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Audio-Visual Oral Practice for Improving Letter Articulation in Early Quranic Literacy Learning

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ABSTRACT
This study aims to improve the understanding of letter articulation points (makhārijul hurūf) through audio-visual-based oral practice in Iqra learning among children aged 4–5 years at RA Darun Najwa, Bandar Khalipah, Medan. The study employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) method conducted in two cycles, consisting of planning, action, observation, and reflection. The participants were 15 children. Data were collected using observation sheets and analyzed descriptively and through a paired-samples t-test. The results showed that the mean score increased from 17.20 in the pre-test to 25.00 in Cycle I and 32.00 in Cycle II. Classical mastery reached 100% in Cycle II, with statistically significant differences in scores across stages ($p < 0.001$). The use of pronunciation videos, hijaiyah songs, small mirrors, repeated practice, and direct teacher feedback was accompanied by improvements in children's abilities. This study recommends the interactive use of audio-visual media in Iqra learning for early childhood education.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Qur'an education for early childhood is an important effort in instilling Islamic values while also developing the ability to read the Qur'an from an early age (Iskandar, 2022). Iqra learning has become one of the methods used to introduce the hijaiyah letters gradually. In the process, understanding the points of articulation or makharijul huruf is very important so that children can recognize sound differences and pronounce each letter according to where the sound comes from (Astuti & Watini, 2021).

Children aged 4–5 years are at a stage of language development that requires stimulation through concrete activities, repetition, listening, and imitation. At this age, children may have difficulty distinguishing Arabic letters that sound similar or are pronounced in a similar way (Suharsiwi, Fadilah, & Farokhah, 2022; Jannah, Ibrahim, & Syuhadak, 2025). Therefore, Iqra learning needs to be designed in an engaging way and in line with children's developmental characteristics so that the process of introducing letters focuses not only on their shapes but also on correct pronunciation.

One effort that can be made is to implement audio-visual based speaking exercises. This approach combines examples of letter pronunciation sounds with visual displays of hijaiyah letters and demonstrations of speech organ positions. Through activities like listening, observing, imitating, and repeating pronunciations, children are expected to more easily understand sound differences and recognize the articulation point of each letter. Teachers can also give direct corrections according to the child's ability (Fajriah, Muthmainnah, & Shalihah, 2025; Astina & Bakti, 2026).

In learning Iqra at RA Darun Najwa, Bandar Khalipah, Medan, implementing oral exercises based on audio-visual methods needs to be explored as an alternative to improve children's understanding of letter articulation points. The initial conditions regarding children's pronunciation abilities and the difficulties they face need to be identified through observation so that the designed learning activities match the students' needs. In this way, using audio-visual media is not only aimed at increasing children's interest but also supports guided and repeated pronunciation practice.

Based on this explanation, this study aims to examine efforts to improve understanding of the articulation points of letters through oral exercises supported by audio-visual materials in Iqra learning for children aged 4–5 at RA Darun Najwa, Bandar Khalipah, Medan. This research is expected to provide practical contributions for teachers in developing Iqra lessons that are interactive, enjoyable, and appropriate for the child's developmental stage, as well as help improve the ability to recognize, differentiate, and correctly pronounce hijaiyah letters.

Previous research by (Nurliadin, Chirzin, Arif, & Khairudin, 2024) discussing the Iqra method as a means to introduce Hijaiyah letters to young children by emphasizing the role of the teacher, guidance, and learning media. Research (Kutanga, Nurhayati, Amrullah, & Durrotunnisa, 2025) studying the use of audio-visual media to improve the ability to recognize hijaiyah letters in children aged 4–5 years, while (Kurniawan & Siregar, 2026) researching the optimization of recognizing Hijaiyah letters through audio-visual media in children aged 5–6 years. These three studies serve as a basis that learning media and letter recognition strategies are important in early childhood Quranic education.

Even so, previous research focused more on introducing hijaiyah letters and general reading skills, so studies specifically on understanding articulation points or makharijul huruf through verbal practice still need to be developed. The gap in this research lies in the assessment focus, which not only covers the ability to recognize letter shapes but also the child's ability to distinguish sounds, imitate pronunciation, and pronounce letters based on where the sound comes from. These aspects need to be specifically studied in 4–5-year-old children at RA Darun Najwa, Bandar Khalipah, Medan.

The novelty of this research lies in the application of audio-visual based oral exercises that integrate listening to sound examples, observing articulation demonstrations, mimicking pronunciation, and receiving direct feedback from teachers in Iqra learning. This approach is expected to provide a more guided learning alternative to improve young children's understanding of the articulation points of Hijaiyah letters. The novelty is contextual and methodological, while broader claims of novelty need to be verified through more thorough literature review.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach, known in Indonesia as Penelitian Tindakan Kelas (PTK), to improve children's understanding and pronunciation of Hijaiyah letters based on their articulation points (*makhārijul hurūf*) through audio-visual oral practice in Iqra

learning. The research was conducted with children aged 4–5 years at RA Darun Najwa, Bandar Khalipah, Medan. According to (Arikunto, 2021), Classroom Action Research is a systematic effort to improve the learning process through planned actions that are continuously evaluated.

The research followed the action research cycle consisting of four stages: planning, action, observation, and reflection. (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988) explain that action research involves a systematic reflective process aimed at improving learning practices. This design was considered appropriate because it enabled teachers to identify children's pronunciation difficulties and improve instructional strategies based on observations and reflections from each cycle.

2.2 Participants and Setting

The research was conducted at RA Darun Najwa, Bandar Khalipah, Medan, during the even semester of the 2026/2027 academic year. The participants consisted of 15 children aged 4–5 years who had complete assessment data from the pre-action assessment, Cycle I, and Cycle II. The participants were selected based on the availability of complete data across all research stages. The study focused on children's ability to recognize, differentiate, and pronounce Hijaiyah letters correctly according to their articulation points. The learning activities were implemented in the regular Iqra learning environment with the teacher facilitating the audio-visual learning activities and providing individual pronunciation guidance.

2.3 Instruments

The research instrument consisted of an observation sheet designed to assess children's abilities in recognizing Hijaiyah letters, differentiating Hijaiyah letters, pronouncing the letters correctly, and understanding their articulation points (*makhārijul hurūf*). The observation sheet was used consistently during the pre-action assessment, Cycle I, and Cycle II to monitor changes in children's learning achievements. The instrument had a maximum score of 40, with an individual success criterion of at least 30 points, equivalent to 75% of the maximum score. This criterion was used to determine whether each child had achieved the expected learning competency. The assessment focused on children's observable performance during pronunciation practice and their ability to imitate the correct articulation of Hijaiyah letters.

2.4 Procedure

The research procedure was implemented through a pre-action assessment followed by two cycles of Classroom Action Research. Each cycle consisted of planning, action, observation, and reflection. During the pre-action stage, children's initial abilities in recognizing and pronouncing Hijaiyah letters were assessed to identify learning difficulties and establish a baseline for improvement. In Cycle I, the intervention involved audio-visual videos presenting examples of Hijaiyah letter pronunciation and demonstrations of the positions of the speech organs. Children were encouraged to observe, listen to, and imitate the pronunciation demonstrated in the videos. The teacher monitored children's responses and recorded their pronunciation abilities using the observation sheet.

Based on the reflection from Cycle I, improvements were introduced in Cycle II to address the difficulties identified during the previous cycle. The instructional videos were played at a slower speed to allow children to observe pronunciation more carefully. Hijaiyah songs were also incorporated to create a more engaging learning atmosphere, while small mirrors were used to help children observe their own mouth movements. Furthermore, individual pronunciation practice and direct correction from the teacher were provided to support children's gradual improvement in articulation. These instructional improvements were intended to help children observe, imitate, and develop more accurate pronunciation skills (Creswell, 2018).

2.5 Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive analysis involved calculating the mean, standard deviation, minimum score, maximum score, score improvements, and overall learning completeness at each research stage. Individual learning completeness was determined based on the minimum achievement criterion of 30 out of 40 points, or 75%. To examine differences in children's scores between the assessment stages, paired-samples t-tests were conducted. Before conducting the tests, the normality of the paired difference scores was examined

using the Shapiro–Wilk test. The results indicated that the difference scores met the normality assumption ($p > 0.05$). Therefore, paired-samples t-tests were considered appropriate for examining changes in children's pronunciation abilities between the assessment stages. This analysis was used to evaluate improvements following the implementation of the audio-visual learning intervention (Sugiyono, 2022).

2.6 Ethical Considerations

The research involved children aged 4–5 years; therefore, attention was given to protecting participants' identities, privacy, and comfort throughout the research process. Children's participation in learning activities was conducted in accordance with the regular educational activities at RA Darun Najwa. Their identities were kept confidential and were not disclosed in the presentation of research findings.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Development of Makhārijul Hurūf Skills

The results of a study involving 15 children aged 4–5 years at RA Darun Najwa, Bandar Khalipah, Medan, indicated an improvement in the children's ability to understand and pronounce makhārijul hurūf following the implementation of audiovisual-based oral practice. The assessment was conducted in three stages: the pre-test, Cycle I, and Cycle II. The children's performance was assessed using an observation checklist with a maximum score of 40. The minimum individual mastery criterion was set at 30, equivalent to 75% of the maximum score.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Children's Ability to Understand Makhārijul Hurūf

Stage	N	Mean	SD	SE	Median	Min–Max
Pre-test	15	17.20	2.11	0.55	18	14–21
Cycle I	15	25.00	2.83	0.73	26	21–29
Cycle II	15	32.00	2.30	0.59	31	30–37

Source: Primary data from the researcher's observations and assessments (2026).

Based on Table 1, the children's mean scores increased from 17.20 at the pre-test stage to 25.00 in Cycle I and 32.00 in Cycle II. This improvement indicates a gradual development in the children's abilities throughout the implementation of the instructional intervention. The minimum score also increased from 14 to 21 and subsequently reached 30 in Cycle II. This means that, in the final assessment, even the child with the lowest score had achieved the established individual mastery criterion. These findings demonstrate that improvements in the instructional process were reflected not only in the mean scores but also in the overall learning outcomes of the children.

3.2. Score Improvements at Each Stage

To provide a clearer picture of the children's progress, changes in the mean scores and their relative percentage increases are presented in the following table. The percentage of the maximum possible score of 40 achieved at each stage is also reported.

Table 2. Changes in Children's Mean Ability Scores at Each Stage

Comparison	Initial Mean	Final Mean	Score Increase	Relative Increase
Pre-test to Cycle I	17.20	25.00	7.80	45.35%
Cycle I to Cycle II	25.00	32.00	7.00	28.00%
Pre-test to Cycle II	17.20	32.00	14.80	86.05%

Source: Research data, processed by the researchers (2026).

Table 2 shows that the greatest overall improvement occurred between the pre-test and Cycle II, with an increase of 14.80 points, equivalent to an 86.05% increase relative to the initial mean score. From the pre-test to Cycle I, the mean score increased by 7.80 points. Subsequently, following refinements to the instructional intervention in Cycle II, the mean score increased by a further 7.00 points. The relative percentage increases presented in the table were calculated using the mean score at

the beginning of each comparison as the reference value. Meanwhile, the percentages of the maximum possible score achieved at each stage were 43.00%, 62.50%, and 80.00%, respectively.

This pattern indicates that the intervention implemented in Cycle I was accompanied by improvements in the children's abilities, although further instructional refinements were still necessary. In Cycle II, the oral practice activities were enhanced by incorporating slower-paced videos, hijaiyah songs, small mirrors, and individualized guidance. These modifications provided children with opportunities to listen to the sounds, observe pronunciation demonstrations, imitate the articulation of the letters, and receive immediate corrective feedback. Although the score improvements occurred alongside the refinement of the instructional intervention, the research design does not allow the individual effects of each media component to be isolated and examined separately.

3.3. Individual and Classical Mastery

The success of the intervention was also analyzed based on the number of children who achieved a minimum score of 30 out of a maximum possible score of 40. This criterion was used to determine individual mastery and calculate the percentage of classical mastery.

Table 3. Classical Mastery Based on the Minimum Score Criterion of 30

Stage	Children Achieving Mastery	Children Not Achieving Mastery	Classical Mastery	Mean Score Attainment
Pre-test	0	15	0%	43.00%
Cycle I	0	15	0%	62.50%
Cycle II	15	0	100%	80.00%

Source: Research data, processed by the researchers based on children's assessment scores and the predetermined individual mastery criterion (minimum score of 30 out of 40) (2026).

The results presented in Table 3 indicate that none of the children achieved the mastery criterion before the intervention was implemented. The same condition persisted in Cycle I, despite an increase in the mean score to 25.00. This finding indicates that an improvement in the mean score alone was insufficient to meet the individual mastery target. Therefore, the reflection conducted after Cycle I provided the basis for refining the instructional strategies in the subsequent cycle.

In Cycle II, all 15 children achieved a minimum score of 30, with a mean score of 32.00 and a maximum score of 37. Classical mastery reached 100%, indicating that the success criterion established on the basis of the predetermined score threshold had been met. These findings demonstrate that the systematic implementation of the intervention, accompanied by improvements in instructional media and teacher guidance, was associated with enhanced children's achievement in understanding and pronouncing makhārijul hurūf.

3.4. Inferential Statistical Analysis

To examine differences in the children's ability scores across the assessment stages, a paired-samples t-test was employed. The analysis was conducted for three pairs of measurements: the pre-test and Cycle I, Cycle I and Cycle II, and the pre-test and Cycle II.

Table 4. Results of Paired-Samples Tests and Effect Size Analysis

Comparison	Mean Difference	t	df	p	Cohen's d
Pre-test–Cycle I	7.80	-16.96	14	< 0.001	4.38
Cycle I–Cycle II	7.00	-19.17	14	< 0.001	4.95
Pre-test–Cycle II	14.80	-34.61	14	< 0.001	8.94

Source: Research data, processed by the researchers using paired-samples t-tests and Cohen's d effect size calculations based on the children's assessment scores from the pre-test, Cycle I, and Cycle II (2026).

The statistical test results indicate that all comparisons yielded p-values below 0.001. Thus, statistically significant differences were observed between the pre-test and Cycle I, between Cycle I and Cycle II, and between the pre-test and Cycle II. The negative t-values resulted from the direction of subtraction used in the analysis, in which the earlier assessment stage was subtracted from the

subsequent stage in reverse order. Substantively, the children's scores increased across all three comparisons.

The Cohen's d values indicate very large effect sizes in the study data, particularly in the comparison between the pre-test and Cycle II. However, these values should be interpreted cautiously because the study employed a single-group design without a control group. The findings demonstrate substantial changes within the classroom context under investigation, but they do not establish that the improvements were attributable exclusively to the audiovisual media.

3.5. Changes in the Instructional Process Across Cycles

In addition to changes in scores, the intervention reflections provided insights into improvements in the instructional process. In Cycle I, the children participated in activities involving videos demonstrating the pronunciation of hijaiyah letters and imitated the sounds presented. However, the reflection notes indicated that some children remained passive, hesitant, and embarrassed when asked to pronounce the letters independently. These conditions informed the revisions made to the instructional activities in Cycle II.

In Cycle II, the instructional process was improved by slowing down the video playback, incorporating more engaging hijaiyah songs, providing small mirrors, and offering opportunities for individual practice. The children were not only able to listen to and imitate the sounds but also observe the positioning of their speech organs while practicing pronunciation. The teacher provided immediate corrective feedback to help the children improve their articulation. According to the reflection notes, the children reportedly became more enthusiastic, interactive, and confident. However, because no specific quantitative measurements of the children's responses were available, these changes are presented as observational findings rather than as percentage-based improvements.

4. DISCUSSION

The research results show that implementing audio-visual based oral exercises in Iqra learning at RA Darun Najwa, Bandar Khalipah, Medan, was followed by an improvement in children's ability to understand and pronounce makhārijul hurūf. The improvement is seen from the average scores changing from 17.20 in the pre-test to 25.00 in Cycle I and 32.00 in Cycle II. These findings indicate that learning which combines pronunciation examples, visual observation, imitation practice, and teacher guidance can support the development of articulation skills in 4–5-year-old children. In the context of early childhood education, learning Hijaiyah letters is not enough to only emphasize recognizing symbol shapes; it also needs to provide hands-on experiences so that children can differentiate sounds and gradually practice their pronunciation.

The finding aligns with the research (Hasibuan & Sit, 2025; Giawa, et al., 2025), which discusses the issues of pronouncing hijaiyah letters in early childhood and highlights the importance of paying special attention to pronunciation difficulties. Research (Ahmadil, Zubaidillah, & Nuruddaroini, 2025) about an application for recognizing Hijaiyah letters and makhārijul hurūf based on augmented reality also shows the relevance of using technology to present visual information about letters and how to pronounce them. Meanwhile, (Saputri & Sururudin, 2026) finding that the use of the MPQu-Berkah digital media based on harakat is related to the improvement of Tajweed competence in elementary school students. These three studies support the view that learning media can help in the process of recognizing letters and pronouncing the Qur'an. The difference in the study at RA Darun Najwa lies in its application to children aged 4–5 through direct oral practice accompanied by repetition and teacher guidance.

The use of audio-visual media in this study provides a learning experience that combines sound and image information. Children can listen to examples of the pronunciation of hijaiyah letters while observing demonstrations of the speech organs' positions. These findings are relevant to research (Sit, Nasution, & Aminah, 2025; Ujung, Lubis, Akbar, Shofiyah, & Azhar, 2026), who studies the use of audio-visual media to improve the ability to recognize Hijaiyah letters in children aged 4–5 years. Research (Gajah & Azhari, 2026) It also shows that animated videos can support the ability to recognize hijaiyah letters in children aged 5–6. The similarity of these findings highlights the potential of audio-visual media in creating engaging learning and supporting letter recognition. However, the ability to recognize letters is different from accurate articulation, so previous research results cannot be directly considered as evidence of improved makhārijul hurūf.

A multisensory approach also becomes an important aspect in explaining the improvement of a child's abilities. Research (Hartatik, Supriatin, Widayani, Wulandari, & Hartanti, 2025; Raja, Mustafa, & Nurhidayanti, 2026) Regarding the multimedia-based multisensory method for introducing Hijaiyah letters to children aged 4–5, it found a significant difference between the results before and after the treatment in the experimental group. These results support the use of learning that combines more than one sensory channel. In research at RA Darun Najwa, the multisensory approach was applied through activities like listening to sounds, watching videos, imitating pronunciation, singing Hijaiyah songs, and using small mirrors to observe the position of the speech organs. This combination of activities gives children the chance to engage directly in the learning process. However, this study did not test the contribution of each element separately, so the improvement in scores should be understood as related to the overall sequence of actions.

Improvements in Cycle II show the importance of reflection in classroom action research. In Cycle I, the average score increased to 25.00, but no child had reached the minimum score of 30. This situation shows that an increase in the average doesn't always mean that every child has achieved the learning goals. Reflection then became the basis for adjusting the video pace, adding hijaiyah songs, using small mirrors, and giving individual exercises with direct correction from the teacher. Research (Zahra & Sit, 2024; Rifain & Amirdabbaghian, 2026) Regarding the use of audio-visual media to improve Quran reading skills, it also supports using media as part of learning improvement actions. The similarity of this study with the research at RA Darun Najwa lies in the use of audio-visual media and learning evaluation to enhance Quran reading ability, while the difference is in the characteristics of the participants and the focus of the actions.

The results of Cycle II show that the average score reached 32.00 and all 15 children got at least 30 points. Classical completeness increased from 0% in the pre-test and Cycle I to 100% in Cycle II. These findings are also relevant to the research (Putri, 2026; Nisa, Muhammad, Bahtiar, Zulkiflee, & Hkaim, 2026), which discusses the use of audio-visual media to improve the quality of tajwid and makhārijul hurūf in reciting Surah Al-Qadr. Both studies place audio-visual media as a support for learning Quranic pronunciation. However, differences in participants, instruments, and success indicators need to be considered, so the results cannot be directly compared. The study at RA Darun Najwa provides contextual contributions through oral practice exercises tailored to the characteristics of early childhood.

Statistically, all comparisons between stages showed a significant difference with a p-value of less than 0.001. An average increase of 14.80 points from the pre-test to Cycle II indicates a strong change in the children's ability scores. Cohen's d effect size of 8.94 also shows a very large difference in the analyzed data. Still, these results need to be interpreted carefully since the study used a one-group classroom action research design without a control group. So, the statistical results support the evidence of improvement in the class studied, but we can't say for sure that all the changes were solely due to the use of audio-visual media.

Overall, this study reinforces previous findings about the potential of audio-visual and multisensory media in learning Hijaiyah letters and Quran reading skills. The study's unique contribution lies in applying oral exercises based on audio-visual materials combined with slow-tempo videos, Hijaiyah songs, small mirrors, repetitive practice, and direct teacher feedback for children aged 4–5. Future research is suggested to use comparison groups, more detailed assessment tools for each letter group, and specific measurements of children's responses and participation. These steps could clarify the relationship between learning strategies, articulation accuracy, and the development of Iqra reading skills.

5. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the implementation of audiovisual-based oral practice in Iqra learning at RA Darun Najwa, Bandar Khalipah, Medan, was accompanied by improvements in the ability of children aged 4–5 years to understand and pronounce makhārijul hurūf. The mean score increased from 17.20 in the pre-test to 25.00 in Cycle I and 32.00 in Cycle II, with classical mastery reaching 100% in the final cycle. These findings have practical implications for teachers, particularly regarding the integration of pronunciation videos, hijaiyah songs, small mirrors, repeated practice, and immediate corrective feedback into Iqra learning activities. However, this study was limited to 15 children at a single educational institution, employed a classroom action research design without a control group, and

did not assess children's responses or the articulation accuracy of individual letters separately. Therefore, future research is recommended to involve larger and more diverse samples across multiple educational institutions, incorporate comparison groups, develop more detailed assessment instruments for makhārijul hurūf, and measure children's participation and self-confidence to obtain stronger evidence regarding the sustainability of learning outcomes.

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7. DECLARATIONS

Author Contributions

Najwa Kholida: Conceptualization, Methodology, Investigation, Data Curation, Formal Analysis, Writing – Original Draft. Masganti Sit: Supervision, Validation, Methodology, Writing – Review & Editing. All authors have read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

Declaration of Generative AI Use

During the preparation of this manuscript, the authors used ChatGPT (OpenAI) to assist with language refinement, grammar correction, and academic writing organization. The authors reviewed, revised, and verified the generated content and take full responsibility for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of the published work.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest related to the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

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Ethical Approval and Informed Consent

This study involved children aged 4–5 years at RA Darun Najwa, Bandar Khalipah, Medan. The research was conducted with attention to the privacy, confidentiality, and well-being of all participants. Permission to conduct the research and written informed consent from the children's parents or guardians should be documented in accordance with the institution's requirements. Children's identities were kept confidential throughout the research and publication process.

Data Availability

The data supporting the findings of this study, including observation records and assessment scores from the pre-test, Cycle I, and Cycle II, are available from the corresponding author, Najwa Kholida, upon reasonable request, subject to applicable privacy and confidentiality considerations.

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