

# Sign Language Skills of Teachers in the Subject of Islamic Education

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**Abstract:** This study aims to examine the extent of the sign language skills of teachers teaching Islamic Education subjects. Apart from that, this study also reviews 3 aspects, namely teaching strategies, teacher communication, and teaching aids. Two Islamic Education teachers and 30 students with hearing loss disorders from a school in Melaka are the samples in this study. A sample of students viewed the achievement of their Islamic Education exams. The sample of students also answered probing questions. The study tools used consisted of a set of quizzes that were analyzed through descriptive statistical methods when confusion and attention were analyzed by the method of nursery rather than sign language expert teachers. The study shows that the signaling skills of Islamic Education teachers in teaching and learning need to be improved. They need further training to improve communicating using sign language. The curriculum of teacher training in Islamic Education that will teach students needs to be supplemented by sign language courses.

**Keywords:** *stage of teacher signaling skills, achievement of Islamic education subjects, teacher communication*

## INTRODUCTION

Communication is an educational process because most of the teaching and learning session involve the communication process. The process of teaching and learning for students with hearing disability is implemented through a holistic approach in teaching. According to Hallahan, Kauffman & Pullen (2012) the use of whole communication method is an effective approach to the teaching and learning process. The Islamic Education Curriculum is drafted based on the Islamic Education Philosophy to achieve its goals (Ministry of Education Malaysia 2002) and the sign language in Islamic Education involves the integration of the system, the Rumi alphabet system, the Jawi alphabet system (Hamdi Ishak 2010). Communication is one of the factors in ensuring effective of implementation in teaching session for students with hearing disability (Mayer et al. 2002).

A similar study was conducted to examine the mastery of teacher's sign language skills in a study conducted by Amina VP Hamzah (2016), she studying the pedagogical skills of teachers who teach students with hearing problems to focus on the use of teachers' Communication and All Languages (KTBM). However, there are some issues that arise about teacher's sign language skills. The findings of Mohd Hanafi (2005) show that most Islamic Education teachers do not know how to communicate using the Malay Language Code (KTBM) and it is difficult to explain the abstract words while teaching. Thus, this study was conducted to look at teachers' sign language skills in teaching for Islamic Education subjects with support from student's achievement decisions and student's perceptions of hearing disability in teaching Islamic Education for teachers in learning process.

## **RESEARCH OBJECTIVE**

- i. To identify the level of sign language for Islamic Education teachers
- ii. To review the way of using and delivering sign language in teaching Islamic Education subject
- iii. To identify student's achievement in Islamic Education subject

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study was used mix methods which are qualitative and quantitative method. The research questions in this study are regarding to the level of mastery of Islamic Education in sign language skills, the use and delivery of teacher's sign language affect the teaching and learning, as well as the achievement level of students with hearing disability in the examination.

Researcher has used a number of methods to gather information to gain an accurate picture of the mastery of sign language in teaching. For an example, researcher make an interview session with Islamic Education teachers, distribute questionnaires to the students with hearing disabilities to assess their perceptions of Islamic Education subjects and observations were made into two sections: observations on teacher in teaching as well as examination scores for hearing disability students. According to Creswell (2012) the combination of these two approaches gives the researcher an advantage in obtaining information and reinforcing the findings.

The population in this study consisted of two special education teachers that teaching Islamic Education subject and 30 students with hearing disability at a school Malacca. The selection of sample in this study was using simple sampling method. According to Neuman (2011) the main rationale for choosing this method is that it is using low cost, convenient and easy to obtain. Based on a study conducted on the quantitative design of validity and reliability, it was performed using Statistical Packages for The Social Sciences (SPSS) software using the Cronbach Alpha method. While qualitative method was gained from the credibility of a qualified teacher in sign language skills which is a signalman for the court.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### ***The level of mastery of Islamic education in sign language skills and the use and delivery of teacher sign language affects teaching and learning.***

Findings from the checklist of use the sign language in teaching include teaching strategies, use of teaching aids and communication.

#### *Teaching Strategies*

Islamic Education teachers have used several teaching strategies with combination of sign language. This can be seen by teacher 1 and teacher 2 where they are using visuals, storytelling and acting by incorporating comedy in teaching and learning. According to Azimi Hamzah (2007) through the knowledge and appreciation of students, teachers can develop and implement proactive steps to enhance understanding and appreciation of their learning.

"So one of the ways is to tell my students until now that my students still remember what I told them ..." (**Teacher 1**)

"We should use a little bit of amicable imagery to explain to them ..." **(Teacher 2)**

However, these teaching and learning activities are more interesting with the use of induction sets. Through this set of induction teachers can help students with hearing disability to think about the learning to be learned. This is in line with what Shahabuddin (2007) points out as induction sets are the methods or means which a person begins his or her education.

### *Teaching Aids*

Islamic Education teachers use visual materials as an approaches way to engage students with hearing disability on Islamic Education subjects. This study also found that although teachers used pictures and visual materials, they still explained to students about the pictures and videos with a combination of sign language. This was supported by Yusri Mat Johor (2004) which using a computer-based teaching method with a combination of gestures to enhance student interest in teaching.

"... I'm going to open a video for them to understand better." **(Teacher 1)**

"I will use the audio visual materials. I use and ICT to the fullest..." **(Teacher 2)**

Therefore, this study shows that the level of mastery of the sign language using the computer helps to improve student's understanding. In addition, teachers are encouraged to record the use of teaching aids in order to see the effectiveness and improvement towards the use of material with the combination of gestures used and even through the recording the teachers can improve their use of sign language.

### *Teacher's signal communication*

The findings of this study show that teacher 1 and teacher 2 use the whole method of communication in teaching and learning. Teachers have combined face-to-face mimics, speech, finger-spelling, and the Malay Language Code in communicating with students with hearing disability. In line with the previous study Munyati (2010) found that 94.5% of using overall communication well was easing the teachers in giving information and 83.3% used of it very effectively in teaching and learning for students with hearing disability.

"Ok! First I use the KTBM method which is Malay language handwriting, second we need to talk too. Third I am using facial expression...." **(Teacher 1)**

"I also use the whole communication, I have to use it in order they to make them understand ..."  
**(Teacher 2)**

Based on this study it is recommended that a committee should be set up for an Islamic Education subjects for students with hearing disability. This is because there are many words that have no signal. The absence of sign language in this teaching and learning may cause students with hearing disability to be less interested in learning something because they do not understand the lessons being presented (Cooper, Sherly, Jody, Cripps, & Joel, 2013).

### ***Level of achievement of Islamic Education students with disabilities and perceptions of students toward teaching and learning Islamic Education subject***

Briefly through the record of the end-of-year examination of students with hearing disabilities in the integration school for hearing problems, the level of student achievement is satisfactory that is 17% of students received grade A in the final examination. Then, followed by 9 students with hearing disability achieve grade B and C with a total of 18 students with 30%, then 20% who received grade D in the final year examination of 6 students but also a student with grade E with 3.3% percentage. Previous studies have shown that students with hearing disability have the same cognitive abilities as typical students (Easterbrook & Baker 2002).

In order to support the above findings, the study of Slike and Johnson (2012) states that although the types and degrees of hearing disability are different, they will still affect the development and functioning of individuals under various circumstances. Teachers' knowledge in Islamic Education and their ability to teach are also helpful in improving student achievement. This was proved in 50% with the average 3.80 students with hearing disability agree that teachers are capable of communicating religious knowledge. The findings in line with previous studies by Davies (2010) suggest that lesson planning should be explicit, clear and not give instruction at the same time.

### **SUGGESTIONS**

As a result of this study the researcher needs to find more Islamic Education teachers in order to cover the scope of this study and to find the problems as detailed and comprehensive to Islamic Education teachers. In addition, there is proposal to examine the suitability of the Islamic Education curriculum for students with hearing disability. It is based on the findings of the study that many of the contents of Islamic Education teaching are not taught by teachers. In the opinion of Islamic Education teachers, they only take the most important content to teach their students as examples of prayer, fasting, and so on. Finally, researcher also proposed to study the need for additional Islamic Education signal code to facilitate the teaching and learning of teachers in this subject. This is because based on the findings of this study, teachers of Islamic education will use the fingerspelling method in teaching because there is no signal code in some words.

### **CONCLUSION**

Teacher's sign language skills required an extensive mastery in teaching students with hearing disability. A literature review was conducted to get an accurate picture of the language skills of teachers in teaching Islamic Education subject. Sign skills effectively play a role in improving the academic achievement of students with hearing disability. This research is conducted using qualitative and quantitative design, which is by observation, interview and questionnaire. The findings show that Islamic Education teachers have good sign language skills. However this study is not relevant because the number of population for teachers in this study is small. It is suggested that future researchers look for more respondents to look at the overall mastery of Islamic Education teachers in their teaching.

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