Innovations in Teaching Basic Quranic Recitation between the IFTaR and Al-Matien Methods

Nurul Nadiah Mustaza[1], Nurzatil Ismah Azizan*[2], Mohd Nazri Ahmad[3], Sharifah Noorhidayah Syed Aziz[4]

[1]Master Student, Research Centre for Al-Quran and Al-Sunnah, Faculty of Islamic Studies, The National University Of Malaysia, Bangi, Selangor.

[2]Lecturer, Research Centre for Al-Quran and Al-Sunnah, Faculty of Islamic Studies, The National University Of Malaysia

[3]Lecturer, Research Centre for Al-Quran and Al-Sunnah, Faculty of Islamic Studies, The National University Of Malaysia

[4] Lecturer, Department of Tahfiz al-Quran and al-Qiraat, Universiti Islam Selangor (UIS)

***Corresponding Author**

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ABSTRACT

Foundational Qur'anic literacy methodologies in modern Islamic education are increasingly shifting from traditional rote learning toward structured, innovative pedagogical approaches. This qualitative comparative study analyses the instructional frameworks, pedagogical strategies, and target demographics of two prominent contemporary Qur'anic learning methodologies in Malaysia the Iqra' Fast Track (IFTaR) method and the al-Matien method. Utilizing a comparative document analysis approach, data were drawn exclusively from primary textual materials and validated research literature associated with both paradigms. Findings reveal that IFTaR operates on a multi-sensory, non-linear staged learning framework that integrates reading, writing, and listening mechanics with fundamental Arabic vocabulary acquisition, rendering it uniquely adaptable for primary students, adult learners, and new converts (*mu'allaf*). Conversely, al-Matien employs a streamlined, visually intensive two-tiered module (*al-Matien 1* and *al-Matien 2*) that prohibits conventional spelling in favour of direct phonetic recognition, formula based shortcuts, and full colour infographics for primary school students. While IFTaR fosters holistic linguistic Qur'anic literacy through educational psychology principles, al-Matien provides a targeted, accelerated path toward precise *tajwīd* application. Ultimately, both methods do not compete but rather offer complementary pedagogical models, enabling Islamic educators to select or integrate instructional tools aligned with specific cognitive profiles and learning goals.

Keywords: Qur'anic literacy, IFTaR method, al-Matien method, Islamic pedagogy, *tajwīd* instruction, comparative educational analysis.

INTRODUCTION

The Quran serves as the primary guidance for the Muslim community; however, many Muslims in Malaysia particularly adultsare still unable to recite the Qur'an fluently. More concerningly, some are entirely unable to recognize Arabic letters, a condition termed "Qur'anic illiteracy." Similarly, many students fail to recite short Qur'anic verses with the correct *makhraj* (articulation points). The situation is further compounded by the fact that some secondary school students are completely illiterate in Qur'anic recitation (Ghazali, n.d.). Factors contributing to these weaknesses include significant gender differences, attendance at afternoon religious schools, home based learning, and the reliance on the Iqra' book method compared to students' actual Quranic

recitation performance in school (Mohammad Naim Mat Salleh, 2003), alongside the role of educators, teaching strategies, and learning methods employed (Mohd Aderi Che Noh & Rohani Ahmad Tarmizi, 2009).

Previous research on Qur'anic teaching methods indicates that Iqra' instruction for Primary Year One students in primary schools is allocated 60 minutes or one hour per week. Iqra' teaching is conducted during the Quranic Teaching and Learning (PdP) sessions, representing the total duration allocated by the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE) for Year One students. Findings revealed that 86 percent of respondents reported that students were unable to master Iqra' Books 1 through 6 in the first term, while 85 percent stated that students could not yet recite the Qur'an by the second term of Year One, despite this being the standard curriculum prescribed by the MOE. Furthermore, 64 percent of respondents expressed the need for a simplified curriculum to facilitate students' mastery of the Iqra' method, and 59 percent stated that Year One students should not be burdened with the current curriculum load (Shahrulanuar Mohamed et al., 2021).

Innovative approaches in Qur'anic pedagogy are necessary to engage both neurotypical students and students with special educational needs. Both student demographics require pedagogical innovation to minimize Qur'anic illiteracy within society, particularly in Malaysia. For instance, teaching the Qur'an to visually impaired students demands modern approaches due to the absence of dedicated instructional module guidelines. Additionally, challenges persist regarding teachers' pedagogical skills, diverse student ability levels, and a lack of teaching aids (Mohd Raus, 2013).

Qur'anic teaching and learning continue to evolve through ongoing innovation, aligning with the passage of time and the growing public demand for deeper Qur'anic engagement. Several methods introduced in Malaysia since the 20th century include the al-Baghdadi, Iqra', al-Taisir, Hattawiyah, Haraki, and al-Matien methods (Sharifah Norshah et al., 2018), as well as al-Barqy, Qiraati, Kalam, Abahata al-Jabari, al-Musyassar, al-Furqan, Nur al-Yaqeen (Azrul Hisyam & Muhammad Fadlly, 2023), Baghdadiah, and IFTaR (Rosnani Hashim, 2021). Despite the diversity of these pedagogical methods, all maintain an emphasis on the *talaqqi musyafahah* (face-to-face recitation learning) approach practiced since the era of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

Prior literature demonstrates that the concept of reciting, understanding, and practicing the Qur'an is increasingly marginalized, partly due to shortcomings in the religious education system that prioritize rote memorization over conceptual reflection. A holistic approach to Qur'anic pedagogy requires innovation to foster an integrated engagement with the text, encompassing recitation (*qira'ah*), comprehension (*tafahhum/tadabbur*), and practical application (*tathbiq/'amal*). Pedagogical innovation is essential as the current generation is exposed to digital technologies and exhibits a strong affinity for digitalization. Consequently, students show reduced interest in studying the Qur'an deeply due to excessive time spent on social media. This necessitates empirical research into innovative Qur'anic recitation methods that can stimulate student interest (Johari et al., 2026).

Accordingly, this article aims to propose novel solutions and approaches to assist in Qur'anic instruction for children to reduce illiteracy. Diversified teaching strategies must be adopted rather than relying solely on uniform approaches. Therefore, this study examines Qur'anic recitation pedagogy using the IFTaR and al-Matien methods to address how pedagogical innovations can optimize learning outcomes. The scope encompasses basic theoretical and practical *tajwid* rules, time efficiency within the teaching and learning process, and student self-reliance in reciting the Qur'an without teacher supervision. This article posits that various pedagogical innovations can be implemented beyond traditional methods like *talaqqi* and *musyafahah*, and that adopting diverse teaching methodologies will significantly impact students' Qur'anic recitation proficiency.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Pedagogical Innovation in Qur'anic Instruction

The development of innovations in teaching Qur'anic recitation reflects a continuous transformation process from traditional *talaqqi* and *musyafahah* approaches toward a pedagogy that is more systematic, flexible, and

responsive to contemporary education (Awang Japilan et al., 2024; Lubis & Wekke, 2007). This evolution involves the integration of digital technologies in line with the Fourth Industrial Revolution, progressing from printed materials to multimedia applications, Augmented Reality (AR), and Artificial Intelligence (AI). Applications such as AR-Qu, Qara'a, Habibul Quran, Quantum Reading Qur'an (QRQ), and Ezi-Maq have been developed to accelerate the comprehension of *makhraj* and *tajwid* through a combination of audio, visual, and graphic elements (Masykur et al., 2025; Omar, 2022). Furthermore, kinesthetic approaches such as the Yadun Method and gamification platforms like Quizizz are also utilized to render learning more active and engaging (Jaafar & Mat Said, 2019). This movement is supported by instructional designs based on the ADDIE Model and the Thoughtful School Framework (TSF), leading to holistic 21st-century learning while maintaining the role of the teacher as a *mursyid* (spiritual guide) to preserve the continuity of recitation chain of transmission (*sanad*) (Lubis & Wekke, 2007; Omar, 2022; Yusoff & Ismail, 2022; Rahman & Zakaria, 2021).

Overall, the characteristics of these instructional innovations encompass student-centered, systematic, interactive, flexible, user-friendly, and technology-driven approaches that are proven to enhance motivation and Qur'anic recitation mastery. This pedagogical innovation is no longer focused solely on mechanical memorization, but instead emphasizes understanding, *tadabbur* (reflection), and Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) (Rahman & Zakaria, 2021; Hassan & Mokhtar, 2023). Its development has also been adapted to meet specific needs, such as the Mama-Papa and Sahala methods for children, as well as the concise Dirosa and Tsaqifa modules for adults. Within the scope of inclusive education, innovations have been extended to students with special educational needs through sign language Arabic letters (*hijaiyah*) and Braille Qur'an. This approach clearly demonstrates a balance between modern technology and Islamic scholarly traditions, thereby broadening learning access for all demographics (Masykur et al., 2025; Rahman & Zakaria, 2021; Yusoff & Ismail, 2022).

Mastery of Basic Qur'anic Recitation

At the initial stage, the mastery of basic Qur'anic recitation relied heavily on the *al-Qawa'id al-Baghdadiyyah* method, which emphasizes a step by step spelling process. Although it establishes a solid foundation, its relatively lengthy learning duration often leads to boredom, reduced motivation, and ultimately dropout issues among some students (Masykur et al., 2025). To address these limitations and accelerate mastery, various innovative new methods have been introduced, such as Iqra', Qiraati, Tilawati, Yanbu'a, and Ummi, alongside Ezi-Maq, Yadun, IFTaR, and al-Matien. These methods emphasize direct learning without the need to spell, applying the Student Active Learning (CBSA) framework. Repetitive practice coupled with structured recitation rhythms successfully accelerates mastery and builds students' confidence to recite more fluently (Masykur et al., 2025).

The development of methodologies to strengthen fundamental mastery was further advanced through the introduction of the Systematic Eclectic Method, which combines the strengths of traditional methods (*al-Taqlidiyyah*) with listening and speaking skills approaches (*al-Sam'iyyah al-Shafawiyyah*). This strategic combination enables theoretical rules of *tajwid* and practical recitation skills to be reinforced simultaneously, thereby producing a more balanced and comprehensive learning process (Lubis & Wekke, 2007). The entire ecosystem constructed from the combination of pedagogical innovation features and modern methods has proven effective in meeting contemporary educational needs. In the context of this study, all these innovative features and methodologies form an important basis for evaluating the extent to which the IFTaR Method and the al-Matien Method are effective as pedagogical innovations in improving students' basic Qur'anic recitation mastery.

Basic Qur'anic recitation can be understood as the recognition of *Hijaiyah* letters, *makhraj* (articulation points), attributes (*sifat*), fundamental *tajwid*, and articulation fluency (Yuslina Mohamed et al., 2024), whereas mastery refers to an individual's level of competence in a specific area (Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 2017). Nuril Ham and Sharifah Norshah (2024) conducted a literature review to identify research trends in Qur'anic learning methods from 2019 to 2023, finding that various innovations and adaptations carried out by researchers in Malaysia reflect efforts to align traditional methods with current needs, including technological integration. This is because serious emphasis on the daily practice of Qur'anic recitation remains an essential

focus (Aminah Mat Yusoff et al., 2024).

Furthermore, numerous weaknesses in students' Qur'anic recitation persist, encompassing oral skills, reading fluency, *fasohah* (eloquence) skills, *tajwid*-compliant recitation, and recitation in *tadwir* and *tartil* styles among Muslim students across primary, secondary, and higher education levels (Norita Abd Aziz et al., 2021). Learning to recite the Qur'an accurately is crucial, as it represents divine revelation and the primary source of reference for Muslims, which parents ought to instill as early as four years old as a parental initiative (Norwardatun Mohamed Razali et al., 2021). Muhammad Zulazizi et al. (2021) assert that the Qur'an must be recited accurately according to *tajwid* rules, citing Ibn al-Jazari: "Reciting the Qur'an with *tajwid* is a mandatory duty; whoever does not recite it with *tajwid* is sinful, for Allah revealed the Qur'an in this manner, and thus it has reached us."

Learning Qur'anic Recitation Through the IFTaR Method

The primary study addressing this method was conducted by its founder, Rosnani Hashim (2021), who highlighted the need to reform pedagogy in fundamental Qur'anic learning methods. Factors driving this reform include concerns regarding the effectiveness of existing mainstream methods such as the six-volume Iqra' method by Ustaz As'ad, the al-Baghdadi method, and the Muqaddam Noor al-Hayat method where statistical data indicated that the percentage of Qur'anic recitation mastery among primary school students in several schools remained low.

The main limitation identified by Rosnani (2021) in existing methods is the lack of adherence to systematic pedagogical principles, specifically in terms of progressive content organization from simple to complex, overburdening students' memory capacity, imbalanced content difficulty, and the failure to integrate comprehensive language skills, particularly writing and listening. Consequently, subsequent studies emerged, such as Aishah Hanim et al. (2022), who examined the effectiveness of this method among converts aged 31 to 60 at the Hidayah Centre Foundation, and Rosnani et al. (2025), who investigated its effectiveness among Year Six primary school students in Setapak, Kuala Lumpur. Both studies reported positive outcomes, with respondents providing feedback that the method was concise, easy, fast, and motivating.

Learning Qur'anic Recitation Through the al-Matien Method

A study by Sharifah Norshah (2018) briefly touched upon the al-Matien method regarding its background, noting its introduction by its founders, Ustaz Haji Mohd Zamri Mohd Zainuddin and Ustaz Haji Mohd Wahid Abdul Hanif, in describing Qur'anic learning methods in Malaysia. Haziyah Hussin and Masitah Ali (2018) examined the effectiveness of this method on 30 Year 1 students at a school in Seremban 2 by conducting two test series (pre-test and post-test) on basic Qur'anic recitation across two groups: a control group (using the Iqra' method) and an experimental group (using the al-Matien method). Findings showed that 66.7 percent of students achieved excellent scores (between 70% and 100%) after learning the Qur'an via the al-Matien method, compared to only 6.7 percent of excellent students in the Iqra' group.

Research indicates that deficiencies in students' Qur'anic recitation mastery do not stem solely from the Iqra' method itself, but are also influenced by factors such as teacher competency, module implementation, and insufficient instructional time. Conversely, the al-Matien Method proved more effective in enhancing recitation mastery with *tajwid* as well as theoretical comprehension of *tajwid* principles. This effectiveness is attributed to the emphasis placed on teacher training prior to implementation. The study's findings also revealed a significant difference in the performance of students using the al-Matien Method compared to the control group, thereby highlighting its potential to serve as an instructional Qur'anic module within the mainstream education system (Haziyah Hussin & Masitah Ali, 2018).

From this literature review, the researcher observes that both methods have undergone empirical effectiveness studies and have been proposed for implementation as mainstream modules in relevant schools to replace existing methods. However, a research gap remains, as no comparative analysis between these two methods has yet been conducted to highlight the unique strengths and limitations of each developed approach.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative descriptive and comparative research design using a systematic content analysis approach to explore innovative pedagogical elements in basic Quranic recitation, specifically focusing on the IFTaR Method and the Al-Matien Method in Malaysia. To evaluate and compare their syllabus structures, instructional techniques, and engaging features in addressing Quranic illiteracy, a structured data collection process was implemented. Documents and relevant previous literature were retrieved through systematic searches across major academic databases. Document selection was guided by strict inclusion criteria: official syllabus manuals for both methods, peer-reviewed studies on their implementation or effectiveness and materials addressing basic Quranic recitation innovations in Malaysia.

For data analysis, this study applies thematic analysis integrated with inductive and comparative approaches. The process began with data familiarization through repeated reading of the selected modules and literature. A systematic coding procedure was then conducted. These initial codes were inductively grouped into thematic categories, specifically *instructional techniques*, *syllabus suitability and progression*, and *learning effectiveness*. Subsequently, a cross-case comparative matrix was utilized to systematically contrast the unique pedagogical strengths, structural differences, and innovative features between the IFTaR and Al-Matien methods, providing comprehensive findings that fulfill the research objectives.

FINDINGS

Background of the Methods

IFTaR method was developed by Professor Rosnani, a lecturer at the Kulliyyah of Education, International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), and published through the textbook titled *Mari Membaca Bahasa Arab* (Rosnani & Hassanein, 2012; Rosnani et al., 2025). This method represents an innovative adaptation derived from the Baghdadi Muqaddam, Qiraati, and the six-volume Iqra' methods. Originally developed in 1983 for the personal instruction of the founder's children, it was subsequently published for public implementation specifically targeting school students in 2010. Following its publication, the Kulliyyah of Education at IIUM organised multiple training workshops covering the theoretical and practical applications of the method for primary school Islamic Education teachers, preschool educators, community members, and volunteer teachers from Islamic non governmental organisations (NGOs). Presently, the method is implemented at a private Islamic primary school in Johor, the International Islamic School Malaysia in Kuantan, a private kindergarten in Kuala Lumpur, and the Hidayah Centre Foundation (Aishah Hanim et al., 2022).

Conversely, the al-Matien method is a Qur'anic instructional module introduced in 2009 by Mohd Zamri bin Mohd Zainuldin and Mohamad Wahid bin Abdul Hanif, a Qur'an teacher and Shariah editor at Telaga Biru Sdn. Bhd. This method synthesises the strengths and advantages of two traditional methods, namely the al-Baghdadiyah and Iqra' methods. The novel element introduced in this module is the enhanced attainment of Qur'anic learning objectives by placing equal emphasis on letter recognition and the mastery of *tajwīd* principles throughout the teaching and learning process (Haziyah Hussin & Masitah Ali, 2018). The al-Matien method comprises a two-book series, specifically *al-Matien 1* and *al-Matien 2* (Sharifah Norshah et al., 2018).

Table 1. Background of the Methods

Dimension	IFTaR Method	al-Matien Method
Founders & Year of Origin	Professor Rosnani (IIUM); developed in 1983, 2010.	Mohd Zamri bin Mohd Zainuldin & Mohamad Wahid bin Abdul Hanif (2009).
Methodological Adaptation	Innovative adaptation derived from Baghdadi Muqaddam, Qiraati, and the six-volume Iqra' methods.	Synthesis of the strengths of the al-Baghdadiyah and Iqra' methods.
Core Textbooks	*Mari Membaca Bahasa Arab* (Rosnani & Hassanein, 2012; Rosnani et al., 2025).	Two-book series: *al-Matien 1* and *al-Matien 2* (Sharifah Norshah et al., 2018).

Implementation Scope	Private Islamic schools (Johor & Kuantan), private kindergarten (KL), Hidayah Centre Foundation, and teacher/NGO training workshops.	Published under Telaga Biru Sdn. Bhd. for Qur'anic instruction.

Instructional Techniques

The primary instructional technique of the IFTaR method is based on a staged learning technique (*teknik pembelajaran bertingkat*), which structures progressive learning by systematically introducing multi-tiered *hijā'īyyah* letter combinations along with various vowels and diacritical marks (*fatḥah*, *kasrah*, *ḍammah*, *fatḥatayn*, *kasratayn*, *ḍammatayn*, *madd*, *sukūn*, *shaddah*, *al-Shamsiyyah*, and *al-Qamariyyah*) in alternating sequence. Instruction commences with unvoweled letter pronunciations, followed by *tanwīn* and prolonged *madd*. This letter arrangement diverges from the conventional Iqra' method, which follows a linear alphabetical sequence from *Alif* to *Yā'*. Each time a new letter or diacritical mark is introduced, students participate in retention and consolidation activities by spelling new words that combine the newly introduced letter or diacritical mark with previously mastered letter sequences, supplemented by writing and dictation exercises tailored to student age. Vowels are taught with an emphasis on clear articulation and lip positioning, whereas consonants are taught by emphasizing *makhārij al-ḥurūf* (articulation points: lips, tongue, throat cavity, and oral cavity) through repetitive to reinforce mastery. Letter shapes are also contextualised for identification (e.g., the letter *Mīm* (م) features an eye shape, while *Lām* (ل) resembles a fishhook). Students proceed sequentially through the module until they attain the proficiency required to recite selected Qur'anic verses, short chapters (*sūrahs*), and engage in basic Arabic conversational exchanges (Rosnani et al., 2025).

In contrast, the al-Matien method employs a reading simplification and reinforcement technique. Students are required to fully master *al-Matien 1* before advancing to *al-Matien 2*. Under this framework, spelling is strictly prohibited, students are required to visually observe, verify, and pronounce correctly, effortlessly, and firmly prior to learning the distinct phonetic sound corresponding to each diacritical mark. Teachers are strictly prohibited from advancing to the subsequent page if a student has not attained fluency. In *al-Matien 2*, students are introduced to formal *tajwīd* rules and proper recitation techniques under guided instructor supervision (Sharifah Norshah et al., 2018).

Table 2. Instructional Techniques

Dimension	IFTaR Method	al-Matien Method
Technique	Staged learning technique	Reading simplification and reinforcement technique.
Spelling Practice	Incorporates word spelling activities for letter retention and reinforcement.	Spelling is strictly prohibited (requires direct visual recognition and instant pronunciation).
Letter Sequence	Alternating combinations of letters and diacritics (non-linear,does not follow the traditional *Alif–Yā'* sequence).	Strict sequential mastery of *al-Matien 1* prior to progression to *al-Matien 2*.
Phonetic & Articulation Focus	Emphasises *makhārij al-ḥurūf* (lips, tongue, throat, oral cavity), lip posture for vowels, and visual letter shape analogies.	Direct phonetic pronunciation of letter sounds according to diacritical marks with firm accuracy.
Progression Criteria	Sequential progression culminating in verse recitation, short *sūrahs*, and basic Arabic conversation.	Teachers are restricted from advancing pages until complete student fluency is achieved.

Syllabus

The IFTaR syllabus encompasses the introductory progression of *hijā'īyyah* letters from isolated single letters to two-form representations (such as the letter *Kāf* (ك)), followed by the introduction of the *fatḥah* diacritic.

Reading and pronunciation practices are integrated simultaneously with writing and listening skills using shaded (grey) letter-tracing boxes (Rosnani et al., 2025). New word construction is built upon previously learned letters, wherein newly introduced letters (e.g., *Nūn* (ن) highlighted in red) are combined with prior letter sequences and diacritical marks alongside shaded word boxes (grey), the three short vowels (*fatḥah*, *kasrah*, *ḍammah*), and unvoweled consonants (*Fā'* (ف) – *Alif* (أ) – *Mīm* (م) – *Lām* (ل) – *Kāf* (ك)). Furthermore, the syllabus incorporates thematic illustrations, contextual Arabic vocabulary, and letter positional variants (initial, medial, and final positions) (Rosnani et al., 2025).

Conversely, the al-Matien syllabus is structured into two main sections. *Al-Matien 1* focuses on four core competencies: mastering *hijā'īyyah* letters, learning diacritical marks concurrently with connected letter forms, connecting voweled letters to silent letters (*sukūn*) or doubled letters (*shaddah*), and evaluating/differentiating vowel lengths (*madd*) (Zakaria Din, 2014; Sharifah Norshah et al., 2018). *Al-Matien 2* exposes students to 11 explicit *tajwīd* rules (*Madd*, *Nūn Sākinah*, *Mīm Sākinah*, *Wājib al-Ghunnah*, *Idghām*, *Qalqalah*, *Tafkhīm* and *Tarqīq*, *Hamzat al-Waṣl*, Stopping Signs (*Waqf*), *Saktah*, rules specific to the transmission of Ḥafṣ 'an 'Āṣim, and Attributes of Letters (*Ṣifāt al-Ḥurūf*)). This phase is supported by full colour infographics and vibrant letter illustrations (Zakaria Din, 2014; Sharifah Norshah et al., 2018).

Table 3. Syllabus

Dimension	IFTaR Method	al-Matien Method
Syllabus Structure	Integrated skill development structured continuously throughout the textbook.	Formally bifurcated into two distinct modules (*al-Matien 1* and *al-Matien 2*).
Foundational Phase Focus	Isolated to two-form letters, *fatḥah* diacritic, and multi-sensory integration (reading, writing via grey tracing boxes, and listening).	*Hijā'īyyah* mastery, voweled connected letters, *sukūn*/*shaddah* connections, and vowel length (*madd*) distinction.
Tajwīd & Linguistic Elements	Vocabulary acquisition, word construction, structural illustrations, and positional letter variants (initial, medial, final).	Systematic instruction in 11 specific *tajwīd* rules in *al-Matien 2* (including Ḥafṣ 'an 'Āṣim transmission and *Ṣifāt al-Ḥurūf*).
Visual	Shaded letter-tracing boxes (grey) and red highlighting for newly introduced letters.	Full-colour infographics and vibrant, color-coded letter illustrations.

Pedagogical Approaches

The pedagogical framework of the IFTaR method integrates *hijā'īyyah* letter literacy implicitly with *tajwīd* principles, targeting fluent reading, accurate *makhārij* articulation, proper application of *tajwīd* rules, correct spelling, and writing mechanics (Aishah Hanim et al., 2022). Furthermore, it incorporates established educational psychology theories, namely cognitive learning theory, behaviorist theory, constructivist theory, and social cognitive theory (Zhou & Brown, 2015; Rosnani et al., 2025). This is operationalised through a structured instructional approach using the textbook *Mari Membaca Bahasa Arab* as a systematic guide for both educators and learners.

On the other hand, the al-Matien method employs a concise and accessible pedagogical approach featuring visual learning tools such as infographics, vibrant colors, diagrams, tables, visual illustrations, and summarized tables of Qur'anic symbols and diacritics, accompanied by consolidation exercises (Haziyah Hussin & Masitah Ali, 2018). Additionally, it utilizes a formula-based approach operationalised through the textbook *Mantap Mengaji Kaedah al-Matien dengan Formula Tajwid Ringkas dan Mudah*, which necessitates direct teacher evaluation and verification on every page (Mohd Zamri & Mohd Wahid, 2016; Haziyah Hussin & Masitah Ali, 2018).

Table 4. Pedagogical Approaches

Dimension	IFTaR Method	al-Matien Method
Core Pedagogical Approach	Indirect integration of *hijā'īyyah* literacy with *tajwīd*, structured through comprehensive multi-skill acquisition.	Concise, accessible visual approach combined with a formula-based method (*formula-based approach*).

Theoretical & Visual Integration	Grounded in Educational Psychology Theories (Cognitive, Behaviorist, Constructivist, Social Cognitive) (Zhou & Brown, 2015; Rosnani et al., 2025).	Relies heavily on visual media (infographics, diagrams, summary charts, color coding, and reinforcement modules).
Textbook Guidance & Evaluation	*Mari Membaca Bahasa Arab* serves as a structured instructional guide for teachers and students.	*Mantap Mengaji,* requires mandatory page-by-page teacher verification and evaluation.

Target Audience

In general, the IFTaR method is well suited as an introductory framework for learners seeking to commence Qur'anic reading from the foundational level. However, it is particularly recommended for adult learners and new converts (*mu'allaf*) who are beginning their Qur'anic learning journey (Aishah Hanim et al., 2022).

Conversely, the al-Matien method primarily targets primary school students seeking to acquire basic Qur'anic recitation skills as a functional alternative to the existing Iqra' method (Haziyah Hussin & Masitah Ali, 2018).

Table 5. Target Audience

Dimension	IFTaR Method	al-Matien Method
Primary Target Group	General foundational-level learners.	Primary school students (as an alternative replacement for the conventional Iqra' method).
Specialized Recommendations	Highly recommended for adult learners and new converts (*mu'allaf*).	Primary school students acquiring basic Qur'anic recitation skills.

DISCUSSION

The comparative findings of the IFTaR and al-Matien methods reveal two distinct pedagogical paradigms in foundational Qur'anic literacy, reflecting a broader shift from traditional rote memorisation toward learner-centred and visually mediated instruction. The IFTaR method operationalises a multi sensory, staged learning approach that systematically integrates reading, writing, and listening through shaded tracing boxes and contextual vocabulary acquisition. This multi tiered structure aligns directly with cognitive load theory and constructivist principles (Zhou & Brown, 2015; Rosnani et al., 2025), where learners construct phonological awareness incrementally without being overwhelmed by initial structural complexities. In contrast, the al-Matien method adopts a formula-based and visually intensified framework that prioritises direct phonetic recognition over spelling mechanics. By strictly prohibiting traditional spelling and enforcing instant visual verification, al-Matien streamlines cognitive processing for young learners, enabling a rapid transition from basic letter recognition to advanced *tajwīd* application (Haziyah Hussin & Masitah Ali, 2018).

A significant point of divergence between the two frameworks lies in their structural organisation of the syllabus and phonetic progression. While traditional methodologies rely heavily on the linear alphabetical sequence (*Alif* to *Yā'*), IFTaR disrupts this convention by grouping letters based on phonetic utility and diacritical versatility, coupled with immediate exposure to sentence construction and basic Arabic conversation (Rosnani et al., 2025). This non-linear integration fosters both Qur'anic literacy and functional linguistic competence simultaneously. Conversely, al-Matien maintains a strict two-tier bifurcation (*al-Matien 1* and *al-Matien 2*), establishing absolute mastery over letter-sound correspondences before introducing its 11 explicit *tajwīd* rules (Zakaria Din, 2014; Sharifah Norshah et al., 2018). This rigid progression ensures that foundational phonetic fluency is fully consolidated prior to encountering complex theoretical rules such as *Ṣifāt al-Ḥurūf* or specific transmission variants (*Ḥafṣ 'an 'Āṣim*).

The pedagogical implementation and target audience adaptabilities further highlight the complementary nature

of these two innovations. IFTaR's explicit grounding in educational psychology incorporating behaviorist reinforcement, cognitive processing, and social learning makes it uniquely versatile for a broader demographic, particularly adult learners and new converts (*mu'allaf*) who benefit from analytical letter-shape analogies and structured writing exercises (Aishah Hanim et al., 2022). On the other hand, al-Matien relies extensively on high density visual media, full colour infographics, and formulaic shortcuts designed specifically to capture the attention of primary school students seeking an alternative to the conventional Iqra' series (Haziyah Hussin & Masitah Ali, 2018). While IFTaR distributes teacher guidance within an integrated workbook format, al-Matien enforces mandatory page by page teacher verification, ensuring continuous formative assessment and immediate error correction before page progression.

Synthesising these insights demonstrates that neither method operates in opposition; rather, they offer tailored pedagogical pathways catering to distinct learner profiles and instructional objectives. IFTaR excels in providing a holistic, multi-sensory linguistic foundation that bridges Qur'anic recitation with basic Arabic language acquisition, whereas al-Matien provides a highly streamlined, visually engaging route focused squarely on rapid *tajwīd* mastery and recitation fluency.

Table 6. Synthesis of Pedagogical Differences and Practical Implications Between the IFTaR and al-Matien Methods

Pedagogical Dimension	IFTaR Method	al-Matien Method	Analytical and Practical Implications
Cognitive & Learning Strategy	Staged learning with Multi sensory integration (reading, writing, listening, and spelling).	Reading simplification via direct visual recognition; strict prohibition of spelling.	IFTaR enhances deep cognitive retention through motor sensory engagement, whereas al-Matien reduces cognitive load for faster phonetic retrieval.
Syllabus Progression & Structure	Integrated non-linear sequence combining letters, diacritics, and basic conversational Arabic.	Bifurcated progression (*al-Matien 1* for foundation; *al-Matien 2* for 11 formal *tajwīd* rules).	IFTaR fosters dual linguistic-Qur'anic literacy, while al-Matien guarantees prerequisite phonetic mastery before complex rules are introduced.
Visual, Media Integration	Functional shading (grey tracing boxes) and red color-highlighting for target letters.	Extensive full-colour infographics, summary diagrams, and visual rules tables.	al-Matien leverages visual aesthetics to sustain young learners' focus, while IFTaR uses targeted visual cues to reinforce structural mechanics.
Learner Demographics & Execution	Adaptable across age groups; highly effective for primary students, adults, and *mu'allaf*.	Tailored specifically as a modern alternative for primary school students.	Selection between methods should be driven by learner age, prior background, and whether holistic language skills or targeted recitation speed is prioritized.

CONCLUSION

Both the IFTaR and al-Matien methods present highly effective, modernised paradigms for Qur'anic literacy that move beyond traditional rote learning, each tailored to distinct educational objectives and target demographics. IFTaR excels as a holistic, multi sensory model that integrates non-linear phonetic progression, writing mechanics, and fundamental Arabic vocabulary, making it exceptionally versatile for young learners, adult students, and new converts alike. Conversely, al-Matien offers a streamlined, visually intensive alternative that relies on formulaic shortcuts, color coded infographics, and direct phonetic recognition to rapidly secure tajwīd mastery among primary school children. Ultimately, these two methodologies do not compete but rather function complementarily within contemporary Islamic pedagogy, allowing educators to select or integrate the framework that best aligns with their students' cognitive needs, linguistic goals, and developmental stages. This study is delimited to these two methods, and future research could explore other

contemporary methods that feature distinct pedagogical approaches to Qur'anic recitation instruction.

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