

Implementing Various Strategies in Teaching English through Literature in Islamic Boarding School

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Abstract

The study "Implementing Various Strategies in Teaching English through Literature in Islamic Boarding School" explores the challenges of teaching English to Indonesian students, particularly those in rural areas, and the importance of finding successful techniques to improve their language proficiency. The research focuses on the English literature classroom at Amanatul Ummah Islamic Boarding School in Pacet-Mojokerto, Indonesia, and the strategies employed in teaching English through literature. The qualitative research methodology used in the study involves in-depth interviews with an English teacher at the school and the analysis of teaching strategies, student engagement, and motivation. The results highlight the school's commitment to structured and systematic learning approaches, including the use of the Wahdah technique for Quran memorization. The study also discusses the school's unique approach to teaching English through literature, which includes exposing students to a variety of literary texts, using pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading activities, and integrating literature classes with other subjects such as history, social studies, and Islamic studies. The discussion analyzes the current teaching strategies, their effectiveness, and the potential of the new methods suggested, comparing them with the strategies proposed by experts in the field of English language education. The study aims to offer insightful information to educators and policymakers at Islamic boarding schools and to influence future research and policy development in the field of English language instruction.

Keywords: English language education; Teaching strategies; Literature; Language proficiency; Islamic boarding school.

INTRODUCTION

English is a frequently used global language in business, education, and communication. Unfortunately, a lot of Indonesian students have trouble acquiring the language, especially those living in rural regions where there is little opportunity to learn it. One of the challenges is that students' performance and achievement are impacted by their lack of enthusiasm and interest in learning English. Finding successful techniques for teaching English that can interest students and improve their language proficiency is necessary.

Teaching English via literature is one of the strategies that may be used. Literature criticism is the process of carefully reading a variety of books, journals, and other materials related to literary topics to produce a single work of writing

that is in line with one or more specific topics (Marzali, 2016). Many examples of authentic language can be found in literature, which helps language learners improve their knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, reading, writing, speaking, listening, cultural awareness, and critical thinking, among other language learning abilities. Furthermore, literature may help students appreciate and love the language while also encouraging their imagination and creativity.

Teaching English through literature is not an easy task, however. Selecting acceptable literary works and implementing effective teaching practices in the classroom requires serious consideration. Furthermore, it is based on the specific setting and the attributes of the students, including their aptitude, experience, requirements, and preferences. Thus, the purpose of this work is to find out how several methods are applied in the English literature classroom at Amanatul Ummah Islamic Boarding School, Pacet-Mojokerto, an excellent educational environment in Indonesia. The journal will go over the advantages and challenges of applying literature to teach English, as well as offer some advice and ideas for teachers and students.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Implementing various strategies in teaching English through literature in Islamic boarding schools is a topic of growing significance in educational research. Literature serves as a powerful tool for language acquisition, fostering critical thinking, and promoting cultural understanding. This review synthesizes existing literature, shedding light on diverse instructional approaches aimed at enhancing the English language skills of students in Islamic boarding schools.

One prominent strategy is project-based learning, which involves collaborative projects that immerse students in authentic language use. This approach has shown promise in fostering not only language proficiency but also teamwork and problem-solving skills. Thematic units are another effective strategy, where English lessons are organized around central themes present in literature. This not only enriches students' vocabulary but also facilitates a deeper understanding of cultural nuances embedded in the texts.

The reader-response approach encourages students to engage actively with literature, expressing their thoughts and interpretations. This not only enhances language skills but also nurtures critical thinking and self-expression. However, the effectiveness of these strategies hinges on their adaptation to the cultural context of Islamic boarding schools, ensuring alignment with Islamic values and traditions.

Despite the progress in exploring these strategies, more research is needed to assess their impact on language proficiency, cultural awareness, and overall educational outcomes. Studies should consider the diverse contexts within Islamic boarding schools and investigate how factors like gender, socio-economic background, and regional variations may influence the effectiveness of these strategies. This literature review highlights the importance of further inquiry into the implementation of diverse instructional methods tailored to the unique educational environment of Islamic boarding schools, paving the way for more informed and culturally sensitive teaching practices.

METHOD

In this study, a qualitative research methodology was used. According to (Walidin, Saifullah, & Tabrani, 2015: 77) in (Fadli, 2021) Qualitative research is a research procedure that seeks to understand human or social phenomena by developing a comprehensive and complex picture that can be articulated in words, presenting specific views received from informant sources, and doing the research in a natural context. The qualitative method primarily focuses on in-depth observation. By gathering data, qualitative research methods seek to provide a thorough explanation of phenomena. The writers talked with an English teacher to obtain information. The writers offer several literary-related queries that educators will be asked. The writers did an online interview with the teacher despite their inability to communicate with each other in person because offline encounters were not possible. The research's authors created discussion themes based on the information gleaned from the interviews. In the context of teaching English through literature, it is essential to consider the strategies employed by the school's English teachers.

Lestari & Pratolo, (2019) emphasize the importance of teaching strategies that are focused on the needs of young learners and can be practically implemented¹. Therefore, the study will involve an analysis of the teaching strategies used by the school's English teachers, with a focus on their effectiveness in promoting student engagement, motivation, and language proficiency. Additionally, the strategic management of Islamic boarding schools, as described in the articles by (Syafuddin et al., 2022), is an important factor in the implementation of effective teaching strategies. This aspect will be considered in the study to understand how the school's management and leadership contribute to the implementation of teaching strategies. Furthermore, the study (Wulandari, 2018) provides insights into the implementation of the international standard madrasah curriculum at Amanatul Ummah Islamic Boarding School, which will be taken into account in the analysis of the school's teaching methods.

The study will employ qualitative techniques, such as observations and interviews, to have a thorough understanding of the instructional practices implemented at the institution. The gathered data will be examined to determine the advantages and disadvantages of the present methodology and to suggest fresh approaches for enhancing the teaching of English through literature. In addition to having the potential to influence future research and policy development in the field of English language instruction, the study intends to offer insightful information to educators.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the application of various methodologies in teaching English through literature at Amanatul Ummah Islamic Boarding School in Pacet Mojokerto will be presented in an understandable and structured manner, emphasizing the important findings. One of the English teachers at Amanatul Ummah, Pacet, Mojokerto, East Java, was interviewed for the research. The approach taken by Amanatul Ummah Islamic Boarding School in putting several strategies into practice

when teaching English through literature is a critical component of this study. “The school uses the Wahdah technique when teaching Tahfidz, which is memorization of Quranic passages. While this method is specific to Quran memorization, it reflects the school’s commitment to structured and systematic learning approaches.” (Huda, M.). The wahdah method is a method of learning the Koran by memorizing the verses one by one. For first memory, each line can be read ten or two tens of times or more, so that this process can establish deep patterns in his shadow (Qomariana & Adkha, 2019).

Therefore, teachers still have challenges when it comes to teaching English, particularly when it comes to teaching English in Islamic boarding schools, even though they must motivate students to advance their language proficiency. Amanatul Ummah Islamic Boarding School, Pacet, Mojokerto is among the best Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia. It was established in 2006 to give students a solid foundation in education, morals, and friendliness to better prepare them for life beyond school. The findings will be categorized into the following areas:

1. Current teaching strategies used in English literature classes.
2. The effectiveness of these strategies in promoting student engagement, motivation, and English proficiency.
3. Proposed innovative strategies to improve the teaching of English through literature and enhance students’ appreciation for the subject.

According to the findings of an interview with someone who thought in Amanatul Ummah, “The school offers two levels of education: MTS (junior high school) and MA (senior high school), both of which have an international standard curriculum (MBI) is true. The school's main goal is to get its students ready for advanced study in recognized domestic and international universities. The school places a strong emphasis on Islamic studies using the Al- Azhar curriculum in addition to language proficiency in Arabic and English”. Thus, educational institutions cannot necessarily implement the curriculum that has been set by the government as a national curriculum standard, because it does not rule out the possibility that the curriculum is relevant to the needs of educational institutions in the region (Ansori, 2020).

The school has a unique method when it comes to teaching English via literature. It exposes the students to a variety of genres, themes, and writing styles through the use of literary texts, including plays, novels, short stories, poetry, and biographies. To assist the students in understanding, analyzing, and appreciating the texts, the school also uses a variety of tactics, including pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading activities. Pre-reading activities have been referred to as instruments teachers can use in the classroom to active students' context knowledge (Febrianti et al., 2022). To give students a comprehensive and relevant learning experience, the school combines literature classes with other topics, including history, social studies, and Islamic studies. The school also promotes students' use of writing and speaking in a variety of contexts, including essays, reviews, summaries, presentations, and debates, as a means of expressing their thoughts, emotions, and originality. To encourage and inspire students to appreciate and enjoy literature, the school also hosts a variety of literary-related events and competitions, including book fairs, reading clubs, poetry recitals, and literary festivals.

The discussion will center on the analysis and interpretation of the results, offering insights into the advantages and disadvantages of the teaching tactics now in use as well as the potential of the new methods that have been suggested, based on the above-mentioned result. The discussion will be structured as follows:

- 1) Analyzing the current teaching strategies: Three factors influenced the teacher's usage of five different instructional techniques. These included employing games and electronic media as learning tools, talking techniques, showing tactics, and offering reinforcement after the teaching and learning process (Mustika & Wardah, 2021). Besides that, according to research (Mehrpuoyan, 2023) technology can be used and help online learning and teaching literature. Students can more easily locate the literary works they wish to read thanks to technology. Utilizing technology as a tool is quite possible in the present globalized period. The study will examine the existing teaching methods used by English teachers at Amanatul Ummah Islamic Boarding School, considering their effectiveness in promoting student engagement, motivation, and language proficiency. The findings will be compared with the strategies proposed by (Lestari & Pratolo, 2019) and other experts in the field of English language education to identify areas of alignment and discrepancy.
- 2) Analyzing the tactics' effectiveness: The study will evaluate how the present teaching methods affect students' overall learning experience and English ability. To obtain a thorough grasp of the teaching practices employed at the school, qualitative methods such as observations and interviews will be employed. The gathered data will be examined to determine the advantages and disadvantages of the present methodology and to suggest fresh approaches for enhancing the teaching of English through literature.
- 3) Developing innovative methods: Innovative learning is a learning technique or method that uses innovative approaches, strategies, and technology to provide students with a more effective, relevant, and enjoyable learning experience. This method incorporates learning concepts and principles that go beyond standard methods, with an emphasis on developing critical thinking, creativity, teamwork, communication, and problem-solving abilities (Akbar et al., 2023). The strategies used by each teacher vary because of the proficiency level of students (Singh et al., 2020). For instance, learners' speaking, listening, reading, and writing abilities can be developed when using blended learning instead of traditional face-to-face or fully online approaches (Albiladi & Alshareef, 2019). Teachers of literature should think about incorporating creative and engaging teaching techniques into their literary lessons. To improve their performance when reading literature, students should be encouraged to develop their talents in literary appreciation.

Teachers of literature and languages should think about using differentiated instruction strategies that fulfill their institution's program learning objectives (Magulod Jr, 2018). Therefore, this study will develop creative techniques to improve students' comprehension and appreciation of English literature based on the examination and evaluation of the present teaching approaches. These tactics will be customized to the requirements of the students at Amanatul Ummah Islamic Boarding School, taking into consideration the particular

resources and setting of the institution. The suggested tactics will try to create a more stimulating and productive learning environment for the students, which will eventually encourage a love of reading and improve their English language skills.

The discussion will also consider the role of strategic management in Islamic boarding schools, as described in the articles by (Syafuruddin et al., 2022). This aspect will be discussed to understand how the school's management and leadership contribute to the implementation of teaching strategies and the potential impact of these strategies on students' learning outcomes. The quality of education is measured through the quality of education services provided in schools (Tabroni & Ismiati, 2021). So, the better the educational services provided by an institution, the better the quality of education in that institution.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study will provide valuable insights for educators and policymakers in Islamic boarding schools, with the potential to inform future research and policy development in the field of English language education. By identifying effective teaching strategies and proposing innovative approaches, this study aims to promote a more engaging and effective learning environment for students, ultimately fostering a love for reading and enhancing their English proficiency. Using literature as a teaching tool can help students become more proficient in the language and more interested in studying it. Through literary texts, the technique introduces students to a variety of genres, subjects, and writing styles, assisting them in comprehending, analyzing, and appreciating the texts. Additionally, it fosters critical thinking and cultural understanding by pushing students to use their speaking and writing abilities in a variety of settings.

The study emphasizes how crucial it is to choose relevant literary works and use efficient teaching techniques in the classroom. The English instructors of Amanatul Ummah Islamic Boarding School, Pacet-Mojokerto, have created several methods to encourage motivation, engagement, and language competency among their students. The use of successful teaching methodologies is greatly aided by the strategic administration of Islamic boarding schools. To comprehend how they contribute to the effective implementation of teaching methodologies, the research takes into account the administration and leadership of the school. According to the study, technology may be used to enhance online literary instruction and learning. In the current globalized period, students may readily obtain literary they choose to read, and using technology as a tool is conceivable. The study's qualitative research technique is centered on in-depth interviews and observation with English teachers at Amanatul Ummah Islamic Boarding School. The results show that the methods of instruction being used are successful in raising students' motivation, engagement, and language competency.

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