



## Integrating Literacy and Islamic Values: The Rotating Islamic Book Week at TK Yaa Bunayya to Enhance Children's Language Development

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### Abstract

This study aims to describe the implementation of the rotating Islamic-themed book week program as a form of literacy-based Islamic education practice in stimulating early childhood language skills at TK Yaa Bunayya Magetan. The program is designed to strengthen collaboration between school and family through the activity of borrowing Islamic storybooks to be read together with parents at home. This activity not only aims to foster reading interest but also to instill Islamic values that shape character and enrich children's vocabulary. The research employs a descriptive qualitative approach with data collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. The research subjects include the school principal, classroom teacher, assistant teacher, and students. The findings show that the program is effective in enhancing children's speaking skills, expanding language comprehension, and strengthening verbal expression. Active interaction between children and parents during reading becomes a key moment in the scaffolding process and supports development within the child's zone of proximal development, as explained by Vygotsky and Bruner. The results have important implications for the development of literacy-based learning models that integrate Islamic values, both theoretically and practically in early childhood education settings. This study highlights the necessity of active collaboration between schools and families to support children's language and character development, offering practical guidance for teachers and parents in implementing effective literacy strategies.

**Keywords:** Literacy-based Islamic education, Parental involvement, Language development, ZPD

*Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan pelaksanaan program pekan buku bertema Islami bergilir sebagai praktik pendidikan berbasis literasi Islami dalam menstimulasi kemampuan berbahasa anak usia dini di TK Yaa Bunayya Magetan. Program ini dirancang untuk memperkuat kolaborasi antara sekolah dan keluarga melalui aktivitas peminjaman buku cerita Islami yang dibaca bersama orang tua di rumah. Kegiatan ini tidak hanya bertujuan untuk menumbuhkan minat baca, tetapi juga menanamkan nilai-nilai Islami yang membentuk karakter dan memperkaya kosakata anak. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan pengumpulan data melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Subjek penelitian meliputi kepala sekolah, guru kelas, guru pendamping, dan siswa. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa program ini efektif dalam meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara anak, memperluas pemahaman bahasa, dan memperkuat ekspresi verbal. Interaksi aktif antara anak dan orang tua saat membaca menjadi momen penting dalam proses scaffolding dan mendukung perkembangan dalam zona perkembangan proksimal anak, sebagaimana dijelaskan oleh Vygotsky dan Bruner. Hasil penelitian ini memiliki implikasi penting untuk pengembangan model pembelajaran berbasis literasi yang mengintegrasikan nilai-nilai Islami, baik dalam kerangka teori maupun praktik pendidikan di lembaga pendidikan anak usia dini. Temuan ini menegaskan perlunya kolaborasi aktif antara sekolah dan keluarga dalam mendukung perkembangan bahasa dan karakter anak, serta memberikan pedoman bagi guru dan orang tua dalam menerapkan strategi literasi yang efektif.*

**Kata Kunci:** Pendidikan Islam berbasis literasi, Keterlibatan orang tua, Perkembangan bahasa, ZPD

## INTRODUCTION

Islamic education from an early age plays a vital role in shaping the spiritual, intellectual, and social foundations of children. The main goal of Islamic education is to instill values of faith, morality, and a love for knowledge from an early age, as reflected in the first revelation received by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), namely the command to read (*Iqra'*). In this context, literacy is not merely understood as the technical ability to read and write, but as an effort to comprehend and internalize Islamic values through meaningful texts and social interaction. Therefore, literacy-based Islamic education is a strategic approach to develop children's language skills while shaping their character from an early age.

Language plays a crucial role in human life, especially as a tool for communication and learning. For early childhood, language is not only a medium of interaction but also a fundamental foundation for cognitive, social, and emotional development (Anggraini, 2019). During the golden age (0–6 years), language development progresses rapidly, encompassing the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in stages. Early stimulation of language is thus essential, as it determines children's readiness to enter the next level of education. Children with strong language skills tend to express themselves more effectively, understand their environment better, and form positive social relationships.

In practice, however, not all children receive adequate language stimulation either at school or at home. Limited access to children's books, lack of time for parents to read with their children, and a weak culture of family literacy are common obstacles in

language development. In fact, parental involvement in early literacy has been proven to accelerate vocabulary acquisition, deepen comprehension, and foster reading interest from a young age (Fitriyani, 2020). Fadillah (2023) emphasizes that building a strong literacy culture in early childhood requires structured collaboration between parents and teachers through familiar, repetitive reading practices that are rooted in daily religious and moral values. Children aged 3–4 years begin to show the ability to construct simple sentences, understand word meanings, and ask questions (Nuryanto, 2016), making this stage an ideal time to stimulate language through reading and active dialogue.

In response to these challenges, TK Yaa Bunayya in Magetan initiated an innovative program: the Rotating Islamic-Themed Book Week. This program is held every Monday, involving students in bringing an Islamic storybook from home, which is then collected and lent to classmates on a rotating basis. The book is read at home with parents, and the activity is documented using a checklist provided by the school. Besides cultivating a reading culture, the program also serves as a means of strengthening family literacy grounded in Islamic values.

The program has proven to positively impact children's language development. Children not only acquire new vocabulary in everyday contexts but also become familiar with religious terms that enrich their language and expression. Values such as honesty, kindness, and compassion—embedded in Islamic storybooks—help children understand moral concepts in a concrete way, while also expanding their ability to verbally express ideas and stories. The program also encourages the development of reading and listening skills through repetition of words, correct pronunciation, and comprehension. Children are encouraged to retell stories, participate in discussions, and express opinions, which indirectly strengthens their ability to construct sentences, present arguments, and communicate with confidence.

Theoretically, the program aligns with the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) by Vygotsky, which suggests that children develop more effectively through guidance from more capable adults or peers (Vygotsky, 1978). This approach is supported by Bruner's scaffolding theory, which emphasizes the importance of gradual assistance to help children understand and communicate content more effectively. Literacy interactions with parents create meaningful learning experiences, accelerate vocabulary acquisition, and strengthen children's communication skills.

Several previous studies have confirmed the effectiveness of illustrated storybooks in improving early reading skills (Rahmawati, 2021), as well as the role of pop-up books in enhancing early childhood language abilities (Harmanto, 2020). However, few studies have specifically examined the integration of rotating book lending activities within family literacy, particularly with an Islamic theme. Therefore, this article aims to examine the implementation of the rotating Islamic-themed book week program at TK Yaa Bunayya as a literacy-based Islamic education strategy to stimulate language skills in early childhood through a collaborative and meaningful approach.

Islamic literacy-based education is a pedagogical approach that integrates Islamic values into the development of reading, writing, and language skills from an early age. In this context, literacy is not limited to technical abilities, but includes understanding and internalizing the moral and spiritual messages conveyed through texts and literacy activities (Al-Faruqi, 1982). This approach is essential for shaping individuals who are faithful, pious, and morally upright, in accordance with the objectives of Islamic education as stated by the Ministry of Religious Affairs (2013) and Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System.

Language is a fundamental aspect of early childhood development that underpins cognitive, social, and emotional growth (Anggraini, 2019; Berk, 2003). Early stimulation of listening and speaking skills through engaging and meaningful activities is crucial (Suryani, 2019; Sulistyorini, 2019). Activities such as read-alouds and the use of illustrated storybooks have been proven effective in enhancing children's language skills, including early reading abilities and vocabulary expansion (Rahmawati, 2020; Rahmawati, 2021; Harmanto, 2021a; Harmanto, 2021b; Lusiana et al., 2024).

Developing a culture of literacy that actively involves both family and school through programs such as the rotating book week is an effective strategy to foster reading interest, improve language skills, and strengthen verbal interactions between children and their parents (Fitriyani, 2020; Harmanto, 2022; Snow, 2010). Weekly checklists and reading logs serve as motivational tools that encourage consistent parental involvement. In line with this, Fadillah (2023) in *Jurnal At-Turats* highlights the effectiveness of family-based literacy programs rooted in Islamic values in increasing children's expressive abilities and spiritual sensitivity through storytelling routines at home.

From a learning theory perspective, Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) emphasizes that children reach optimal development when guided by more capable adults or peers. This is supported by Bruner's (1996) scaffolding theory, which underscores the importance of gradually reducing support as the child gains competence. The involvement of parents and teachers in the rotating book week program reflects the practical application of both these theories (Suhartono, 2005).

In the domain of speaking skill development, Tarigan (2021) asserts that regular storytelling practices significantly improve expressive language skills, including sentence structure and vocabulary use. Rahmawati (2021) further supports this by showing that illustrated storybooks foster a positive emotional atmosphere that supports language learning in early childhood.

Islamic literacy-based education also provides a critical moral and spiritual dimension. Children's stories containing Islamic values—such as prophetic stories, etiquette, and virtuous character—serve as symbolic media to convey Islamic culture and language to young learners (Nicolopoulou, 2002). This is in line with the principle of *tarbiyah* in Islamic education, which emphasizes holistic spiritual, intellectual, and social development (Al-Attas, 1979). According to Masfufah (2022) in *Jurnal At-Turats*, the use of Islamic stories in early education is not only effective in character building but also aligns with the developmental needs of children when embedded in daily family practices.

Policy frameworks such as Permendikbud No. 137 of 2014 and Law No. 20 of 2003 support early childhood education focused on cognitive and character development, aligning with the goals of the rotating Islamic-themed book week program (Permendikbud No. 137/2014; UU No. 20/2003).

Moreover, child-friendly teaching methods such as storytelling and role-playing are proven to enhance both language skills and character development (Fadillah, 2024; Harmanto, 2021b). Innovations such as pop-up books and interactive alphabet boards further support optimal language stimulation in children (Harmanto, 2020; Lusiana et al., 2024).

Qualitative research methods emphasize the importance of data triangulation to ensure the validity and credibility of findings (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Creswell, 2014; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Moleong, 2017). Through observation, interviews, and documentation, researchers can capture educational processes in a comprehensive and contextual manner.

Unlike previous studies that typically focus on storytelling media or general story-based methods in early literacy, this research emphasizes the structured integration of rotating Islamic-themed book borrowing activities that involve active collaboration between schools and families. This approach offers a novel contribution by filling the gap in structured and collaborative Islamic literacy programs, particularly in the context of early childhood education. Thus, this study proposes a more contextual and applicable model for enhancing both language skills and Islamic character values through family-based literacy education.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach using a case study design to provide an in-depth understanding of the implementation of the rotating Islamic-themed book week program within the framework of literacy-based Islamic education at TK Yaa Bunayya, Magetan. This approach was chosen to capture the actual practices that involve collaboration between school and family in fostering a culture of literacy in early childhood, grounded in Islamic values.

The research was conducted at TK Yaa Bunayya, an early childhood education institution affiliated with Islamic educational values. The study took place during the odd semester of the 2024/2025 academic year. The primary focus was the implementation of the rotating Islamic-themed book week program as part of a literacy habituation strategy and the development of children's language skills through the integration of Islamic values.

The research subjects included the school principal, classroom teacher, assistant teacher, several parents of students, and thirteen children aged 5 to 6 years from TK B class who actively participated in the program. The subjects were selected purposively, based on their direct involvement in the program and their relevance to the research focus.

Data were collected through participatory observation of literacy activities at school and parent-child reading interactions at home. In-depth interviews were conducted with the principal, teachers, and parents to gain insight into the program's implementation and its impact on language development and the internalization of Islamic values in children. Supporting data were also collected in the form of reading report checklists, photographs of children reading with parents, and observation notes.

Data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, consisting of data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing conducted inductively. The validity of the data was ensured through triangulation of techniques and sources by comparing the results of observations, interviews, and documentation from various informants to obtain a comprehensive and objective understanding.

In the analysis, the researcher emphasized the integration of literacy and Islamic education, focusing on how Islamic values are internalized through shared reading activities. Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and Bruner's scaffolding theory served as the conceptual framework to explain the guidance process that supports children's language development and character formation.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **RESULT**

The implementation of the rotating Islamic-themed book week program at TK Yaa Bunayya has demonstrated a significant positive impact on early childhood language development as well as the internalization of Islamic values. Each week, children bring



Islamic storybooks containing narratives about the prophets, noble character, and moral values aligned with the principles of Islamic education. These books are then read at home with active parental involvement, which is documented through reading report checklists.

Children show great enthusiasm for the Islamic-themed storybooks, being interested not only in the story content but also in the religious values embedded within. They actively retell the stories at school, enhancing their speaking skills and verbal expression. This process also strengthens the emotional bond between children and their parents, an important aspect of Islamic education.

Parents play a crucial role as facilitators of literacy grounded in Islamic values. They not only assist children in understanding the stories but also pose questions that stimulate reflection on moral and spiritual values. This interaction reflects scaffolding that supports both language development and the simultaneous cultivation of Islamic character.

Teachers at school support this activity by providing space for discussion and guidance, helping children relate the stories to daily experiences and moral values. This aligns with Vygotsky's theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), where children learn optimally with the support of more competent adults.

Improvements in language skills are evident from the increased use of Islamic vocabulary in everyday communication, enhanced sentence construction abilities, and the children's growing confidence in speaking before the class. Children also begin to demonstrate more polite and respectful language behavior, consistent with the Islamic values taught through the stories.

## DISCUSSION

The implementation of the rotating Islamic-themed storybook week program at TK Yaa Bunayya represents an innovative literacy learning approach for early childhood that emphasizes close collaboration between family and school environments. The program is consistently held every Monday with the mechanism that each child brings one illustrated Islamic storybook from home to be lent in rotation to classmates. Children then read the book with their parents at home for one week. In the following week, they are asked to retell the story to their teacher and classmates. This activity not only strengthens enjoyable literacy habits but also significantly expands children's vocabulary and fosters a love of reading from an early age.

This activity aligns with contextual and experiential learning approaches, where children learn through direct interaction with texts and their social environment. According to Vygotsky (1978), language development occurs within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), meaning children reach optimal development when guided by adults or more capable peers. In this context, parents' role in assisting children to read Islamic-themed storybooks is an integral part of the scaffolding process, as explained by Bruner (in Suhartono, 2005). When children ask about the meaning of words or relate the story content to their own lives, active and meaningful construction of knowledge and language takes place.

The books selected for this program are rich in Islamic values, such as stories of the prophets, daily manners, and praiseworthy character. These themes not only enrich children's vocabulary but also serve as a medium for instilling moral and spiritual values aligned with the vision of Islamic education. This aligns with Indonesian Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System, which states that the goal of education is to develop the potential of students to become faithful, God-fearing, and morally upright

individuals. Therefore, the selection of Islamic-themed reading materials directly supports the mission of character education from an early age through a literacy approach.

The success of this program is reflected in children's enthusiasm in selecting books to bring, their eagerness to share stories in class, and the increased involvement of parents in their children's learning process. Teacher observations show that children begin to exhibit improvements in listening and speaking skills. They can name characters, explain storylines, and convey moral messages coherently. Some children even relate stories to daily behavior, such as saying, "I also want to help friends like Prophet Musa."

Teacher assessments through retelling activities indicate that this activity effectively develops children's expressive language skills. This aligns with Tarigan (2021), who states that children's speaking skills can be naturally trained through meaningful storytelling activities. Retelling also provides opportunities for teachers to observe children's sentence structure, logical sequencing of stories, and use of new vocabulary. This finding is supported by Rahmawati's (2021) study, which shows that picture storybooks are highly effective in improving language skills among kindergarten children, especially through active involvement and a positive emotional atmosphere.

Another important aspect of the program is parental involvement facilitated through weekly checklists. These checklists not only record reading time, who read to the child, and the child's responses but also serve as a reflection tool for parents regarding their engagement in their children's learning. Many parents who previously did not have the habit of reading at home began to show new consistency and enthusiasm. They feel motivated due to the clear system, recognition from teachers, and tangible results in their children's language development. Harmanto (2022) emphasizes that active parental involvement in home literacy practices strongly correlates with children's success in language development and other cognitive aspects.

The program also builds social values and responsibility in children. They understand that the books they bring will be used by their friends, so they must take good care of them and read them carefully. Islamic values such as responsibility (*amanah*), togetherness, and mutual respect are simultaneously constructed through this literacy practice. Here, character and language learning run integrally and harmoniously.

On the other hand, the program faces some challenges, such as parents' limited time to accompany children in reading and variations in children's abilities to understand stories. However, these challenges are overcome through teacher guidance strategies and program flexibility. Teachers regularly provide direction and feedback to parents through informal communication, creating a dynamic and positive communication ecosystem between home and school. When teachers and parents work with a shared vision, children gain consistent, meaningful, and enjoyable learning experiences.

Thus, the rotating Islamic-themed storybook week model is not only an innovation in habituating reading activities but also a means to integrate language learning and Islamic character formation. Through shared reading activities, children acquire foundational literacy skills while absorbing the positive values from Islamic-themed storybooks read in a warm and supportive environment, both at home and at school.

This study has important implications for early childhood Islamic education practices. The integration of rotating Islamic-themed storybooks offers a replicable model for other schools aiming to strengthen children's language skills and Islamic character through family-based literacy. Educators and policymakers may consider adopting similar collaborative programs that engage parents meaningfully in language

development. Additionally, this model contributes to the discourse on contextualized literacy learning that aligns moral education with verbal expression in young children.

However, this study also has several limitations. First, the scope was limited to one school with a relatively small and homogeneous sample, which may not represent the diversity of early childhood education contexts in Indonesia. Second, the data were collected within a specific period without a longitudinal follow-up to assess long-term language development. Future research could involve a broader participant base, employ mixed-method approaches, or evaluate the sustained impact of similar programs over time.

## CONCLUSION

The implementation of the rotating Islamic-themed book week program at TK Yaa Bunayya has proven effective in stimulating early childhood language development while simultaneously fostering Islamic character education. Through regular shared reading with parents at home and structured retelling sessions at school, children demonstrate measurable improvements in verbal expression, enriched Islamic vocabulary, and more coherent sentence construction. In parallel, moral and spiritual values embedded in the storybooks are gradually internalized, strengthening children's social-emotional and ethical development.

This study highlights the integration of literacy-based Islamic education as a holistic approach that combines cognitive, social, and religious dimensions of early learning. The active involvement of both teachers and parents, supported by a structured yet flexible reading mechanism, emerges as a key success factor. The findings offer meaningful implications for early childhood educators and policymakers aiming to integrate character education into language learning through contextualized family literacy.

However, this study is limited by its focus on a single educational setting with a relatively small sample size and short observation period. Future research should explore broader contexts and adopt longitudinal or mixed-method approaches to deepen the understanding of the program's long-term impact.

**Recommendations For Schools:** Enhance teacher training and facilitation in implementing literacy programs with Islamic content. Schools should provide capacity-building sessions for parents to strengthen their ability to support home-based literacy activities using Islamic approaches.

**Recommendations For Parents:** Maintain consistent involvement in shared reading activities at home as part of the family's educational role. Parents are encouraged to enrich their home library with diverse Islamic-themed storybooks to nurture both language and character development.

**Recommendations For Future Researchers:** Consider conducting quantitative or mixed-method studies to examine the specific impact of rotating Islamic-themed book activities on children's language skills and Islamic values acquisition. Broader research across different regions and age groups is also recommended to validate and expand the applicability of the findings.

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