

Designing a Thematic Syllabus for Islamic and Environmental Awareness in EFL Teaching

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ABSTRACT

This paper will examine how a thematic syllabus for EFL classes can be developed that combines elements of Islamic Values and Environmental Awareness using the TEFLIN curriculum framework (Richards, 2013 dan UNESCO (2017)). The TEFLIN curriculum places importance on communicative competency and culturally responsive pedagogy emphasizing gradual learning levels for English acquisition, starting from beginner to advanced stages so that students can develop skills step by step. The TEFLIN curriculum has undergone recent restructuring that emphasizes flexibility and need-driven syllabus design, including intercultural understanding and content-based learning. The key TEFLIN curriculum outcomes target learners acquisition both in linguistic competency and meaningful participation in cultural and moral issues, including ecological responsibility. The TEFLIN curriculum has supported several types of syllabus designs, including structural syllabus, functional syllabus, and thematic syllabus, for which the thematic syllabus can also be beneficial for incorporating large theme subjects like Islamic Environmental Values for English language acquisition classes. The proposed thematic syllabus will explore how TEFLIN's content learning and culturally responsive teaching can equip English language learners for effective communication, observing Islamic values, and Environment awareness, enabling learners to become effective communicators and Global Citizens.

Keywords: *Islamic environmental awareness; thematic syllabus; English as a Foreign Language (EFL); cultural sensitivity; ecological consciousness.*

INTRODUCTION

The English Teaching as a Foreign language in Indonesia, TEFLIN, learning and teaching process is guided by a curriculum Merdeka that focuses on enhancing learners' communication skills in English, given the diverse Indonesian language and culture (Graves (2000) dan Nation & Macalister (2010)). The TEFLIN curriculum has different learning levels, from a beginner level to advanced, to enable a smooth progression in learning English for different learners. Current trends in TEFLIN curriculum development include flexibility, adapting to local contexts, and using content-based learning for greater relevance in learning English linked to important themes and values.

TEFLIN outcomes can also range from language proficiency to include learning outcomes such as intercultural understanding, critical thinking, and communication skills. TEFLIN has adopted a learning process that covers language proficiency for Indonesia's vision for English learners to become well-informed learners, proficient in English not only from a Western perspective, culturally well-grounded, and socially well-informed learners. Of the different types of syllabuses adopted by TEFLIN, namely structural, functional, and thematic syllabuses, the thematic syllabus can benefit EFL learning by incorporating teachings related to the environment and Islam.

At the junior secondary (SMP) level, English learning outcomes include: (1) developing spoken and written communication based on context; (2) practicing literacy skills through meaningful texts; (3) building intercultural awareness and appreciation of diversity; and (4) Expressing ideas about personal identity, culture, and the environment using English.

The proposed syllabus framework for TEFL is thematic, in line with the curriculum levels adopted by TEFLIN, it covers the recent adjustments, and satisfies learning outcomes by integrating English learning and knowledge of Islam and the environment. This syllabus will enable the learners to master English in a manner that honors their cultures and religions, while also instilling them with the responsibility for guarding the environment.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The TEFLIN learning curriculum is a crucial cornerstone for English language learning in Indonesia, particularly emphasizing the communication competency that corresponds to the Indonesian cultural setting (Abd Rahman et al. (2020), Erawati & La Fua (2024), dan Coyle et al. (2010), given its unique cultural background. The TEFLIN CD plays a significant role in enhancing English language learning through effective professional development for educators, creating learning paths that integrate theoretical and practical knowledge. The TEFLIN curriculum levels are designed in a structured way in relation to the learners' language proficiency levels, from beginner to advanced levels, so that gradual acquisition of language skills can be achieved for a multi-level setting in Indonesia.

The curriculum change in TEFLIN adopts a more flexible, responsive, and learner-centered paradigm, in line with international trends in language learning. The curriculum shift focuses on content-based learning, intercultural competence, and thematic learning, making it easier to include important thematic content, such as Indonesian environmental awareness influenced by Islam, in language curricula. The change from a structural to thematic and functional curriculum also suits the decentralized structure and varying learner contexts in the Indonesian educational environment.

The TEFLIN outcomes go beyond simple language ability to include critical thinking, knowledge and awareness of intercultural, and social responsibility, so that learners can relate both globally and locally to social and environmental issues. This outlook aligns well with the integration of Islamic values and environmental awareness in EFL.

Of the types of syllabuses identified in the TEFLIN curriculum, thematic syllabuses can particularly integrate language learning and content, such as values from Islam and the aspect of environmental conservation. This will enable learners not only to gain language skills, comprehension, and knowledge, but also cultivate good morals that constitute the holistic education pursued at the national and international levels.

METHODOLOGY

The study applies a qualitative methodology, using TEFLIN's curriculum framework and syllabus design principles, to construct a thematic syllabus that combines awareness of Islam and the environment for EFL learning (Richards (2013).

1). TEFLIN Curriculum and Course Design

The process for development commenced by reviewing the TEFLIN curriculum, offering a systematic, multi-tiered framework that meets varying learner proficiency levels present in Indonesia. The TEFLIN curriculum focuses on communicative, intercultural, and context-driven learning, forming a solid foundation for integrating thematic, content such as that related to Muslim ethical and environmental concerns.

2). Curriculum Levels and Changes

The syllabus design also takes into consideration the incremental levels by TEFLIN from the level of a beginner to that of an advanced learner, ensuring that the themes used in learning suit the learners' language level. The recent TEFLIN curriculum shift places emphasis on flexibility and learner-centered elements, such as content-based learning and themes that are social and culturally affirming.

3). Desired Outcomes

The syllabus aims to cater to TEFLIN outcome requirements, such as language competence, critical thinking, and moral-ethical growth. The integration process of values related to Islam and environmental awareness is expected to cultivate globally responsible citizens equipped with effective communication skills in accordance with their cultural and religious selves. Syllabus Type and Design Process With the recognition by TEFLIN that there are various types of syllabuses, the study applies the thematic syllabus design, where the learning objectives and syllabus content are organized around highly thematic, instead of only

grammatical, structures. This can be supported by the content-based instructional learning model, where the curriculum units for the syllabus will revolve around ecologically significant subjects that relate well to the learner's whole environment, instead of only to the structures of the English language.

Validation and Revision

The proposed syllabus is examined by TEFLIN educators and scholars in Islam and the environment for its appropriateness for the different cultures used in learning, while pilot testing helps improve it by ensuring that it meets the TEFLIN curriculum modifications and results.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The outcome of designing and executing a thematic syllabus that is TEFLIN curriculum compliant has brought several important findings to light (Darlington (2019) dan Yasin & Lestari (2024). The TEFLIN curriculum structure, that has integrated several proficiency levels along with recent modifications aimed at flexibility, content-based learning, and responsiveness, forms a comprehensive framework that is conducive to thematic integration. The thematic syllabuses for TEFLIN also enable designing learning around meaningful themes related to Islam and the environment, ensuring alignment in language learning for moral and ecological considerations. The findings also indicate that TEFLIN's proficiency level allows for the gradual acquisition of language learning ability by the learners while incorporating culturally suited learning, making thematic syllabus design and execution both viable and successful. The modifications in the curriculum towards

learner-centered and contextually framed education also enable successful incorporation for socially and ethically important learning content, ensuring that objectives are met beyond language learning proficiency and include critical thought, greater intercultural understanding, and improved moral perspectives. This is particularly suited for aims that include TEFLIN learners becoming environmentally sound and ethically sound from an Islamic perspective. Finally, thematic syllabuses for TEFLIN provide important frameworks for designing comprehensive language curricula that integrate both values, thereby addressing deficiencies identified in standard EFL learning resources.

CONCLUSION

The end result is that the TEFLIN curriculum and course design are proven to play an effective role in ensuring a comprehensive framework for creating a thematic syllabus that combines environmental and Islamic awareness in EFL educational delivery (UNESCO (2017) dan Tilbury (2011)). TEFLIN's curriculum has a multi-level structure that allows for language learning that meets learners' proficiency levels, and its recent curriculum renovation focuses on flexibility, content-based learning, and responsiveness to different cultures, making it an excellent setting for thematic syllabus delivery. TEFLIN's objectives reach beyond language proficiency, covering intercultural communication, critical thinking, and moral development, making it well-aligned for the delivery of EFL thematic syllabus goals that seek to equip learners with environmental and Islamic values. Of the various types of syllabus that TEFLIN distinguishes, the thematic syllabus plays a crucial role in ensuring that valuable content

related to both religion and environmental values combines well, making it easier for learners to benefit from thematic syllabus delivery in EFL, thereby advancing learners' English language proficiency and shaping them into moral individuals, mindful of their environmental responsibilities.

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