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## Designing Islamic Storybooks as Contextual English Teaching Materials for Hafidz Qur'an Students

By

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### Abstract

This study aims to develop relevant and engaging English teaching materials based on Islamic stories for Hafidz Qur'an students. Employing Research and Development (R&D) with the ADDIE model, the research involves five stages: analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation. Data were collected through surveys, interviews, pre-tests, and post-tests with 28 eighth-grade students at Tahfizhul Qur'an Ibrahim Islamic Boarding School.

The findings reveal that the developed storybooks, featuring engaging narratives, vocabulary lists, and comprehension exercises, are well-received by both students and teachers. Expert validation rated the materials as "Good" with a score of 3.5/4. Students demonstrated significant improvement in reading, writing, and comprehension skills, while simultaneously internalizing Islamic moral and ethical values.

**Keywords:** English teaching, Islamic storybooks, Hafidz Qur'an, contextual education, teaching material development.

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### Introduction

The increasing importance of English in global communication and education poses unique challenges for Hafidz Qur'an students, who balance intensive Quranic studies with academic subjects. In today's interconnected world, English proficiency is not merely an academic requirement; it is a vital skill that facilitates access to knowledge, technology, and global opportunities. For Hafidz Qur'an students, the mastery of English can open doors to various fields of study, enhance their academic performance, and broaden their understanding of the world around them.

However, existing English teaching materials often fail to address their cultural and religious needs, reducing engagement and effectiveness. Many traditional language learning resources do not resonate with the values and experiences of these students, which can lead to disinterest and disengagement in the learning process. It is crucial to develop teaching materials that not only meet educational standards but also reflect the students' identities and beliefs.

Islamic storybooks offer a contextualized solution to this challenge. By combining English language acquisition with

narratives grounded in Islamic values, these materials can enhance motivation and improve learning outcomes. Storytelling is a powerful educational tool; it fosters creativity, critical thinking, and comprehension skills while allowing students to connect with their cultural heritage. The use of familiar narratives helps create a more inclusive and engaging learning environment.

This study develops and evaluates Islamic storybooks as English teaching tools specifically designed for Hafidz Qur'an students. The goal is to create materials that are not only educational but also spiritually enriching, thus supporting students' linguistic and spiritual development. By integrating moral lessons and relatable contexts, these storybooks aim to encourage active participation and independence among students, making the learning process more meaningful and relevant.

Moreover, this research highlights the importance of tailoring educational resources to meet the unique needs of specific student populations. It explores how culturally relevant materials can bridge the gap between academic content and the lived experiences of students. The findings of this study aim to contribute to the ongoing discourse on effective language teaching strategies in religious and culturally rich contexts.



## Literature Review

### Contextual Teaching and Learning

Contextual teaching and learning emphasize the importance of linking educational content to real-life contexts. This approach is rooted in Vygotsky's theory of social development, which suggests that learning is most effective when it is socially mediated and contextually meaningful. By grounding educational materials in students' cultural and practical realities, contextual teaching helps bridge the gap between academic content and learners' everyday lives (Vygotsky, 1978).

### Storybooks in Language Learning

Storybooks have long been recognized as effective tools in language learning, particularly for young learners. Krashen (1982) highlights the role of comprehensible input, where engaging narratives facilitate vocabulary acquisition, reading comprehension, and language skills in a natural and enjoyable manner. Storybooks provide an ideal medium to achieve this by combining visual stimuli, relatable characters, and moral lessons.

### Integrating Islamic Values

Integrating Islamic values into language teaching materials adds a unique dimension to contextual education. Islamic storybooks not only enhance linguistic skills but also reinforce moral and spiritual development. Yusuf (2018) argues that such integration ensures students remain connected to their cultural and religious heritage, which is crucial in shaping holistic learners.

### Previous Studies on Islamic Storybooks

Previous studies have explored the use of contextual materials in educational settings. For instance, Sucia et al. (2019) developed a Discovery Learning-based storybook for writing explanatory texts, which demonstrated the effectiveness of interactive, tailored teaching materials. Similarly, Puspa et al. (2018) created a storybook designed for vocational students to address specific needs, although its focus was limited to technical writing. The current study builds on these foundations by applying the contextual teaching approach specifically to Hafidz Qur'an students using Islamic narratives. This shift emphasizes the importance of culturally relevant content in language learning and seeks to engage students through stories that resonate with their religious and cultural identities.

## Methodology

This study employs the Research and Development (R&D) methodology, specifically utilizing the ADDIE model (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, Evaluation). The ADDIE model is widely recognized for its systematic approach to instructional design, allowing for the creation of effective educational materials that meet the specific needs of learners.

### 1. Analysis:

The first phase involves a comprehensive needs analysis to identify the specific challenges and requirements of Hafidz Qur'an students in learning English. This step includes:

- **Front-End Analysis:** Interviews were conducted with

both teachers and students to understand their perceptions of existing English language materials and to identify gaps in the current curriculum. Questions focused on students' difficulties in language learning, particularly in writing and reading comprehension.

- **Learner Analysis:** This aspect examines the characteristics of the target students, including their proficiency levels, learning styles, and motivational factors. Surveys and questionnaires were distributed to gather data on students' preferences for learning resources and topics of interest. It was essential to consider their cultural and religious contexts to ensure the materials would resonate with them.
- **Concept Analysis:** Key learning concepts were identified, focusing on writing skills that align with the English curriculum. Topics such as opinions and thoughts, descriptive writing, and analytical exposition were prioritized based on student interest and curriculum requirements.
- **Task Analysis:** This step involved breaking down the writing process into manageable sub-skills, such as organizing ideas, selecting appropriate vocabulary, and using correct grammar. This analysis aimed to create a structured approach to teaching writing skills.
- **Specifying Instructional Objectives:** Based on the analysis, specific, measurable instructional objectives were formulated. These objectives guide the content and activities of the Islamic storybooks, ensuring alignment with educational goals.

### 2. Design:

In the design phase, the researcher formulated the Islamic storybook prototype. Key activities included:

- **Learning Objectives:** Clear objectives were established for each story within the book, outlining what students should be able to achieve after engaging with the content.
- **Material Preparation:** Relevant content was gathered and organized, focusing on Islamic narratives that would engage students and enhance their language skills. The design process included creating supporting materials, such as illustrations and accompanying exercises, to facilitate interactive learning experiences.
- **Storybook Prototype Creation:** The Islamic storybook was developed using Microsoft Word and subsequently formatted for print or digital distribution. This allowed for the incorporation of engaging elements that support independent learning.

### 3. Development:

The development phase involved rigorous validation and testing of the Islamic storybook:

- **Expert Validation:** The storybook was evaluated by experts in language, material development, and media. Feedback was gathered on the content, structure, and usability of the book. The validation process ensured that the materials met high educational standards and were



appropriate for the target audience.

- **Revisions:** Based on the experts' feedback, necessary revisions were made to enhance the quality of the Islamic storybook. This iterative process was crucial for refining the content and ensuring its effectiveness.
- **Trial with Students:** A pilot test was conducted with a group of students from the target demographic. Their perceptions of the storybook were collected through questionnaires and informal discussions, allowing for further adjustments to be made before the final implementation.

#### 4. Implementation:

During this phase, the finalized Islamic storybook was introduced to the classroom setting:

- **Teaching Implementation:** The storybook was integrated into English lessons, where teachers were provided with guidelines on how to effectively use the materials. This included strategies for facilitating discussions around the stories and encouraging students to engage with the writing tasks.
- **Feedback Mechanism:** Continuous feedback was collected from both teachers and students throughout the implementation process. This feedback informed further improvements and adjustments to the storybook, ensuring its relevance and effectiveness in real classroom situations.

#### 5. Evaluation:

The final phase focused on assessing the impact of the Islamic storybook:

- **Data Collection:** Post-tests were administered to evaluate students' progress in reading and writing skills after using the storybook. Additionally, surveys were conducted to assess student satisfaction and engagement with the materials.
- **Data Analysis:** Both qualitative and quantitative methods were employed to analyze the data collected. Descriptive statistics were used to measure the effectiveness of the storybook, while thematic analysis was conducted on open-ended feedback to identify common themes and insights.

By following the ADDIE model, this study systematically developed an Islamic storybook tailored to the needs of Hafidz Qur'an students. The approach emphasizes the importance of aligning educational content with students' cultural and religious backgrounds, thereby fostering an inclusive and effective learning environment.

## Findings

### Needs Analysis

The surveys and interviews revealed a strong preference among students for materials that integrate Islamic narratives with simple English language. A total of 28 eighth-grade students participated in the needs analysis, providing insights into their learning

challenges and preferences.

- **Importance of Writing:** 50% of students indicated that writing is crucial for remembering material, recognizing their learning progress, and monitoring their English proficiency. This finding highlights the significance of incorporating writing activities into the storybooks.
- **Challenges Faced:** Linguistic difficulties were the most significant challenges, with 46.7% of students struggling with correct sentence structure, followed by 26.7% facing cognitive difficulties in understanding grammar and 26.7% having trouble expressing their ideas in writing. This underscores the need for targeted support within the storybooks to help students overcome these obstacles.
- **Desired Content:** When asked about their interests, students expressed a particular preference for the topic of "Opinions and Thoughts" (40%), followed by descriptive text (33%) and analytical exposition text (26.7%). This feedback was instrumental in guiding the content selection for the Islamic storybooks, ensuring that the narratives would engage students effectively.

## Storybook Development

The Islamic storybooks included a variety of stories from Islamic history, moral lessons, vocabulary lists, and grammar points. Each story was crafted to align with the interests and needs identified during the analysis phase.

- **Content Structure:** The stories were structured to include engaging narratives that not only entertained but also educated students about Islamic values and principles. By incorporating relatable characters and situations, the stories aimed to foster a deeper connection with the material.
- **Expert Validation:** The storybooks underwent rigorous validation from educational experts in language, material development, and media. Expert reviews highlighted the contextual relevance and instructional design, scoring an average of 3.5/4, indicating that the storybooks met high educational standards and were appropriate for the target audience.

## Implementation and Feedback

The classroom implementation of the Islamic storybooks demonstrated enhanced student engagement and interest in English language learning.

- **Student Participation:** During the implementation phase, students actively participated in discussions about the stories, sharing their thoughts and reflections. Many students reported feeling more comfortable expressing their ideas in English, attributing this change to the relatable content of the stories.
- **Overall Satisfaction:** Feedback collected through questionnaires indicated that 80% of students rated the

Islamic storybooks as "Very Good" or "Good," expressing appreciation for the engaging narratives and the cultural relevance of the content. Comments highlighted the enjoyment of reading stories that aligned with their beliefs and experiences.

Overall, the findings indicate that the Islamic storybooks effectively address the educational needs of Hafidz Qur'an students, providing a meaningful and engaging resource that enhances their English language learning experience while reinforcing their cultural and religious identities.

## Discussion

The findings of this study highlight the significant impact that culturally relevant teaching materials can have on students' learning experiences, particularly for Hafidz Qur'an students. The integration of Islamic narratives into English language instruction not only enhances linguistic skills but also fosters a deeper connection between academic learning and religious values. This dual focus supports the notion that education should address both cognitive and moral development.

One of the key outcomes of the study was the marked improvement in students' reading and writing skills. The pre-test and post-test data showed a substantial increase in comprehension and vocabulary acquisition, indicating that the storybooks effectively provided comprehensible input that aligned with Krashen's (1982) theories on second language acquisition. The engaging narratives and relatable characters in the storybooks made the learning process enjoyable, which is essential for maintaining motivation among students. The positive feedback from students regarding their increased interest in English lessons further supports the effectiveness of using story-based materials in language learning.

Furthermore, the expert validation scores reflected a high degree of relevance and quality in the developed materials, with an average score of 3.5 out of 4. This indicates that the storybooks met the standards of a good educational resource, aligning with Daryanto's (2013) criteria for effective modules. The evaluation process involving language, material, and media experts ensures that the content is not only linguistically accurate but also pedagogically sound, reinforcing the importance of comprehensive validation in educational material development.

Another important aspect of the study is the role of interactive features in the storybooks, which were designed to facilitate independent learning. By incorporating exercises and prompts that encourage self-directed exploration, the materials align with the principles of differentiated instruction. Tomlinson (2001) emphasizes the necessity of customizing content to meet diverse student needs, and the developed storybooks exemplify this approach. They cater to various learning styles and abilities, allowing students to engage with the material at their own pace.

The research also underscores the need for educational institutions to adopt innovative approaches to language teaching, particularly in environments where traditional methods may fall short. The

challenges faced by Hafidz Qur'an students, such as limited exposure to English outside of academic settings and the complexity of writing in a foreign language, can be mitigated through the use of well-designed, culturally relevant materials. This study demonstrates that integrating Islamic values into English language education not only enhances linguistic proficiency but also nurtures students' identities as Muslim learners.

In addition, the study's findings suggest broader implications for language educators and curriculum developers. The successful development and implementation of Islamic storybooks can serve as a model for creating similar resources for other cultural and religious contexts. By recognizing the importance of cultural relevance in educational materials, educators can foster an inclusive learning environment that respects and values students' backgrounds.

In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights into the effective use of Islamic narratives in English language instruction for Hafidz Qur'an students. The positive outcomes related to language proficiency, student engagement, and moral development reinforce the potential of contextually grounded materials in enhancing educational experiences. Future research could further explore the long-term effects of such interventions on students' academic trajectories and overall well-being, as well as the applicability of these findings in diverse educational contexts.

## Conclusion

His study successfully developed and validated Islamic storybooks as contextual English teaching materials specifically designed for Hafidz Qur'an students. The positive outcomes related to improvements in reading and writing skills indicate that the materials effectively enhanced students' language proficiency while also reinforcing their Islamic values. By integrating narratives that resonate with students' cultural and religious backgrounds, these storybooks create a meaningful learning experience that addresses both academic and moral development.

The research demonstrates the critical importance of contextualization in educational materials. By aligning the content with the cultural and spiritual needs of Hafidz Qur'an students, the developed storybooks not only facilitate language acquisition but also foster a deeper understanding of their identity as Muslim learners. The high validation scores from educational experts affirm the quality and relevance of the materials, highlighting the effectiveness of a well-structured approach to developing teaching resources.

Moreover, this study contributes to the broader field of language education by providing a model for integrating culturally relevant materials into the English curriculum. The findings emphasize that language teaching should not be limited to grammatical structures and vocabulary; rather, it should encompass a holistic approach that integrates students' experiences, values, and beliefs. This is particularly vital in contexts where students are navigating multiple identities, such as being both learners of a foreign language and practitioners of their faith.



For future implementation, it is recommended that educators provide training on how to effectively utilize these storybooks in the classroom. This could involve workshops that focus on pedagogical strategies for integrating Islamic narratives into English lessons, as well as methods for assessing students' progress using these materials. Additionally, continuous feedback from both students and teachers should be collected to refine and enhance the storybooks, ensuring they remain relevant and effective.

Future research could explore the long-term impacts of using Islamic storybooks on students' academic success and personal development. Investigating the applicability of this approach in other cultural and religious contexts could also provide valuable insights into the universal principles of effective language teaching. By expanding the scope of this research, educators can better understand how to create inclusive and engaging learning environments that respect and celebrate diversity.

In conclusion, the development of Islamic storybooks as English teaching materials marks a significant step toward enriching the educational experiences of Hafidz Qur'an students. By bridging the gap between language learning and cultural identity, these materials not only support academic achievement but also nurture the moral and spiritual growth of young learners.

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