



SNAP TO READ

ISLAMIC VALUES INTEGRATION IN ENGLISH LESSON AT MADRASAH TSANAWIYAH: TEACHERS' BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

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Abstract:

Integrating Islamic values in non-religion subjects at masdrasah has been crucial to do. This study outlines the teachers' beliefs and practices on integrating Islamic values in English lesson at Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) Jawa Timur. By using qualitative approach, this study involved 6 English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers from Surabaya, Malang, and Pasuruan representing the demography of the city as metropolitan city, education city, and santri city. Data were taken from classroom observation and interview which then those were analysed by firstly categorizing into some dimensions. The teachers' beliefs were categorized into their knowledge on integration, the important of integration, and integration in English lesson as well as the supporting policy from the school. The teachers believed that the integration of Islamic values is significant in English lesson as the manifestation of K-13 focusing on KI 1 and KI 2, and school policy. The beliefs influence the teachers' practices in which they have been trying to insert Islamic values in their teaching activities. The level of integration was still at integrating religious routines such as 'doa bersama', 'reciting some Surah', 'warning praying time'. The integration in the content of English lesson was still not strongly practiced even some teachers have done it by giving added values when explaining a particular material. The situation was mostly

influenced by inability to operationalize the values into the teaching materials and the lack of model for integration. Further study on how to operationalize the integration, and on developing the model of integration will be worth investigating.

Keywords: *Integration, Belief, Practices, Islamic Values*

Integrating Islamic values in non-religion subjects at elementary to higher education has been endless topic of discussion among educators. However, the practice of integration has been still weak compare to the spirit of achieving the main target of curriculum. At the school level, the integration has been stated in K-13 involving KI 1 and 2. The curriculum encourages the schools to facilitate students with religious aspects. KI 1 aims at building strong engagement with the religion after students learning English. In fact, the concept was uneasy to be interpreted by teachers and stakeholders.

In the context of EFL teaching, English is compulsory subject and one of subjects being examined in national examination. Being labeled as difficult subject, it was strengthened by students' inability to use it in daily activities and by the overall result of students' English score in national examination. In 2017, the average score slightly decreased compared to in 2016 from 57.17 into 50.18 (Kemendikbud, 2017). Instead the position of English in Indonesia, the teaching of English has not been contextual. Teachers rely too much on what is guided in the book ignoring how to integrate Islamic and local values. It raises another difficulty for students. According to Rohmah (2014) there has been conflicting situation on English teaching in Islamic schools. At the same time students are facing conflicting situation because students have to learn the target language which is totally different from their cultural norms. There was common stereotyping that English is oriented to world life and does not give any benefits to their afterlife (Rohmah, 2014; Umam, 2014). It becomes one of influential factors for madrasah students to learn English. Some studies were conducted to advance the information about integration. Umam (2014) conducted a research on how to maintain Islamic

values in ELT in Indonesian pesantren. Rohmah (2012) employed a research entitled *Incorporating Islamic Messages in the English Teaching in the Indonesian Context*. ELTIS team (2008) with *Current State of ELT Materials for Madrasah Tsanawiyah: A research Report*. Rohmah (2010) with *English Materials for Islamic Junior High Schools in Indonesia: Evaluation by ELTIS team*. Rohmah (2009) entitled *EFL Materials in Madrasah Tsanawiyah: What do They really need*. The previous studies focused on the students' needs of having integration and the material development. Meanwhile the research on teachers' perspectives about integration has been still insufficient to explore.

This study is to explore teachers' beliefs and practices. Teachers' belief gives significant effect on how they make decision and give the treatment in the classroom (Borg, 2015; Johnson, 1992; Richardson, et al, 1991; Mansour, 2009; Kuzborska, 2011). Moreover, Richardson et al (1991) state that ignoring teachers' beliefs in the process of making change will result unsatisfaction. By investigating teachers' belief, information about factors to consider and indicators of integration would be clearly portrayed. When it comes to the context of practice, more or less, teachers are influenced by their beliefs. Eventhough, not all beliefs and practices are match. Based on this, the study is addressed to answer: 1) what are teachers' beliefs about the integration of Islamic values in English lesson at MTs? And, 2) how do the teachers' beliefs influence their practice?

By conducting this study, it is expected to add intellectual resource about the integration of Islamic values in English lesson at madrasah. Specifically, this study becomes a point of departure to operationalize the integration which so far it is still abstract for teachers themselves. Futhermore, the exploration gives empirical evidences on how match or mismatch between teachers' beliefs and practices.

Teachers' beliefs

Teachers' belief is one of important to be owned by teachers. It strongly influences to shape the learning objective, the procedure, pattern of interaction, and the learning materials (Kuzborska, 2011; Borg, 2015). Beliefs

are constructed through two simultaneous processes, enculturation and social construction (Pajares, 1992). Enculturation is a process of gradual acquisition of the characteristics and norms of a culture or group by a person, another culture. It is the result of assimilating elements of culture which are observed, experienced, and imitated by teachers (Van Fleet, 1979 in Pajares, 1992).

Instead of being shaped by enculturation, teachers' beliefs are also constructed from the culture learning and education context. The culture shapes how teachers view the surroundings and the learning process. It is a point for teachers to have rich perspectives to be selected which then to be decided for the most suitable values for teachers' working situation (Mansour, 2009).

Interculturality in ELT

Foreign language teaching formerly distinguishes between linguistic and communicative competences (Seidl, 1998: 104). The shifting of pedagogy has influenced the orientation to the competence. Both linguistic and communicative competences are complementary, and should be possessed by language learners. The competences should be completed by intercultural competence to make the interaction among language learners have culturally bound- relation (Seidl, 1998: 104).

The huge exposure on target culture might cause misperception on learners' own culture (Kramsh dalam Liddicoat, 2002) which then lead to a situation in which learners would be more familiar with target culture than theirs then causes loss of local identity (Shakiyyah, 2011). It is highly recommended to expose learners with balance information of both cultures. The advantage of doing so is learners can face global context of communication (Wahyudi, 2012). Students will be able to compare, evaluate, and interpret target and local culture to gain balance information (Chlopek, 20008; Commonwealth of Australia dalam Wahyudi, 2012).

Integrating Islamic Values

Islamic values should be main teaching spirit and characteristic in Islamic schools. The spirit has actually raised in 2013 curriculum, however,

in terms of the application, it was still far from the idea of integration. Based on the research from Rohmah (2009), school teachers had aspiration to have supplementary book involving Islamic aspects. It indicated that the demand for concept and model of integration should be filled to respond 2013 curriculum.

In English teaching and learning context, integrating Islamic can be done through two ways, specific and holistic integration (Rohmah, 2014). Specific integration, Islamic values are given separately through specific courses such as religion other Islamic-related courses. It has a weakness as not all teachers of Islamic-based courses have intercultural competence which then, they only teach purely about religion without trying give interconnection between the values and students' cultural background. Different from separated/specific pattern, holistic integration offers a model that allows teachers to internalize Islamic values in ELT. It can be done in the process of selecting the topic for all language skills, and the teaching media. The process of integration is done through 5 stages (Liddicoat, et.al, 2003) those are: (1) active construction, understanding cultural aspects which were explicitly stated in the text, song, drama: (2) making connection, connecting local culture and other cultures, and Islamic culture; (3) social interaction, expressing opinion to others by having group work or in pairs to discuss a particular topic; (4) reflection, reflecting on what is happening or commenting on others' opinion; and (5) responsibility, directing the teaching and learning process is a medium for students to be responsible and obey the Islamic norms while is still respectful to other cultures.

Based on the preliminary study, there was no teacher who fully understood the pattern of integration for ELT. However, based on the teaching context, Islamic schools, more or less teachers have an understanding on the integration even it was still in very surface process. Therefore, more intensive investigation would be very fruitful to conduct as the effort to give intellectual resource for better integration.

METHOD

This study employs descriptive qualitative by using ethnography research strategies. This is to describe the integration of Islamic values represented from EFL teachers' beliefs and practices (Harris, 1968 in Cresswell, 2006). The aim of the research is to reveal how Islamic values and culture of Islamic educational institutions influence or shape their English teachers' perception and give much impact on classroom English teaching and learning.

The study also used intercultural approach theory proposed by Anthony Liddicoat. It was mentioned that in learning English, students are not only introduced toward the target language culture but also they are invited to understand their own culture so that they can be mediator for their own local culture as well as the culture of the target language (Rohmah, 2014)

Respondents

This research was conducted at MTs in Malang, Surabaya, Pasuruan East Java under the consideration that those three regions have specific characteristics. Malang represents education city, Surabaya represents metropolitan city, and Pasuruan represents santri city. It helped to get a clear picture how socio-cultural condition influences teachers' beliefs and practices on the integration.

Two schools from each region were chosen with the criterion, one school was from regular MTs, and one school from pesantren-based school. These were the names of the schools:

1. Malang : MTs Al- Ittihad and MTs Sunan Kalijaga
2. Surabaya : MTs Imam Syafi'I and Mts. Sunan Kalijaga
3. Pasuruan : MTs Al-Yasini and MTs Miftakhul Khoir

The data source was EFL teachers with at least five-year teaching experience. The reason for the selection was the teachers have already known the situation and culture of the schools.

Procedures

At the beginning, the process of data collection was doing classroom observation followed by semi-structured interview. Classroom observation was to get the data on the teachers' practices of the integration. Meanwhile, the data about teachers' perception and ideas on integration were collected by doing interview. The interview was also done with the head master and leader of foundation to gain rich data about the school policy and working situation.

Data analysis

To analyse the data, some steps were done. The nature of qualitative research allows the back and forth processes in data analysis. The initial stage was categorizing the data based on the themes of the study. The categorization used a table to easily put the data into its categories. After all data were categorized,

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

EFL Teachers' Beliefs about the integration of Islamic values

The interview reveals that basically all participating teachers both from pesantren and non pesantren-based schools were familiar with the integration of Islamic values on English course. They assumed that the integration was very essential and it should be inserted in learning process. The data were categorized into 4 aspects: a) teachers' knowledge on the integration was reflected from their understanding that it is the operationalization of Kompetensi Inti (KI) 1 dan KI 2 in national curriculum 2013. They also connected the integration with character building. As stated in the following data:

“with this kind school context (referring to school with very strong religion background), integrating Islamic values in all courses was very important” (P.M1.T). it has been strengthened by head master's statement that “students have been begun to be exposed by other cultres” (P.M1.KS).

Meanwhile, another participant stated that in Rencana Pelaksanaan Pembelajaran (RPP), teachers have already integrated Islamic values which was in line with character/akhlak (S.M1.T). Instead of being a medium of character building, the integration to English course was also to motivate students to study harder in learning general courses. Commonly assumed by students from Islamic-based school that English was less important subject, as the way to minimize the assumption, the integration was carefully done.

“According students, English was not important because it would not be asked in after life. When I found this, I kept motivating them that it has still been important for your future, one day you will be assigned to dakwah abroad”. (P.M1.T)

To keep raising students' positive attitude toward English, teachers frequently integrate Islamic values during the lesson to always remind students on the importance of English. Teachers had beliefs that English could be important for both students' life. It became a means of communication for doing both religion and non-religion aspects. Religion aspects referred to explaining Islamic perspective and Islamic teaching to others from different cultural background. Another teacher stated that students felt that English was very difficult because it was not their language. It influenced much on students' motivation. The way to ensure the importance of English was connecting the high demand of English in workplace context. On the other hand, teachers hesitated to integrate Islamic values in English lesson because they were not confident with their capacity to do that as the Pesantren has more capable teachers to teach Islamic values.

Teachers' beliefs on the integration of Islamic values in English lesson

The observation and the interview resulted a finding that teachers had different interpretation about integration of Islamic values in English lesson. T1 stated that integration was necessary but teachers have been unable yet to implement. Preparation for national examination has been teachers' main concern. As a result, their time to make some innovations on integration was limited.

Unlike T1, T2 had an optimism in integrating Islamic values by blending KI 1 and 2 in the lesson plan (RPP) to have systematic plan in the learning process. But, time allocation, again, became the reason as it impossible to give much portion on integration to the content. Meanwhile, T3 stated that integration could be about the teaching of morale and character. It implied that teachers did not need to explicitly insert Islamic values, but it was manifested into giving advice or warning for any misconduct both in and out class.

The Implementation of Integration in Lesson Plan (RPP)

The operationalization of the integration in the English lesson plan specifically in KI 1 and 2 has been represented in daily life. In translating the RPP, teachers approached spiritual indicator involving wudhu, praying. Classroom observation showed that the integration has been differently implemented.

In S.MSKJ school, the integration was not explicitly stated in the curriculum. It was manifested in doing du'a in the beginning of the lesson. Teachers realized that it was still challenging to innovate and integrate Islamic values. It was due to the preparation for NE. all teachers' energy should be directed to the preparation.

School P.MMK has a different way to integrate Islamic values. It has been systematically stated in KI 1 and 2. For example, the topic 'Time' was connected to 5 praying times. But, this practice was not free from challenge. Time limitation made the teachers to wisely distribute the portion of the material. It was impossible for the whole lesson was only for Islamic content.

The interview revealed that teachers have inserted Islamic values at partial level. Teachers still cannot cover all materials with the integration. When only they found relevant verse or hadith to the material, some Islamic values were transferred. Moreover, teacher in P.MMKh has implemented the integration before the existence of Curriculum 2013.

"I often give advices in and after the lesson which I have done before curriculum 2013" (T2)

It is to always remind the students about the importance of character for future life. At the third school (M.MIT), the integration did not exist in the classroom.

“I haven’t yet integrating Islamic values in English lesson, and up to know I don’t think about it. I am still doing what the syllabus states. However, the whole learning process applies some routines such as pray before class, dhuha praying, dhuhur praying which indirectly represents the integration, and teachers do not necessarily do the integration” (T3)

At school S.MSYF, the integration of Islamic values has totally appeared in all learning process. Starting from having religious routines to internalizing the values in the lesson. It was in line with the school policy that encourages all teachers to insert Islamic values.

“It is strongly suggested to integrate islamic values as far as possible such as when having procedural text, it could be connected to the procedures of wudhu” (T4)

As also happened at M.MSKJ school, teachers have already tried to internalize Islamic values even it was a bit different from the previous school. The integration was not the main concern. The school policy relies much on the religious daily practices. According to the policy maker, school activities such as reciting ummi from Monday to Thursday would be the way to build noble. In other words, teachers independently did the integration.

“it depends on the material, when it is possible to connect. The teachers will have it. The content-based pesantren influences much to the school practices. Beginning with praying, reciting juz amma, reciting Yasin every Thursday. Having different terms and conditions for grade 7, 8, and 9 at the beginning of examination” (T6)

It indicated that Pesantren has significant role in determining school activities. It was to build complementary situation for each other. School needs a synergy from all elements.

CONCLUSION

Having investigation on the teachers’ beliefs and practices in the integration of Islamic values in English lesson at MTs widens the horizon

on the existing features of the integration. The research highlights some points on the beliefs and practices. The teachers construct their belief about integration based on KI 1 and KI 2

The integration of Islamic values is viewed as significant aspect for all lessons including English. The integration has been seen as the way to build the students' character. It was supported by school context and policy which allow teachers to integrate in the materials. However, the integration has not totally understood by the teachers. The integration was seen as formality for attaching religious aspects or routines in the English lesson. In the term teachers' practices, various practices were outlined. To realize the implementation of Islamic integration in all Madrasah Tsanawiyah school especially in English lesson, clear description of KI 1 and KI 2 are necessary as teachers' reference. This should also be followed with the intense program of Islamic integration toward the English lesson managed by school stakeholders.

Furthermore, in Madrasah context teachers as the main actor in English language classroom should be able to integrate Islamic culture and values, so that the lesson will be more contextually taught and fully bring the students into deep learning situation. To support this, the research on the development of English teaching prototype which is integrated with Islamic values will be beneficial for English madrasah teachers as well as the school stakeholders.

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