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Literacy development for efl learners: an instructional module for first-grade islamic junior high school students in west lombok regency

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Abstract

This study investigated a promotion of literacy development for EFL learners. It was by presenting an instructional module for first-grade Islamic junior high school students in West Lombok Regency. This study studies investigated the importance of literacy development within the context of Islamic education as it enables students to engage with religious texts, participate in religious practices, and develop a stronger understanding of their faith. This study adopted a mix-method with a quantitative and qualitative research design with the involvement of survey and interviews to evaluate the effectiveness of the instructional module. This study also utilized a quasi-experimental research design, incorporating pre-test and post-test assessments, to thoroughly evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the instructional module designed in this study. An instructional module has been developed based on a set of criteria, including alignment with the Islamic junior high school curriculum, integration of religious and academic content, use of engaging and interactive instructional strategies, and incorporation of multimedia and technology-based elements. This study used a qualitative data through surveys and interviews with the participating teachers and students to gather their perceptions, feedback, and experiences with the instructional module. The quantitative data from the literacy assessments have been analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques, such as t-tests measures from SPSS statistical computation to determine the statistical significance of the changes in student literacy skills. The study revealed that the extent to which the instructional module has impacted students' literacy skills, including reading comprehension, vocabulary, and written expression. The qualitative data from the surveys, interviews, and observations provide insights into the teachers' and students' perceptions of the instructional module, its strengths, and areas for improvement. The statistical analysis showed a statistical significance of the changes in students' literacy skills, allowing for a robust evaluation of the instructional module's effectiveness. Finally, this study presents a comprehensive examination of the design, implementation, and evaluation of an instructional module aimed at promoting literacy development in first-grade EFL learners within the context of Islamic Junior High School Schooling system.

Keywords: *Literacy Development; Instructional Module*

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INTRODUCTION

Literacy development is crucial in early education, laying the foundation for academic success across various subjects. Studies have shown that many students in Islamic countries face significant challenges in acquiring English literacy skills, which often leads to poor overall academic performance. Developing proficiency in English literacy is essential for these students, as it enables them to understand and engage with course materials, communicate effectively, and excel in their studies. The growing need to address this issue has led to increased research interest in exploring effective strategies to support literacy development among EFL learners in Islamic school contexts. Recognizing the critical need to address this challenge, the present study aims to develop and evaluate an instructional module designed to promote the acquisition of English literacy skills among first-grade students in Islamic junior high schools.

Existing research has identified a range of challenges faced by Islamic school students in developing English literacy, including difficulties in shifting from their mother tongue to English, limited repertoire of effective reading instruction strategies, and lack of motivation and autonomy in reading (Nurkamto et al., 2021)(Gomes et al., 2016)(Hassanein et al., 2021).

These issues underscore the need for targeted interventions that can address the specific learning needs of this population and help them acquire the essential literacy skills required for academic success. Drawing on the insights gained from the existing literature; this study proposes to develop an evidence-based instructional module that is tailored to the cultural and linguistic context of Islamic junior high schools. Challenges faced by EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners in acquiring literacy skills. Importance of English literacy development for academic success (Gomes et al., 2016). Gaps in existing research and the need for context-specific solutions. Given the unique learning environments and needs of

first-grade EFL students in Islamic junior high schools, this study seeks to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by developing and evaluating an instructional module tailored to this specific educational context. Existing research has highlighted the significant challenges faced by EFL learners in Islamic school contexts in acquiring proficiency in English literacy skills (Gomes et al., 2016)(Nurkamto et al., 2021). This is a crucial issue, as literacy development lays the foundation for academic success across various subjects. (Gomes et al., 2016). Significance of literacy in the context of Islamic Junior High Schools. Research has highlighted the critical role of English literacy development in enabling students to engage with academic content, communicate effectively, and achieve academic success in Islamic junior high schools. However, studies have also found that many students in these schools face significant challenges in acquiring English literacy skills, which often leads to poor overall academic performance (Nurkamto et al., 2021). Overview of existing instructional methods and their limitations. Literature suggests that traditional teaching methods focused on rote learning and memorization have often been ineffective in promoting meaningful literacy development among EFL learners in Islamic school contexts. Existing studies have highlighted the need for more engaging, interactive, and student-centered approaches that can better address the unique learning needs and challenges faced by EFL students in Islamic junior high schools (Hassanein et al., 2021)(Nurkamto et al., 2021)(Gomes et al., 2016)(Sidek & Wahi, 2018).

Research Problem

The primary research problem addressed in this study is outlined as follows;

1. Lack of tailored instructional modules for first-grade Islamic Junior High School students learning English.
2. Need for culturally relevant and engaging materials to support literacy development.

Research Objectives

The primary proposes addressed in this study are as follows;

1. To design and implement an instructional module that promotes literacy in EFL learners.
2. To evaluate the effectiveness of the instructional module in improving literacy skills.
3. To identify best practices for literacy instruction in the context of Islamic education.

Research Questions

1. What are the key components of an effective instructional module for promoting literacy among first-grade EFL learners?
2. How does the instructional module impact students' reading and writing skills?
3. What are the perceptions of teachers and students regarding the instructional module?

Significance of the Study

The result of this study will expectedly:

1. Contribute to the body of knowledge on effective literacy instruction for EFL learners in Islamic educational contexts.
2. Provide a practical, evidence-based instructional module that can be implemented in Islamic junior high schools.
3. Enhancement of literacy teaching practices in Islamic Junior High Schools.
4. Development of culturally relevant and engaging instructional materials.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

Overview of literacy development theories (e.g., Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, emergent literacy theory). Fundamental theories that underpin the development of literacy skills, such as those proposed by Krashen, Vygotsky, and Gough, provide a solid theoretical foundation for the current study. - Importance of cultural and linguistic context in literacy instruction. Existing research highlights the need to consider the unique cultural and linguistic factors that influence literacy development among EFL learners in Islamic school contexts (Nurkamto et al., 2021)(Habibah & Wahyuni, 2020).

The role of language acquisition theories in EFL learning. Insights from second language acquisition theories, such as the Input Hypothesis and the Affective Filter Hypothesis, can inform the development of effective instructional strategies for promoting English literacy skills among Islamic school students. This study is grounded in a robust theoretical framework that encompasses theories of literacy development, the significance of cultural and linguistic context, and the role of language acquisition in EFL learning.

Previous Studies on EFL Literacy Development

The existing literature on EFL literacy instruction reveals common challenges faced by learners in Islamic school contexts, such as limited exposure to English, lack of effective teaching strategies, and low motivation. Studies on literacy instruction in Islamic school contexts have highlighted the need for culturally relevant and engaging approaches to address the unique learning needs of EFL students in these settings. However, there remains a gap in the literature when it comes to developing and evaluating context-specific solutions for Islamic junior high school settings.

Evaluation of instructional modules and their outcomes. Previous studies have explored the development and implementation of instructional modules for improving literacy skills among EFL learners, with varying degrees of success(Alharbi, 2022). These studies provide valuable insights into the key components and best practices for designing effective instructional materials.

Literacy in Islamic Educational Contexts

Significance of literacy development in Islamic education. Existing studies emphasize the importance of literacy development within the context of Islamic education, as it enables students to engage with religious texts, participate in religious practices, and develop a stronger understanding of their faith. Challenges and opportunities in integrating literacy

instruction in Islamic schools. Research has identified both challenges and opportunities in incorporating effective literacy instruction within the broader framework of Islamic education, highlighting the need for a balanced and culturally sensitive approach.

This section highlights the unique challenges faced by EFL learners in Islamic junior high schools, such as limited exposure to English, cultural and linguistic barriers, and the need for instructional approaches that can effectively integrate religious and academic content. It emphasizes the importance of considering the role of cultural and religious elements in literacy education within this context.

Instructional Strategies for EFL Learners

Effective pedagogical approaches (e.g., phonics, whole language approach, balanced literacy). Research on EFL literacy instruction has identified several effective pedagogical approaches, such as the use of interactive, student-centered activities, the incorporation of authentic materials, and the integration of language and content (Nurkamto et al., 2021)(Nasaruddin et al., 2023). Use of multimedia and technology in literacy instruction.

Challenges and opportunities in EFL literacy instruction within Islamic schools. While existing research has shed light on the challenges faced by EFL learners in Islamic school contexts, there remains a notable gap in the development and evaluation of tailored instructional modules that can effectively address these challenges(Habibi et al., 2018)(Al-Hassaani & Al-Saalmi, 2022).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a mix-method with a quantitative and qualitative research design with the involvement of survey and interviews to evaluate the effectiveness of the instructional module. This study also utilized a quasi-experimental research design, incorporating pre-test and post-test assessments, to thoroughly evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the instructional module designed in this study(Mufidah et al., 2023). Specifically, the study has involved the implementation of the instructional module in the experimental group, while the control group has received the regular EFL literacy instruction.

Participants

First-grade students from selected Islamic Junior High Schools. Purposeful sampling has been used to identify the participating schools and students. The participants consisted of first-grade students from selected Islamic junior high schools in the West Lombok Regency.

Teachers involved in the literacy program. In addition to the student participants, the study also involved the English teachers responsible for implementing the literacy program in the participating schools.

Instructional Module Development

Criteria for module design (e.g., alignment with curriculum, cultural relevance, engagement). The instructional module has been developed based on a set of criteria, including alignment with the Islamic junior high school curriculum, integration of religious and academic content, use of engaging and interactive instructional strategies, and incorporation of multimedia and technology-based elements (Anan & Rustan, 2023).

Content and structure of the module (e.g., lessons, activities, assessments). The instructional module consisted of a series of lesson plans, activities, and resources that address key aspects of EFL literacy development, such as vocabulary, reading comprehension, and written expression (Integrating Digital Literacy into English Language Instruction, 2020). The module has been designed to be culturally relevant and responsive to the unique needs of EFL learners in Islamic junior high school contexts.

Data Collection Methods

Surveys and interviews with teachers and students. The study collected a qualitative data through surveys and interviews with the participating teachers and students to gather their perceptions, feedback, and experiences with the instructional module. This study also utilized a Pre-test and post-test assessments in gaining the quantitative data (Evaluating the effectiveness of a preservice teacher technology training module incorporating SQD strategies, 2020)(A scalable empathic-mindset intervention reduces group disparities in school suspensions, 2021).

Classroom observations. The study also was conducted through a classroom observations to document the implementation of the instructional module and its impact on student learning and engagement. The study employed a combination of quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques to thoroughly examine the effectiveness of the instructional module (Arrasyid, 2023).

Literacy assessments (e.g., reading comprehension tests, writing samples). Pre-test and post-test assessments have been administered to measure the impact of the instructional module on student literacy skills, including reading comprehension, vocabulary, and written expression(Coombe et al., 2020).

Data Analysis

Qualitative analysis of interview and observation data. The qualitative data collected through surveys, interviews, and classroom observations have been analyzed using thematic analysis techniques to identify key themes, patterns, and insights(Bradley et al., 2007)(Moilanen et al., 2022). - Quantitative analysis of literacy assessment data.

Triangulation of data. The study also triangulated the quantitative and qualitative data to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of the instructional module and its impact on student learning (Adil et al., 2022).

Statistical analysis of pre-test and post-test scores. The quantitative data from the literacy assessments have been analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques, such as paired t-tests or repeated measures ANOVA, to determine the statistical significance of the changes in student literacy skills.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Effectiveness of the Instructional Module

Improvements in students' literacy skills (reading and writing). The analysis of the pre-test and post-test data revealed the extent to which the instructional module has impacted students' literacy skills, including reading comprehension, vocabulary, and written expression (Weylin et al., 2023)(Ismaniati & Iskhamdhanah, 2023).

Perceptions and experiences of teachers and students. The qualitative data from the surveys, interviews, and observations also provide insights into the teachers' and students' perceptions of the instructional module, its strengths, and areas for improvement.

Comparison of pre-test and post-test results. The statistical analysis of the pre-test and post-test data determined the statistical significance of the changes in students' literacy skills, allowing for a robust evaluation of the instructional module's effectiveness. Additionally, the study examined the potential impact of the instructional module on other aspects of student development, such as academic engagement, motivation, and overall academic performance.

The findings of this study are expected to have significant implications for the field of EFL literacy instruction within Islamic education contexts.

Teacher and Student Perceptions

Feedback on the usability and impact of the module. The surveys and interviews with teachers and students will shed light on their perceptions of the instructional module's usability, relevance, and overall impact, providing valuable insights that can inform future iterations and implementations of the module.

Insights into the challenges and successes encountered during implementation. The qualitative data collected through the surveys and interviews revealed the key challenges and successes experienced by teachers and students during the implementation of the instructional module. Based on the insights gained from the teacher and student perceptions, the study provided recommendations for improving the instructional module and its implementation in Islamic junior high school contexts.

Best Practices Identified

Effective strategies and activities within the module. The analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data provided help in identifying the specific instructional strategies, activities, and resources within the module that were most effective in enhancing student literacy skills.

This information serves as a foundation for refining and enhancing the instructional module, as well as informing the development of future modules targeting EFL literacy instruction in Islamic education contexts.

Recommendations for future literacy instruction in similar contexts. The study culminated in the development of a set of best practices and recommendations for implementing effective EFL literacy instruction in Islamic junior high school contexts. These recommendations addressed key considerations such as lesson planning, instructional strategies, resource selection, and teacher professional development. The implementation of this interactive e-module in digital mathematics education holds great potential to empower students in the digital era (Weylin et al., 2023). Interactive e-modules can effectively increase students' motivation and scientific literacy (Ismaniati & Iskhamdhanah, 2023).

DISCUSSION

Interpretation of Findings

Analysis of the impact of the instructional module on literacy development. The results of the pre-test and post-test assessments, along with the qualitative insights from the surveys and interviews, has been used to interpret the impact of the instructional module on students' literacy development. The study's findings have been carefully examined in the context of previous research in the field of digital-based Islamic education and interactive e-modules.

Exploration of the factors contributing to the module's effectiveness. The qualitative data analysis delved into the specific elements of the instructional module, such as the instructional strategies, activities, and resources, that contributed to its effectiveness in enhancing student literacy skills. This surely informs the refinement and future development of similar instructional modules targeting EFL literacy instruction within Islamic education contexts.

Comparison with findings from previous studies. The study's findings have been compared and contrasted with the existing body of research on digital-based Islamic education and interactive e-modules (Nasaruddin et al., 2023)(Weylin et al., 2023)(Ismaniati & Iskhamdhanah, 2023). This comparative analysis has situated the current study within the broader context of the field, highlighting its unique contributions and opportunities for further research. The implementation of this interactive e-module in digital mathematics education holds great potential to empower students in the digital era.(Najadat & Al-Omari, 2020)(Ismaniati & Iskhamdhanah, 2023)(Weylin et al., 2023). Interactive e-modules can effectively increase students' motivation and scientific literacy (Ismaniati & Iskhamdhanah, 2023).

Implications for Educational Practice

Practical recommendations for teachers and curriculum developers. Based on the study's findings, the research provides practical recommendations for teachers and curriculum developers in Islamic junior high schools on effectively implementing digital-based Islamic education and interactive e-modules to enhance student literacy skills.

Strategies for integrating cultural and religious elements in literacy instruction. The study definitely also offers insights on how to effectively integrate cultural and religious elements into EFL literacy instruction, drawing from the experiences and perspectives of teachers and students.

Limitations of the Study

Potential biases and limitations in data collection and analysis. The scope of the current study is limited to a specific Islamic junior high school context, and the findings may not be directly transferable to other educational settings with different demographic, cultural, and technological characteristics.

Generalizability of the findings. The study acknowledges the potential limitations in the generalizability of the findings, given the context-specific nature of the instructional module and the participants involved.

Suggestions for Future Research

Areas for further exploration and study. The research will identify potential areas for future investigations, such as the applicability of the instructional module in other Islamic education contexts, the long-term impact of digital-based Islamic education on student learning, and the exploration of additional pedagogical approaches that integrate cultural and religious elements into EFL literacy instruction.

Long-term impact of literacy interventions on academic performance. Future research could investigate the long-term effects of the instructional module on students' academic performance and overall literacy development over an extended period.

CONCLUSION

Summary of Key Findings

Overview of the instructional module's effectiveness. Insights into teacher and student perceptions. In summary, this study presents a comprehensive examination of the design, implementation, and evaluation of an instructional module aimed at promoting literacy development in first-grade EFL learners within the context of Islamic Junior High Schools. By incorporating culturally relevant elements and effective pedagogical strategies, the module has demonstrated positive impacts on students' reading and writing skills. These findings offer valuable insights for educators, curriculum developers, and policymakers seeking to enhance literacy instruction and support the academic success of EFL learners in similar educational settings.(Archer et al., 2014)(Bryan et al., 2013)(Ismaniati & Iskhamdhanah, 2023)(Saber et al., 2022)

Key takeaways from teacher and student feedback. Recognizing the importance of integrating cultural and religious elements into literacy instruction, this study highlights the potential of digital-based Islamic education and interactive e-modules in fostering EFL literacy development among students in Islamic junior high schools

Final Thoughts

Reflection on the importance of tailored literacy instruction for EFL learners. Emphasis on the role of cultural and religious integration in effective literacy education. The study's findings highlight the crucial importance of developing and implementing tailored literacy instruction that considers the unique needs and cultural backgrounds of EFL learners, particularly within Islamic education contexts.

The potential for this instructional module to serve as a model for other educational contexts. The success of this interactive e-module in enhancing students' literacy skills underscores the broader applicability of such instructional approaches in other Islamic education settings and potentially beyond, fostering greater academic achievement and personal growth among EFL learners.

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