, data presentation, and data verification.²⁸

²⁵<https://gontor.ac.id/telusuri-silsilah-trimurti-gontor-menapaktilasi-sejarah-nenek-moyang-ke-keraton-kasepuhan-cirebon/> accessed on Monday, January 6, 2025.

²⁶ Pradi Khusufi Syamsu, *Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Integratif di Perguruan Tinggi Pesantren*, (Ciputat: Young Progressive Muslim, 2022), p. 93.

²⁷ Noeng Muhadjir, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*, (Yogyakarta: Rake Sarashin, 1996), p. 54-56

²⁸ Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman dan Johnny Saldana, *Qualitative Data Analysis: a Methods Sourcebook*, (London: Sage Publications, 2014), p. 12-14. Lihat Dede Rosyada, *Penelitian Kualitatif untuk Ilmu Pendidikan*, (Jakarta: Kencana, 2020), p. 214.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Relationship between Pesantren and Character Education

Pesantren are the oldest places of learning in Indonesia.²⁹ Pesantren are educational institutions that are considered to have long-implemented character education for their students. The implementation of character education in pesantren is strengthened by a dormitory system where the existence of kiai and teachers become role models in the daily lives of students. Character education in pesantren is not just a narrative but has become a real application.

The existence of kiai in pesantren is not just a formality. There is a pattern of kiai-santri relations in pesantren that are not only established in the pesantren, but also established throughout life, even continued to the next generation. Character education in pesantren is carried out by instilling religious character values, worship values, jihad spirit values, moral and discipline values, role models, and trustworthy and sincere values based on the books studied.

The character education of these values is not merely cognitive but also applied in everyday life in pesantren. The methods used in forming the character of students are habituation, role models, assignments, and rewards and punishments. Empirically, it is proven that *pesantren* can educate people with good morality in all corners of the country.³⁰

The presence and relationship between the kiai and the students in the pesantren have a positive impact on the character education of the students. Conditions like this cannot be found in other educational institutions except pesantren. This means that pesantren are institutions that can develop character education more optimally. This is reflected in the practice of theoretical values obtained from book studies in the form of daily actions simultaneously. These habits can shape character naturally without being felt.³¹

In terms of the objectives of the pesantren education system, pesantren have a strong correlation with character education, where the objective of pesantren is to educate students to become Muslims who are pious to Allah, have noble morals, are intelligent, skilled, and physically and mentally healthy to become cadres of ulama and preachers who are sincere, steadfast, tough, and entrepreneurs who are useful for religion, society, and the country.³²

²⁹ M. Yunus Abu Bakar, "Pembentukan Karakter Lulusan melalui Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab di Pondok Modern Gontor Ponorogo dan Pondok Pesantren Lirboyo Kediri", published in *JOIES: Journal of Islamic Education Studies*, Volume 1, Nomor 1, Juni 2016, p. 42.

³⁰ Akhmad Qomaru Zaman, Dwi Retnani Srinarwati, and Suhari, "Leadership Model of *Pesantren* The Counteract of Religious Blasphemy Movement In Indonesia", published in *At-Ta'dib*. Vol. 18. No. 2, Desember 2023, p. 210.

³¹ Fauzan, "Peran Pesantren dalam Mengembangkan Pendidikan Karakter", published in *Al-Furqoniah*: Vol. 1 No. 1 Agustus 2015, hlm. 74.

³² Hamruni dan Ricky Satria W, "Eksistensi Pesantren dan Kontribusinya dalam Pendidikan Karakter", published in *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, Vol. XIII, No. 2, Desember 2016, p. 208.

Based on Thomas O'Dea's opinion, sociologically, pesantren have two roles. First, as a directive system; second, as a defensive system. A directive system means that religion is placed as the main reference in the process of change. Thus, religion will be able to function as the supremacy of morality that provides the foundation and strength of ethical-spiritual society when they are in dialectic in the process of change. While the defensive system, religion becomes a kind of life force that is increasingly complex in the midst of the rapid flow of change. A society that adheres to religious values will have the ability to defend itself and there will be no sense of worry and doubt in facing the challenges of life.³³

Historically, pesantren have responded to the challenges of Western colonialism that expanded into Indonesia. Pesantren continue to live and develop with the idealism of challenging colonialism. Islamic boarding schools have become reliable educational places for cadres of fighters against colonial practices. Based on this view, pesantren experienced very heavy pressure, even considered by Western colonialists as nests of rebels and threats to the comfort of colonial power in Indonesia. This happened because pesantren always taught their students to love their homeland and educate a patriotic attitude.³⁴

The view that pesantren are pioneers of character education in Indonesia is recognized by education experts such as Khairil Anwar Notodiputro, Head of the Central Research and Development Agency, Ministry of National Education, and Sofyan Sauri, Professor at the Indonesian Education University.

Khairil called pesantren a model of character education in Indonesia. Pesantren focus on character development because the character is the most important variable in the educational pattern developed in pesantren. The values taught by pesantren, according to him, are the culture of sincerity, simplicity, independence, Islamic brotherhood, national brotherhood or brotherhood, and maintaining traditional and local cultural heritage. Meanwhile, Sofyan stated that character education in Islamic boarding schools is better than character education in public schools. His view is based on the fact that character education in pesantren can be implemented well. The value of discipline in pesantren is higher than in regular schools. Students in pesantren are disciplined in various things and they greatly respect the advice of their teachers and kiais.³⁵

The values that shape the character of students are implemented by pesantren comprehensively in the learning process, the formation of pesantren culture, co-curricular activities, and extracurricular activities. It can be said that pesantren are Islamic educational institutions that implement character education in an integrated

³³ Thomas O'Dea, *Sociology of Religion*, (Jakarta: Rajawali, 1987), p. 132.

³⁴ Hamruni dan Ricky Satria W, "Eksistensi Pesantren dan Kontribusinya dalam Pendidikan Karakter", published in *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, Vol. XIII, No. 2, Desember 2016, p. 203.

³⁵ A. Muchaddam Fahham, "Pendidikan Karakter di Pesantren", published in *Aspirasi* Vol. 4, No. 1, Juni 2013, p. 30.

manner in the entire educational process starting from the learning process, pesantren management, and daily activities of students.

Al-Muqoddas, as a modern pesantren in Cirebon, since its establishment has realized that the soul of the pesantren lies in character education. The motto of prioritizing manners over knowledge is not just mere words; this sentence becomes the spirit of life in the pesantren and the foundation in the practice of pesantren education. Moreover, the pesantren is an institution that continues the relay of the prophetic mandate where the core of its teachings is to perfect human morals (*innamā bu'ithtu li utammima makārim al-akhlāq*).³⁶

Without morals, a nation will only lead itself to destruction. Because a nation will only survive as long as their morals are still there, but if their morals are lost, then they will be lost. History proves the destruction of previous nations because of neglect of morals. The presence of pesantren must also be recognized as an effort to preserve the sustainability of humanity through character education, namely complete human being (*insān kāmil*) or a universal man (*al-insān al-kullī*).

However, in terms of epistemology, Islamic boarding schools have uniqueness in character education. The Al-Muqoddas Modern Pesantren uses the Qur'an and hadith as the main sources in compiling and implementing character education. However, the Al-Muqoddas Modern Pesantren does not ignore national values or Indonesianness in character education, considering that pesantren are not only full of Islamic values, they are also full of national values, so it is natural that Islamic boarding schools are the only traditional Islamic educational institutions that continue to grow and develop in Indonesia until now.³⁷

The implementation of character education based on the pillars of Pancasila and national values in pesantren can improve the moral life of individual students, strengthen their religious beliefs, and create a stable social order, which of course requires shared values that form the basis for the existence of community life.³⁸

The diverse epistemology of character education makes the character values in the Al-Muqoddas Modern Pesantren more varied, universal, and complete. This is because character education in the Al-Muqoddas Modern Islamic Boarding School not only involves sources based on the noble values of Indonesia but also on revelation (*khabar ṣādiq*), namely the Qur'an and hadith. It is natural that many academics conclude that character education in pesantren is more optimal than in non-pesantren educational institutions.³⁹

³⁶ Interview with Director of KMI Modern Pesantren Abu Nashar Bukhori MA on Friday December 20th 2024.

³⁷ Interview with Director of Student Care at Al-Muqoddas Modern Pesantren Dimas Sawbil Haqqi, S.Th.I., M.Pd on Thursday 19th Desember 2024.

³⁸ Rina Setyaningsih, "Membangun Character Building Peserta Didik Mts Hidayatul Muhtadiin Dan Relevasinya Bagi Pengembangan Pendidikan Agama Islam", published in *At-Ta'dib*, Vol. 19. No. 1, Juni 2024, p. 107.

³⁹ Muhammad Husin, Devy Habibi Muhammad, and Ari Susandi, "The Role of Islamic Boarding Schools as Character Building in Facing the Challenges of Modern Life (Case Study in Al Barokah Boarding School, Tunggak Crème Village, Wonomerto District, Probolinggo Regency)", published in *Falasifa*, Vol. 13 Nomor 1 Maret 2022, p. 37-38.

So, the concept of character education in Islamic boarding schools is not a concept that blindly imitates the Western secular model and local culture that is contrary to Islam. Instead, it aims to produce a complete human being (*insān kāmil*) or a universal man (*al-insān al-kullī*). Therefore, an pesantren differs from a other education institution's form, concept, structure, and epistemology.⁴⁰

The Relationship between Character Education and Arabic Language

Pesantren play a very active role in producing young cadres who have potential and have skills and noble morals, although Islamic boarding schools are more identical to religious studies, it does not mean that the students are not taught general knowledge. In general, Islamic boarding schools often teach Arabic writing or Arabic books which are usually called yellow books. The students are presented with more Arabic writing than practice writing. Therefore, every student is obliged to be proficient in Arabic.

However, Arabic in pesantren is not only in yellow books. In the teaching and learning process in class, students also encounter Arabic. Moreover, in modern pesantren such as Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor (PMDG) and its alumni pesantren, Arabic has become the everyday language. Arabic becomes the character of students and forms the character of students. Moreover, the Qur'an emphasizes learning Arabic.⁴¹

Arabic is able to sharpen the mind of someone who studies it and add to his honor.⁴² In fact, understanding the Qur'an must be in accordance with Arabic.⁴³ History proves that the Arab nation when focusing all its power and efforts on the richness of the Arabic language was able to excel and surpass other nations in the world that had already advanced.⁴⁴

Imam Syafi'i (150-204 H/767-820 M)⁴⁵ and Ibn Taimiyyah (661-728 H/1263-1328 M)⁴⁶ ruled that it is obligatory for every Muslim to learn Arabic. By learning the Arabic, one can develop the character of faith in Allah and His Messenger with full understanding and awareness, so that what is said in *mahdhah* worship can be

⁴⁰ Firda Inayah, "Integrated Boarding Systems University: An Effective Formula for Creating a Good Man", published in *At-Ta'dib*. Vol. 19. No. 2, December 2024, p. 313.

⁴¹ Brig. (R) Zahoor Ahmed, *Essentials of Arabic Grammar Essentials of Arabic Grammar for Learning Quranic Language*, (Islamabad: Darussalam Publisher & Distributors, 2008), p. 1-2.

⁴² Jamaluddin Abū al-Farāj bin al-Jauzī, *Tārīkh 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb: Awwal al-Hakim Dimuqraṭi fī al-Islām*. (Mesir: Maṭḥba'ah as-Sa'adah, 1924), p. 197.

⁴³ Achmad Satori Ismail, "Hubungan antara Rumpun Bahasa Semit, Bahasa Arab, dan Al-Qur'an", published in *Al-Qalam*, Vol. 19, No. 93, April-Juni 2002, p. 62.

⁴⁴ Abū al-'Abbās Aḥmad bin Muḥammad bin 'Alī al-Fayyūmī al-Muqrī, *Al-Mishbāh al-Munīr fī Garīb asy-Syarḥ al-Munīr*, (Kairo: Syirkah al-Quds li an-Nasyr wa at-Tauzi', 2015), p. 3. Salahuddin Mohd Shamsuddin dan Siti Sara binti Hj. Ahmad, "Problems of Teaching Arabic Language to Non-Native Speakers and its Methodological Solutions", published in *Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal*, Vol. 6, No. 6, Juni 2019, p. 153.

⁴⁵ Abū Ḥamid Muḥammad bin Muḥammad al-Gazālī, *Al-Wajiz fī Maḏhab al-Imām as-Syāfi'ī*. (Kairo: Dar al-Hadits, 2015), p. 62.

⁴⁶ Aḥmad bin 'Abdul Ḥalīm bin 'Abd as-Salām bin Taimiyyah, *Iqṭidā' aṣ-Ṣiraṭ al-Mustaqīm li Mukhālāfah Aṣḥāb al-Jahīm*, Juz 1. (Riyadh: Dar Isybiliya, 1998), p. 527.

experienced and reach the level of *khusyu'*. 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb said, that Arabic is part of the Islamic religion, so learning it is a necessity because it is the door to understanding Islam and being Muslim.⁴⁷ Without understanding Arabic, a person's Islam tends to be lame and lacking in appreciation.⁴⁸

A similar statement also came from Roger Trigg who emphasized that language is closely related to a person's thinking activity where different language systems can create different thought patterns.⁴⁹ It is natural that the influence of Arabic on various languages in non-Arab communities greatly influences the way of thinking and behaving of Muslim communities throughout the world. Someone cannot become and be called a scholar if they do not master Arabic well. Whereas scholars are people who have the best character in both vertical and horizontal relationships.⁵⁰

Character education and Arabic have a close relationship. Arabic is part of the Islamic religion, while Islam exists to improve the character of mankind. The relationship between character education and Arabic allows access to character education references from Arabic sources without worrying about distortion of meaning or misunderstanding. Moreover, Arabic references related to character education are very numerous considering the richness and resilience of the Arabic language across the time and geographical boundaries of mankind.

The Al-Muqoddas Modern Pesantren takes an integral position by uniting Arabic with character education simultaneously. Arabic language sources and teaching materials are selected according to noble, wise, and prudent character values in order to encourage the character education of students to achieve their goals and targets, namely to become good human beings. The hope is that students will be able to become good people wherever they work.⁵¹

Fortunately, Arabic is closely related to Islam, so that Arabic language sources and teaching materials that support character education are widely available. The unity of Arabic with character education has existed since the time of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, then continues to develop until now which is manifested in the form of writings and books. In fact, it has become an agreement among Arabic language experts that language is culture and Arabic is Arabic culture where the Arabic culture in question is a culture that is in accordance with Islamic teachings.

The choice of Arabic as the main language in the Al-Muqoddas Modern Pesantren is related to character education. The ability to speak Arabic for students is intended so that they are able to explore the vastness of the treasury of Islamic knowledge, most of which is authentically written in Arabic, so that students do not run out of

⁴⁷ Aḥmad bin 'Abdul Ḥalim bin 'Abd as-Salām bin Taimiyyah, *Iqtiḍā' aṣ-Ṣiraṭ al-Mustaqīm li Mukhālafah Aṣḥāb al-Jahīm*, Juz 1. (Riyadh: Dar Isybiyya, 1998), p. 527-528.

⁴⁸ Nur Ali, "The Role of the Arabic Teacher in the Spread of Islam in Nusantara", d published in *Ilomata International Journal of Social Science (IJSS)*, Vol. 2, No. 2 April 2022, p. 108.

⁴⁹ Roger Trigg, *Understanding Social Science*. (Oxford: Basic Blackwell, 1985), p. 188.

⁵⁰ Muhammad Hasyim Asy'ari, *Adab al-'Alim wa al-Muta'allim*, (Jombang: Maktab at-Turats al-Islami, 1415), p. 82.

⁵¹ Interview with Director of KMI Modern Pesantren Abu Nashar Bukhori MA on Friday December 20th 2024.

knowledge in maintaining Islamic character values within themselves. By reading Arabic texts, students will continue to receive energy and enthusiasm in maintaining character values within themselves. The character education they receive is expected to continue to experience renewal and become solid in terms of knowledge, thought, and action.⁵²

The Concept of Character Education in Pesantren

The term character comes from the Latin word "character" which means nature, disposition, mental traits, disposition, personality, or morals. Character is the mental, moral, or ethical traits that characterize a person. In terminology, character means nature, disposition, mental, moral, or manners that distinguish one person from another.⁵³

Character education is an educational effort so that students can make wise decisions and practice them in everyday life. Because character education is a process of educating noble values in students both cognitively, psychomotorically, and affectively,⁵⁴ it involves the entire dynamics of interpersonal relations with various dimensions, both from within and from outside themselves, in order to provide a positive contribution to the life of society.⁵⁵

Based on Presidential Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 87 of 2017 Article 3, the values of character education include religious values, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, independent creativity, democracy, curiosity, national spirit, love of the homeland, respect for achievement, communicative, love of peace, love of reading, care for the environment, care for society, and responsibility. Character education aims to develop the potential of students to become kind-hearted people, have a noble character, and behave well; build a nation characterized by Pancasila; and develop the potential of citizens to have an attitude of self-confidence, pride in the nation and state, and love of humanity. Where character formation in learning encourages student creativity, critical thinking, and analytical skills.⁵⁶

There are 18 character values released by the Curriculum Center of the Ministry of National Education based on religion, Pancasila, culture, and national education goals such as religious, honest, tolerant, disciplined, hard-working, creative, independent, democratic, curious, national spirit, love of the homeland, appreciate

⁵² Interview with Director of KMI Modern Pesantren Abu Nashar Bukhori MA on Friday December 20th 2024.

⁵³ Dini Yanti Sakinah dan Dewi Suriyani Djamdjuri, "The Concept of Character Education From The Perspective Of Al-Qur'an And Hadith", published in Tarbawi : Jurnal Pendidikan Islam Vol. 19. No. 1. Januari-Juni 2022, p. 29.

⁵⁴ A. Muchaddam Fahham, "Pendidikan Karakter di Pesantren", dalam Aspirasi Vol. 4, No. 1, Juni 2013, p. 31.

⁵⁵ Muhammad Misbah, "Relasi Patronase Kiai-Santri dalam Pendidikan Karakter di Pondok Pesantren Ma'hadutholabah Babakan Tegal", published in Jurnal SMArT Studi Masyarakat, Religi dan Tradisi Volume 05 No. 02 Desember 2019, p. 216.

⁵⁶ Kementerian Pendidikan Nasional, *Rencana Strategis Pusat Kurikulum dan Perbukuan Tahun 2020-2024*, (Jakarta: Badan Penelitian dan Pengembangan Pusat Kurikulum dan Perbukuan, 2020), p. 8.

achievement, communicative, love peace, like to read, care for the environment, care for society, and responsibility.⁵⁷

Regarding ideal character education, Kiai Hasyim Asy'ari thinks that ideal character education is to foster a correct and comprehensive understanding of Islamic teachings and to be able to actualize them in everyday life consistently.⁵⁸ Character education has the same essence and meaning as moral education and ethical education. The goal is to shape human beings to become good individuals and good citizens.⁵⁹

In line with the above view, Mulyasa defines character education as a system of character value education for students which includes elements of awareness, understanding, concern, and integrity to implement these values, both towards God Almighty, oneself, others, the environment, and society and the nation as a whole, so that they become perfect human beings according to their nature.⁶⁰

Pesantren play a very important role in shaping the character of their students. In the contemporary era, pesantren are at the forefront of instilling Islamic moral and ethical values. The Islamic values taught to students are not only understanding religious teachings but also absorbing Islamic values in every aspect of life. Through teaching about the Quran and Hadith, pesantren guide students to integrate Islamic moral and ethical principles into their daily behavior. One of the principles of character education at pesantren is that it is not taught by way of teaching, it is inculcated by way of practice.⁶¹

Pesantren also play a role in forming noble morals in their students, such as forming students to have Islamic characters and are committed to producing a generation that not only masters religious knowledge, but also has good attitudes and morals, is disciplined, honest, and has patience. These are all values that must be practiced intensively, to create students who have Islamic characters and are useful for society in the future.⁶²

Pesantren also play a central role in creating a disciplined educational atmosphere. Starting from daily activity schedules to communication ethics, pesantren teach students to become responsible individuals and obey the norms that apply in society. Character education in pesantren is not limited to moral and ethical aspects alone, but also involves the development of religious and spiritual dimensions. Pesantren teach

⁵⁷ Kementerian Pendidikan Nasional, *Pedoman Pelaksanaan Pendidikan Karakter: Berdasarkan Pengalaman di Satuan Pendidikan Rintisan*, (Jakarta: Badan Penelitian dan Pengembangan Pusat Kurikulum dan Perbukuan, 2011), p. 9-10.

⁵⁸ Muhammad Hasyim Asy'ari, *Adab al-'Alim wa al-Muta'allim*, (Jombang: Makatab at-Turats al-Islami, 1415), p. 29.

⁵⁹ M. Yunus Abu Bakar, "Pembentukan Karakter Lulusan melalui Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab di Pondok Modern Gontor Ponorogo dan Pondok Pesantren Lirboyo Kediri", published in *JOIES: Journal of Islamic Education Studies*, Volume 1, Nomor 1, Juni 2016, p. 41.

⁶⁰ E. Mulyasa, *Manajemen Pendidikan Karakter*, (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 2011), p. 7.

⁶¹ Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, "Imam Zarkasyi's Modernization of Pesantren in Indonesia (A Case Study of Darussalam Gontor)", published in *QIJS: Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 2020, p. 185.

⁶² Ahmad Saifulloh and Jia Ying Neoh, "TQM Implementation in Character Education: Lessons Learned from Pesantren Gontor", published in *Jurnal At-Ta'dib* Vol. 17. No 1, June 2022, p. 20.

students to deepen their relationship with Allah *ta'ala*, making religiosity and spirituality a source of strength in facing life.

In addition to forming Islamic characters such as personalities who believe and fear Allah *ta'ala*, have noble morals, are useful, and serve the community,⁶³ pesantren also educate students to appreciate diversity. Tolerance becomes a value that is applied in daily interactions and creates an inclusive environment where differences are appreciated and used as a source of strength. Pesantren not only instill character values in students but also encourage them to actively contribute to society. By involving students in social activities and forming individuals who have a sense of responsibility for the welfare of humanity.

The role of pesantren in character education can be said to be unique and comprehensive considering its function is in line with character education as an educational institution that provides religious knowledge (*tafaqquh fi ad-din*) and Islamic values; a religious institution that carries out social control; and a religious institution that carries out social engineering or community development.⁶⁴ This means that pesantren in the context of character education are epistemologically more relevant and actual, and sociologically and anthropologically have a wider scope.

Implementation of Character Education Through Arabic Learning

In this section, there are several relevant discussion sub-headings to be presented, such as the curriculum design of the Al-Muqoddas Modern Pesantren based on *Kulliyatul Mu'allimin al-Islamiyyah* (KMI), character values in the book *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah*, character education strategies and methods based on the book *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah*, and the character education environment.

KMI Curriculum

Arabic is the mainstream language of education at the Al-Muqoddas Modern Pesantren. This is because the curriculum of the Al-Muqoddas Modern Pesantren is *Kulliyatul Mu'allimin al-Islamiyyah* (KMI).⁶⁵ The curriculum adapts the curriculum of the Darussalam Gontor Modern Pesantren as a pioneer of the KMI system in the contemporary era, considering that the KMI system was once popular in the pre-independence era and early independence of the Republic of Indonesia. The curriculum of KMI Gontor is adapted from two modern madrasahs: Madrasah Arabiyah Adabiyyah, Surakarta and Islam Normaal (*Kulliyatul Mu'allimīn al-Islamiyyah*), West Sumatra.⁶⁶

However, now there are very few junior and senior high school educational institutions that still apply the KMI system or *mu'allimin* schools. Only Darussalam

⁶³ Tatang Hidayat, Ahmad Syamsu Rizal, dan Fahrudin, "Peran Pondok Pesantren sebagai Lembaga Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia", published in *Ta'dib: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, Vol. 7 No. 2, 2018, p. 470.

⁶⁴ Ria Gumilang dan Asep Nurcholis, "Peran Pondok Pesantren dalam Pembentukan Karakter Santri", published in *Jurnal Comm-Edu*, Volume 1 Nomor 3, September 2018, p. 44.

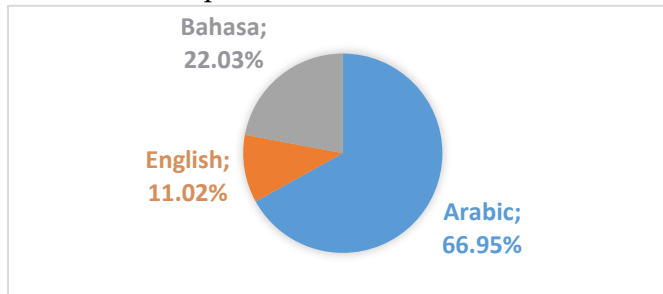
⁶⁵ Interview with Director of KMI Modern Pesantren Abu Nashar Bukhori MA on Friday December 20th 2024.

⁶⁶ Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, "Imam Zarkasyi's Modernization of Pesantren in Indonesia (A Case Study of Darussalam Gontor)", published in *QIJS: Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 2020, p. 180.

Gontor Modern Pesantren and its alumni Islamic boarding schools and Muhammadiyah still apply this education system.⁶⁷

At least 66.95% of subjects use Arabic and Arabic textbooks. While the rest, 22.03% of learning uses Indonesian and 11.02% uses English. Arabic language learning that is full of character education is very explicit in the Muthala'ah subject where the textbook used is *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah*.

Graph 1. Percentage of Language of Instruction for Subjects at the Al-Muqoddas Modern Pesantren



Character Values in *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah*

Values are everything meaningful to a person's life that is considered based on the quality of right or wrong, good or bad, beautiful or not beautiful, whose orientation is both anthropocentric and theocentric.⁶⁸ The book *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah* is full of character education values. Naturally, this book by Abdul Fatah Shabri and Ali Umar is used in the Al-Muqoddas Modern Pesantren. This book contains a collection of *fuṣṣḥā* Arabic texts and is more than a hundred years old. This book was first published in Dar al-Ma'arif Egypt, and then distributed to several countries in the world as teaching materials, especially to several Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia.

Naturally, the book *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah* has become a legendary book among students. This is because it contains educational stories delivered in a beautiful, unique Arabic style, and contains deep meaning. *Al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah* is divided into several chapters studied at all levels in the muthala'ah subject where students read, understand, memorize, and take wisdom from the stories.

The book *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah* chapter one consists of 60 titles of inspiring and educational stories. It's just that in learning Arabic using this book, not all titles are studied. Not discussing all of these titles is based on proportionality, relevance of character values, and limited learning time. Only a few titles are Arabic language teaching materials that are considered relevant to the development of the language and character of students. Moreover, students must be able to understand and memorize each text taught and submit their memorization one by one in front of the teacher.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ <https://muallimin.sch.id/tentang/sejarah/> accessed on Monday 23rd December 2024.

⁶⁸ Heri Cahyono, "Pendidikan Karakter: Strategi Pendidikan Nilai dalam Membentuk Karakter Religius", published in *Ri'ayah*. Vol. 1, No. 02, 2016, p. 232.

⁶⁹ Interview with Deputy Director of KMI Modern Pesantren Faisal Kamal, S.Sy on Friday December 20th 2024.

Table 1. Character Education Values in the Book *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah* Chapter One⁷⁰

No	Title	Character Values ⁷¹
1	<i>Al-Harīq</i>	Social care, environmental care, and solidarity.
2	<i>As-Sā'at</i>	Discipline and curiosity.
3	<i>Aṣ-Ṣabīy wa al-Fīl</i>	Compassion and animal care.
4	<i>Al-Asad wa al-Fa'r</i>	Helping each other, humble, and reciprocating.
5	<i>Ṣaid as-Samak</i>	Independent, grateful, hard-working, and environmental care.
6	<i>Ar-Rā'i wa adh-Dhi'b</i>	Honest, social care, and responsible.
7	<i>Ath-Tha'lab wa al-'Anzu</i>	Self-reliance, curious, and intelligent.
8	<i>Iṭlāq at-Ṭhuyūr</i>	Compassion, gratitude, willingness to sacrifice, and independence.
9	<i>'Abdullāh wa al-'Uṣfūr 1 & 2</i>	Compassion, chivalry, responsibility, and sacrifice.
10	<i>Walad Najīb</i>	Intelligent, appreciative achievement, and honest.
11	<i>Ḥalāwat al-Kaṣb</i>	Independent, hard-working, disciplined, and responsible.
12	<i>Ash-Sharr bi ash-Sharr</i>	Social care and responsible.
13	<i>Al-'Ain</i>	Grateful and hygienic.

Likewise, the book *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah* juz two, consists of 60 titles of inspiring and educational stories but has different stories from chapter 1. In chapter 2, not all titles are studied. Only a few titles, according to considerations of proportionality, relevance, and learning time.⁷²

Table 2. Character Education Values in the Book *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah* Chapter Two⁷³

No	Title	Character Values ⁷⁴
1	<i>Jazā' aṣ-Ṣidq</i>	Honest, grateful, thrifty.
2	<i>Al-Adab Asās an-Najāh</i>	Hygienic, intelligent, polite, humble.
3	<i>Hadiyyat al-Firān</i>	Environmentally conscious, patient, peace-loving.
4	<i>Sā'at al-Ḥā'iṭ wa al-Mizwalah</i>	Confident, independent.
5	<i>Al-Asad wa ath-Tha'lab</i>	Creative, self-reliance, trustworthy.
6	<i>Al-Mudda'i</i>	Brave, creative, and confident.
7	<i>Ḥīlat al-'Ankabut</i>	Hard-working, creative, faith, and self-reliance.
8	<i>Al-Fallāḥ wa al-Lift</i>	Hard-working, generous, sincere.
9	<i>Jamā'at al-Firān</i>	Solidarity, social awareness, compassion, helping each other.
10	<i>Ash-Shajā'at wa al-Jubnu</i>	Brave, patient, social awareness, helping each other.
11	<i>Aṣ-ṣayyād wa al-Asad</i>	Creative, intelligent, and self-reliance.

⁷⁰ Abdul Fattah Shabri dan 'Ali 'Umar, *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rasyidah*, juz 1, (Mesir: Dar al-Ma'arif, 1953).

⁷¹ Interview with Deputy Director of KMI Modern Pesantren Faisal Kamal, S.Sy on Friday December 20th 2024.

⁷² Interview with Deputy Director of KMI Modern Pesantren Faisal Kamal, S.Sy on Friday December 20th 2024.

⁷³ Abdul Fattah Shabri dan 'Ali 'Umar, *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rasyidah*, juz 2, (Mesir: Dar al-Ma'arif, 1953).

⁷⁴ Interview with Deputy Director of KMI Modern Pesantren Faisal Kamal, S.Sy on Friday December 20th 2024.

Meanwhile, the book *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah* chapter three also consists of 60 titles of inspiring and educational stories. This book is taught in the fourth grade of KMI Pesantren Modern Al-Muqoddas. Not all titles are studied. Only a few titles, according to considerations of proportionality, relevance, and learning time.

Table 3. Character Education Values in the Book *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah* Chapter Three⁷⁵

No	Title	Character Values ⁷⁶
1	<i>Kisrā wa al-Fallāḥ ash-Shaikh</i>	Social care, environmental care, patriotic, creativity, and independence.
2	<i>At-Tahāwun</i>	Discipline, responsibility, thoroughness.
3	<i>Hal Tu'āhiduni 'alā Tark al-Kadhib</i>	Honest, pious, faithful, disciplined.
4	<i>Sur'atul Khāṭir</i>	Intelligent, social care, responsible, creative, and communicative.
5	<i>Ta'affuf 'Umar bin 'Abd al-'Azīz</i>	Honest, trustworthy, accountable, and simplicity.
6	<i>At-Taqlīd al-A'mā</i>	Self-reliance, sincere, and responsibility.
7	<i>Al-Amīr wa as-Sujanā'</i>	Know shame, be honest, responsible, and appreciate honesty.
8	<i>Christopher Columbus</i>	Love to learn, intelligent, hard work, and self-reliance.
9	<i>Kadhab al-Munajjimūn walaw Ṣadaqu</i>	Self-confident, honorable guests, honest.
10	<i>Jazā' al-Khiyānah</i>	Honest, responsible, disciplined, social care.
11	<i>Al-Qāḍī wa al-Amīr</i>	Integrity, piety, love for the homeland, responsibility, and appreciation of achievement.
12	<i>'Iẓat Luqmān li Ibnih</i>	Faith, piety, devotion to both parents, appreciate achievement, love of knowledge, hard-work, independent.

Unlike the 3 chapters above, the book *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah* chapter 4 consists of 15 titles of inspiring and educational stories. This book is taught in the fifth grade of KMI Pesantren Modern Al-Muqoddas. Not all titles are studied. Only a few titles, according to considerations of proportionality, relevance, and learning time.

Table 4. Character Education Values in the Book *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah* Chapter Four⁷⁷

No	Title	Character Values
1	<i>Nukrān al-Jamīl</i>	Social care, grateful, and humble.
2	<i>Al-I'tirāf bi al-Jamīl</i>	Patriotic, honest, and generous.
3	<i>Khutbat Ṭāriq Qabl Futūḥ al-Andalus</i>	Faith, piety, resignation, and patriotic.

⁷⁵ Abdul Fattah Shabri dan 'Ali 'Umar, *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rasyidah*, juz 3, (Mesir: Dar al-Ma'arif, 1953).

⁷⁶ Interview with Director of KMI Modern Pesantren Abu Nashar Bukhori MA on Friday December 20th 2024.

⁷⁷ Abdul Fattah Shabri dan 'Ali 'Umar, *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rasyidah*, juz 4, (Mesir: Dar al-Ma'arif, 1953).

4	<i>Āyāt al-Wafā</i>	Trustworthy, honest, willing to sacrifice, love peace.
5	<i>Mā Jazā' al-Wālid min Waladīh</i>	Sincere, reciprocal, and generous.
6	<i>Tanāzu' al-Baqā</i>	National spirit, patriotic, and love peace.
7	<i>Dhkā' al-Qāḍī</i>	Intelligent, integrity, and creative.
8	<i>Fī Sabīl al-Waṭan</i>	Patriotic, sincere, and willing to sacrifice.

Character Education Strategy

Educational strategy is interpreted as a step that is systematically and planned and will be practiced in the process of educational activities to achieve a set goal. Educational strategy has an important role in achieving the success of educational goals because the educational process involves all aspects of cognition experienced by students. Several studies have concluded that the process of implementing educational strategies does not only involve cognition and metacognition but also the influence of motivation, emotion, and behavior. Therefore, educational strategy is a very important part of the success of the character education process.⁷⁸

Character education through Arabic language learning with the *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah* textbook at the Al-Muqoddas Modern Pesantren applies several strategies such as expository education strategies, inquiry learning strategies, contextual learning strategies, and problem-based learning strategies.⁷⁹ The use of expository learning strategies is because teachers play a very dominant role in character education. Teachers must be role models and good examples. This strategy is a manifestation of a teacher-oriented learning approach. To involve the participation of students, the inquiry learning strategy is not left out of the implementation of character education. The inquiry strategy is expected to be able to develop critical thinking to find answers to a problem through the active involvement of the students themselves.

Contextual learning strategy is no less important to use in character education based on the *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah* textbook. Because the textbook needs to present meaning and meaningfulness, the involvement of this strategy is inevitable. Moreover, the contextual learning strategy is considered capable of stimulating the brains of students to create patterns that produce meaning by connecting academic content with the context of their daily lives.

Problem-based learning strategy is also applied in learning *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah* for the development of students' character. This strategy is a learning that is centered on students by presenting various problems faced by students and their solutions by students.

Character education through the Arabic language textbook *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah* also presents strategies that in the process run simultaneously and continuously, these strategies include: knowing of good character, habituation of good character,

⁷⁸ Pradi Khusufi Syamsu, *Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Integratif di Perguruan Tinggi Pesantren*, (Ciputat: Young Progressive Muslim, 2022), p. 162-163.

⁷⁹ Interview with Deputy Director of KMI Modern Pesantren Faisal Kamal, S.Sy on Friday December 20th 2024.

experiencing or loving good character, practicing good character, role model, advice, and punishment.⁸⁰ Learning Arabic with the *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah* textbook applies the strategy of knowing good values and bad values and understanding their positive and negative effects. The goal is for students to have more self-awareness in doing and acting. In addition, the habituation strategy of good character is also applied in this learning. The habituation strategy begins with instilling a positive mindset towards the values of goodness and the benefits of good behavior.

Because, if students have felt the benefits of doing good things, they will internalize and love those actions. Even willing to sacrifice to do good things. So the strategy of internalizing or loving good character is applied by using the action approach which gives students the opportunity to carry out actions that they consider good.

The strategy of practicing good character is applied in learning Arabic with the *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah* textbook. This strategy is through direct action after students have knowledge and can feel the meaning of a value so that students act according to their knowledge and experience of the values they have. However, acts of kindness must also be based on awareness and love, so that they will provide a good experience in themselves.

The exemplary strategy is no less important in shaping the character of students through learning Arabic with the *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah* textbook. Exemplary behavior must start from the teacher as the central figure in education. Teachers at pesantren become role models and role models in the world of education for students. Without the teacher's exemplary behavior, the character of students will not grow and develop as expected. Therefore, teachers are emphasized to be good in thought, speech, and deed. So that in the minds of students, teachers are parent figures at pesantren who identify with their characters and are examples for their students.⁸¹

Learning Arabic with the *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah* textbook is full of advice strategies. Moreover, the contents of the book are full of educational values and good character that need to be passed on to students as the next generation of the nation. Teachers apply advice strategies by directly informing students about which values are good and which are bad. In addition, in this strategy, teachers provide guidance, input, and direction, and invite students to move towards noble values that can be accepted by all groups.

The punishment strategy is not absent in character education through learning Arabic with the *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah* textbook. This is because good character discipline will not run without punishment for violators. After all, punishment or

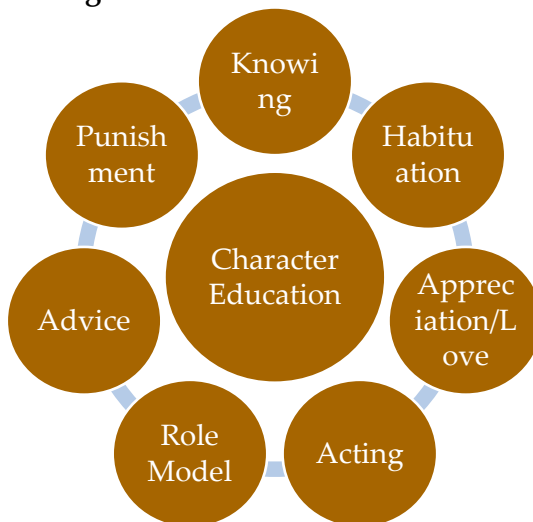
⁸⁰ Interview with Director of Student Care at Al-Muqoddas Modern Pesantren Dimas Sawbil Haqqi, S.Th.I., M.Pd on Thursday 19th Desember 2024.

⁸¹ Etika Pujianti, "Integrating Neuroscience Perspectives in Islamic Religious Education: Strategies for Developing Islamic Character in Students", published in *At-Ta'dib*. Vol. 19. No. 2, December 2024, p. 252.

discipline is part of education. However, the purpose of the punishment is to uphold good character values in students seriously and consistently.

The working diagram of the seven character education strategies above runs simultaneously and continuously as in the following diagram:

Diagram 1. Character Education Strategy



Thus, knowledge about good character or morals is not enough in character education. Moral values must be accompanied by moral character. Because, the benchmark of character education is knowledge about morals, feelings about morals, and moral actions. These three things are needed so that students can understand, feel, and carry out good values in their lives.

Character Education Environment

One of the factors that greatly determines and influences the success of the character education process is the environment.⁸² The educational environment is a form of habituation for students to apply good character values. The goal is that there will be a process of forming the character of students consistently.⁸³ The educational environment for students is everything around the students that has meaning and influence on the development of the student's character. The creation of an educational environment is based on the fact that character education requires habituation where knowledge of good character can be obtained from the environment through habituation conditioned by the environment.

Al-Muqoddas Modern Pesantren applies an educational environment to all its students both in class and in daily activities in the pesantren environment so that the character of students can be controlled from the process to its evaluation. The role

⁸² Ahmad Saifulloh dan Jia Ying Neoh, "TQM Implementation in Character Education: Lessons Learned from Pesantren Gontor", published in *At-Ta'dib* Vol. 17. No 1, June 2022, p. 24.

⁸³ Interview with Director of KMI Modern Pesantren Abu Nashar Bukhori MA on Friday December 20th 2024.

model and place of residence of teachers in the pesantren provide a positive contribution to creating a good educational environment for students.⁸⁴

Pavlov as a pioneer of the behaviorist school, which was then followed by Edward L. Thorndike with the theory of the law of effect, and continued by B. F. Skinner with the theory of reinforcement, considered that engineering the educational environment is an effective way to develop the character of students. Although the opinion above is refuted by the cognitive school which states the importance of active learning, students are the ones who regulate and determine the educational process, the environment is not the determinant of the beginning and end of positive or negative educational outcomes. According to the view of this school, when a student receives stimulus from his environment, the student makes a choice according to his interests and needs, interprets it, and connects it with his previous experiences.

To implement a character education environment, Al-Muqoddas Modern Pesantren creates daily, weekly, semester, and annual activity programs. These activities aim to make students have good character in thoughts, words, and actions. To achieve these goals, Al-Muqoddas Modern Pesantren adds supporting factors such as the existence of student organizations in disciplining students; the need for teachers, mentors, and directors as role models for character education; and regulations that support the implementation of character education.⁸⁵ The creation of an environment is believed to be able to help students in forming their character better. Because, what is seen, heard, and felt by students must have educational value.⁸⁶

Creating a character education environment is important to create a conducive learning situation. This environmental approach is a learning approach that seeks to increase the involvement of students through the utilization of the environment as a learning resource. This approach assumes that learning activities will attract the attention of students if what is learned is taken from the environment so that what is learned is related to life and is beneficial to the environment.

No rose without thorn. Al-Muqoddas Modern Pesantren is not free from obstacles in implementing character education through the Arabic language textbook *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah*. Maintaining consistency in integrating character education in Arabic language lessons is an important thing to note and is not easy. Sometimes teachers focus more on Arabic language materials and rules. As a result, the wisdom of the stories taught gets less attention or little emphasis. For this reason, Al-Muqoddas

⁸⁴ Interview with Director of Student Care at Al-Muqoddas Modern Pesantren Dimas Sawbil Haqqi, S.Th.I., M.Pd on Thursday 19th Desember 2024.

⁸⁵ Interview with Director of Student Care at Al-Muqoddas Modern Pesantren Dimas Sawbil Haqqi, S.Th.I., M.Pd on Thursday 19th Desember 2024.

⁸⁶ Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, "Imam Zarkasyi's Modernization of Pesantren in Indonesia (A Case Study of Darussalam Gontor)", published in QIJS: Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies, Vol. 8, No. 1, 2020, p. 193.

Modern Islamic Boarding School conducts learning evaluations every week to maintain teacher consistency in teaching and implementing character education.⁸⁷

Individual differences in students are also an obstacle in character education through Arabic language learning through the book *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah*. There are several notes for teachers to overcome individual differences in students: *First*, teachers must understand the learning style of each student so that teachers can adapt appropriate teaching methods and media; *second*, teachers, in overcoming individual differences, need to provide a personal approach to each student; *third*, individual obstacles occur because students feel incapable or unmotivated, so it is important for teachers to provide support and motivation to each individual student; and *fourth*, teachers also need to actively involve students in the learning process. Giving them the opportunity to participate, share experiences, or provide input will help them feel more involved and motivated in learning.

CONCLUSION

Al-Muqoddas Modern Pesantren in Cirebon is an pesantren that has a strong commitment to the character education of its students, so that character education is embodied in Arabic language learning through the *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah* textbook. This book by Abdul Fatah Shabri and Ali Umar published by *Dar al-Ma'arif* Egypt is full of character education values so that it exceed the character education values set by the Ministry of National Education. The character education values taught in the book *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah* include: faith, piety, religious, respect to the parents, honesty, patriotic, integrity, trustworthiness, intelligence, sincerity, patience, affection, creativity, mutual assistance, national spirit, humility, reciprocity, independence or self-reliance, gratitude, integrity or consistency, hard work, care for the environment, discipline, love of reading, love of knowledge, curiosity, social concern, responsibility, alertness, thoroughness, willingness to sacrifice, love of peace, chivalry, communicative, tolerance, deliberation, have a sense of shame, and appreciation of achievement.

Character education at the Al-Muqoddas Modern Islamic Boarding School is carried out simultaneously and continuously. In addition to implementing expository education strategies, inquiry education strategies, contextual education strategies, and problem-based education strategies in Arabic language learning through the *al-Qirā'ah ar-Rashīdah* textbook for understanding the values of character education, the Al-Muqoddas Modern Islamic Boarding School also implements reinforcement strategies including knowing of good character, habituation of good character, appreciation or love of good character, practice of good character, role models, advice, and punishment.

⁸⁷ Interview with Deputy Director of KMI Modern Pesantren Faisal Kamal, S.Sy on Friday December 20th 2024.

This research supports the opinion that character education and the Arabic language have a close and integral relationship. The unity of both can be seen from the perspective of cultural competence in Arabic language learning, where cultural competence is interpreted as Arabic culture that does not conflict with Islamic values. Several scholars who support the above opinion include: ‘*Abdurrahmān bin Ibrāhīm al-Fawzān, Mukhtār Ṭāhir Ḥusain, and Muḥammad Abdul Khāliq Muḥammad Faḍl.*

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