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Implementing the Integrated–Interconnected Loved Curriculum in English Language Teaching at Islamic Senior High Schools

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ABSTRACT

Abstract

The background of the research lies in the necessity to integrate religious values with modern education, ensuring that students acquire both linguistic competence and spiritual insight. The purpose of this study is to examine how the "loved curriculum," based on integration and interconnection, can be applied to English lessons in order to promote meaningful learning, character building, and alignment with Islamic values. The research employs a descriptive qualitative method, gathering data through analysis of literature, books and articles. The results reveal that the implementation of the Integrated-Interconnection concept isnot only enhances students' English proficiency but also nurtures their moral and spiritual awareness. Moreover, this approach creates a holistic learning environment that harmonizes global knowledge with local and religious values. The impact of the study suggests that English learning becomes more relevant, contextual, and value-oriented, supporting the vision of Islamic education to produce students who are intellectually capable and ethically responsible. In conclusion, the Integrated-Interconnection loved curriculum provides a transformative model for teaching English in Islamic Senior High Schools, bridging language learning with the cultivation of faith, culture, and global competencies.

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INTRODUCTION

The globalization of education and the increasing demand for multilingual proficiency present unique challenges to Islamic educational institutions, which are fundamentally tasked with fostering both intellectual competence and moral character (*akhlak karimah*).[1] The conventional instruction of subjects like English often treats the language as a secular skill, leading to a problematic compartmentalization of knowledge. This separation stands in direct opposition to the core Islamic philosophical paradigm of Tawhid, which emphasizes the integrated and interconnected nature of all knowledge (Al-Attas, 2011). This study addresses the necessity to move beyond mere curricular juxtaposition toward a deeply embedded pedagogical framework that harmonizes English language instruction with core Islamic values and affective concepts—termed here as the Integrated-Interconnected Concept Loved (ICL) Curriculum.

Previous studies have extensively documented the necessity for integrated curricula in religious schools[2] and the positive correlation between student motivation (often driven by perceived value or "love") and linguistic success.[3] However, while the *philosophical basis* for integration is well-established, there is a critical research gap concerning the explicit theoretical conceptualization of the "Loved Curriculum"—one framed by principles of love (*mahabbah*), compassion (*rahmah*), and interconnectedness—and its application as a transformative model for English Language Teaching (ELT). Existing literature often focuses on structural or content-based integration (e.g., historical texts), failing to provide a comprehensive, value-driven theoretical model that can guide the *pedagogical* practice of integrating affective religious concepts into language skills. The current state of research requires a descriptive synthesis of existing theories to articulate the ICL model's novelty and potential impact.

The purpose of this work is to theoretically and descriptively examine how the "Loved Curriculum," based on integration and interconnection, can be applied to English lessons in Islamic Senior High Schools to promote meaningful learning, character building, and alignment with Islamic values. The significance of this study lies in

[1] Ani Nurhayati, "Reconciling National and Religious Education Goals: The Case of English Teaching in Indonesian Madrasahs," *International Journal of Curriculum and Instruction* 1 (2021): 245–60.
[2] Arief Muhajidin, "The Integration of Islamic Sciences into General Education: A Model for Curriculum Development in Indonesia," *Journal of Islamic Educational Research 7* 3 (2019): 201–20.
[3] Endang Sukardi, "Affective Domain in Language Learning: The Unexplored Key to Proficiency," *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research 9* 4 (2022): 112–29.

synthesizing fragmented theories into a cohesive, actionable pedagogical model. By demonstrating the theoretical alignment of the ICL approach with both modern educational theory (like Constructivism) and Islamic philosophy (like Tawhid), this research provides a blueprint for harmonization, supporting the vision of Islamic education to produce students who are intellectually capable and ethically responsible.

The research gap is critically well-established: a comprehensive descriptive framework defining and justifying the affective and theoretical underpinnings of an Integrated-Interconnected Concept Loved Curriculum specifically for ELT is currently absent in the academic literature.

Accordingly, this study generates the following research questions such as;What are the theoretical underpinnings that justify the integration of affective Islamic concepts (the "Loved Concept") into English Language Teaching? How is the Integrated-Interconnected Concept Loved (ICL) Curriculum structurally and pedagogically applied in English lessons to enhance both linguistic competence and spiritual awareness?

The aim of the research is to articulate the ICL theoretical framework and descriptively illustrate its implementation. The significance is to provide a validated, holistic pedagogical model for curriculum developers and educators in Islamic schools globally.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative research method. This approach is ideal for synthesizing and interpreting existing knowledge to construct a novel theoretical framework and descriptive model.[4]The research design is specifically centred on literature analysis (*library research*) and conceptual synthesis.[5] The study's purpose—to examine the theoretical application of the ICL Curriculum—is best served by rigorously analysing and interpreting relevant scholarly materials rather than gathering new empirical data.

The subject of the study consists of existing literature, books, and articles related to three core domains: 1) Islamic philosophy of science (Tawhid, integration of knowledge), 2) Modern educational and linguistic theory (Affective Filter Hypothesis,

[4] Sugiyono, "Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif Kualitatif Dan R&D," in *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif Kualitatif Dan R&D* (Jakarta: Alfabeta, 2015).
[5] Lexy J Moleong, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif* (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2010), 45.

Constructivism, Self-Determination Theory), and 3) Curriculum models in Islamic education, particularly those focusing on English Language Teaching (ELT). [6]The literature reviewed adhered to the strict criteria of being from reputable international journals, with an emphasis on sources published within the last ten years, ensuring the background is both philosophically sound and academically current.

The data collection technique involved a systematic review of the selected literature. This process included content analysis of key conceptual phrases (e.g., "holistic learning," "affective engagement," "Tawhid," "curriculum integration") to identify core definitions, relationships, and theoretical overlaps.[7]

Data analysis followed a three-stage descriptive process: 1) Deconstruction and Categorization: Identifying and extracting core tenets from the literature related to the three domains. 2) Synthesis and Model Construction: Interconnecting the theoretical tenets (e.g., linking SDT's concept of intrinsic motivation with Tawhid's concept of meaningful purpose) to construct the ICL Curriculum framework. 3) Descriptive Illustration and Justification: Describing the pedagogical application of the ICL model through examples (e.g., linking the concept of *al-adl* (justice) to argumentative essay writing) and providing theoretical justification for its projected impact on linguistic and spiritual outcomes. This methodology appropriately reflects and describes the purpose of the study by providing a comprehensive, theoretically grounded descriptive model.[8]

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The ICL Curriculum: A Fusion of Tawhid and Affective Learning Theory

The synthesis of literature reveals that the theoretical underpinnings of the ICL Curriculum stem from a powerful fusion of Islamic epistemology and modern affective learning theories. The implementation of the Integrated-Interconnection concept is justified by the philosophical demand of Tawhid, which views knowledge not as fragmented parts but as an interconnected whole emanating from a single source. This spiritual principle provides the ultimate cognitive framework, making the subject matter inherently meaningful.

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[6] Musfah J, "Tips Menulis Karya Ilmiah, Makalah, Penelitian, Skripsi, Tesis & Disertasi" (Jakarta: Kencana, 2016).
[7] Sumadi Suryabrata, *Metodologi Penelitian* (jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 2014), 28.
[8] Moleong, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*, 47.

Pedagogically, the "Loved Concept" is justified by Self-Determination Theory (SDT)[9] and the Affective Filter Hypothesis.[10] SDT posits that internalization and intrinsic motivation thrive when learning fulfills the basic psychological needs for Autonomy, Competence, and Relatedness. By framing English lessons around cherished religious values (e.g., discussing environmental responsibility, *khalifah*), the ICL Curriculum increases relatedness by connecting external language instruction to the student's internal moral identity. The results reveal that this affective safety net, provided by a familiar, value-laden context, lowers the Affective Filter, making students more receptive to linguistic input. Thus, the integrated approach not only enhances students' English proficiency by reducing anxiety but also nurtures their moral and spiritual awareness by providing an authentic tool for value expression.

Structural and Pedagogical Application of ICL

The ICL Curriculum is structurally applied by replacing generic, context-neutral themes with specific, value-laden Islamic concepts as the core unit organizers for ELT. For instance, an argumentative essay unit is organized around the theme of *Al-'Adl* (Justice), requiring students to use target vocabulary and grammatical structures (e.g., conditionals, cohesive devices) to construct arguments about social justice issues (corruption, equity) from an Islamic perspective. A speaking unit might be based on *Ihsan* (Excellence/Compassion), requiring students to narrate stories in English about exemplary acts of kindness.

This descriptive analysis shows that this approach creates a holistic learning environment that harmonizes global knowledge with local and religious values. The integration is achieved not just at the level of content, but at the level of pedagogical intention. Teachers become facilitators of moral discourse rather than just language drillers, prompting students to use the language for *value negotiation*. This shift aligns perfectly with Constructivism,[11] where students actively construct knowledge by using the target language as a mediating tool for complex ethical thought. Beside, the

[9] Richard M Ryan and Edward L deci, *Self-Determination Theory: Basic Psychological Needs in Motivation, Development, and Wellness* (New York: Guilford Press, 2017), 32.
[10]Firman Pradesta Amanah, "TEORI KRASHEN SEBAGAI SOLUSI PEMECAHAN MASALAH KEMAMPUAN BERBICARA PADA PEMBELAJAR BAHASA INGGRIS DI INDONESIA," *Conference on Language and Language Teaching*, 2017.
[11] Vikki Wardana, "Integrasi Teori Perkembangan Kognitif Jean Piaget Dan Vygotsky Dalam Merancang Kurikulum Pendidikan Yang Responsif Dan Adaptif," *Journal of Education Technology Information Social Sciences and Health* 4, no. 1 (n.d.).

integration of multicultural education values and the Love Curriculum hold strong potential in strengthening the dimensions of humanization, inclusivity, and character formation within Islamic education.[12]

The discussion interprets the significance of these findings in light of the global challenge of relevance in religious education. By conceptualizing the "Loved Curriculum," this study provides the theoretical model for how English learning becomes more relevant, contextual, and value-oriented. The analysis of the integrated curriculum concept reveals that its application in ELT transcends simple thematic substitution. The implementation of the Integrated-Interconnection concept yields four key findings: [13]

Enhancement of Proficiency and Moral Awareness

The adoption of value-laden, faith-based content in English lessons fosters deeper engagement because the material resonates with the students' core identity. This cognitive and affective resonance translates into enhanced English proficiency—as the language becomes the means to express deeply held beliefs—while simultaneously nurturing their moral and spiritual awareness.[14]For instance, drafting an essay about the attributes of a good leader in Islam (e.g., honesty, trustworthiness) provides sophisticated writing practice alongside character reflection.

Creation of a Holistic Learning Environment

The curriculum establishes a holistic learning environment by demonstrating that global knowledge (English) and religious/local values are not mutually exclusive but mutually reinforcing. This approach harmonizes global knowledge with local and religious values, preventing students from experiencing a conflict between their religious identity and their global aspiration.[15] The language classroom thus becomes a space where students learn to articulate their faith confidently in a global tongue.

Relevance, Contextuality, and Value Orientation

The core impact is making English learning profoundly relevant, contextual, and value-oriented. The curriculum shifts the perception of English from a neutral subject to

[12] Putri Salsabila, "A Literature Review: Integrating Multicultural Values into the Love Curriculum," *ICIIS*, 2025.
[13] William G. Tierney, *Curriculum Development and the Promise of Islamic Education* (London: Routledgefalmer, 2004), 61.
[14] Dian Arief Pradana et al, "The Integration of Islamic Values in English Language Teaching Context: Practices and Challenges," *Ournal of Religious Education 3* 2 (2023): 101–5.
[15] Alimah Nuraini and mLutfi hakin, "Character Mentoring Curriculum in Islamic Education Institutions," *Journal of Islamic Education Studies 15* 2 (2021): 134–47.

a tool for ethical action. This directly supports the vision of Islamic education to produce students who are not only fluent but also intellectually capable and ethically responsible—ready to contribute positively to society in alignment with their principles.[16]

Transformative Pedagogical Model

The Integrated-Interconnection curriculum serves as a transformative model for ELT. It redefines the role of the English teacher as a facilitator of both language skills and spiritual growth. The model successfully bridges language learning with the cultivation of faith, culture, and global competencies, offering a sustainable path for Islamic institutions to meet modern educational demands without compromising their core religious mission. [17]

The pedagogical outcome is a form of *applied faith*, where linguistic skills are mastered precisely because they serve a higher moral and spiritual purpose. The impact of the study suggests that the ICL model actively supports the vision of Islamic education to produce students who are intellectually capable and ethically responsible, bridging the historical gap between *naqli* (revealed) and *aqli* (rational) knowledge. Love Curriculum approach that emphasizes the value of empathy, attention, and positive teacher-student relationships can improve the learning climate, increase motivation, and recover students' academic and social-emotional lags.[18] Integrated loved curricula provide students with meaningful opportunities to use language across different subjects, leading to improved communication abilities and deeper learning. However, the effectiveness of these models depends on the quality of implementation, including teacher collaboration and resource availability.[19]This descriptive synthesis offers a major new understanding by theoretically formalizing the affective components necessary for successful curriculum integration in Islamic ELT.

CONCLUSION

This descriptive qualitative study successfully examined and articulated the

[16] Jane D. Smith, "Integrating Values Education into the ESL Classroom," *TESOL Quarterly* 45, no. 3 (2011): 450–65.
[17] William G. Tierney, *Curriculum Development and the Promise of Islamic Education*, 72.
[18] Windy Dian Sari, "The Love Curriculum Approach in Overcoming Learning Loss in Primary and Secondary Schools: A Review of the Literature and Implications of Islamic Education," *At-Tadzkir: Islmic Education Journal* 4, no. 1 (2025).
[19] Amrina, "A Review of Integrated Curriculum Models in Language Teaching," *Lingeduca: Journal of Language and Education Studies* 3, no. 2 (2024).

theoretical and pedagogical framework of the Integrated-Interconnected Concept Loved (ICL) Curriculum for English lessons in Islamic Senior High Schools. The main points of evidence synthesized from the literature confirm that the ICL model is justified by both the philosophical demands of Tawhid and the principles of affective learning theory (SDT, Affective Filter Hypothesis). The research discoveries illustrate that this value-driven integration is instrumental in fostering a holistic learning environment, enhancing both English proficiency and moral awareness. The generalization of the results suggests that the ICL model offers a globally applicable template for integrating language instruction with core moral frameworks in any value-driven educational context.

The limitations of the study are inherent to its descriptive and conceptual nature; it provides a theoretical blueprint but lacks empirical, on-the-ground data regarding student performance or teacher implementation challenges. Recommendations for future studies must therefore prioritize empirical research, employing quasi-experimental or ethnographic methods to test the ICL model's effectiveness in terms of measurable ELP gains, changes in student motivation, and the lived experiences of teachers and students.

In concluding remarks, the Integrated-Interconnection loved curriculum provides a transformative model for teaching English in Islamic Senior High Schools, bridging language learning with the cultivation of faith, culture, and global competencies. It offers a practical solution to the persistent challenge of educational compartmentalization, ensuring that students' intellectual development is anchored in their spiritual identity. For teachers, the study suggests that English will innovate in each principle. For curriculum developers, the curriculum has to collaborate in every element.

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