Developing Vocabulary Learning Cards with Islamic Contexts for Indonesian Muslim Young Learners

Ahmad Sakti Alhamidi Hasibuan[1]*, Kalayo Hasibuan[1], Zulhidah[1]

[1]Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau, Riau, Indonesia
*ahmadsalhamidih@gmail.com, 22390814790@students.uin-suska.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This study explores the development of English word cards integrated with Islamic perspectives as vocabulary learning media for Muslim young learners in Indonesia. Using the ADDIE model—Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation—the research aims to provide culturally relevant materials that align with learners' religious values. The resulting product consists of 26 double-sided alphabet-based cards featuring Islamic vocabulary, visual aids, and contextual Quranic references. Conducted in three Islamic elementary schools, the development process included needs analysis, expert validation, and trials involving students and teachers. Data were collected through questionnaires, interviews, observation, and pre-test/post-test instruments. Results showed significant improvement in vocabulary acquisition, student engagement, and learning motivation. Expert validation yielded an average score of 89%, and practicality assessment reached 80.6%. The paired sample t-test confirmed the effectiveness of the media. This research contributes to the integration of language instruction with character and faith development in Islamic educational settings.

ARTICLE INFO

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the integration of cultural and religious values into language teaching has gained significant attention, particularly in contexts where religion plays a central role in learners' identities (Kramsch, 1993; Rohmani & Andriyanti, 2022)). In Indonesia—a nation with the world's largest Muslim population—the

role of Islamic values in education is especially salient (Astuti et al., 2024). Traditional English vocabulary instruction often remains value-neutral and culturally distant, which may limit both learner engagement and relevance (Gay, 2018). To enhance the meaningfulness of vocabulary learning for young Muslim learners, this research investigates the development of English word cards that are embedded with Islamic perspectives, thereby aligning linguistic content with learners' religious and cultural frameworks.

Language learning materials designed with cultural congruence have been shown to increase learner motivation and deepen conceptual understanding (Byram, 1997). In contexts where faith and language are interwoven, materials that reflect religious identity can also support character and moral development (Lickona, 2004). In the Indonesian Islamic education milieu especially, educators increasingly advocate for instructional resources that reinforce both language proficiency and Islamic character education (Amir & Miftah, 2022). However, few empirical studies have addressed how specific Islamic content—such as Qur'anic vocabulary, moral concepts, or prophetic stories—can be systematically integrated into English language learning tools for young learners.

Another key consideration is the format of vocabulary instruction. Flashcards and word cards have long been recognized as effective vocabulary learning tools, especially for young learners, due to their visual, interactive, and multimodal nature (Nation, 2001; Webb & Nation, 2017). These tools support spaced repetition, visual association, and active recall—factors known to enhance retention and retrieval in vocabulary acquisition (Thornbury, 2002). Yet, there is limited research on adapting such tools to embed Islamic values and religious content in a culturally meaningful way. This study seeks to address this gap by combining the pedagogical strengths of vocabulary cards with Islamically rooted content tailored for a Muslim young learner audience.

To guide the systematic creation of these word cards, this study employs the ADDIE instructional design model—comprising Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation phases (Branch, 2009). The ADDIE model has been widely used in educational material development for its structured approach and flexibility (Molenda, 2003). In the context of Islamic education, ADDIE has been successfully applied to create materials that balance religious content authenticity with pedagogical soundness, for instance, in the development of Islamic-based English e-modules (Berlin et al., 2022). Applying ADDIE in this study ensures that the word cards are carefully aligned with both language learning objectives and Islamic values.

Moreover, the theoretical underpinnings of this research draw on Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, which emphasizes that learning is inherently situated within cultural and social contexts. By embedding Qur'anic references and Islamic vocabulary into the word card design, the material becomes meaningful within

learners' lived cultural and faith experiences, facilitating more effective internalization of both linguistic and spiritual content. Furthermore, Gardner's (1985) theory of motivation—particularly integrative motivation—indicates that learners who perceive content as connected to their identity (here, religious identity) display higher engagement and persistence in language learning.

Empirical research further suggests that value-infused educational materials can lead to measurable improvements in learning outcomes. For example, Maharani et al. (2024) found that using a mobile application significantly improved students' English vocabulary mastery. Similarly, research by Putra (2017) demonstrated that developing English learning media integrated with Islamic values could enhance student motivation. These findings provide a promising basis for the current investigation, though Indonesian studies specifically addressing Islamic-integrated English vocabulary tools remain sparse.

Therefore, this study is designed to explore the development of English word cards with Islamic perspectives for young Muslim learners in Indonesia, using the ADDIE framework. The central research objectives are threefold:
1. To design alphabet-based English word cards that integrate Islamic vocabulary, visual aids, and contextual Qur'anic references.
2. To validate the content and practicality of the developed word cards through expert review and field trials in Islamic elementary schools.
3. To evaluate the effectiveness of the word cards in improving vocabulary acquisition, learner engagement, and motivation.

By addressing these objectives, this study aims not only to contribute to the field of language teaching materials design but also to offer practical resources for Islamic educational settings in Indonesia. The findings are anticipated to inform both curriculum developers and classroom practitioners about how to combine language instruction with faith-based educational goals. In summary, this research responds to the growing call for culturally and religiously responsive pedagogies (Ladson-Billings, 1995) and fills a gap in vocabulary learning tools that consciously integrate Islamic perspectives.

METHOD

This study employed a Research and Development (R&D) design, structured according to the five phases of the ADDIE model: Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation. The research was conducted in three private Islamic elementary schools in Indonesia, involving 60 third-grade students, three English teachers, and two experts for validation. The initial Analysis phase involved reviewing the curriculum and conducting interviews with teachers and classroom observations to identify learner needs. Following this, in the Design phase, a blueprint for 26 alphabet-based, double-sided word cards was created, and all research instruments, including validation questionnaires, practicality

questionnaires, and vocabulary pre-test/post-test instruments, were developed. During the Development phase, a physical prototype of the word cards was produced and subsequently refined based on feedback gathered from the expert validation questionnaires. The Implementation phase began with the administration of a pre-test to the student participants. This was followed by a four-week treatment period where the English teachers used the word cards as a supplementary learning medium in their classrooms. Throughout this period, classroom activities were monitored using an observation checklist to assess student engagement. The implementation concluded with the administration of a post-test to measure vocabulary improvement. Finally, in the Evaluation phase, all collected data were analyzed. Qualitative data from interviews and observation notes were analyzed thematically, while quantitative data from the expert and practicality questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics. To determine the effectiveness of the media, the pre-test and post-test scores were analyzed using a paired-samples t-test after data normality was confirmed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Characteristics of the Developed Product

The primary outcome of this Research and Development (R&D) study was a set of English word cards integrated with Islamic perspectives, henceforth referred to as "Islamic-Perspective Word Cards." The final product consisted of 26 alphabet-based cards printed in full color on durable A6-sized cardstock. Each card was double-sided. The front featured a capital and lowercase letter (e.g., "Dd"), a corresponding English vocabulary word (e.g., "Dua"), and a culturally relevant illustration depicting the concept. The reverse side provided the Indonesian translation ("Doa"), a simple contextual sentence in English ("We make Dua to Allah"), and a brief, relevant reference from the Qur'an or Hadith to anchor the word within an authentic Islamic framework. This design was the culmination of the Analysis, Design, and Development phases, intended to create a tool that was not only linguistically functional but also culturally and spiritually resonant for young Muslim learners.

Product Validity

The validity of the Islamic-Perspective Word Cards was determined through expert validation questionnaires completed by a subject matter expert in Islamic Studies and ELT, and a media and instructional design expert. The validation focused on two key aspects: content accuracy and media appropriateness. The content expert assessed the theological accuracy of the Islamic concepts, the correctness of the Qur'anic references, and the suitability of the vocabulary for the target age group, yielding a score of 91%. The media expert evaluated the

instructional design, visual layout, font choice, color scheme, and overall pedagogical suitability, providing a score of 87%.

The average expert validation score was calculated to be 89%, which falls into the "highly valid" category. This high level of validity indicates that the developed product was deemed accurate, appropriate, and pedagogically sound by experts in the relevant fields. Qualitative feedback from the experts was instrumental in the final revisions. For instance, the content expert praised the "seamless and natural integration of vocabulary with core Islamic tenets," but suggested simplifying the wording of two contextual sentences to better match the learners' proficiency level. The media expert commended the "clear, child-friendly illustrations" but recommended increasing the font size of the Indonesian translation for better readability. These suggestions were incorporated into the final version of the cards, ensuring the product achieved a high standard of quality before its implementation.

Product Practicality

The practicality of the word cards was assessed through questionnaires administered to the three participating English teachers and 60 students following the implementation phase. Practicality was defined as the ease of use, appeal, and suitability of the media within a real classroom environment. The practicality assessment by teachers yielded an average score of 82.5% ("highly practical"), while students rated its appeal and usability at 78.7% ("practical"). The combined average practicality score was 80.6%, signifying that the product was well-received and considered effective for classroom use by its end-users.

The discussion with teachers during post-implementation interviews provided deeper insight into these scores. Teachers unanimously reported that the cards were easy to integrate into their lesson plans and served as an effective tool for introducing new vocabulary. One teacher noted, "The cards provided a tangible and interactive alternative to simply writing words on the whiteboard. The students were visibly more engaged." Observations conducted during the implementation phase corroborated this, showing increased student participation, particularly during group activities and games using the cards. Students were frequently observed discussing the illustrations and connecting the English words to stories they knew from their religious studies classes. This finding underscores the importance of creating materials that learners can personally connect with, aligning with the principles of culturally responsive pedagogy (Gay, 2018). The visual and tactile nature of the cards, combined with familiar Islamic content, successfully lowered the affective filter and enhanced learner motivation.

Product Effectiveness

The effectiveness of the Islamic-Perspective Word Cards in improving students' vocabulary acquisition was the central focus of the evaluation. This was measured by comparing the results of the pre-test and post-test administered to the 60 student participants. The descriptive statistics revealed a substantial improvement in vocabulary mastery. The mean pre-test score was 48.50 (SD = 10.2), indicating a foundational but limited vocabulary knowledge prior to the intervention. After the four-week implementation period, the mean post-test score rose to 79.80 (SD = 8.5).

To determine if this improvement was statistically significant, a paired-samples t-test was conducted after a Shapiro-Wilk test confirmed the normality of the data distribution ($p > .05$). The result of the t-test was highly significant, $t(59) = 15.67$, $p < .001$. As the p-value is well below the alpha level of 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected. This confirms that the use of the Islamic-Perspective Word Cards resulted in a statistically significant improvement in students' English vocabulary scores.

This marked effectiveness can be attributed to several converging factors grounded in established learning theories. First, from a cognitive perspective, the word cards leveraged the principles of dual-coding theory by presenting information both visually (illustrations) and verbally (text), which is known to enhance memory and recall (Nation, 2001). Second, and more central to this study's thesis, the effectiveness is strongly linked to Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory. The cards acted as cultural tools that bridged the gap between the new language (English) and the learners' existing sociocultural and religious schemas. By embedding vocabulary within a familiar Islamic context, the learning process became more meaningful and less abstract. The Qur'anic references and moral concepts provided a powerful "scaffold" that helped students internalize new words.

Furthermore, the results support Gardner's (1985) theory of integrative motivation. The students, identifying as Muslims, were more motivated to learn a language when it was presented as being connected to their religious identity. This connection fostered a positive attitude toward the learning materials and the language itself, leading to higher engagement and, consequently, better learning outcomes. This finding aligns with recent studies in similar contexts, such as that of Maharani et al. (2024), who also found that teaching media improved vocabulary mastery. This study extends that research by providing a tangible, non-digital tool developed and validated through the systematic R&D process.

Limitations and Future Directions

Despite the positive results, this study has several limitations. First, the sample size was relatively small and confined to three schools in a specific region, which

may limit the generalizability of the findings. Second, the implementation period of four weeks was short; a longitudinal study could provide more insight into long-term vocabulary retention. Finally, the study employed a pre-test/post-test design without a control group, making it difficult to definitively rule out other factors that might have contributed to the students' improvement.

Future research should aim to address these limitations. A quasi-experimental study comparing an experimental group using the Islamic-Perspective Word Cards with a control group using conventional flashcards would provide more robust evidence of the product's unique effectiveness. Furthermore, the concept could be expanded to develop materials for other language skills, such as reading or writing, or adapted for different age groups.

In conclusion, this R&D study successfully developed, validated, and tested a set of English word cards with Islamic perspectives. The findings demonstrate that the product is highly valid, practical for classroom use, and statistically effective in improving vocabulary acquisition among young Muslim learners. The results strongly support the integration of culturally and religiously relevant content in language teaching materials to enhance motivation, engagement, and learning outcomes.

CONCLUSION

This R&D study was undertaken to design, validate, and evaluate the effectiveness of English word cards integrated with Islamic perspectives as a vocabulary learning medium for young Muslim learners in Indonesia. Based on the systematic application of the ADDIE model and the subsequent data analysis, several key conclusions can be drawn.

First, the study successfully produced a set of 26 alphabet-based, Islamic-Perspective Word Cards that were confirmed to be of high quality. The product achieved a final validation score of 89% from content and media experts, classifying it as "highly valid" in terms of its linguistic accuracy, religious appropriateness, and pedagogical design. Second, the word cards were found to be "highly practical" for classroom use, earning an average practicality score of 80.6% from both teachers and students. This indicates that the media is not only appealing and engaging for learners but also easy for teachers to implement within their existing lesson structures.

Most importantly, the study concludes that the developed word cards are effective in improving students' English vocabulary acquisition. The paired-samples t-test revealed a statistically significant difference between the students' pre-test and post-test scores ($p < .001$), providing strong empirical evidence that the intervention successfully enhanced learning outcomes. The effectiveness of the media is attributed to its alignment with sociocultural learning theories and its

ability to foster integrative motivation by connecting language learning to the students' cultural and religious identities.

In summary, this research confirms that integrating culturally and religiously congruent content into language materials is a valuable and effective pedagogical strategy. This study contributes a validated, practical, and effective learning tool for educators in Islamic educational settings and provides a replicable model for developing similar value-based materials in the future.

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