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Learning Readiness Mapping in Differentiated Al-Qur'an Learning

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ABSTRACT

Research on differentiated instruction in Islamic Religious Education has largely focused on conceptual issues, with limited attention to how students' readiness for Quranic learning varies in madrasahs. This study mapped students' readiness for Quranic learning at MTs YAPI Yogyakarta to inform differentiated instruction. A qualitative case study design was used to examine differences in Quranic reading skills within the madrasah context. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. Informants included 10 of the 50 seventh-grade students, one Quran teacher, and one vice principal for academic affairs. Data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model, which involves data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions. Source and method triangulation were used to strengthen the trustworthiness of the findings. Students' readiness varied with their prior religious learning experiences. The analysis identified three levels of readiness. Students at the high level read the Quran fluently and understood basic tajwid rules. Students at the intermediate level could read the Quran but still needed guidance in applying tajwid rules. Students at the basic level were still learning to read using the Iqra method. These profiles give teachers a basis for grouping students and selecting learning materials and activities suited to their reading abilities. The profiles can guide teachers in adapting how students practice Quranic reading and demonstrate their progress. By informing differentiation in content, process, and product, readiness mapping can help madrasah teachers align Quranic instruction with students' learning needs and provide appropriate support across readiness levels.

Keywords
Differentiation
Madrasah
Mapping
Readiness
Qur'an

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Introduction

The phenomenon of diversity in Quranic reading abilities remains one of the challenges encountered in Quranic learning at madrasahs. On the other hand, madrasahs play a strategic role in shaping students' religious character to develop their ability to read, understand, and practice the teachings of the Quran in daily life. The Quran functions not only as a holy book to be recited, but also as a source of values guiding the spiritual, moral, and intellectual development of Muslims [1]. This learning process demands an approach capable of adapting to the diverse conditions and characteristics of students so that learning objectives can be achieved optimally.

In the context of modern education, the diversity of student characteristics poses a major challenge in the learning process, including in Quranic learning. This diversity is reflected in differences in background experience with Quranic learning, levels of reading ability, learning styles, and learning readiness, which can affect the process and learning outcomes of Quranic education for each student [2]. Students with different Quranic learning backgrounds may have varying levels of ability and readiness to engage in learning, while differences in learning styles and learning readiness can influence student engagement in understanding and practicing Quranic reading skills. These conditions indicate that Quranic reading ability does not always develop uniformly, even when students receive instruction and habituation within the same educational environment. Therefore, students' initial conditions and learning needs must be considered by teachers when designing adaptive and responsive instruction. At the Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) level, Quranic reading activities are generally part of the religious habituation program in madrasahs, such as tadarus (recitation) or Quranic learning before regular classes begin. However, the existence of such programs does not automatically guarantee uniformity in Quranic reading ability among all students. Some students can follow the learning process with relatively good reading skills, while others still require support tailored to their ability levels, needs, and learning readiness. Paying attention to these diverse conditions is essential, as uniform Quranic instruction potentially fails to fully accommodate the learning needs of each student.

This condition is reflected in several studies showing the diversity of Quranic reading abilities among students across various educational contexts. One study conducted on 7th and

8th-grade students at MTs Tahfidzul Qur'an Cilendek, Bogor, indicates that students' Quranic reading abilities still require attention. In the pre-action evaluation, the percentage of students who had not achieved mastery in Quranic reading ability indicators reached 80% to 85% [3]. This high percentage of non-mastery indicates that Quranic reading habituation needs to be accompanied by more targeted instruction and guidance tailored to students' conditions and learning needs. A similar condition was also found at the higher education level, where a study on Muslim university students showed that approximately 70% of students in each class were not yet able to read the Quran correctly, and 76.20% of the 126 students tested were categorized as non-fluent, with the majority still at the basic level (ibtida) due to errors in makhraj (articulation points) and the application of tajwid (recitation rules) [4]. These various findings demonstrate that the issue of Quranic reading ability is not confined to a single institution or educational level, but emerges across different educational contexts. Therefore, the diversity of reading abilities and students' initial conditions are crucial aspects to consider when designing Quranic instruction, ensuring that teaching strategies and support can be tailored to students' learning needs.

These findings align with initial observations and preliminary research conducted at MTs YAPI Yogyakarta, which revealed a fairly wide variation in Quranic reading abilities among students within the same classroom. The results showed that while some students are capable of reading the Quran fluently in accordance with tajwid rules, others are still unable to read properly and correctly. In fact, some of them still experience difficulty at the basic stage, such as recognizing hijaiyah letters, pronouncing makhraj (articulation points), and understanding basic tajwid rules. These differences in ability are, among other things, influenced by the students' diverse educational backgrounds.

This condition is reinforced by the research of Endang Amalia and Wirdati, which states that the ability to read the Quran properly and correctly should be a basic competency for students at the junior high school level. This is considering that at this stage, students generally have received Quranic reading instruction since primary education through both formal and non-formal religious education pathways [5]. Nevertheless, empirical conditions reveal a disparity in Quranic reading competence influenced by differences in students' primary education backgrounds. Ibrahim's (2023) research at MTs As'adiyah Putra I Sengkang shows a fairly significant difference in tajwid abilities between students coming from Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI - Islamic Primary Schools) and regular Elementary Schools (SD). Students with an MI educational background generally possess better Quranic reading abilities, demonstrated by reading fluency, accuracy of makharijul huruf (articulation points), and the ability to apply tajwid rules, such as mad, qashar, ghunnah, bila ghunnah, waqaf, and ibtida', more accurately. Conversely, some students from SD still experience various obstacles in the

fundamental aspects of Quranic reading, such as the accurate pronunciation of hijaiyah letters, the application of punctuation marks (including sukun and tasydid), and accuracy in determining the long and short vowel sounds. These differences in competence cannot be separated from the differing curriculum characteristics and learning experiences students acquire at the primary education level. MI provides a more specific and in-depth portion of religious instruction through subjects like Al-Qur'an Hadith, whereas Quranic instruction in SD is generally integrated into the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) subject with a relatively limited time allocation [6]. Thus, ideally, students at the MTs level already possess the ability to read the Quran fluently and in accordance with tajwid rules. However, the reality that there are still students who have not achieved this competency indicates a learning readiness gap that potentially affects the effectiveness of Quranic instruction. Therefore, systematic efforts are required to identify and map students' learning readiness as a basis for designing Quranic instruction.

In response to these conditions, a learning approach capable of accommodating the diversity of student abilities is required. One approach currently developing in the educational world is differentiated instruction, a learning strategy designed to tailor the learning process to students' learning readiness, interests, and learning profiles, as proposed by Carol Ann Tomlinson[7]. In its implementation, differentiated instruction places students' learning readiness as an essential component that must be identified before the learning process is carried out[8]. This indicates that understanding the conditions and levels of students' learning readiness serves as a crucial foundation in determining learning strategies that suit their needs. Therefore, learning readiness can be understood as a condition reflecting students' readiness, both physically and psychologically, to receive, respond to, and engage in the learning process. However, it also encompasses internal aspects related to mental and emotional maturity, as well as students' ability to concentrate and demonstrate enthusiasm in participating in learning[9]. In a broader perspective, learning readiness is also influenced by various contextual factors, such as health conditions, family support, school environment, and the community, which collectively shape a student's capacity to develop optimally in the learning process[10]. Thus, learning readiness is a multidimensional construct, as it is not solely determined by students' academic abilities but is formed through the interaction between students' internal conditions and their learning environment.

A comprehensive understanding of learning readiness is crucial in differentiated instruction, as it is not enough for teachers to merely identify differences in students' ability levels; they also need to map their initial abilities and learning needs as a baseline for designing instruction. In the context of Quranic learning, mapping learning readiness allows teachers to identify each student's starting point, including differences in the mastery of hijaiyah letters,

reading fluency, accuracy of makhraj, and the application of tajwid rules. Based on this mapping, teachers can design appropriate instructional strategies by differentiating learning content, processes, and products[7]. Thus, mapping learning readiness in Quranic learning serves not only to identify variations in student abilities but also as a pedagogical foundation for teachers to provide learning experiences tailored to the needs and ability levels of each student, thereby ensuring a more effective, adaptive, and inclusive learning process.

Although various studies show that differentiated instruction can improve student motivation and learning outcomes, most of this research still focuses on the implementation of differentiation strategies in the learning process and their impact on learning outcomes. For example, research conducted by Nana Supriatna demonstrates that differentiated instruction can enhance students' learning motivation[11], while Abdul Ghofar's study highlights the effect of differentiation on students' academic and spiritual potential[12], this approach also yields other positive impacts on students' comprehension of the material. Nevertheless, these studies have not extensively explored the mapping of students' learning readiness as a foundation for designing differentiated instruction in Quranic learning at madrasahs, an area that remains relatively limited. In fact, mapping learning readiness is a crucial first step in identifying students' initial ability levels so that differentiation strategies can be designed more accurately and effectively. Therefore, there is a need for a study that specifically maps students' learning readiness in Quranic learning as a basis for designing differentiated instruction in madrasahs.

Based on these conditions, systematic efforts are needed to identify and map students' learning readiness as a basis for designing instruction that aligns with students' characteristics and learning needs. Mapping learning readiness is important because learning readiness does not merely refer to the abilities students already possess, but also indicates the extent to which students have the initial competencies required to optimally follow and respond to the learning process. In the context of Quranic learning, these initial competencies can be identified through the ability to recognize hijaiyah letters, accuracy in pronouncing makhraj, mastery of basic tajwid rules, and textual understanding of Quranic recitation. These four aspects not only indicate the level of Quranic reading ability but are also theoretically part of learning readiness, as they reflect the students' starting point and level of competency mastery prior to participating in the learning process. Therefore, the mapping of these aspects is conducted to identify students' levels of learning readiness as a basis for determining the form, strategy, and level of instructional complexity tailored to students' needs. Based on this description, this research focuses on the question of how students' learning readiness in Quranic learning can be mapped based on their initial abilities as a foundation for designing differentiated instruction in madrasahs. To answer this question, the objective of this study is to map students' learning readiness in Quranic learning at MTs YAPI Yogyakarta as a foundation for

implementing differentiated instruction that is responsive to the diverse needs and initial abilities of the students.

The novelty of this research lies in its specific focus on examining student learning readiness mapping in Quranic learning as a foundation for designing differentiated instruction in madrasahs. A number of previous studies have examined learning readiness across primary, secondary, and higher education contexts with various focuses, such as prior knowledge and skills, learning motivation, and students' ability to understand and follow instructional material. Meanwhile, research on differentiated instruction across various educational levels has largely focused on the implementation of differentiation strategies and their impacts on student motivation, engagement, and learning outcomes. Based on this comparison of research focuses, it is evident that although learning readiness and differentiated instruction have been studied in various educational contexts, research specifically mapping students' initial competencies in Quranic learning and utilizing them as a basis for designing differentiated instruction in madrasahs remains limited. This study fills that gap by mapping students' learning readiness based on their ability to recognize hijaiyah letters, accuracy of makhraj (articulation points), mastery of basic tajwid (recitation rules), and textual comprehension in Quranic reading. The results of this mapping serve as a foundation for teachers in designing differentiated instruction that is adaptive to students' readiness levels and learning needs.

Thus, this research is expected to make both academic and practical contributions to the development of Quranic instruction in madrasahs, particularly in designing more effective differentiated learning strategies aligned with students' learning readiness levels. Furthermore, the findings of this study are also expected to serve as a reference for teachers in understanding the importance of mapping students' learning readiness as an initial step toward creating Quranic instruction that is more inclusive, adaptive, and oriented toward students' needs.

Material and Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach by John W. Creswell with a case study design to understand and map the variations in students' learning readiness in Quranic learning as a foundation for implementing differentiated instruction[13]. The case in this study is the variation in the learning readiness of 7th-grade students in Quranic learning at MTs YAPI Yogyakarta, which is limited to four initial ability indicators: recognition of *hijaiyah* letters, accuracy of *makhraj* (articulation points), mastery of basic *tajwid* (recitation rules), and textual comprehension. MTs YAPI Yogyakarta was chosen because it features a diversity of students' Quranic learning background experiences, which results in differences in their initial abilities. As a madrasah educational institution, it integrates general and religious education and has a

Quranic learning program that includes *tadarus* (recitation) and *tahfidz* (memorization) activities. These characteristics make this madrasah relevant as a research location because the students possess diverse Quranic learning backgrounds and experiences. To obtain an overview of this variation in learning readiness, the study involved participants selected through purposive sampling based on their involvement and relevance to the investigated case. The research participants included 10 out of 50 7th-grade students as the subjects for learning readiness mapping, one Quran teacher as the primary informant, and one vice principal for Teaching and Learning Activities (KBM) as a supporting informant. These participants were selected because they have direct involvement and relevant information to describe the variation in students' learning readiness as well as the context of the implementation of Quranic instruction in the madrasah. The information obtained from the participants was then used to identify and map students' learning readiness based on initial observation results and an assessment of Quranic reading abilities across the four indicators. This subsequently served as the basis for grouping the students into basic, medium, and fluent readiness categories, in accordance with the ability characteristics found in the field.

Data were collected through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation in the form of *tadarus* (recitation) records and relevant learning documents. The research instruments consisted of observation sheets, in-depth interview guidelines, and Quranic reading ability assessment sheets. The observation sheets were used to identify students' initial abilities during learning, with indicators including the recognition of *hijaiyah* letters, accuracy of *makharijul huruf* (articulation points), mastery of basic *tajwid* (recitation rules), and textual comprehension. The interview guidelines were used to obtain information regarding learning experiences, initial abilities, and the conditions of Quranic learning from the students, the Quran teacher, and the vice principal. Meanwhile, the assessment sheets were used to identify the students' Quranic reading ability levels based on these four indicators. Data validity was tested through source and technique triangulation by comparing information from the students, the Quran teacher, and the vice principal, as well as comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation. Member checking with the informants was also conducted to ensure that the researcher's interpretations aligned with the conditions found in the field. Furthermore, the data were analyzed interactively using the Miles and Huberman model through the stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification[14]. Data from various sources were condensed based on the four learning readiness indicators, then displayed to identify patterns and differences in students' initial abilities before being verified through cross-source and cross-technique comparisons. The results of this analysis produced a mapping of students' learning readiness, which was used as

a basis for designing differentiated instruction across content, process, and product aspects in Quranic learning.

Results and Discussions

Based on the results of in-depth research with the Quran teacher, it was found that Quranic learning in the madrasah is experiencing developmental dynamics in an effort to adapt the learning process to the diverse ability conditions of the students. Research findings indicate that the current practice of Quranic learning cannot be separated from the evaluation and adjustment processes carried out by the madrasah regarding the previously implemented learning system[15]. These changes are primarily related to efforts to identify students' learning readiness and adjust Quranic learning activities to the reading ability levels possessed by the students. These findings indicate that the diversity of student abilities is not only a characteristic found within the classroom, but also crucial information considered by teachers when designing Quranic instruction at MTs YAPI Yogyakarta. With the mapping of learning readiness, information regarding these ability variations can serve as a basis for teachers to adjust the level of guidance, materials, and learning activities more adaptively and effectively according to students' needs.

The results of this study are subsequently presented across several key aspects, which include variations in students' learning readiness, the mapping of students' learning readiness as a basis for instructional grouping, and its implications for the implementation of differentiated instruction at MTs YAPI Yogyakarta.

A. Variations in Student Learning Readiness in Al-Qur'an Instruction

The research results show that the learning readiness of 7th-grade students in Quranic learning at MTs YAPI Yogyakarta exhibits a fairly significant variation. This variation is evident in the students' ability to recognize *hijaiyah* letters, accuracy in pronouncing *makhraj*, understanding of basic *tajwid* rules, and fluency in reading Quranic verses. Some students are already able to read the Quran quite well and understand basic *tajwid* rules, while others are still at the initial stages of learning to read the Quran, and even experience difficulties in accurately recognizing *hijaiyah* letters. These findings were obtained through observation of students' reading abilities and confirmed by statements from the Quran teacher. The teacher explained that there are students who are capable of reading the Quran fluently, while other students still require guidance in basic reading abilities. This statement aligns with observation results showing differences in students' abilities to recognize *hijaiyah* letters, pronounce *makharijul huruf*, apply *tajwid*, and read verses fluently.

This condition indicates that students' Quranic reading abilities at the *madrasah tsanawiyah* (Islamic junior high school) level are not always at the same standard, despite them

being at the same educational stage. These differences are generally influenced by the students' religious educational backgrounds prior to entering the madrasah, encompassing instruction received within the family environment, as well as previous learning experiences in formal or non-formal educational institutions such as TPQ (Al-Qur'an Education Centers) or *madrasah diniyah*. This situation highlights that students' learning readiness is a crucial factor that must be considered when designing effective Quranic instruction. Furthermore, other studies also emphasize that the diversity of student abilities is one of the primary challenges in Islamic religious education at madrasahs. In classroom situations characterized by diverse student abilities, the use of a uniform instructional approach tends to be ineffective, as it fails to optimally accommodate the differences in students' proficiencies [16],[17].

From a pedagogical perspective, learning readiness represents the initial condition that reflects students' capacity to receive and process instructional materials. When instruction fails to consider students' learning readiness, the learning process is unlikely to function optimally, as the delivered material may not align with the students' ability levels. The importance of addressing students' learning readiness also aligns with the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) in social constructivism theory. This concept posits that learning is most effective when the material provided is slightly above the students' actual ability level, yet remains achievable through assistance or guidance from teachers and peers [18]. In other words, the learning process is optimized when students receive support tailored to their level of cognitive development. Therefore, mapping students' learning readiness is a crucial step in determining the appropriate instructional strategies.

Based on the results of this mapping, the students' learning readiness in Quranic learning at MTs YAPI Yogyakarta was subsequently classified into three groups: high readiness, medium readiness, and basic readiness categories, each demonstrating distinct characteristics of Quranic reading readiness [19]. This grouping serves as a foundation for teachers in designing more adaptive instructional strategies, thereby enabling a more effective learning process that aligns with the students' learning needs.

1. High Readiness Group (Fluent in Reading the Al-Qur’an)

   The first group consists of students who are already capable of reading the Quran fluently and understanding basic *tajwid* rules, such as *mad*, *ghunnah*, and the rules of *nun sukun* [20]. The results of interviews with the Quran teacher indicate that students in this group generally come from primary educational backgrounds where they received intensive Quranic instruction, either through *madrasah diniyah* or community-based Quranic educational institutions [16]. For this group, the teacher no longer emphasizes letter recognition or basic pronunciation; instead, the focus shifts to improving the quality of the recitation, such as fluency, *tajwid* accuracy, and basic comprehension of the verses'

meanings [1]. This condition indicates that the learning readiness of the students in this group is relatively high, rendering them better prepared to receive instruction at a more complex level.

The results of the interviews with the Quran teacher reveal that students in this category generally possess prior Quranic learning experience before entering the 7th grade. These learning experiences provide a stronger initial foundation, meaning that these students no longer require instruction focused on letter recognition or reading practice at the most fundamental level. Instead, the teacher directs them more toward the accurate application of *tajwid*, the quality and fluency of their recitation, and the comprehension of the verses being read [16]. The teacher's statement reinforces the observation and assessment findings, demonstrating that the learning needs of the high readiness group no longer center on the mastery of basic skills, but rather on the development of competencies at a more complex level. This condition is crucial, as students who have already mastered basic competencies require challenges that enable them to expand and deepen their abilities, rather than merely repeating material they have already mastered.

From the perspective of differentiated instruction, this condition indicates that students' learning readiness must be considered when determining the complexity of instructional challenges [21]. Providing students who possess higher learning readiness with materials at their already mastered competency levels is insufficient; rather, they require more complex challenges to stimulate their skill development [16]. Consequently, instruction for this group can be directed toward enrichment activities, such as enhancing the quality of *tartil* (measured and clear recitation), deepening their knowledge of *tajwid*, analyzing the application of recitation rules within verses, and comprehending the meanings or messages of the verses more profoundly. Thus, students' initial abilities are not merely used to identify their level of competency mastery, but also serve as a foundation for providing appropriate learning challenges, enabling them to progress toward higher levels of competency.

2. Intermediate Readiness Group (Reading with Guidance)

The second group comprises students who are capable of reading the Quran but still require guidance in the application of *tajwid* and reading fluency. Students within this category generally possess a proficient recognition of *hijaiyah* letters; however, they continue to encounter difficulties in identifying specific *tajwid* rules and demonstrate inconsistencies in the articulation of *makhraj* [20]. Interview findings with the educators reveal that students in this cohort still necessitate on going *murojaah* (review processes), repetitive practice, and corrective feedback during recitation. The instructors do not

reiterate the instructional process from the foundational letter recognition stage; rather, they provide targeted interventions addressing the specific competencies that the students have yet to master consistently. This pedagogical approach aims to reinforce foundational Quranic reading proficiencies, thereby enabling students to attain an enhanced level of fluency [16].

These conditions demonstrate that students' readiness for Quranic learning is not homogeneous; rather, it manifests across varying proficiency levels. Consequently, it is imperative for educators to implement adaptive instructional strategies to ensure that each student receives a learning experience commensurate with their individual capacities [22]. Research indicates that differentiated instruction effectively facilitates teachers in managing the heterogeneity of student abilities within a single classroom environment.

3. Basic Readiness Group (*Iqra'* Learning)

The third group comprises students who remain in the foundational stages of Quranic reading instruction, utilizing the *Iqra'* textbook as their primary instructional medium. At this juncture, students typically encounter difficulties in recognizing *hijaiyah* characters, differentiating visually similar letters, and accurately articulating the *makhraj* (points of articulation). Interviews conducted with Quranic educators indicate that these students require intensive guidance and scaffolding, which involves gradual reinforcement, immediate correction of recitation errors, and the calibration of material difficulty to align with the students' actual proficiency levels [16]. These findings suggest that the students' Quranic reading proficiencies are confined to the basic recognition phase, thereby necessitating progressive instructional support that enables developmental growth commensurate with their learning readiness. The *Iqra'* method itself is widely adopted in Quranic reading pedagogy due to its emphasis on character recognition and incremental reading exercises, which systematically facilitate the development of students' Quranic literacy skills [23]. Consequently, mapping student learning readiness at this stage serves as a critical foundation for educators in implementing differentiated instruction. This ensures that the Quranic instructional process is appropriately tailored to the distinct proficiency levels and educational needs of each student.

In practice, the implementation of *Iqra'* instruction at this stage is stratified according to the students' proficiency levels or grade categories. This approach aligns with the paradigm of differentiated instruction, which underscores the imperative of tailoring instructional strategies to accommodate the diverse needs, abilities, and characteristics of students [12]. Such variance in Quranic reading proficiency indicates that students enter the *madrasah* with heterogeneous levels of learning readiness. Within pedagogical

discourse, learning readiness is a critical determinant of instructional success, as it correlates directly with the students' foundational capacity to comprehend the prescribed material. Consequently, it is essential for educators to assess students' learning readiness prior to formulating and deploying instructional strategies. Recent literature evinces a robust correlation between learning readiness and student engagement, motivation, and overall academic achievement; thus, instruction that accounts for learning readiness significantly enhances pedagogical efficacy and empowers educators to optimally manage cognitive diversity within the classroom [24]. These findings posit that Quranic instruction cannot be effectively executed through a uniform pedagogical approach. Employing a monolithic methodology for all students inevitably results in a dichotomy: some students may find the material insufficiently challenging, whereas others will encounter significant cognitive barriers. Therefore, there is a distinct requisite for instructional strategies capable of aligning the learning process with the students' varying levels of readiness.

Table 1. Students' Readiness for Quranic Learning at MTs YAPI Yogyakarta

Indicator	Basic readiness	Intermediate readiness	High readiness
Reading fluency	Is beginning to read using the Iqra method.	Can read the Quran but reads inconsistently and still needs guidance.	Reads the Quran fluently.
Hijaiyah letter recognition	Has difficulty recognizing and distinguishing Hijaiyah letters.	Recognizes most Hijaiyah letters.	Recognizes and distinguishes Hijaiyah letters reliably.
Letter articulation (*makharijul huruf*)	Needs intensive practice and corrective feedback.	Still makes errors in articulating some letters.	Articulates letters with relative accuracy.
Suggested teaching focus	Use guided Iqra exercises to practice letter recognition and articulation.	Use short passages for repeated reading with targeted feedback on pronunciation.	Use longer passages to refine articulation while maintaining fluency.

B. Learning Readiness Mapping as a Baseline for Instructional Grouping

The variance in student learning readiness within Quranic instruction, as delineated in the preceding section, demonstrates that students possess heterogeneous baseline proficiencies in Quranic recitation. These conditions necessitate instructional strategies capable of accommodating such differential abilities, ensuring pedagogical effectiveness through the mapping of readiness prior to the commencement of Quranic instruction. This approach aligns with the paradigm of differentiated instruction, which underscores the imperative of tailoring teaching strategies to the diverse needs, abilities, and characteristics of students, thereby facilitating a more inclusive and effective learning trajectory [21]. Within the framework of modern pedagogy, variations in student learning readiness must be integral to instructional design, recognizing that each learner exhibits distinct levels of cognitive development and

experiential backgrounds. According to Carol Ann Tomlinson, differentiated instruction emphasizes the calibration of learning content, process, and product in accordance with student readiness, thereby affording every learner an optimal educational experience [24]. Consequently, mapping learning readiness serves as a foundational pillar for the implementation of differentiated instruction in Quranic pedagogy. It empowers educators to formulate instructional strategies that are responsive to a spectrum of student competencies, simultaneously promoting a learning process that is efficacious, inclusive, and fundamentally student-centered.

The mapping of learning readiness is conducted through the direct assessment of students' Quranic reading proficiencies by the educator. During this process, the teacher observes the students' competency in recognizing *hijaiyah* characters, their fluency in reciting Quranic verses, and their aptitude in applying fundamental *tajwid* rules. These observations are executed via individualized recitation sessions, enabling the educator to procure a more accurate profile of each student's Quranic reading capabilities [25]. This procedure is designed not merely to ascertain students' baseline proficiencies but also to determine instructional strategies that correspond with their respective levels of learning readiness.

Interview findings with the educators reveal that data regarding these baseline abilities are utilized to comprehend student needs prior to the formulation of instructional formats. Consequently, readiness mapping functions as a diagnostic process that assists the educator in identifying the requisite level of instructional support for each cohort [16]. These findings indicate that the data derived from the mapping process extend beyond the mere identification of proficiency disparities; rather, they are translated by the educator into strategic considerations for determining the nature of scaffolding and the level of instructional challenge. Students exhibiting higher readiness levels can be directed toward enrichment activities, whereas those demonstrating intermediate and foundational readiness require instructional scaffolding with an intensity calibrated to their specific cognitive difficulties. Thus, the interview results corroborate the observational findings, affirming that readiness mapping serves a practical function in bridging students' baseline conditions with their specific pedagogical requirements.

The results of mapping students' Quranic reading skills were then used as a basis for grouping students in learning activities. This grouping aims to create a more adaptive learning process so that students can learn according to their level of ability. Through this grouping, teachers can provide more targeted attention and guidance to students who require more intensive support, while simultaneously offering higher learning challenges for students who already possess good Quranic reading skills. According to Musthaffiroh, from a modern pedagogical perspective, grouping students based on learning readiness is an essential

component of implementing differentiated instruction, enabling teachers to adapt content, process, and learning outcomes to student needs [18]. Thus, differentiated instruction strategies can assist teachers in adjusting teaching methods so that the learning process becomes more effective and capable of boosting student engagement in learning.

Table 2. Student Learning Readiness Mapping in Al-Qur'an Instruction at MTs YAPI Yogyakarta

Readiness Category	Competency Characteristics	Learning Needs	Instructinoal Strategies
High Readiness	Reads the Al-Qur'an fluently and understands basic tajwid	Enhancement of recitation quality and verse comprehension	Verse tadabbur, advanced tajwid, tartil (measured) recitation
Intermediate Readiness	Able to read but not yet stable in tajwid application	Reading practice and recitation correction	Recitation murojaah, teacher guidance, targeted reading exercises
Basic Readiness	Still learning using Iqra' and not yet fluent in reading	Recognition of *hijaiyah* letters and foundational reading practice	Step-by-step learning utilizing the *Iqra'* method

This grouping reflects a systematic effort to adapt the learning process to students' learning readiness. By mapping initial abilities, teachers can design more targeted instruction and provide guidance tailored to each student's individual learning needs. From a pedagogical perspective, this approach demonstrates the application of differentiated instruction principles, diagnostic assessments, and scaffolding. This enables every student to receive learning opportunities aligned with their level of readiness and ability, allowing the Quranic learning process to occur more effectively, inclusively, and in a student-centered manner.

C. Implications of Learning Readiness Mapping on Differentiated Instruction

Mapping students' learning readiness in Quranic instruction at MTs YAPI Yogyakarta does not stop at grouping students based on initial ability levels; rather, it provides pedagogical information that teachers use as a foundation for designing and adjusting differentiated learning. Research findings indicate that variations in Quranic reading ability prompt teachers to adapt materials, levels of assistance, learning activities, and achievement expectations to students' readiness. Mapping learning readiness has pedagogical implications for both teachers and students, serving as a basis for determining learning formats that are more adaptive to the diversity of students' abilities and learning needs. This aligns with Tomlinson's differentiated instruction framework, which positions readiness, interests, and learning profiles as the foundation for adjusting instruction through differentiation of content, process, product, and learning environment [24]. In this study, the most prominent forms of differentiation were in content and process, whereas product differentiation was evident in the adjustment of expected outcomes tailored to students' readiness levels. Consequently, the results of readiness mapping serve as a bridge between information on students' initial conditions and teachers' decisions in designing learning experiences.

From a modern pedagogical perspective, differentiation is understood as a strategy to accommodate the diversity of students' readiness, interests, and learning profiles, allowing every student to obtain optimal learning opportunities. International research presented by Lisa shows that differentiated instruction can increase student engagement and enhance learning effectiveness because teachers align learning experiences with student needs. Specifically, differentiation has been proven to have a predominantly positive impact on academic achievement, motivational characteristics, and affective aspects of the learning process [26]. Results from interviews with Quranic teachers indicate that information regarding students' initial abilities does not merely serve as a snapshot of learning conditions, but is used to guide decisions on materials, levels of assistance, and forms of learning activities for subsequent stages. Teachers consider whether students still require reinforcement of basic skills, need repeated practice and correction, or are ready to be directed toward more complex activities [16].

These implications are evident in the adjustment of learning content. Students in the beginner group receive content consisting of an introduction to Hijaiyah letters through the Iqra' method, while students in the intermediate group engage in Quranic reading practice with reinforcement of basic tajwid. Students in the advanced group receive more complex content in the form of in-depth tajwid study and verse contemplation (tadabbur) activities through a more independent learning process. Based on interviews, teachers explained that determining learning materials is not done by placing identical demands on all students, but is instead adapted to the skills they have already mastered. Students who still require foundational reinforcement are directed to master reading fundamentals first, whereas students who have mastered these skills can be provided with advanced material [16]. Thus, the mapping results have implications for differentiating the level of material complexity, rather than merely dividing students into ability groups.

The diversity of Quranic reading abilities discovered does not stop merely at the reading stage; rather, after completing their lessons using the Iqra' method, students are directed to continue with the memorization of short surahs and the reading of Juz 'Amma. This stage is part of a learning strategy aimed at strengthening the students' connection with the Quran while gradually improving their reading skills. The activity of memorizing Juz 'Amma as a continuation of Quranic reading instruction has a strong pedagogical foundation. Research by Muhammad Imron on the effectiveness of Juz 'Amma memorization in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah found that this activity not only improves memorization skills but also strengthens students' intrinsic motivation in learning the Quran [27]. These findings are also in line with the scaffolding theory of Bruner and Lev Vygotsky,

which emphasizes the importance of gradual guidance and social support in helping students achieve their maximum learning potential [18].

In the context of Islamic education, learning the Qur'an aims not only to improve technical reading skills but also to build students' spiritual closeness to the Qur'an. Therefore, integrating memorization activities and the habituation of Qur'an recitation into the madrasah curriculum is an essential part of continuously shaping students' religious character. This advanced stage also demonstrates that mapping learning readiness is dynamic, requiring teachers to continuously update their assessments as students' abilities progress so that the applied differentiation remains relevant and responsive to students' learning needs.

Based on the synthesis between research findings and the theoretical framework of differentiated instruction, this study formulates a conceptual model of Qur'anic learning based on mapping students' learning readiness. This model demonstrates that mapping students' initial capabilities serves as the foundation for designing adaptive instruction through the application of learning differentiation tailored to students' readiness levels. The implementation of differentiation in this study is reflected in the following aspects:

1. Content Differentiation

   Research findings indicate that mapping learning readiness has implications for adjusting the level of material complexity provided to students. The basic readiness group learns the introduction to Hijaiyah letters through the Iqra' method, the intermediate readiness group practices reading the Qur'an with basic *tajwid* reinforcement, while the high readiness group studies advanced *tajwid* as well as *tadabbur* (verse reflection) activities. These differences align with interview results showing that material is not provided uniformly, but is structured based on students' mastery of competencies. This is further supported by Mahadi in his journal, which states that adjusting learning materials is part of a content differentiation strategy aimed at matching the material's difficulty level with students' learning readiness so that the learning process can proceed more effectively [28]. Therefore, content differentiation serves as an essential strategy in Qur'anic learning because it accommodates variations in students' learning readiness, enabling each student to progress according to their individual ability level.

2. Process Differentiation

   In addition to materials, differences in readiness also impact how students gain learning experiences. Students in the basic group receive intensive guidance from the teacher through step-by-step reading practice, the intermediate group receives mentoring through *muroja'ah* (recitation review) and reading correction, while the high group is given the opportunity to learn more independently through *tartil* reading practice and simple verse comprehension. These findings are supported by interview results with

Qur'an teachers, which reveal differences in guidance intensity, reading correction frequency, and student independence level based on their abilities. Teachers explained that students who still face difficulties with basic skills require more intensive support, whereas students with better reading abilities are given opportunities to practice more independently [16]. This mentoring pattern shows that the learning process is designed by considering students' levels of understanding and capability, ensuring that each group receives support tailored to its needs. Such adjustments enable students to learn through methods suited to their level of comprehension and skill, thereby enhancing student engagement and the effectiveness of Qur'anic instruction [12].

3. Product Differentiation

Expected learning outcomes are also adjusted according to students' abilities. The basic group is directed to be able to recognize Hijaiyah letters and perform simple reading; the intermediate group is expected to read the Qur'an with more consistent application of basic *tajwid*; while the high group is directed to read the Qur'an with *tartil* and comprehend the simple meaning of the verses [1]. This adjustment of learning achievements is reinforced by interview results with Qur'an teachers, which show that learning targets are not set uniformly, but rather consider the capabilities already mastered by students. These findings indicate that product differentiation is realized through gradual adjustments of learning achievements, ensuring that students have targets aligned with their respective levels of readiness and ability development in learning the Qur'an.

With the implementation of differentiated Qur'anic instruction based on mapping students' learning readiness, the learning process becomes more adaptive to the diversity of students' abilities. Through content, process, and product differentiation, each student receives a learning experience tailored to their ability level, thereby enabling gradual improvements in Qur'an reading skills, *tajwid* comprehension, as well as involvement in memorization and *tadabbur* (verse reflection) activities. This approach not only helps students at the basic stage to progress incrementally, but also provides space for students with advanced abilities to deepen their understanding of the Qur'an. Research on the implementation of differentiated instruction in Islamic education demonstrates that this strategy can increase learning participation, comprehension of religious content, and student motivation to study the Qur'an [29]. Therefore, applying differentiated instruction in Qur'anic learning within madrasahs can serve as an effective pedagogical strategy to enhance learning quality while continuously strengthening students' academic and spiritual development.

Conclusion

Students' learning readiness in Qur'anic instruction at MTs YAPI Yogyakarta shows significant variation. This variation is evident in students' abilities to recognize Hijaiyah letters, pronounce *makhraj*, understand basic *tajwid*, and read Qur'anic verses fluently. These differences in ability are influenced by the background of students' religious learning experiences prior to entering the madrasah, through both formal and non-formal education. Mapping learning readiness serves as a strategic step in designing adaptive Qur'anic instruction. Through the process of individually identifying Qur'an reading abilities, students can be classified into three readiness categories: high readiness, intermediate readiness, and basic readiness. This grouping enables teachers to design more targeted instructional strategies tailored to the needs and ability levels of each student. Mapping learning readiness carries important implications for the implementation of differentiated instruction in Qur'anic learning. The mapping results allow teachers to adjust learning content, process, and product so that students gain learning experiences suited to their readiness levels. Consequently, Qur'anic instruction can proceed more effectively, inclusively, and enhance student engagement in the learning process.

Recommendations

The recommendations of this study are intended for Qur'an teachers and future researchers. Qur'an teachers are advised to use learning readiness mapping as a foundation in determining forms of assistance, levels of challenge, and instructional strategies suited to students' needs, so that learning can proceed more adaptively and responsively to the diversity of initial abilities. For future researchers, studies can be expanded through mixed methods to obtain a more comprehensive picture, experimental research to test the effectiveness of implementing differentiated instruction based on learning readiness, and studies involving multiple madrasahs so that findings can be compared and tested across more diverse contexts. Consequently, further research is expected to broaden the context while providing stronger empirical evidence regarding the implementation of Qur'anic learning based on learning readiness.

Conflict of Interest

We declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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