Transformation Model of History Learning in Increasing Student Competency

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ABSTRACT: Since Islamic boarding school-based madrasas maintain books as a source of history learning, teachers face serious challenges, form students' critical and chronological thinking skills through book study. This encourages a transformation of history learning, which has been taking place traditionally. This study aims to explore and describe book-based history teaching and learning to improve student competence. This research is qualitative, using a case study type. Data collection techniques use interviews, observation and documentation. Data is analyzed using relevant theories or previous research findings. Data validity is carried out by extending observations. This study found that book-based history learning was transformed by formulating personal-social goals without ignoring transformative goals, emphasizing a chronological approach in education, and developing CRI (Constructed Response Items) model evaluation questions. Book-based learning activities are different from using modern textbooks. Teachers' creative and innovative efforts are needed to realise learning objectives in madrasas through book learning. Apart from mastering the content, the national curriculum is also directed at developing critical, creative, communicative, collaborative and literacy skills.


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berbasis kitab berbeda dengan menggunakan teksbook modern. Upaya kreatif dan inovatif guru diperlukan agar tujuan pembelajaran pada madrasah bisa diwujudkan melalui pembelajaran kitab. Selain peguasaan konten kurikulum nasional juga diarahkan pada pengembangan ketrampilan critis, creative, communicative, collaborative dan kemampuan literasi.

**Keywords:** Transformation Model, Religious Texts, History Learning.

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### I. INTRODUCTION

Learning the History of Islamic Culture (SKI) in the madrasa curriculum aims to present a new paradigm by prioritizing developing critical and chronological thinking skills. This transformation marks a fundamental change from the traditional approach towards a more scientific approach. The focus is to equip students with the ability to analyze historical facts more critically, apply scientific methods in the learning process, and build awareness of the significance of time and place in history (Aidulsyah, 2023; Savenije et al., 2022).

Within the framework of the madrasa curriculum, SKI learning aims to train students' critical powers in understanding and analyzing historical facts with a scientific approach. The decree of the Minister of Religion Number 183 of 2019, which regulates the PAI and Arabic curriculum in madrasas confirms this. This approach encourages a deeper understanding and more critical analysis of the historical context and Islamic cultural values (Kepmenag No.183, 2019).

Islamic boarding school-based madrasas face significant challenges in adapting book-based SKI learning approaches. The Islamic content of Islamic boarding schools, which is an integral part of the madrasa PAI content, and the use of Islamic boarding school books as the primary source of learning adds complexity to integrating scientific methods into SKI learning. This shows the need for in-depth research regarding SKI learning transformation strategies in Islamic boarding school-based madrasas (Azizan et al., 2022; Liam et al., 2023).

The importance of studying the transformation of book-based SKI learning in madrasas does not only lie in developing students' critical and chronological thinking skills. More than that, this also refers to strengthening the integration of Islamic boarding school values with a more inclusive scientific learning paradigm. This transformation will allow the combining of traditional Islamic values with more scientific and contextual teaching (Arshad et al., 2012; Ihsan et al., 2021).

Studies and efforts to integrate scientific methods into SKI learning in Islamic boarding school-based madrasas build awareness of the need for a relevant curriculum. By combining the rich values of Islamic boarding schools with more scientific learning methods, madrasas can produce a curriculum that is not only academically strong but also capable of forming critical thinking and a deep understanding of Islamic history and culture (Dzhuad, 2023; Kumala & Rohman, 2023; Sukamto, 2023).

So far, studies on SKI learning in madrasas have focused on learning problems and innovative efforts to solve these problems. Research on SKI learning problems has been carried out by (Fauziah, 2013; Hasmar, 2020; Rohman et al., 2019). Innovative efforts
to solve learning problems are often carried out through experimental research and CAR (Classroom Action Research), such as research by (Afifah & Sulaeman, 2022; Istiqomah et al., 2023; Majid & Suteja, 2017; Nurpriatna et al., 2021; Ramadhan et al., 2019). These studies were carried out on SKI learning using modern textbooks by the madrasah SKI syllabus. The current text-based SKI learning model differs from a traditional book/textbook-based SKI learning. In line with this, it is essential to research how book-based education can encourage the development of students' critical and chronological thinking skills.

This paper seeks to complement previous studies which paid less attention to the transformation of book-based SKI learning in madrasas to improve student competency. Book-based learning takes place traditionally. The learning objective is mastery of the book's content so that the teacher's teaching activities are centred on conveying the book's content, and evaluation activities also explore students' ability of the book's content. In history learning, developing content knowledge is central to history learning (Lévesque & Clark, 2018). Historical content knowledge includes facts, concepts, and chronology. Knowing these three components can encourage the development of students' reasoning (van Drie & van Boxtel, 2007). In line with this, this study focuses on transforming three learning components, namely learning objectives, teaching and learning activities, and evaluation of learning outcomes.

This article is based on an argument that increasing students' competence in historical material requires a transformation of learning that has been taking place traditionally. Traditional education focuses on conveying historical facts through lecture activities, reading textbooks, memorizing notes, and taking tests. This conventional learning is allegedly the leading cause of failure in history learning in many educational institutions (Waring & Robinson, 2015). Therefore, the transformation of history learning requires formulating personal-social learning goals without ignoring transformative goals, a chronological approach to education, and using CRI (Constructed Response Items) in evaluation. Such a learning transformation can build a foundation for developing students' critical and chronological thinking skills.

II. METHOD

This qualitative research allows researchers to focus on analytical topics related to how and why questions to obtain a complete picture of the transformation of history teaching and learning in madrasas. Tsanawiyah and Aliyah Madrasas in Islamic boarding schools are formal Islamic boarding school educational institutions that are different from madrasas because Islamic boarding schools have flexibility in managing their education. Therefore, this research also uses a case study type because it is impossible to generalize the results in Islamic boarding school research (Yin, 2013). Data collection techniques use interviews, observation and documentation. The subjects of this data collection were Islamic boarding school caregivers, madrasa administrators, teachers and students. Another data source is obtained from observations of history teaching and learning activities. Curriculum documentation and teachers' documents become sources for historical curricular content and learning. The data that has been collected is classified based on themes, presented in table form, and then analyzed using relevant theories or previous research findings. Data validity was carried out by extending observations and, at the same time, presenting them in front of critical informants (madrasah administrators and teachers) (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

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III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The transformation of SKI learning in madrasahs takes place by the character of the madrasah itself. Madrasah Tsanawiyah and Aliyah Wali Songo are a form of integration of Islamic boarding schools with madrasas. The Wali Songo Islamic Boarding School (PPWS) was established on April 4 1961, by adopting the KMI (Kulliyatul Mu'allimin al-Islamiyah) Gontor Modern Boarding School Ponorogo education pattern. In line with the Islamic education reform policy by the New Order government in 1975, PPWS adopted the madrasa education pattern in 1980/1981, where the curriculum content integrated Islamic boarding school content with national content (madrasah) (Laila et al., 2020). The institutional integration of Islamic boarding schools with madrasas is intended so that students continue to receive Islamic boarding school education and, simultaneously, are registered as madrasa students so they can continue to higher education (Ikhwan et al., 2023).

In this institutional context, learning SKI material at PPWS madrasas continues the Islamic boarding school scientific tradition. Learning uses Islamic boarding school books as teaching resources and develops learning models by Islamic boarding school learning traditions. According to (Ihsan et al., 2021), Islamic boarding school-based madrasas can create Islamic curriculum content and learning models. Based on the results of interviews, observations, and document studies, it was found that the transformation of history learning was found in the formulation of learning objectives, development of learning activities, and implementation of evaluation of learning outcomes. The following presents the transformation of book-based SKI learning in madrasas.

Personal-Social and Transformative Learning Objectives

History learning objectives can be classified into personal-social objectives and transformative objectives. In SKI learning in madrasas, personal-social goals are more dominant than transformative goals. By using four points of view (four stances), namely identification, analytic, moral response, and exhibition (Lévesque & Clark, 2018), the objectives of history learning at PPWS madrasas can be described in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Competence</th>
<th>Competency Coverage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Content</td>
<td>Mastery of historical content knowledge (facts, concepts, chronology)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Construct</td>
<td>The ability to construct ibrah from past knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Moral judgment</td>
<td>The ability to provide judgments about past events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Pedagogical</td>
<td>Ability to teach content knowledge and the values contained therein</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above shows that SKI learning at PPWS madrasas aims to form three competencies: content, construct, and moral judgment. For madrasas, these three competencies are related to one another. Mastery of historical content is the core of history learning. Content mastery includes essential events in Islamic history and figures who played important roles. Through content mastery, students are expected to be able to make judgments about past events and learn lessons for present and future life. With these three competencies, students are expected to be able to teach historical content and the values contained therein.

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History learning objectives at the madrasah above prioritize personal social goals but do not ignore transformative goals. Social and personal goals mean that historical content knowledge is treated as a data source for solving current social problems (Lévesque & Clark, 2018). By historical accounts, we are connected to past generations. Then, through historical accounts, we reflect on and re-apprehend past events and think about and re-apply human behaviour in the past to find the right approach to current social problems. These personal and social goals do not ignore transformative goals. Transformative goals try to establish a balance in learning between teaching students about the past and equipping them with historical-critical thinking skills (Mufron et al., 2021). According to (van Boxtel & van Drie, 2018), students' thinking skills will automatically be formed through learning content knowledge (facts, concepts, chronology). In addition, students' reasoning will develop when they learn to construct faith from the past and make judgments about the past.

The traditional historical paradigm influences the vital personal and social goals in history learning. For teachers, Islamic history is the growth and development of Islam, starting from the time of the Prophet Muhammad Saw, the Khulafaurrosyidin, and the caliphs after him, until the development of Islam in Indonesia. The teacher formulated this conceptualisation based on the historical material that he understands and teaches. This shows that the teacher understands history according to its object. Namely the incident or incident itself, and does not contain elements of the subject (story maker). In the traditional paradigm, history is a collection of past events or records about past events (Laila, 2018).

In line with this traditional paradigm, the importance of critical thinking in history learning objectives has received less attention. Teachers understand historical narratives in books as objective truth that does not need to be questioned critically. This conceptualization is formed because teachers also learn historical knowledge from these books. Teachers do not see historical material in textbooks as historians' interpretations, thus closing opportunities to critically analyse differences in variations in history (Waring & Robinson, 2015). Critical thinking is understood not to question historical narratives in the context of history learning in madrasas.

On the other hand, critical thinking is needed to understand historical events so that we can take lessons from these events to improve our lives now and in the future. Apart from that, critical thinking is also essential to understand the exemplary stories of Islamic figures so that you can follow in the footsteps of their struggle. This shows that history learning objectives at madrasas integrate cognitive, psychomotor and affective aspects, as well as critical thinking skills.

**Chronological Approach to Learning**

SKI learning at PPWS madrasas maintains the long-standing scientific traditions of Islamic boarding schools. Learning uses Islamic boarding school books as textbooks and applies learning steps from Islamic boarding school teaching manuals. The following is a description of the history textbook and a chronological approach to learning.

**History Learning Textbook**

History learning at PPWS madrasas uses Islamic boarding school books as textbooks for teachers and students. There are two books used. *First*, the book *khulasoh nurul iman fi shiroti sayyidil mursalin* by Umar bin Abdul Jabbar, a book writer born in
Mecca. This book summarises Nurul Yakin written by Muhammad Al-Khudhari Bek, a history book writer from Egypt (Al Fattah et al., 2022). In madrasas, this book is a source of learning SKI material for Tsanawiyah level class II-III and Aliyah level I class. Second, the book *al-Tarikh al-Islamy* was compiled by Umar al-Iskandary al-Mirafsafdaj and printed by Gontor Modern Boarding School Ponorogo. This book consists of two volumes taught at Aliyah levels II and III. PPWS Madrasah uses both books as sources for learning history because they follow the content of the KMI Gontor curriculum. PPWS is the oldest Gontor alum boarding school, which still maintains the content of the Gontor curriculum in the madrasas it organizes, namely Islamic content, language content and pedagogical content (Ashari et al., 2023; Laila et al., 2020).

Document studies of the two books found that the historical narratives constructed were mono-perspective. Historical events are presented chronologically, starting from the period of the Prophet Muhammad Saw, the Khulafaurrosidin period, and the period of the caliphs who followed. In the book *Khulashoh Nurul Yakin*, the historical narrative is presented concisely and accompanied by detailed explanations in footnotes. At the end of each chapter, formative questions are presented in essay form. Meanwhile, the book *al-Tarikh al-Islamy* narrates historical events more broadly and in-depth. Specific terms are given conceptual explanations in footnotes. Judging from their content, these two historical books present one narrative constructed by the author and do not include various primary and secondary sources. Both books give historical facts from a mono-perspective, so it is impossible to find multiple interpretations with different perspectives from diverse contexts. Van Boxtel & Van Drie (2018) quote Bain's opinion that teachers and textbooks often present history as something that already exists and is finished.

**Chronological Learning of History Content**

In general, learning Islamic material at PPWS madrasas follows Herbart's learning steps (*khuṭuwȃt herbȃrt*). Document studies of Islamic boarding school pedagogical books, namely *Ushȗl at-tarbiyah wat ta'lim* (Ahmad et al., 2014) and the *al-Tarbiyah al-ʻAmaliyah* book (Zarkasy, 2014), found Herbart's five learning steps. These are *al-muqaddimah* (preliminary activities), *al-ʻarḍ* (explanation activities), *ar-rabṭu* (association activities), *al-istinbȃṭ* (concluding), and *at-taṭbȋq* (evaluation). These five steps are maintained in book learning at madrasas because they are based on the Islamic material's character. In addition, teachers are familiar with these learning steps, so they are easier to implement. This shows that history learning at madrasas adopts Islamic boarding school learning resources and, at the same time, teaching guidelines.

Based on the results of learning observations in class and equipped with interviews, it was found that history learning emphasizes conveying content knowledge through overviews and in-depth studies. The overview activity begins with presenting new/complex vocabulary found in the textbook. Overview teaching is carried out by the teacher through lectures/stories of historical events by the theme of the discussion being studied. The teacher uses a blackboard to write difficult words (vocab), the names of specific figures, places and essential years. One teacher also uses the electronic media video/YouTube *sirah nabawi*. The teacher presents this overview of historical events chronologically by the beginning and end chronology constructed by the textbook's author. The overview teaching ends with taking a lesson from the historical event that has just been presented.

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In-depth study activities develop students' understanding of the overview material. This activity is carried out by asking students to read the historical material in the textbook themselves without making a sound. In this activity, students can ask questions about historical content and the meaning of specific sentences they have yet to understand. Students also work on evaluation questions provided in the textbook. The learning activity ends with a conclusion of the historical material studied.

The history learning activities above show that learning emphasizes conveying content knowledge and taking lessons from the past using a traditional approach. Transmission of content knowledge is core to history learning. With the conventional method, content knowledge is delivered through a series of lecture activities, reading textbooks, memorizing notes, and working on test questions (Thorp & Persson, 2020). However, conveying content knowledge using this traditional approach recognizes the development of student reasoning. Historical content knowledge includes facts, concepts and chronology. Content knowledge becomes the basis for student reasoning. Students reason with knowledge of facts, pictures, and chronology, which comes from history classrooms and historical narratives told at home or present in popular culture (van Boxtel & van Drie, 2018). This shows that learning historical content knowledge itself becomes the foundation for developing students' thinking skills.

The history learning above also shows that the delivery of content knowledge emphasizes the chronological aspect. Chronology contains two essential elements, namely timelines and time conventions. Timelines have a series of events that occur according to chronology, while time conventions involve dates and events. A strong emphasis on the chronological aspect can encourage students' critical thinking skills. Chronology is an essential thinking skill for sequencing, which is included in higher-order thinking skills (Thorp & Persson, 2020). Learning historical chronology from period to period and between periods can help students orient themselves to time, that is, help them develop a picture of the past that they can remember, understand and use to make sense of the world (Lévesque & Clark, 2018).

From the discussion above, book-based history learning uses a traditional approach. Learning uses traditional mono-textbooks with mono-perspectives and utilizes various media. Education emphasizes the delivery of historical content so that student learning activities focus on mastering this content. However, the strong emphasis on the chronological element automatically encourages the development of students' critical thinking skills.

**Learning Evaluation Using the CRI (Constructed Response Items) Model**

Evaluation is an essential component of the educational process. If used correctly, this can determine the achievement of learning goals. Evaluation of history learning in Islamic boarding school-based madrasahs uses various techniques that require students' critical-analytical thinking skills. The implementation of the evaluation can be seen in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Aspects</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Technique</th>
<th>Test Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content Mastery</td>
<td>Formative</td>
<td>Oral test:</td>
<td>Theme: Conquest of Baitul Maqdis, Egypt, Alexandria and Libya during the time of Umar bin Khattab.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to construct</td>
<td>Summative</td>
<td>Writing test:</td>
<td>Question:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lessons/ihrah</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Question and answer</td>
<td>1. What did ‘Amr ibn ‘Ash do in Jordan?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mastery of Arabic</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Retelling Story</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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The table above explains three things in history learning evaluation activities. First, history learning evaluation is carried out with two objectives: to ensure student progress in the learning process (formative) and to obtain information on student learning outcomes after participating in learning activities (summative). Second, formative and summative evaluations integrate three aspects, namely content, *ibrah*, and vocabulary. Evaluation of content knowledge is directed at mastery of facts, concepts, and chronology. Evaluation of the preparation of *ibrah* is required at the accuracy/suitability of *ibrah* with the historical theme being studied, and evaluation of vocabulary mastery is directed at new vocabulary learned in the lesson. Third, the implementation of formative and summative assessment uses the same technique, namely the test technique. Oral and written test questions are about knowledge of facts and chronology, continuity, and effect relationships.

The history learning evaluation above shows that the learning evaluation was developed in the CRI (Constructed Response Items) model. Question-and-answer questions, retelling stories, and essays require open answers from students based on the content knowledge they have studied. Open-ended questions often need students to construct or develop their solutions without the benefit of any suggestions or answer choices (Belo et al., 2019). In the implementation of open evaluations in history learning at madrasas, the opinion (Shemilt, 2018) that evaluation of content knowledge with open question types can begin by asking candidates to provide one or two-word answers to specific questions or, in essay form, write everything that they know about the content being taught.

Oral tests and oral tests in the form of CRI can be the foundation for developing students' critical thinking skills. Question-and-answer questions require a short response, while retelling stories and essays requires an extended response. CRI in quick response items requires students to make correct responses. This question model is very suitable for testing factual knowledge only but has the potential to test memory (recall), not just recognition. CRI, in the form of extended response items, assesses high-level cognitive skills. Students are asked to think about and create complex responses. This type of assessment allows students to express themselves and demonstrate their reasoning regarding a topic. Essay questions often require higher-order thinking skills, such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Belo et al., 2019; Shemilt, 2018). From this discussion, the CRI model in evaluating text-based history learning can improve students' mastery of content knowledge and critical-chronological thinking skills.

**IV. CONCLUSION**

The use of Islamic boarding school books as a source of learning SKI material in madrasas encourages the achievement of learning objectives more effectively. Madrasahs can improve students' competence through transforming learning objectives, developing teaching and learning activities, and implementing evaluations. Content learning objectives do not ignore construct objectives and moral judgment. Learning
activities balance an overview from the teacher and in-depth study by individual students. Meanwhile, learning evaluation trains students to develop their responses based on the content knowledge they have mastered. Thus, book-based history learning in madrasas can develop students’ competence in historical content knowledge and encourage developing their critical thinking skills. This transformation of teaching and learning allows madrasas in the Islamic boarding school environment to realize the goals of learning history through book study.

V. REFERENCES


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