



Dynamics of Attitude Change and Creative Writing Ability of *Santri Mutawassith* Through Mentoring Based on the Book *Husnul Isgho' Fi Darsil Insyah*

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Abstract: This applied community service program examined attitude changes and creative Arabic writing ability (maharah kitabah) among twenty santri mutawassith at Pondok Pesantren Dalwa, East Java, who participated in a twenty-day intensive mentoring program based on the book *Husnul Isgho' fi Darsil Insyah*. Despite foundational Nahwu knowledge, students initially struggled with imla' accuracy, limited vocabulary, and complex sentences. Program evaluation through interviews, observations, portfolios, and field notes revealed a significant positive attitude shift: from 70% viewing writing as difficult or boring to 85% feeling confident and 75% finding writing easier and more enjoyable post-program. Writing improvement occurred in three progressive phases: mastering imla' and basic sentences, developing paragraphs with varied rhetorical styles (uslub qashr, ithnab, musawah), and independent creative writing with peer correction. Supporting factors included the book's eclectic method, modern vocabulary, personal mentoring, and the Arabic-speaking pesantren environment. Constraints were Arabic instructions and limited time. The program concludes that intensive book-based mentoring accelerates both technical writing skills and self-efficacy, recommending a sustainable writing club and peer-tutor training.

Abstrak: Program pengabdian masyarakat terapan ini meneliti perubahan sikap dan kemampuan menulis kreatif dalam bahasa Arab (maharah kitabah) di kalangan dua puluh santri tingkat menengah di Pondok Pesantren Dalwa, Jawa Timur, yang mengikuti program pendampingan intensif selama dua puluh hari berdasarkan buku **Husnul Isgho' fi Darsil Insyah**. Meskipun telah memiliki pengetahuan dasar Nahwu, para santri pada awalnya mengalami kesulitan dalam hal ketepatan imla', keterbatasan kosakata, dan kalimat yang rumit. Evaluasi program melalui wawancara, observasi, portofolio, dan catatan lapangan menunjukkan perubahan sikap positif yang signifikan: dari 70% yang menganggap menulis sebagai hal yang sulit atau membosankan menjadi 85% yang merasa percaya diri dan 75% yang merasa menulis menjadi lebih mudah dan menyenangkan setelah program berakhir. Peningkatan kemampuan menulis terjadi dalam tiga fase progresif: menguasai ejaan (imla') dan kalimat dasar,

mengembangkan paragraf dengan gaya retorika yang bervariasi (*uslub qashr, ithnab, musawah*), serta menulis kreatif secara mandiri dengan koreksi sesama siswa. Faktor pendukung meliputi metode eklektik buku tersebut, kosakata modern, bimbingan pribadi, dan lingkungan pesantren yang berbahasa Arab. Kendala yang dihadapi adalah instruksi dalam bahasa Arab dan keterbatasan waktu. Program ini menyimpulkan bahwa bimbingan intensif berbasis buku mempercepat peningkatan keterampilan menulis teknis dan efikasi diri, serta merekomendasikan pembentukan klub menulis yang berkelanjutan dan pelatihan tutor sesama peserta.



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Introduction

The ability to write in Arabic (*maharah kitabah*) is a core competence for students in Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*). This skill serves not only as a medium for written expression but also as a prerequisite for understanding classical texts (*turats*), constructing religious arguments, and producing academic work in Arabic¹. At Pondok Pesantren Dalwa, student grouping is based on Arabic language proficiency rather than chronological age. The *Mutawassith* (intermediate) level comprises students who can actively communicate in Arabic, though not fluently, and who have a basic knowledge of *Nahwu* (e.g., recognition of *ism, fi'il, huruf*, and basic *'irab*).

However, preliminary assessments conducted by the service team and the pesantren committee revealed significant challenges among *Mutawassith* students in the area of writing. These challenges include: (1) low accuracy in *imla'* (especially regarding *hamzah, ta' marbutah, and alif maqsurah*), (2) limited thematic vocabulary that can be activated in writing, and (3) inability to construct complex sentences that conform to *Nahwu* rules which they have theoretically learned. Ironically, their *Nahwu* knowledge has not been optimally applied in writing practice due to a lack of structured writing exercises and individual feedback outside the formal lessons, which occur only two to three times per week².

This condition indicates a gap between receptive ability (reading and understanding texts) and productive ability (writing). Students can read *kitab kuning* (classic yellow books) with the help of *gandul* (Javanese-Arabic translation), but when asked to write a short paragraph about their daily activities in Arabic, they tend to make errors in word order (*tartib*), subject-predicate agreement (*muthabaqah*), and

¹ Hapid Hurmat dan Moh. Abdul Kholiq Hasan, "Stilistika Bab *Al-Aqdam* dalam Kitab *Idhotun Nasyi'in* sebagai Landasan Literasi Moral dalam Membaca Teks Arab," *Uktub: Journal of Arabic Studies* 5, no. 2 (2025): 326–35, <https://doi.org/10.32678/uktub.v5i2.45>.

² Hurmat dan Moh. Abdul Kholiq Hasan, "Stilistika Bab *Al-Aqdam* dalam Kitab *Idhotun Nasyi'in* sebagai Landasan Literasi Moral dalam Membaca Teks Arab"; Dafa Nur Abtia Zayuda dkk., "Eksistensi Mahārah Al-Kitābah Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab," *Counselia; Jurnal Bimbingan Konseling Pendidikan Islam* 4, no. 2 (2023): 164–80, <https://doi.org/10.31943/counselia.v4i2.117>.

punctuation. This problem is a priority because *maharah kitabah* is the foundation for the next level (*Mutaqaddim*), where students are expected to write short articles or even academic papers. Without timely intervention, this gap will hinder students' academic acceleration at higher levels³.

As a solution, the service team offered a twenty-day intensive mentoring program based on the book *Husnul Isgho' fi Darsil Insyā'* by Dr. Makki Lazuardi, M.Pd. This book was chosen because of its characteristics that are highly suitable for the needs of *Mutawassith* students. According to the analysis conducted by Abidin (2014), *Husnul Isgho'* employs an eclectic method (*al-thariqah al-intiqā'iyyah*) that selectively and integratively combines various approaches to Arabic language teaching. Moreover, a *balaghah* (rhetoric) study of this book reveals that it contains various effective rhetorical styles (*uslub*), such as *qashr* (brevity/restriction), *ithnab* (circumlocution/elaboration), and *musawah* (equality/balanced style), designed to hone students' thinking skills through examples of writing with modern and contextual vocabulary⁴. Other research also indicates that the exercises in *Husnul Isgho'* are effective for improving students' writing skills at the intermediate level⁵.

The acceleration approach in this program does not teach *Nahwu* from scratch⁶. Instead, it bridges the *Nahwu* knowledge that students already possess into productive writing practice by utilizing the materials and exercises in the book *Husnul Isgho'*. The duration of twenty days was chosen based on the theory of automaticity in language learning, where daily repetition over three weeks can transform writing habits from slow and error-prone to more automatic and accurate⁷.

Several previous studies have examined the use of eclectic methods and *uslub* variations in Arabic writing instruction. Al-Khasawneh⁸ systematically reviewed the eclectic approach in language teaching and found that its flexibility allows instructors to adapt to diverse learner needs. Irawan, Fahmi, and Nadia⁹ investigated the application of eclectic methods in speaking and writing skills for middle school students

³ Ahmad Syarif, "STRATEGI PENGUATAN LITERASI BERBAHASA ARAB BAGI SANTRI MILENIAL," *Fitrah: Jurnal Studi Pendidikan* 13, no. 1 (2022): 73–86, <https://doi.org/10.47625/fitrah.v13i1.375>.

⁴ M. H. Zakiyudin dan Z. Saleh, "Good Listening In The Construction Lesson By Ahmed Makki Lazurdi (Rhetorical Analytical Study In Brevity, Circumlocution, And Equality): حسن الإصغاء في درس الإنشاء على تأليف أحمد مكي (دراسة تحليلية بلاغية في الإيجاز والإطناب والمساواة)," *MUHIBBUL ARABIYAH: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 1, no. 1 (2021): 78–94, <https://doi.org/10.35719/pba.v1i1.12>.

⁵ Zainal Abidin, "Analisis Buku 'Husnu Al-Ishgā' Fi Dars Al-Insyā' Li Al-Mubtadiin' Karya: Achmad Makki Lazuardi (Kajian Metode dan Materi Pembelajaran)" (Skripsi, UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, t.t.), <http://digilib.uin-suka.ac.id/id/eprint/12465/>.

⁶ R. Kholisol Muhlis, *AKSELERASI PEMBELAJARAN KITAB KUNING: Kajian Teoretis dan Praktik* (Penerbit Kbm Indonesia, 2026).

⁷ Muhlis, *AKSELERASI PEMBELAJARAN KITAB KUNING*.

⁸ Fadi Al-Khasawneh, "A Systematic Review of the Eclectic Approach Application in Language Teaching," *Saudi Journal of Language Studies* 2 (Maret 2022): 300, <https://doi.org/10.1108/SJLS-11-2021-0022>.

⁹ D. D. Irawan dkk., "Eclectic Maharah Kalam and Kitabah: Solution or Obstacle? in Arabic Language Learning for MTs Student," *Al Bayan: Jurnal Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 17, no. 1 (2025), <https://doi.org/10.24042/albayan.v17i1.25363>.

and concluded that while beneficial, careful integration is required to avoid confusion. Highlighted the role of self-efficacy in writing strategies, showing that students' belief in their own abilities significantly affects their writing performance¹⁰. However, most of these studies used quantitative or mixed-methods designs and focused on school or university contexts, not on *pesantren* with its unique *biah lughawiyah* (Arabic language environment)¹¹. There is a lack of qualitative research that delves deeply into the *process* and *dynamics* of attitude change and writing improvement among *santri* who already have *Nahwu* knowledge but struggle with productive writing. This gap justifies the need for a qualitative case study that can capture the lived experiences, perceptions, and gradual transformations of students during an intensive mentoring program.

Therefore, this study aims to answer the following research questions: (1) How do the attitudes of *Mutawassith santri* toward Arabic writing change throughout the twenty-day intensive mentoring based on the book *Husnul Isgho'*? (2) What are the dynamics and phases of improvement in their creative writing ability? (3) What factors support or hinder this process according to the participants' perspectives? The significance of this study lies in its potential to provide an in-depth, contextual understanding of how a well-designed book and intensive mentoring can bridge the gap between *Nahwu* knowledge and writing practice in a *pesantren* setting. The findings may inform curriculum development, mentor training, and the design of sustainable writing programs in similar Islamic educational institutions.

Method

This program employed an applied community service implementation method (*metode pelaksanaan pengabdian kepada masyarakat*) with a participatory mentoring approach. The program was designed to address the gap between *Nahwu* knowledge and productive writing skills among *santri mutawassith* at Pondok Pesantren Dalwa through intensive, structured mentoring based on the book *Husnul Isgho' fi Darsil Insya'*. Unlike formal research that primarily aims to produce theoretical knowledge, this applied program focused on practical intervention and direct skill development, with evaluation integrated into the implementation process to measure progress and inform ongoing improvement¹².

The program was conducted at Pondok Pesantren Dalwa, an Islamic boarding school in Pasuruan, East Java, Indonesia, known for its strong *biah lughawiyah* (Arabic language environment) where students are required to speak Arabic daily in dormitory

¹⁰ A. D. Deviana dkk., "Learning Strategies For Writing Skills With Self-Efficacy Based," *Ijaz Arabi: Journal of Arabic Learning* 5, no. 1 (2022), <https://ejournal.uin-malang.ac.id/index.php/ijazarabi/article/view/13196>.

¹¹ N. D. Nurcahyaningtias dan S. Julaeha, "Strategy of Bi'ah Lughowiyah (Language Environment) in Improving Arabic Language Proficiency at Wali Songo Islamic Boarding School Ngabar Ponorogo," *Proceeding of Annual International Conference on Islamic Education (AICIED)* 2 (2025): 89–104.

¹² Suartini Iklima dkk., "Manajemen Model MEKAR Pada Pendampingan Pelatihan Guru Dalam Meningkatkan Kompetensi Literasi Peserta Didik di Kecamatan Labuapi," (*JPAP*) *Jurnal Praktisi Administrasi Pendidikan* 9, no. 2 (2025): 127–31, <https://doi.org/10.29303/jpap.v9i2.1097>.

settings. The location was selected purposively because the pesantren leadership had identified a significant gap between students' *Nahwu* knowledge and their productive writing ability, and because the service team had already established a collaborative relationship with the pesantren to implement the twenty-day intensive mentoring program using *Husnul Isgho'*. The target beneficiaries were twenty *santri* at the *Mutawassith* (intermediate) level, selected based on three criteria: (1) they were able to communicate actively in Arabic, though not yet fluently; (2) they had foundational knowledge of *Nahwu*, including understanding the basic categories of *ism*, *fi'il*, *huruf* and simple concepts of *rafa'*, *nashab*, *jar*; and (3) they had not yet achieved the minimum writing competence expected for their level according to the pesantren's initial assessment. These criteria ensured that participants possessed the necessary prerequisite knowledge so that the mentoring could focus on bridging rather than reteaching, while still experiencing the target difficulty in writing. Participant selection was conducted based on recommendations from pesantren supervisors and the results of a preliminary writing screening¹³. The cohort of twenty was considered manageable for intensive individual mentoring and for providing meaningful program evaluation.



Figure 1. The cohort of twenty *santri mutawassith* at Pondok Pesantren Dalwa who participated as research subjects in the intensive mentoring program

The mentoring program lasted twenty consecutive days, with each session lasting 120 minutes (from 10:00 to 12:00 AM). The structure of the program followed a phased approach aligned with the book's content. The first week focused on *imla'* (dictation accuracy) and basic sentence structures (*jumlah ismiyyah* and *jumlah fi'liyyah*), introducing *uslub qashr*. The second week developed paragraph writing and introduced *uslub ithnab* and *musawah*. The third week emphasized independent creative writing, peer correction, and self-editing using the book's exercises. Each participant received personal mentoring for at least ten minutes daily from one of four mentors (with a mentor-to-santri ratio of 1:4), allowing for individualized feedback and scaffolding¹⁴.

¹³ Elizabeth B. Raposa dkk., "Predictors of Close Faculty–student Relationships and Mentorship in Higher Education: Findings from the Gallup–Purdue Index," *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 1483, no. 1 (2021): 36–49, <https://doi.org/10.1111/nyas.14342>.

¹⁴ Stacy L. Astrove dan Maria L. Kraimer, "What and How Do Mentors Learn? The Role of Relationship

The program also included a pre-test on day one to establish baseline abilities and a post-test on days nineteen and twenty to measure progress, as part of the program evaluation (Gwynne et al. 2020)¹⁵.

Program evaluation employed four techniques to assess outcomes and capture participant experiences, ensuring triangulation of sources and methods. First, semi-structured interviews were conducted with all twenty participants at three time points: before the program began (to capture baseline attitudes and perceived difficulties), at the midpoint of the program (to document emerging changes and challenges), and immediately after the program concluded (to gather reflections on the overall experience and perceived transformation). Interview protocols explored participants' feelings toward Arabic writing, their confidence levels, their perceptions of the book *Husnul Isgho'*, and their views on the mentoring process. Each interview lasted approximately thirty to forty-five minutes and was conducted in a mix of Arabic and Indonesian to ensure comfort and fluency of expression¹⁶. Second, participant observation was carried out daily throughout the twenty-day program by the four mentors. Observers recorded detailed field notes on participants' engagement, emotional expressions, questions asked, peer interactions, and any spontaneous behaviors such as voluntary writing outside of assignments¹⁷. Observations focused not only on writing performance but also on affective and behavioral indicators of attitude change.

Third, document analysis was performed on the daily writing portfolios collected from each participant¹⁸. Every day, participants submitted one piece of writing based on the exercises in *Husnul Isgho'*, ranging from single sentences in the first week to full paragraphs in the third week. These written artifacts were analyzed qualitatively: examining patterns of errors, improvements in vocabulary variety, use of rhetorical styles (*uslub qashr, ithnab, musawah*), and the development of coherence and creativity over time¹⁹. Fourth, field notes from mentors were collected daily. Each mentor recorded

Quality and Mentoring Self-efficacy in Mentor Learning," *Personnel Psychology* 75, no. 2 (2022): 485–513, <https://doi.org/10.1111/peps.12471>; Raposa dkk., "Predictors of Close Faculty–student Relationships and Mentorship in Higher Education"; Mustahar Ali Wardana, "Pelatihan Integrasi HOTS Dalam Pengembangan Modul Ajar Kurikulum Merdeka Pada Guru Bahasa Arab Di Pesantren Darullughah Wadda'wah," *Filantropis: Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat* 2, no. 1 (2026): 1–19, <https://doi.org/10.38073/filantropis.v2i1.4846>.

¹⁵ Steve Gwynne dkk., "The Future of Evacuation Drills: Assessing and Enhancing Evacuee Performance," *Safety Science* 129 (September 2020): 104767, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssci.2020.104767>.

¹⁶ Kate Roberts dkk., "Attempting Rigour and Replicability in Thematic Analysis of Qualitative Research Data; a Case Study of Codebook Development," *BMC Medical Research Methodology* 19, no. 1 (2019): 66, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12874-019-0707-y>.

¹⁷ Laura S. Bakosh dkk., "Maximizing Mindful Learning: Mindful Awareness Intervention Improves Elementary School Students' Quarterly Grades," *Mindfulness* 7, no. 1 (2016): 59–67, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12671-015-0387-6>.

¹⁸ Paul Henry Leslie dan Celiane Camargo-Borges, "Narratives of Learning: The Personal Portfolio in the Portfolio Approach to Teaching and Learning," *The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning* 18, no. 6 (2017), <https://doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v18i6.2827>.

¹⁹ Abidin, "Analisis Buku 'Husnu Al-Ishgā' Fi Dars Al-Insyā' Li Al-Mubtadiin' Karya: Achmad Makki Lazuardi (Kajian Metode dan Materi Pembelajaran)"; Zakiyudin dan Saleh, "Good Listening In The Construction Lesson By Ahmed Makki Lazurdi (Rhetorical Analytical Study In Brevity, Circumlocution, And Equality): حسن الإصغاء في درس الإنشاء على تأليف أحمد مكي لازوردي (دراسة تحليلية بلاغية في الإيجاز والإطناب والمساواة)."

individual observations of their four assigned *santri*, including specific difficulties encountered, strategies that worked, and notable breakthroughs or persistent struggles. These field notes served both as a source of evaluation data and as a means of cross-checking findings from interviews and portfolios.

Evaluation findings were analyzed thematically following the procedures outlined by Roberts, Dowell, and Nie (2019). All interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and then translated into English where necessary. Field notes and portfolio documents were organized chronologically by participant. The analysis moved from descriptive coding (e.g., "feels frustrated with *imla'* errors," "enjoys *uslub ithnab* examples") to interpretive thematic development (e.g., "from fear to playfulness," "phase of mechanical accuracy," "phase of expressive exploration"). Themes were identified both inductively (emerging from the data) and deductively (informed by theoretical concepts such as self-efficacy, automaticity, and eclectic method). To ensure trustworthiness of the evaluation findings, several strategies were employed. Triangulation was achieved by comparing findings across interviews, observations, portfolios, and field notes²⁰. Member checking was conducted by presenting preliminary findings to five randomly selected participants and asking for their confirmation or correction of interpretations. Peer debriefing involved regular discussions among the four mentors and two external observers not involved in the program to challenge assumptions and refine interpretations. Finally, an audit trail documented all analytical decisions, from raw data to final themes, ensuring transparency.

Ethical considerations were addressed throughout the program. Informed consent was obtained from all participants and from the *pesantren* leadership. Participants were assured of confidentiality and the right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Pseudonyms are used in reporting to protect identities. The program obtained approval from the institutional ethics committee of UII Darullughah Wadda'wah Pasuruan.

By employing this applied community service implementation method with integrated evaluation and multiple data sources, the program aimed to provide both direct benefits to the participating *santri* and practical insights for similar interventions in other *pesantren* settings.

Result and Discussion

Dynamics of Attitude Change: From Fear and Boredom to Confidence and Enjoyment

At the outset of the program, the majority of participants expressed negative or hesitant attitudes toward writing in Arabic. In pre-program interviews, fourteen out of twenty *santri* (70%) explicitly described writing as "sul" (difficult), "mumil" (boring), or "mukhif" (scary). One participant, Ahmad, stated, "*Kitabah bil arabiyah? A'udzu billah. Ana a'rifu nahwu lakin idza uktubu, akhta'u katsiran*" (Writing in Arabic? God forbid. I

²⁰ Gwynne dkk., "The Future of Evacuation Drills."

know Nahwu but when I write, I make many mistakes). Another participant, Fatimah, confessed, “*Asy’uru bil-malal qabla an abda*” (I feel bored even before I start). Observations during the first three days confirmed these attitudes: several *santri* showed visible reluctance, often delaying the start of writing tasks, sighing frequently, or producing very short, minimal responses²¹. Field notes from mentors recorded that on day two, three *santri* attempted to copy examples from the book without modification, a strategy indicative of low self-efficacy and avoidance of productive effort.

However, a gradual but noticeable shift began to emerge around the end of the first week and accelerated during the second and third weeks. By the midpoint interviews, eight participants spontaneously reported feeling “*ahsan*” (better) or “*aktsar tsiqah*” (more confident). By the post-program interviews, seventeen out of twenty *santri* (85%) expressed feeling confident to write in Arabic, and fifteen (75%) described writing as “*ashal*” (easier) and “*mumti**” (enjoyable). One participant, Khaled, explained, “*Al-aan, ana uhibbu an aktub. Uhibbu an ujarribu usluban jadidan* (Now, I love to write. I love to try new uslub). Another participant, Siti, stated, “*Kitab Husnul Isgho’ ja’alanii ara anna al-kitabah kal-lu’bah, laysat kal-wajib*” (The book *Husnul Isgho’* made me see writing as a game, not as a duty).

This transformation in attitude can be understood through the lens of self-efficacy as discussed²². Self-efficacy refers to an individual’s belief in their capacity to execute a specific task successfully. At the beginning, the *santri* had low self-efficacy for writing due to repeated experiences of error and a lack of structured, successful practice. The book *Husnul Isgho’*, with its systematic progression from simple *imla’* exercises to varied uslub, provided frequent opportunities for small successes. Each time a participant correctly wrote a sentence using uslub qashr or *uslub ithnab*, their sense of competence increased. Moreover, the eclectic method inherent in the book²³ allowed mentors to adapt tasks to each *santri*’s level, ensuring that challenges were neither too easy nor overwhelmingly difficult. This zone of proximal development, mediated by personal mentoring, fostered a gradual but durable shift in self-perception. The fact that several *santri* began keeping personal diaries in Arabic voluntarily—without any assignment—is a powerful behavioral indicator of internalized motivation and positive attitude change, as noted in field observations on days fifteen through eighteen.

Phases of Improvement in Creative Writing Ability

The analysis of daily writing portfolios and observation records revealed that the improvement in *maharah kitabah* unfolded in three distinct but overlapping phases. These phases align with the structure of the book and the weekly focus of the program.

The first phase (days one to seven) focused on *imla’* accuracy and basic sentence construction. During this phase, participants initially made frequent errors in writing *hamzah*, *ta’ marbutah*, and *alif maqsurah*, as well as in matching subjects and predicates

²¹ Syagif, “STRATEGI PENGUATAN LITERASI BERBAHASA ARAB BAGI SANTRI MILENIAL.”

²² Astrove dan Kraimer, “What and How Do Mentors Learn?”

²³ Irawan dkk., “Eclectic Maharah Kalam and Kitabah: Solution or Obstacle? in Arabic Language Learning for MTs Student.”

(*muthabaqah*). However, through daily dictation exercises and structured imitation of the book's examples, most *santri* showed marked improvement by the end of the week. For instance, in the pre-test, the average number of *imla'* errors per participant was eight per short paragraph; by the end of the first week, the average had dropped to three. More importantly, participants began to internalize the distinction between *jumlah ismiyyah* (nominal sentences) and *jumlah fi'liyyah* (verbal sentences), applying them appropriately in their writing. Observations recorded that by day six, many *santri* no longer needed to consciously think about basic word order; their production became more automatic²⁴. One mentor noted in field notes: "*Santri mulai menulis tanpa banyak jeda. Kesalahan tartib berkurang drastis*" (Students started writing without many pauses. Word order errors decreased drastically).

The second phase (days eight to thirteen) introduced paragraph development and the use of rhetorical styles (*uslub qashr, ithnab, musawah*). This phase was characterized by a shift from writing isolated sentences to producing coherent paragraphs of three to five sentences on familiar topics such as daily activities, descriptions of the pesantren environment, and personal hobbies. The book's examples of *uslub qashr* (restriction, e.g., "*Innama al-mujtahidu yuhibbu al-'amal*" – only the diligent person loves work) and *uslub ithnab* (elaboration, e.g., adding explanatory clauses) encouraged participants to vary their expressions rather than repeating the same sentence patterns. Qualitative analysis of portfolios showed that by the end of week two, participants used an average of 2.5 different *uslub* per paragraph, compared to none in the pre-test. For example, one participant wrote about his morning routine: "*Ana astayqidzu mubakkiran, tsumma ushallii al-fajra, ba'da dzaalika aqra'u al-qur'an*" (I wake up early, then I pray fajr, after that I read the Qur'an). Then, applying *uslub qashr*, he reformulated: "*Innama astayqidzu mubakkiran li-ashalliyal fajra*" (I only wake up early to pray fajr). This ability to reframe the same idea in different rhetorical structures is a hallmark of creative writing and was directly facilitated by the book's systematic presentation of these *uslub* ²⁵.

The third phase (days fourteen to eighteen) emphasized independent creative writing, peer correction, and self-editing. During this phase, participants were asked to write paragraphs on freely chosen topics without direct copying from the book. They also engaged in peer correction sessions where they exchanged drafts and provided feedback to each other, guided by the mentor. Field notes recorded high levels of engagement and even excitement during these sessions. One participant, Rizki, wrote a paragraph about his dream to become a writer, using a mix of *uslub musawah* (balanced style) and *ithnab*. Another participant, Aisyah, wrote a short narrative about a lost cat in the pesantren, demonstrating creativity in plot and vocabulary choice. By day eighteen, all participants were able to produce three or more coherent paragraphs on a given theme, with fewer than 20% of sentences containing major grammatical errors. This achievement surpassed

²⁴ Muhlis, *AKSELERASI PEMBELAJARAN KITAB KUNING*.

²⁵ Zakiyudin dan Saleh, "Good Listening In The Construction Lesson By Ahmed Makki Lazurdi (Rhetorical Analytical Study In Brevity, Circumlocution, And Equality): حسن الإصغاء في درس الإنشاء على تأليف أحمد مكي لازوردي (دراسة تحليلية بلاغية في الإيجاز والإطناب والمساواة)."

the program's specific target of "minimal three paragraphs" and indicated that the intensive practice had begun to automate the application of *Nahwu* rules and *uslub* variations²⁶.

The observed phases correspond to the theoretical concept of automaticity in language learning, as described²⁷. Automaticity is achieved when declarative knowledge (knowing *that*) is transformed into procedural knowledge (knowing *how*) through repeated, spaced practice. The santri entered the program with declarative knowledge of *Nahwu* but lacked procedural ability to apply it in writing. The daily, structured exercises in *Husnul Isgho'*, combined with immediate feedback from mentors, facilitated this transformation. By the third week, many *santri* no longer needed to consciously recall *Nahwu* rules; they wrote more fluently and with fewer pauses, indicating the development of automatic processing. This finding is consistent with the eclectic approach, which integrates various methods—drill, imitation, creative production—to support different stages of learning²⁸.

Supporting and Hindering Factors from Participants' Perspectives

Participants identified several factors that facilitated their progress during the program. The most frequently mentioned factor was the quality of the book *Husnul Isgho'* itself²⁹. In post-program interviews, eighteen out of twenty *santri* praised the book's systematic organization, its use of modern and relatable vocabulary, and the variety of *uslub* examples. One participant, Umar, stated, "*Al-kitabu laisa kaal-kutub al-ukhra. Huwa yatahaddatsu 'an asyyaa' nahnu nafa'aluha kulla yaum*" (The book is not like other books. It talks about things we do every day). This relevance made writing tasks meaningful rather than abstract exercises. Another participant, Nisa, noted, "*Al-uslub al-mukhtalifah ja'alatnii arghabu fii an ajarrba kulla wahid minha*" (The different *uslub* made me eager to try each one). This echoes the rhetorical analysis³⁰, who found that the book's inclusion of multiple *uslub* stimulates students' thinking and prevents boredom.

The second major supporting factor was the personal mentoring provided daily. Participants appreciated the individualized feedback and the opportunity to ask questions without fear of embarrassment in front of peers³¹. Field notes showed that mentors often sat beside individual *santri*, pointing out errors gently and guiding corrections step by step. This one-on-one attention, with a ratio of 1:4, allowed for

²⁶ Gwynne dkk., "The Future of Evacuation Drills."

²⁷ Muhlis, *AKSELERASI PEMBELAJARAN KITAB KUNING*.

²⁸ Al-Khasawneh, "A Systematic Review of the Eclectic Approach Application in Language Teaching."

²⁹ Ikrimatul Jannah dkk., "Student Participation in Ubudiyah Management: an Educational Model for Strengthening Worship Discipline in the Islamic Boarding School," *Jurnal Cendekia Media Komunikasi Penelitian dan Pengembangan Pendidikan Islam* 17, no. 02 (2025): 404–18, <https://doi.org/10.37850/cendekia.v17i02.1119>.

³⁰ Zakiyudin dan Saleh, "Good Listening In The Construction Lesson By Ahmed Makki Lazurdi (Rhetorical Analytical Study In Brevity, Circumlocution, And Equality): حسن الإصغاء في درس الإنشاء على تأليف أحمد مكي لازوردي (دراسة تحليلية بلاغية في الإيجاز والإطناب والمساواة)." *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education* 48, no. 4 (2023): 502–12, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2022.2089348>.

³¹ Wei Su, "Masked Ball for All: How Anonymity Affects Students' Perceived Comfort Levels in Peer Feedback," *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education* 48, no. 4 (2023): 502–12, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2022.2089348>.

differentiated instruction based on each *santri*'s specific error patterns. Have shown, close mentoring relationships in educational settings significantly enhance both skill development and affective outcomes. Several *santri* explicitly mentioned that their mentors' encouragement was crucial in overcoming initial frustration³².

The third supporting factor was the existing *biah lughawiyah* (Arabic language environment) at Pondok Pesantren Dalwa. Because students are required to speak Arabic in the dormitories, the vocabulary and sentence patterns they practiced in writing were immediately reinforced in daily conversation. This created a beneficial cycle: writing practice introduced new *uslub* and expressions, which then appeared in spoken interactions, reinforcing retention and automaticity³³. One mentor observed that by week two, *santri* began using *uslub qashr* in their spoken Arabic spontaneously, demonstrating transfer of learning across modalities.

However, participants also identified two main hindering factors. The first was the Arabic medium of the book's instructions. In the early days of the program, several *santri* struggled to understand the task descriptions because they were written entirely in Arabic without Indonesian translation. This required mentors to spend extra time explaining the instructions, reducing the time available for writing practice. By day four, mentors began providing brief oral clarifications in Indonesian when needed, mitigating this issue. The second hindering factor was the limited duration of twenty days. Although significant progress was made, participants felt that they had only covered about half of the book's exercises. Many expressed a desire for a longer program (forty to sixty days) to master all the *uslub* and practice them more extensively. As one participant, Hasan, said, "*Dua puluh hari cepet sekali. Saya merasa baru mulai terbiasa, tetapi program sudah selesai*" (Twenty days passed very quickly. I feel I was just getting used to it, but the program ended). This feedback aligns with the recommendation³⁴ that intensive programs for writing acceleration should ideally extend beyond three weeks to achieve full automatization.

Overall, the qualitative findings demonstrate that the intensive mentoring program based on *Husnul Isgho*'s successfully accelerated both the writing ability and the positive attitudes of *santri mutawassith*. The dynamics of change were not linear but rather involved phases of mechanical accuracy, rhetorical expansion, and creative independence. The eclectic method, personal mentoring, and supportive language environment worked together to bridge the gap between theoretical *Nahwu* knowledge and productive writing skill. These findings contribute to the existing literature by providing a rich, contextualized account of how such acceleration occurs in a *pesantren* setting, complementing the quantitative evidence of pre-post improvement reported in the community service report.

³² Bakosh dkk., "Maximizing Mindful Learning."

³³ Nurcahyaningtias dan Julaeha, "Strategy of Bi'ah Lughowiyah (Language Environment) in Improving Arabic Language Proficiency at Wali Songo Islamic Boarding School Ngabar Ponorogo."

³⁴ Muhlis, *AKSELERASI PEMBELAJARAN KITAB KUNING*.

Conclusion

This qualitative case study investigated the dynamics of attitude change and creative writing improvement among twenty *santri mutawassith* at Pondok Pesantren Dalwa who participated in a twenty-day intensive mentoring program based on the book *Husnul Isgho' fi Darsil Insya'* by Dr. Makki Lazuardi. The findings reveal a significant transformation in both affective and cognitive domains. In terms of attitude, the percentage of *santri* who perceived writing in Arabic as difficult or boring decreased from 70% at the outset to only 15% by the end of the program, while those who felt confident increased to 85%. In terms of writing ability, participants progressed through three phases: mastering **imla'* and basic sentences, developing paragraphs with varied *uslub* (*qashr, ithnab, musawah*), and finally producing independent creative paragraphs with peer correction. Supporting factors included the book's systematic design, modern vocabulary, eclectic method, personal mentoring, and the pesantren's Arabic language environment. Hindering factors included the Arabic medium of instructions and the limited twenty-day duration.

The main theoretical implication is that bridging the gap between declarative *Nahwu* knowledge and productive writing requires not only structured practice but also the cultivation of self-efficacy and the provision of varied rhetorical models. The eclectic method, as embodied in *Husnul Isgho'*, proves effective for intermediate *santri* precisely because it combines imitation, drill, and creative production in a graduated sequence. Practically, this study recommends that *pesantren* adopt *Husnul Isgho'* as an official textbook for writing instruction at the *Mutawassith* level, establish a sustainable writing club (*Nādī al-Kitābah*) for continued practice, and train peer tutors from among graduates of the program. Future research should extend the program duration to forty or sixty days to assess whether full automatization and mastery of all *uslub* can be achieved. Additionally, comparative studies between *Husnul Isgho'* and other writing textbooks would help identify specific features that most effectively support writing acceleration. Finally, longitudinal studies following participants into the *Mutaqaddim* (advanced) level could determine whether the gains observed in this program are sustained and transferred to more complex academic writing tasks.

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