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The Concept of Calligraphy Learning at the Pesantren for the Fine Arts and Calligraphy of the Qur'an (PSKQ) Modern Kudus

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ABSTRACT

Calligraphy is one of the Islamic arts that has received great attention from Muslims. Calligraphy as an Islamic art is the most important aspect of Islamic science, the Arabic Qur'an is an obligation to study Arabic grammar. One of the skills in Arabic grammar, namely Maharah Kitabah, calligraphy is to improve Arabic grammar according to the rules, both in terms of length, short in the number of letters to be stylish and beautiful. Modern Kudus Islamic Arts and Calligraphy Islamic Boarding School (PSKQ) provides a platform for studying the art of calligraphy in a systematic, effective and efficient manner. The intent and purpose of this research is to find out the learning system that exists in the modern PSKQ holy boarding school. From the results of the literature review, it was found that the art of calligraphy plays an important role in writing skills that can be expressed through writing and improve the grammar of the appropriate rules as beauty in writing. Methods of teaching the rules include tracing, imitating and modifying them using the Syauqi and Izzat styles.

Keywords: Calligraphy, Modern PSKQ



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Introduction

Arabic is one of the subjects that almost exists at every level of education, Arabic language learning is the most important aspect as the key to Islamic knowledge, therefore it is very important for Muslims to learn Arabic properly and correctly. when it comes to Arabic language, it cannot be separated from the four maharahs, namely maharah al-istima', maharah al-kalam, maharah qiraah and maharah kitabah. (Fauzi & Thohir, 2020). These four maharah are skills that must be learned to improve students' ability in language, both from oral and written.

Maharah kitabah is one of the most important skills in the Arabic language learning process. In maharah kitabah there are several groupings, namely *Imla'*, *al-khat* also called calligraphy, and *Insyah* which is called composing. (Fauzi & Thohir, 2020.). Maharah kitabah is one of the skills that many students have not mastered in the aspect of writing so that in writing a lot of Arabic writing comes out and is not in accordance with the rules. (Fauzi & Thohir, 2020.). Arabic writing is commonly referred to as calligraphy (*khat*), which means beautiful writing.

Calligraphy is an Islamic art that should be developed. Calligraphy art is something worth talking about. It is even called the art of Islamic art which shows that calligraphy has a high meaning because the Qur'an in the order of language has a language full of meaning and its position cannot be doubted in space and time for Islamic civilization and its culture. (Shiddiq, 2022).

The purpose of maharah kitabah is to complement every skill in Arabic, Arabic writing is very important to learn and understand students as a way to improve grammar in accordance with the rules that have been written by experts in an Islamic civilization and culture, therefore it is important for students to know the methods of learning calligraphy both from writing and the kinds of calligraphy art.

In the current era, there are many boarding schools that complement religious education with religious material and the talents and interests of students. Among them is the Modern Holy Quran Calligraphy and Fine Arts Boarding School (PSKQ). This boarding school was established in 2007 founded by Muhammad Assiry who has a mission to become a mecca for Islamic fine arts and the best calligraphy in the world. (Shiddiq, 2022). Calligraphy learning is a process for students to learn better. calligraphy is a tool that can express feelings in writing as an expression and communication tool in media with images and writing.

Therefore, calligraphy is an Islamic art as a source in the learning process to improve the quality of maharah kitabah skills so that students are able to understand the rules in every Arabic writing and are able to make expression and communication tools in the form of information and knowledge in recognizing Islamic art and culture.

Research Methods

This study is a literature review research conducted by collecting data, reading and taking data from sources in the form of books and scientific reports related to the object of this research, to analyze and describe the concept of calligraphy learning. The data collection method is directed at collecting textbook references that are neatly written in softfile format, as well as previous research journals that are in accordance with the topic of this study.

Results and Discussion

A. Definition of Calligraphy

Talking about Arabic calligraphy should start with understanding the meaning of writing. Calligraphy comes from two words, kallos and graphein, which means beautiful writing. (R.Khoiri Ilham, 1999). In Arabic, it is called *khat*, which means lines or pen strokes that form handwriting and is often referred to as *fann al-khath* in the sense of art that refines writing or improves graffiti. (R.Khoiri Ilham, 1999).

Sheikh Sham al-Din al-Afkani gives an understanding: calligraphy is a science that introduces the forms of single letters, and their locations, and the procedure for assembling them into a beautiful writing and arranged according to the rules. (R.Khoiri Ilham, 1999). It is mentioned in the book entitled *Al-Qur'an and Arabic Calligraphy* that Muhammad Thahir ibn 'Abd al-Qadir Al-Kurdi collected as many as seven kinds of definitions or *khat* and concluded that calligraphy is a skill to arrange the fingertips by utilizing a pen in a certain manner. (R.Khoiri Ilham, 1999). In the sense that the "pen" in question is the center of the movement of the fingertips, while the "certain procedure" encompasses all types of writing rules in calligraphy. (R.Khoiri Ilham, 1999).

While the word Arab refers to a community that comes from the Semitic family of nations attributed to Sam bin Noah. Located on the Arabian Peninsula, it is called the Arabian Peninsula because it is surrounded by seas and rivers. Geographically, the Arabian Peninsula is located in the southwestern part of the Asian continent within the borders on the north with Iraq and Syria, on the south with the Indian Ocean, on the east with the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman. (R.Khoiri Ilham, 1999).

There are many scholarly opinions regarding the origin of Arabic calligraphy. Some are based on data taken from past civilizations and cultures; others rely on mystical beliefs because this opinion does not find its scientific beginnings. Even so; it is mentioned in the book *Al-Qur'an and Arabic Calligraphy* that it is agreed that Habibullah Fadhaili said, writing including Arabic calligraphy is not created suddenly in one moment in a perfect state,

but Arabic writing or calligraphy must go through a long process gradually. (R.Khoiri Ilham, 1999).

Kamil Al-Baba explained that some experts think that Arabic writing comes from the root fragments of *theyani* writing, because of the similarity of Arabic letters with the letters *ofyani*. Another opinion says that experts in the field of language in 1904-1905, in Sinai, managed to get some carvings written with writing that is close to Egyptian Hieroglyph writing, from here, historians argue that Arabic calligraphy comes from ancient Egyptian *hieroglyphs* that developed in 3,200 AD. (R.Khoiri Ilham, 1999).

Compared to other Islamic arts, calligraphy occupies the highest position, and is a very distinctive expression of the Islamic spirit. Therefore, calligraphy is often referred to as "the art of Islamic art" (Brier & lia dwi jayanti, 2020; Shiddiq, 2022). This qualification is appropriate because calligraphy reflects the depth of meaning of art, whose essence comes from the values and concepts of faith because the writing of the Qur'an is in Arabic, so calligraphy is inseparable from the Qur'an and Islamic civilization. (Brier & lia dwi jayanti, 2020). In addition to honing the creativity of intuition and imagination in creating works, it is very important to explore the appreciation and practice of religion intensely, so that emotions and intellect are in harmony and harmony between artistry and faith. Therefore, calligraphy has a great influence on other forms of artistic expression or in other words, on cultural expression in general.

One of the objectives of learning Arabic is for Santri to be able and correct in Arabic, namely writing proficiency (maharah kitabah), the great oman mubarak revealed that: There are many goals of calligraphy lessons, namely, for education, learning, and those related to student character, where students are able to write and read Arabic sentences. Arabic language has also entered one of the characteristics of the madrasa, including. *First*, it contributes to the learning of maharah kitabah and qiraah because calligraphy is a process of perfecting reading and writing; *second*, to write in a form that is clearly read and can distinguish letters from other letters; *Third*, to train speed in writing without crossing the limit, so that the speed of writing does not damage the beauty of calligraphy; *Fourth*, getting students used to controlling their hand movements easily, lightly and maintaining beautiful writing skills; *Fifth*, getting students used to having good behavior such as cleanliness, and keeping away from bad habits such as putting pens in their mouths, dirtying clothes or notes; *Sixth*, making it easier for others to read every writing; *Seventh*, Careful in each position of the letter, scratching the composition of each shape of the angle and curve. (Mustafa, 2020).

B. Calligraphy Learning at PSKQ

Pesantren Seni Rupa dan Kaligrafi Al-Qur'an (PSKQ) Modren Kudus is a boarding school that offers education that focuses on developing the art of Islamic calligraphy. Along with its development, this pesantren also complements its curriculum with visual arts education. So that it becomes a differentiator from the Calligraphy Education Institute (Lemka) Sukabumi Calligraphy School (Sakal) Jombang. (Shiddiq, 2022).

The materials taught in the pesantren include decorative calligraphy, mosque calligraphy, carving, painting, calligraphy batik, crafts, sculpture, yellow book studies, tilawatil Qur'an. (Shiddiq, 2022). PSKQ is the only and first art boarding school in Indonesia that combines pure art and calligraphy as a learning model for its curriculum. So that the learning process students can receive subject matter more systematically, effectively and efficiently. It is proven that many of PSKQ's graduates have won competitions up to the ASEAN level and become successful entrepreneurs.(Abdurrahman bin, 2012). It was mentioned that PSKQ is a source center that is in great demand by students to learn the art of pure calligraphy and diversity in all arts both from painting, sculpture which is of interest to students.

The art of calligraphy taught by PSKQ Modren Kudus lessons in Arabic calligraphy rules ranging from *Naskhi* and *Tsuluts* in the style of Muhammad Syauqi Affandi, to *Diwani* and *Riq'ah* in the style of Muhammad Izzat among others: *First, Khath Naskhi* is referred to as *khath* that has been perfected in a beautiful form by the famous Arabic calligrapher named Al-Wazir Abu Aly Muhammad ibnu Muqlah and his brother Abu Abdullah Al-Hasan who created naskhi rules both in terms of length, shortness, and letter spacing as well as a very neat style and rhythm. Khat Naskhi is writing that is easy to read and this is one of the materials that must be learned by PSKQ students.

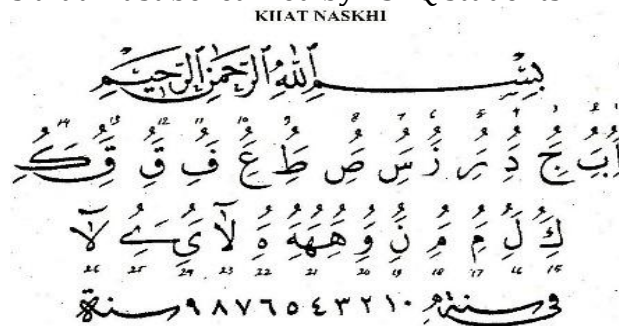


Image 1 PSKQ Modern Khat Naskhi

Second, Various kinds of khat are known such as *Khath Tsulus* which is often used for writing the Qur'an. Variations of khath tsulus ornamentation were developed by Ibn al-Bawab and Yaqut. And this writing is assumed to be the writing of scholars.



Image 2. Khat tsulus PSKQ MODERN

Third, *Pharisaic Khath*, a script developed by Persian Arabic scholars, which gave birth to its own style with letterforms that lean more to the right. It is widely used for writing literary books, magazine names, and magazine titles. It is often used by Turkey, Pakistan, Persia.



Image 3 Khat Farisi PSKQ Modern

Fourth, *Khath Diwani*, developed from *Riq'ah* writing to *musalsal* writing in which letters are intertwined, then increased to *khath sulthaniyah* and *khath hamayuni*.

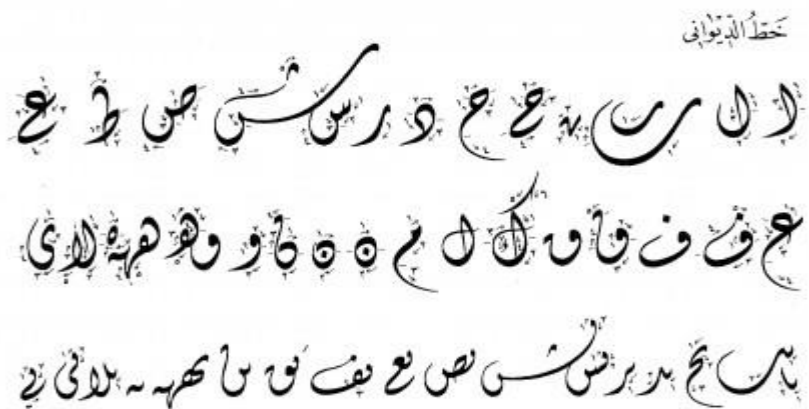


Image 4 Modern PSKQ Diwani Jali Khat

Fifth, *Khath Riq'ah*, writing that can be written quickly, *Khath* is often used in the environment of Islamic universities such as Al-Azhar University and Darul Ulum Cairo.

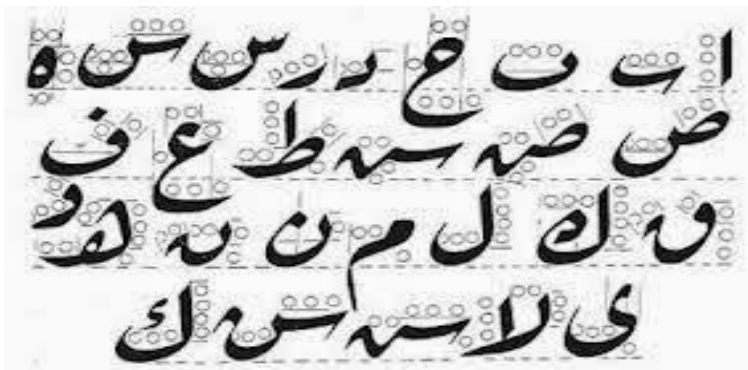


Image 5. Modern Khat Riq'ah PSKQ

Sixth, Khat Kufi, which had existed before Islam and was developed with various variations by the Abbasid Dynasty, was often used for the decoration of mosque walls, gates, and kubbahs. (Angga Saputra, 2016; Shiddiq, 2022)



Image 6. Modern Khat Kufi PSKQ

Apart from the calligraphy mentioned, PSKQ Modren Kudus adds a contemporary style that is more directed towards the tendency of the theme, namely two-dimensional (two-dimensional) or three-dimensional (three-dimensional) works that present elements independently and are supported by other elements in aesthetic unity with appearances as a style of expression, media and techniques.

PSKQ Modren Kudus uses the Turkish Usmani method with a combination of archipelago styles popularized by H. Muhammad Assiry Jasiri as the first learning method in Indonesia. Modern PSKQ is also an IT-based pesantren using the *boardingschool* system, where all students live in the boarding school environment, obeying the rules and following the provisions of the activities under the supervision, control and guidance of the administrators. PSKQ Modern applies two kinds of learning systems for students as follows:

In-Class Learning System

Learning is held every day and is closed on Friday. Santri will be given learning material every 09.00 WIB until 16.00 WIB in the pesantren classroom. This system is implemented so that students focus more on each

material taught by ustadz/ustadzah through a system including. *First*, try out exams twice a week as an evaluation to improve the learning system; *Second*, students will be taught by teachers about the rules of easy and light letters and the processing of paintings in various media such as metal, brass, wood, glass and other media; *Third*, students are given an explanation and understanding of the rules of the Turkish Usmani calligraphy style, as well as mastery of various styles of single khat, proposition, volume, layout and line elements; *Fourth*, students are also taught various naghmah styles such as the sound of sentences and the beauty of sound when reading the Qur'an and the deepening of the yellow book as a provision for students when plunging into society.

C. Learning System Outside the Classroom (Field)

The learning system in the field emphasizes students who are considered to have mastered every material that has been taught in the classroom. Then the students are sent to the field to practice the knowledge they have learned and obtained in class. The learning system in the field includes. *First*, meeting calligraphy figures, painting artists to historical places that store a lot of culture in Kudus and surrounding cities; *second*, participating in various national and international calligraphy competitions and activating art exhibitions to increase the creativity of students; *Third*, students are given entrepreneurship training and distribution of student works to the market to introduce their calligraphy; *Fourth*, there is a PPL (Field Experience Practice) program by making calligraphy in various mosques spread throughout Indonesia together with Assiry Art. (Nur Siti, 2020).

D. Characteristics of Islamic Boarding Schools

Pesantren is defined as a traditional Islamic educational institution as an aspect to study, understand, live and apply Islamic values in everyday life. (Julhadi, 2018). According to Syukri Zarkasyi, a pesantren is an Islamic educational institution that has a kiai as an educator and central figure, a dormitory as a place to live for students, and there are students, study rooms, and mosques (Julhadi, 2018). Pesantren is an Islamic educational institution that must have the basic characteristics of pesantren, namely kiai, santri, book teaching, dormitories, and mosques. The characteristics of pesantren are described as follows, *first*, having a kiai, kiai as a central figure has an important influence in the pesantren education system, the title of kiai as a religious expert is given by the local community who is recognized for his knowledge and kiai is also the caregiver of the hut who is respected to be a role model for his students; *second*, children who study in pesantren to gain religious knowledge; *third*, teaching classical books usually called "yellow books" such as nahwu, shorof, hadith, fiqh, tafsir, Sufism and ethics, and other

branches; *Fourth*, dormitories as a place to live for students which is a characteristic of pesantren that is different from other education; *Fifth*, mosques and study rooms are elements that cannot be separated from pesantren and are considered the most appropriate place to educate and teach students, especially in performing the five daily prayers and Friday prayers, which basically the mosque is not only limited to a place of worship but can occur the process of interaction between kiai and students (Julhadi, 2018).

Conclusion

Calligraphy is a science that introduces writing the basic forms of letters and how to apply the rules into a beautiful and neatly arranged writing. Calligraphy is the art of Islam because the writing of the Quran is in Arabic, so calligraphy is inseparable from the Qur'an and the history of Islamic civilization. Calligraphy occupies the highest position that has a depth of meaning as one of the Arabic language skills, namely maharah kitabah and which can make a means of communication and expression through writing.

Pesantren Seni Rupa dan Kaligrafi Al-Qur'an (PSKQ) Modren Kudus develops the talents and interests of students in the field of Islamic art, namely Calligraphy using the Syauqi style and the Izzat style in various kinds of *khath* such as *Khath Naskhi*, *Khath Tsulus*, *Khath Farisi*, *Khath Diwani*, *Khath Riq'ah* and *Khath Kufi* and raises cadres in the dissemination of the art of calligraphy in the world to become the best calligraphy art pesantren in Asia and in demand from students in order to participate in learning the art of calligraphy.

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