

Integrating Islamic Values into English Language Teaching: Some Practical Insights from Indonesian Contexts

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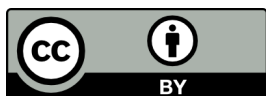
1. Introduction

The intersection of Islam ideology and Western ideology represents a dynamic and multifaceted dialogue that permeates various aspects of contemporary discourse, including education, culture, politics, and religion. Rooted in divergent historical trajectories and philosophical frameworks, these two ideological perspectives often intersect and, at times, collide, giving rise to a complex interplay of ideas, values, and worldviews. At the heart of this oscillation lies a tension between tradition and modernity, faith and reason, and globalization and localization. As our world becomes increasingly interconnected and culturally diverse, a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics inherent in the oscillation between Islam and the West is imperative for navigating the complexities of our globalized society. In this context, exploring how these ideologies intersect within the realm of education, particularly in English language teaching, sheds light on the challenges and opportunities inherent in fostering cross-cultural understanding and dialogue. This paper endeavors to explicate the framework of integration between Islamic values and English ideology. Following this introduction, the subsequent sections will delineate conflicting perspectives on integration, elucidate rationales for integration, explore strategies for integration, delineate challenges encountered in the integration process, and conclude with prospects for facilitating integration in the future.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Oscillation between Islam Ideology and Western Ideology

In contemporary society, the perspectives on Islam and English ideology are diverse and multifaceted, shaped by various cultural, social, political, and historical factors. Islam is viewed



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by many as a major world religion with over a billion adherents, encompassing a rich tapestry of beliefs, practices, and traditions. In some contexts, Islam is seen as a source of spiritual guidance, moral values, and social cohesion, providing a framework for individuals to navigate life's challenges and uncertainties. However, Islam is also often subject to misconceptions, stereotypes, and prejudices, particularly in Western societies where negative portrayals in media and political discourse can contribute to Islamophobia and discrimination.

English ideology, on the other hand, is often associated with notions of modernity, progress, and global interconnectedness. As the lingua franca of the modern world, English is viewed as a practical tool for communication, commerce, education, and cultural exchange. Its widespread use in international diplomacy, business, science, and technology underscores its importance as a vehicle for global communication and collaboration. However, the dominance of English as a global language has also raised concerns about linguistic imperialism, cultural hegemony, and the erosion of linguistic diversity and indigenous languages. In the domain of English Language Teaching (ELT), the traditional paradigm of English as a Native Language (ENL) serving as the standard variety is increasingly contested by Global English perspectives. These emerging perspectives advocate for the recognition and inclusion of multiple English varieties, thereby challenging the exclusive emphasis on ENL within pedagogical practices.

In today's era, the intersection of Islam and English ideology is characterized by both cooperation and conflict. On one hand, there are efforts to integrate Islamic values into English language teaching and learning, recognizing the importance of incorporating cultural and religious perspectives into educational curricula. On the other hand, there are tensions between Islamic cultural norms and Western cultural values, particularly in the context of globalization, immigration, and multiculturalism. Negotiating these tensions requires a nuanced understanding of the complexities inherent in the interaction between Islam and English ideology in contemporary society. The tension of these two ideologies is depicted in the following figure.

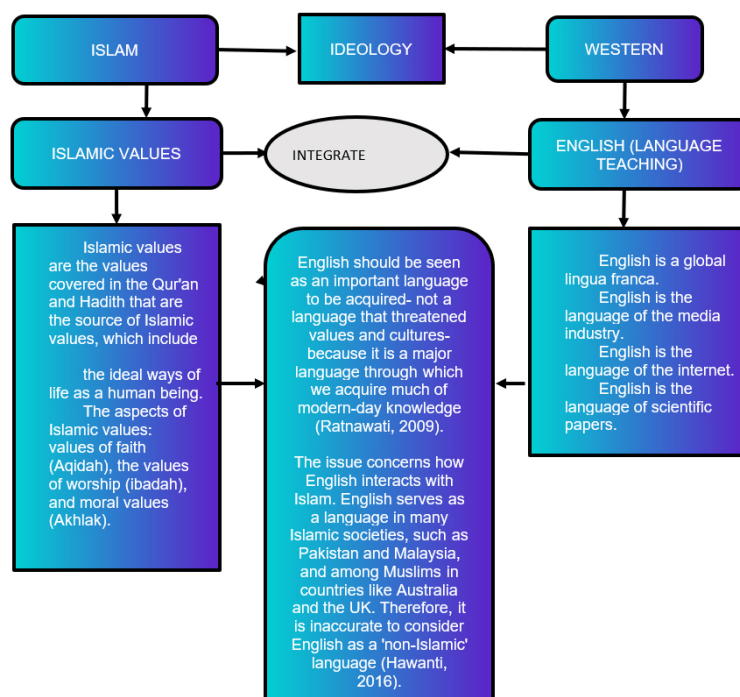


Figure 1: Framework of integration between the Islamic values and English ideology

The above figure reveals that there are two realms of ideologies, Islam and Western (represented by English). Although it is not in the vis-a-vis position, there exists a dynamic oscillation between Islamic and Western ideologies, reflecting the broader cultural dialogue that shapes educational practices. At the heart of Islamic teachings lie fundamental values enshrined in the Qur'an and Hadith, serving as guiding principles for believers. These values encompass various facets of life, including faith (Aqidah), worship (Ibadah), and moral conduct (Akhlag), offering a comprehensive framework for ethical living. Consequently, for certain individuals, Islamic values are perceived as being in contestation with Western cultures, including the English language.

In navigating this intersection between Islamic and Western ideologies, proponents of English language teaching within Islamic contexts argue for the integration of English as a means to uphold Islamic values while engaging with global discourse. English, as a global lingua franca, permeates diverse spheres of modern life, from the media industry to the realms of academia and scientific research. Its significance as the language of the internet and scientific publications underscores its indispensable role in accessing and disseminating knowledge. However, this integration of English into Islamic education is not without its tensions. Critics may perceive the adoption of English as a threat to traditional values and cultural identity, fearing the erosion of Islamic principles in favor of Western ideals. Yet, proponents counter such apprehensions by emphasizing that English should be viewed as a tool for enriching Islamic education, rather than a force of cultural dilution.

Indeed, English language teaching within Islamic contexts represents a delicate balance between preserving Islamic values and embracing the opportunities afforded by global linguistic trends. It is through this nuanced approach that educators seek to empower students to navigate the complexities of the modern world while remaining rooted in their Islamic identity. Ultimately, the integration of English into Islamic education serves not to undermine Islamic values, but rather to equip learners with the linguistic skills necessary to engage meaningfully with a diverse and interconnected global community. Thus, integrating Islamic values into English Language Teaching (ELT) is imperative. This integration is not a matter of positioning within the realm of aqidah or worship but rather serves as an added value for English students in Indonesia, enhancing their capacity to become global citizens.

2.2. The Intersection of Language, Culture, and Faith: Challenges in Integrating English Language Learning within Islamic Contexts

The integration of English language learning within Islamic contexts often confronts a clash of cultural perspectives and ideologies. Some argue that English, as the target language, inherently diverges from students' cultural norms, creating a perceived disconnect between language acquisition and traditional values (Rambe & Salminawati, 2019). Moreover, there persists a stereotype that English proficiency primarily benefits worldly pursuits, with little relevance to spiritual or afterlife considerations (Irfani, Meisuri, & Rohmatilah, 2018). This dichotomy reflects a tension between the practical utility of English and its perceived spiritual significance within Islamic teachings. Within this discourse, the acceptance of English language

proficiency is contingent upon its alignment with Islamic beliefs. While exposure to the social values of English-speaking cultures may be tolerated, divergence from Islamic principles is met with resistance (Hudriati, Rusdiah, & Sulastri, 2021). This nuanced approach underscores the negotiation between linguistic proficiency and adherence to religious tenets, highlighting the complex interplay between language, culture, and faith.

Critics further contend that English textbooks serve as conduits for Western ideologies, perpetuating cultural imperialism and undermining indigenous values (Khoiriyah, Farah, & Anggareni, 2022). This perspective positions English language education as a battleground for ideological supremacy, with the textbook as a symbolic battleground. Additionally, English is often perceived as a symbol of Western culture, prompting resistance from learners who view language acquisition as synonymous with the adoption of Western values (Muhsinin & Assapari, 2023). This resistance is compounded by the association of English with historical imperialism and domination, rooted in Judeo-Christian cultural frameworks (Phillipson, 2012). These perspectives reflect a negative outlook on integrating Islamic values into English Language Teaching (ELT), a sentiment shaped by the trauma of past experiences. Thus, the integration of English language teaching within Islamic contexts is fraught with conflicting perceptions and ideologies. It encompasses debates surrounding cultural authenticity, spiritual relevance, ideological transmission, and resistance to Western hegemony. Negotiating these tensions requires a nuanced understanding of the complex interplay between language, culture, and belief systems within the educational landscape.

2.3. The Essential Role of Islamic Values in English Language Pedagogy

In pursuit of the national education vision, which aims to cultivate students into “*insan kamil*” – individuals who are complete and balanced in body and soul – it becomes imperative to integrate Islamic values into all subjects, including English. This integration serves as a means to imbue students with religious and spiritual principles, guiding their behavior and character development (Mahmud, 2014; Rusdiana, 2017). Such an approach not only nurtures academic proficiency but also fosters holistic growth aligned with Islamic teachings. One pragmatic approach to integrating Islamic values into English language teaching (ELT) involves contextualizing language learning experiences for Islamic students. By incorporating topics relevant to their religious and cultural background, educators can enhance the relevance and utility of English instruction (Khoiriyah & Widyantoro, 2018). Moreover, recognizing the limitations of existing English textbooks in addressing Islamic themes, supplementary materials infused with Islamic values become essential to enrich the learning process (Febriani, 2015).

However, despite the recognized importance of integrating Islamic discourse into ELT, suitable and standardized teaching materials that incorporate these values remain scarce (Maesaroh, Aridah, & Rusmawaty, 2022). This underscores the need for professional development among English teachers, who must not only impart language skills but also nurture Islamic values and character development (Maesaroh, Aridah, & Rusmawaty, 2022). Moreover, integrating Islamic values into ELT extends beyond mere academic concerns; it is deeply rooted in the conviction that education should instill moral and ethical principles in learners’ lives. Islamic values serve

as fundamental pillars of morality, guiding individuals towards virtuous conduct and ethical decision-making (Hawanti, 2016). Furthermore, incorporating Islamic values safeguards against the erosion of cultural and religious identity among Indonesian Muslim youth, reaffirming their sense of belonging and heritage (Hawanti, 2016). In the realm of pedagogy, the integration of Islamic values into English language instruction is not merely an optional addendum but an essential component of effective teaching practices. It reflects a broader understanding of education as a universal endeavor that transcends religious boundaries, embracing knowledge that is relevant and beneficial to all humanity (Rohmah et al., 2019). This inclusive approach mirrors the essence of Islamic education, which emphasizes the holistic development of individuals and the integration of religious and secular knowledge (Solehah & Rahimah, 2008). Thus, integrating Islamic values into ELT serves as a bridge between academic rigor and moral enrichment, embodying the ethos of comprehensive education.

3. Method

The methodology utilized in this study comprised an extensive library research approach, emphasizing the examination of some practical insights in integrating Islamic values into English Language Teaching in Indonesian contexts. This research involves a collection of local journal articles related to the topic mentioned. These journals are the primary sources employed for this paper.

To conduct the library research, a systematic approach was adopted. Initially, an extensive review of the existing literature on the integration of Islamic values in English Language Teaching (ELT) was undertaken. This involved conducting comprehensive searches of academic libraries to identify relevant publications and research articles. Subsequently, the selected journal articles were meticulously analyzed to uncover practical insights reported within these sources. This analysis concentrated on the methods and practices of integrating Islamic values into ELT. Through this process, the study aimed to elucidate the connections between Islamic values and English language teaching.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Strategies for Integrating Islamic Values into English Language Teaching

Integrating Islamic values into English language teaching (ELT) encompasses a range of strategies and approaches aimed at infusing religious and moral principles into the learning process. One method involves incorporating exercises that reflect Islamic values directly into lecture materials. This can be achieved by designing exercises that prompt students to apply Islamic principles in their responses or interpretations of the content being taught. Additionally, inserting Islamic names for people, places, or events into exercises serves to reinforce cultural and religious connections within the learning material (Rambe & Salminawati, 2019). Practical activities provide another avenue for integrating Islamic values into ELT. By incorporating code-switching and code-mixing between Islamic expressions and English during opening and closing activities, educators create opportunities for students to engage with both linguistic

and cultural aspects simultaneously. For example, greetings such as “Assalamualaikum” can be seamlessly integrated alongside English phrases like “How are you?” (Mukarramah et al., 2021).

Furthermore, learning materials can be developed to explicitly incorporate Islamic principles through various means. This may involve adding examples or exercises that reflect Islamic values, using Islamic names for people or places, and linking topics with relevant verses from the Qur’an. Assignments that prompt students to explore topics through the lens of Islamic values further reinforce the integration of religious teachings into the curriculum (Irawan, 2020; Sulaiman, 2019). In the context of textbook design, Islamic messages can be incorporated both directly and indirectly. Direct integration involves explicitly addressing Islamic topics and messages within the textbook content, such as discussing the Five Pillars of Islam or economic concepts in Islam. Indirect integration involves portraying Islamic values through imagery, language, and cultural references within the textbook (Rohmah, 2012). Moreover, an Islamic approach to English language teaching emphasizes the integration of Islamic expressions and teachings throughout instructional activities. This includes using codes mixing or switching between English and Islamic expressions, linking topics with relevant Islamic teachings, incorporating Islamic names into examples, and assigning tasks related to Islamic values (Amelia, 2012).

Beyond the classroom, activities that reflect Islamic values can be integrated into learning experiences. For instance, students may be asked to discuss stories of prophets or summarize mosque sermons as part of their assignments (Suhud, 2018). Additionally, the use of Islamic media and texts featuring Islamic themes further reinforces spiritual engagement within the learning environment (Rahman, 2023). Therefore, integrating Islamic values into ELT involves a multifaceted approach that encompasses various instructional strategies, materials development, and practical activities aimed at nurturing religious and moral development alongside language proficiency. By embedding Islamic principles into the curriculum, educators create a learning environment that fosters holistic growth and spiritual enrichment among students. Examples of this integration are provided below.

Example 3

How to Wear Tengkuluk **Goal**

Things needed:

- Cupit - a piece of tengkuluk - pin

Steps:

- First, wear cupit on your head.
- Secondly, prepare tengkuluk which have motif Batik Jambi. Spread it over.
- Then, put tengkuluk on your head. Frame the tengkuluk around your face as you like. Keep one side shorter than the other (Remember that the dangled side on the left is for single women, and the dangled side on the right is for married women).
- After that, bundle the two sides of the tengkuluk at the lower back of the head. Make it evenly.
- Take the left side of tengkuluk, bundle again as you wish to be.
- Next, reveal back the right side of tengkuluk on your head. You can use a pin to make it steady. Say, finally here it is, tengkuluk Jambi for unmarried women.

List of Vocabulary

Wings	• membran	• sayap
Process	• dangul	• proses
Spread	• sawat	• menyebar
Bundle	• sifat	• membundel

Analysis of Language Features:

- Specific vocabulary related to the product: tengkuluk, batik
- Nominal phrases to mention nouns: a piece of tengkuluk, a pin
- Action verbs: wear, prepare, frame, spread, bundle, reveal, take, etc.
- Adverb of time, place or manner: on your head, around your face, etc.
- Temporal conjunctions: first, secondly, after that, then, next
- Imperative sentences: First, put cupit on your head. Prepare tengkuluk which have motif Batik Jambi. Spread it over. Etc.

Traditional Clothes Jambi

Figure 2. Example of procedure text and its analysis (Nafiah, 2020)

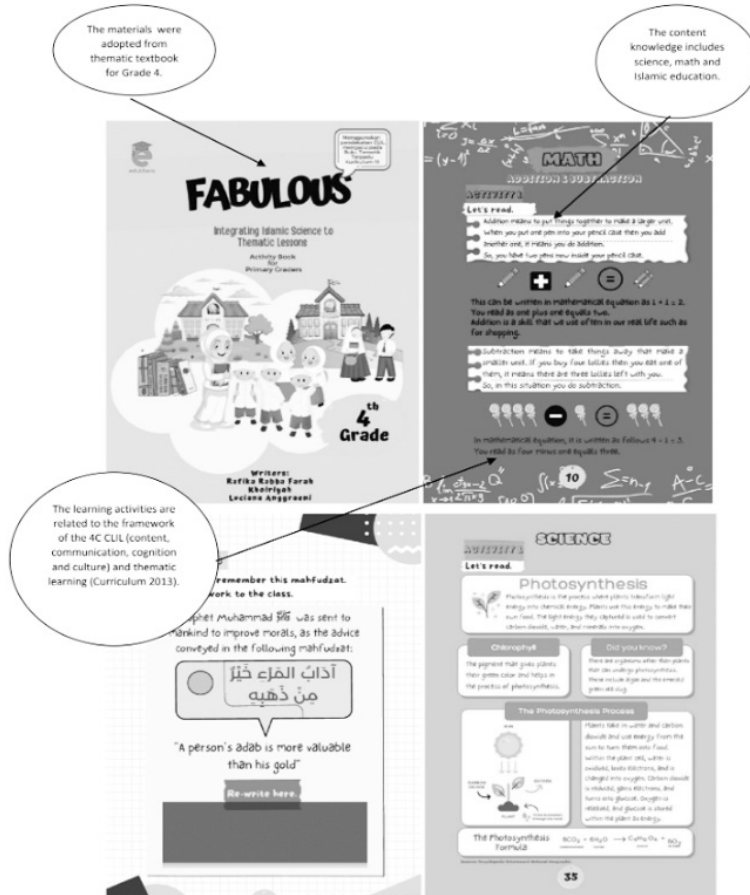


Figure 3. Integrating Islamic science to thematic lesson (Khoiriyah, Farah, Anggareni, 2022)

People/Noun (stone)



Place= mosque concept/idea



Animals



Figure 4. Vocabulary learning with Islamic words (Rambe and Salminawati, 2019)

a) Adding exercises that reflect Islamic values.

Read the text bellows carefully!

ISLAM AND IMAN

Islam consists of faith (Iman) and deeds (Amal). Everywhere in the Holy Qur'an you find these two mentioned together. This means that, in the eyes of Allah, faith without good deeds is useless. Similarly, good deeds cannot be fruitful without in the right faith, because faith is away of thinking, and man's action will also act in the wrong way. Therefore, faith means right knowledge, right beliefs, and right thoughts.

There are two kinds of faith, Imani Mujmal (faith in the brief) and Imani Mufassal (faith in detail). This is because power, wealth them rightly, they will be yours if you miss them, they will be taken from you and given to others.

Iman also means belief in the life hereafter, when every man will be shown the record of all he did in life and will be treated according to his deeds. If his good deeds are greater than evil ones, he will enjoy peace and happiness. If not, then he will suffer torture. Iman also requires us to believe in angels who are the servants of Allah and carry out His commands faithfully.

b) Inserting Islamic names for people, places or events into added exercises, for example:

Figure 5. Text with Islamic values (Rambe and Salminawati, 2019)

4.2. Overcoming Challenges in Integrating Islamic Values into English Language Teaching

Integrating Islamic values into English language teaching presents a unique set of challenges that require innovative approaches to overcome. One such approach, as suggested by Rohmah, Fitriyah, and Hanifiyah (2019), involves reimagining the way subjects are taught to align more seamlessly with Islamic values. This may require a reevaluation of curriculum content and teaching methodologies to ensure that lessons can be situated within an Islamic framework without compromising academic integrity. However, despite the importance of integrating Islamic values, English teachers at Islamic schools often struggle to incorporate these principles into their teaching materials (Maesaroh, Aridah, & Rusmawaty, 2022). This may stem from various factors, including a lack of suitable resources and training, as well as the perceived difficulty of aligning English language instruction with Islamic values.

Furthermore, students' openness to embracing differences while maintaining their Islamic identity is crucial for successful integration (Umam, 2014). Educators must foster an environment that encourages critical thinking and respect for diversity, enabling students to engage with diverse perspectives without compromising their religious beliefs. Addressing the challenges faced by teachers in integrating Islamic values requires a multifaceted approach. Hawanti (2016) highlights several issues regarding the challenge of integration. Firstly, educators must acquire a deeper understanding of Islamic values and how they can be incorporated into language instruction. This may involve professional development programs that provide training on Islamic pedagogy and curriculum development. Secondly, teachers need to enhance their knowledge of the target language cultures and values to effectively contextualize language learning within an Islamic framework. This can be achieved through ongoing learning and engagement with diverse cultural perspectives. Conflicts with teaching objectives or targets may arise when attempting to integrate Islamic values, highlighting the need for careful alignment between educational goals and religious principles. Educators must strike a balance between meeting curriculum requirements and fostering spiritual and moral development. Moreover, Hawanti (2016) argues that effective integration of Islamic values requires thorough teaching preparation, which may pose challenges for educators with limited time and resources. School administrators can support teachers by providing adequate resources, time for planning, and professional development opportunities focused on Islamic pedagogy. Thirdly, teachers' personal beliefs and attitudes towards integration may impact their willingness to incorporate Islamic values into their teaching. Addressing misconceptions and promoting the benefits of integrating Islamic principles can help educators overcome resistance and foster a supportive learning environment. Lastly, teachers' linguistic competence plays a crucial role in their ability to effectively integrate Islamic values into English language teaching. Educators must possess a strong command of the target language to provide clear explanations and facilitate meaningful discussions on religious and cultural topics. By addressing the challenges faced by educators and fostering a supportive learning environment, schools can effectively integrate Islamic principles into language instruction while empowering students to navigate the complexities of a diverse and interconnected world.

4.3. Empowering Teachers to Develop English Learning Materials with an Islamic Focus

To employ a credible approach in developing English learning materials that encourages Indonesian teachers and scholars to share their views and works for publication in international journals, the following steps can be taken: Firstly, establishing collaborative networks. Collaborations between Indonesian educators, scholars, and international academic institutions or organizations specializing in English language teaching and Islamic education needs to be fostered. This collaboration can facilitate knowledge exchange, peer review processes, and joint research projects aimed at developing high-quality English learning materials with an Islamic focus. Secondly, conducting rigorous research. Indonesian teachers and scholars are encouraged to conduct rigorous research on innovative approaches to English language teaching that

integrate Islamic values. The importance of using sound research methodologies and providing empirical evidence to support the effectiveness of the developed materials should be emphasized. This will enhance the credibility and relevance of their work for publication in international journals. Thirdly, peer review and feedback mechanisms. The implementation of peer review processes and feedback mechanisms needs to ensure the quality and accuracy of the developed English learning materials. Indonesian educators should be encouraged to seek feedback from international experts in English language teaching, Islamic education, and educational publishing to enhance the credibility and relevance of their work. Fourthly, adhering to publishing standards. Another encouragement is that Indonesian teachers and scholars have to adhere to publishing standards and guidelines when submitting their work to international journals. This includes following formatting requirements, providing clear citations and references, and addressing ethical considerations such as plagiarism and conflict of interest. By adhering to publishing standards, Indonesian educators can increase the likelihood of their work being accepted for publication in reputable international journals. Fifthly, promoting dissemination and visibility. Support and resources for Indonesian teachers and scholars to disseminate their work and increase its visibility within the global academic community should be facilitated. This may include organizing conferences, workshops, and seminars on English language teaching and Islamic education, as well as leveraging social media and online platforms to showcase their research and publications to a wider audience. Finally, continuous professional development. Opportunities for continuous professional development and capacity building for Indonesian educators and scholars in the areas of English language teaching, Islamic education, and academic publishing have to be widened. This may involve providing training workshops, mentorship programs, and access to relevant resources and literature to enhance their ability, knowledge, and skills in developing and publishing English learning materials with an Islamic focus.

By employing a credible approach that emphasizes collaborative research, rigorous peer review, adherence to publishing standards, and continuous professional development, Indonesian teachers and scholars can be encouraged to share their views and works for publication in international journals. This will not only contribute to the global literature on English language teaching and Islamic education but also enhance their ability to develop alternative English learning materials that are based on Islamic principles.

5. Conclusions

In conclusion, integrating Islamic values into English Language Teaching (ELT) within the Indonesian context is both a necessary and complex endeavor. This integration is not merely an act of accommodating religious beliefs but is aimed at enriching the educational experience of students, enabling them to become well-rounded global citizens. The intersection of Islamic and Western ideologies in ELT presents unique challenges, stemming from cultural and ideological differences. These challenges include the perception of English as a vehicle of Western cultural hegemony and the tension between maintaining Islamic identity while embracing global linguistic trends. However, by contextualizing English learning materials to include Islamic values and developing supplementary resources that resonate with students' religious

and cultural backgrounds, educators can create a more inclusive and relevant educational environment. Strategies such as incorporating Islamic names, principles, and cultural references into English teaching materials, alongside professional development for teachers, are crucial for effective integration. The future of integrating Islamic values into ELT will require ongoing efforts to balance linguistic proficiency with moral and ethical development, ensuring that students can navigate the complexities of a diverse and interconnected world while remaining grounded in their Islamic identity. This holistic approach to education aligns with the broader objectives of fostering cross-cultural understanding and dialogue, ultimately contributing to a more harmonious global society.

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