

Integrating Islamic values in CLIL materials: a syllabus design for Islamic primary school

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Abstract

The new educational policy in Indonesia does not require English as a compulsory subject in primary school. To respond to the current policy, some primary schools, especially Islamic affiliated primary schools still have a commitment to provide English lessons as an extracurricular subject. Since there is no regulation toward the teaching and learning process, implementing Content-Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach into teaching materials aims to improve the learning process. This study used ADDIE (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation) model to design the CLIL materials and reached the third stage. The results highlight that after conducting a need analysis, the syllabus and the students' activity book consists of three selected topics that integrate Islamic values into CLIL model. They were Caring for Living Things, My Heroes, and My Dream Job. Those topics were adapted from a thematic book applied in the school partner under the Curriculum 2013. These topics were designed into three main subjects i.e., Science, Islamic Content, and Arts. Furthermore, before each topic, vocabulary-based activities were presented followed by three kinds of activities. Islamic values are integrated into CLIL materials to promote Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) also to advocate local wisdom-based curriculum, particularly infusing the Muslim cultures and values. This study concludes that there is a need to integrate Islamic content to English materials in Islamic primary affiliated schools.

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INTRODUCTION

In the current curriculum, Curriculum 2013, English lessons have been removed from the curriculum, and it is now only an additional lesson with no government-mandated competencies (Jazuly et al., 2019; Setyaningrum & Purwati, 2020).

Meanwhile, private schools, including Muhammadiyah primary schools, continue to teach English as a subject, despite the importance of English and theories arguing the effectiveness of learning English at an early age (Khoiriyah & Widyantoro, 2018). Due to the lack of government regulation regarding the English teaching and learning process at the primary school level, schools and teachers are free to implement a variety of teaching methods. One of which is by integrating the language lesson into content lessons such as math, science and religion education. This is consistent with thematic learning as implemented in the 2013 curriculum. The themes learned by students in grades 1–6 are determined by the government through shared thematic books, a mandatory ready-use printed book (Wardani, Sunardi & Suharno, 2020).

CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) refers to any pedagogical approach that incorporates content teaching and learning as well as second/foreign languages (L2) (Coyle, 2007; Mehisto, 2012). CLIL practitioners believe that students can learn both content and L2 simultaneously because content subjects provide more exposure and meaningful communication contexts for L2 acquisition (Heras & Lasagabaster, 2015; Marsh, 2012). CLIL approach is primarily applicable for teaching English at the primary level because it employs dual-focused activities that address both language and content aspects. In Indonesian primary school context, CLIL program is supported by the implementation of thematic lessons in which the topics of the lesson are integrated from various content subjects such as math, science (Setyaningrum and Purwanti, 2020), civic education, Indonesian Language and physical exercises (PE).

As an umbrella term, CLIL encompasses a variety of contexts and models. It means that the amount of CLIL materials used in teaching will be determined by the school context. The teaching objective can be more content or language oriented. CLIL models are varied from hard CLIL to soft CLIL (Bentley, 2010). Hard CLIL “subject-led (partial immersion)” can be defined as teaching about half of the curriculum in target language. The primary goal of hard CLIL is on the development of content knowledge. On the other hand, Soft CLIL “language-led” refers to teaching some certain curricular topics in a language lesson (Bentley, 2010). Take an example, language teachers bring a certain content topic such as math or science into their lessons as theme-based approaches for language teaching. In certain school contexts, due to the limited time of English lessons, CLIL lessons may focus on vocabulary learning at the word level with little real-life communicative purpose in

activities which are cognitively demanding (Ellison, 2015). All of the activities should provide momentum of learning.

In implementing CLIL approach for primary school graders, the materials along with its learning activities should be planned carefully by teachers (Mehisto, 2012; Meyer, 2017; Pokrivčáková & Sepešiová, 2015). Further, in designing a CLIL lesson or syllabus, it must also include the four tenants of the 4C framework, which are content, communication, cognition, and culture (Coyle, 2007; Coyle et al., 2010; Wei & Feng, 2015). Content consists of the main concept and content knowledge such as topics in science, math and others. Further, the selected content also contributes to the language use during the learning process, communication. This can be divided into three aspects including language of learning (language related to subject theme or topic such as key subject terminology), language for learning (language needed to operate in a foreign language environment such instruction for group discussion, language for presentation and many more) and language through learning (language gained during the teaching and learning process). Meanwhile, cognition plays crucially in CLIL materials in which the teaching materials should promote learning and thinking process. Lastly, culture or intercultural understanding can be embraced by introducing different cultures into the CLIL materials (Hamer, et al., 2017). Additionally, CLIL programs necessitate extensive collaboration among content teachers, language teachers, and other related stakeholders.

With regards to cultural aspects, infusing Islamic-based content is fundamental for primary school graders for two main reasons. The first one is related to Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) in which ELT (English Language Teaching) should be based on students' real context. As it is highlighted by Shakouri and Esfandiari (2015) that English materials, especially textbooks, are designed mainly by Western country authors or the inner circle of Kachru's model (1985). The textbook is then claimed as the transmitter of Western ideologies. Thus, in Islamic affiliated school, it would be efficient when English is taught using CLIL model, it is by integrating local wisdom-based content, i.e., Islamic cultures and values into school syllabus or materials. Second, English teaching is not value-free knowledge that every Muslim-kid student can learn. This issue has been widely discussed by many scholars asserting that English teaching is associated with Western worldview (Pennycook & Coutand-Marin, 2003; Mohd-Asraf, 2005; Makoni & Pennycook, 2005; Karmani, 2005; Holliday, 2009). The issue why Western culture is sensitive to Muslim is

that not all cultures are acceptable for Muslims to learn. Furthermore, Holliday (2009) critiques that ELT has become a way to urge Western culture into the identity of the Periphery. He, therefore, suggests that Western dominance in ELT should be redefined in terms of how culture is taught so that the Peripheries can define ELT on their terms. Thus, a study highlights that English teaching in Islamic schools should infuse Islamic elements in their curriculum (Farah & Sukarma, 2020). With all these—English competence and Islamic content—instilled in Muslim-kid primary school graders, it is expected that future Muslim generation will be excellent Muslim advocates or agents in international scope.

There are plentiful published works in relation to the implementation of CLIL in Indonesian primary schools. Rohmah (2019), her findings revealed that integrating content knowledge and English competencies in assessing English proficiency is feasible and applicable at the primary school level. These findings are also supported by the works of Khoiriyah (2018) and Setyaningrum & Purwati, (2020). Their research convinced primary school teachers to adapt CLIL approach in their regular class and thematic lessons as they are equipped with English books provided by the local government. Khairurrozikin, Sukartiningsih and Subrata (2020) through their pre-experimental research proved that the incorporation of a pedagogical model of genre and CLIL was successfully improving the story writing skills of fifth graders. Meanwhile, a preliminary report regarding the implementation of CLIL approach in an Islamic primary school has been conducted by Waloyo, Farah, and Khoiriyah (2021). They reported that the primary school teachers were welcome toward a projected CLIL program that is integrated into online teaching media. From the aforementioned previous studies, little work has been done about designing syllabus for CLIL materials. Hence, this research is an attempt to report the ongoing project of syllabus and textbook design for integrating Islamic values in CLIL materials for Muslim primary school graders.

METHOD

In instructional designs, there are a number of frameworks used. In this project, the framework implemented was ADDIE (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation) model of instructional design (Branch, 2009). This approach was particularly the most widely used learning models for course designers to use and apply in a syllabus design. The ADDIE model has five phases which were then applied into two segments. First, it was implemented as a framework for syllabus

planning and development that included Analysis, Design, and Development, whereas the second were Evaluation and Implementation (See Figure 1).

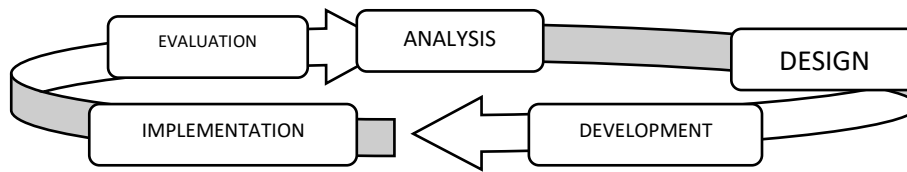


Figure 1. ADDIE framework implemented in the syllabus design

Detail of each phase is described as follow:

First of all, phase 1 was analysis. According to Branch (2009), to do the analysis, some procedures undertaken are to validate the Performance Gap, to determine instructional goals, to analyze learners, to audit available resources, to recommend potential delivery systems (including cost estimates), and to compose a project management plan. In this phase, the project team focused the need analysis on students as the main target audience and teachers as the one who will implement the syllabus. Analysis was done to find students' needs in learning English at Islamic primary school setting. Students' needs were conducted to determine their wants, lacks, and necessities.

Next, phase 2 was design. The purpose of this phase is to justify the correct completion and applicable testing methods (Branch, 2009). Syllabus was designed by considering the results of the need analysis initiated in the previous stage. Then, the results were verified to home room teachers to clarify the exact needs of students before proceeding to the design phase. This facet put its focus on planning and researching to define instructional objectives, strategies, and media. Unless done comprehensively, this instructional design will ruin the material construction in the development process.

The third phase was development. The purpose of the development phase is to achieve and approve the learning resources that will be necessary during the progress of the instructional design (Branch, 2009). Syllabus designers, in this phase, shifted their roles from course planner into course producers. To draft the syllabus, course designers selected topics, activities, and materials. Two outputs were undertaken in this instructional development, they were a syllabus detailing course design and a textbook as teaching material. The syllabus and book design were developed by involving school partners and a kid-book illustrator. Three topics were chosen to be developed.

RESULT

This project has resulted in a syllabus design and a book that integrates Islamic values into the CLIL model. The description of each phase is presented as follows. In the first phase of analysis, the project team (two lecturers with CLIL and TESOL expertise, and one lecturer with Islamic studies expertise) conducted Focus Group Discussion with school partner (homeroom teachers, Islamic education teachers and English teachers). The initial discussion concluded that the project team and the school stakeholders decided to design a student activity book for fourth grade. After having initial need analysis and FGD with the teachers, the project team and the teachers finally decided to design the activity books for fourth grade. The decision comes with several reasons such as 1) English subject is still required for school final examination; 2) the home-room teacher has already integrated several content lessons such as science, math, and civil education using the thematic books; and 3) English textbook is still needed to be adjusted with the students' skill and competence; and 4) the school has mandated the teachers to teach Islamic education through Al-Islam dan Muhammadiyah studies. Further, it was revealed from the FGD data that content and language teachers need a thematic-based syllabus and textbook that is friendly for them also for their students, in terms of level of language difficulties, appropriate topics, and easily-accessed material. The evidence is shown in the following excerpts.

Content Teacher:

".... The textbook is already given from the government such as this thematic book. Yet, in many ways, we still need to modify it because it is only general knowledge. We need to give additional materials. ... and I think providing students' workbooks will be very useful."
(FGD, translated version, homeroom teacher of four grade)

Language Teacher:

"for day-to-day teaching and learning, I usually design my own materials. ...searching from the Internet, modify it because there is no syllabus for English lessons. I tried to figure it out by myself. Designing syllabus or textbook with integrating content lesson topics will ease my job to prepare my materials."
(FGD, translated version, English teacher)

School principal:

"We haven't had a proper English textbook yet. We have once purchased textbooks from famous publishers. However, there were some reports from the parents that the price is not affordable. The homeroom teachers also reported that the materials are not suitable with the students' level of English competence. It is a real dilemma."
(FGD, translated version, school principal)

From the aforementioned evidence, both language teacher and content teachers stated that there is a need to design syllabus and teaching materials such as students' activity books which are based on the students' need and in relation to the thematic lessons. Further, the primary school teachers and the school principal

emphasized the importance of having a ready-to-use textbook that is friendly for them as well as their students in terms of level of language difficulty, appropriate topics, and easily accessible material.

The second phase of design resulted in three topics were selected for thematic-based syllabus that integrate Islamic values into the CLIL model, they were Caring for Living Things (*Peduli Terhadap Makhluk Hidup*), My Heroes, and My Dream Job. Those topics were adapted from a thematic book applied in the school partner under the Curriculum 2013. These topics were designed into three main subjects such as Science, Islamic Content, and Arts. Furthermore, before each topic, vocabulary-based activities were presented followed by three kinds of activities.

The next phase was development. In regards to the previous stage, the syllabus and book are described in the following explanation. Each selected theme is elaborated into five sub-themes based on the lesson such as getting started (general English), science, PPPKN (civil education) which is integrated with Islamic science, math and arts. Furthermore, there are three activities for each sub-theme including vocabulary building, short reading comprehension, and follow-up exercises.

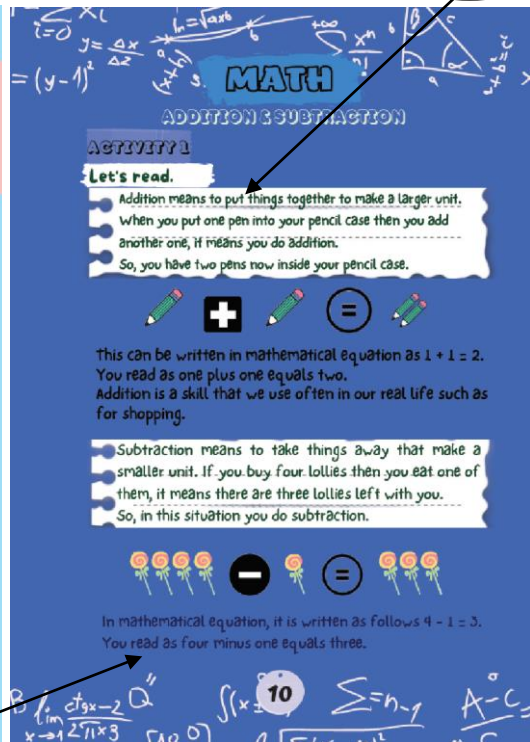
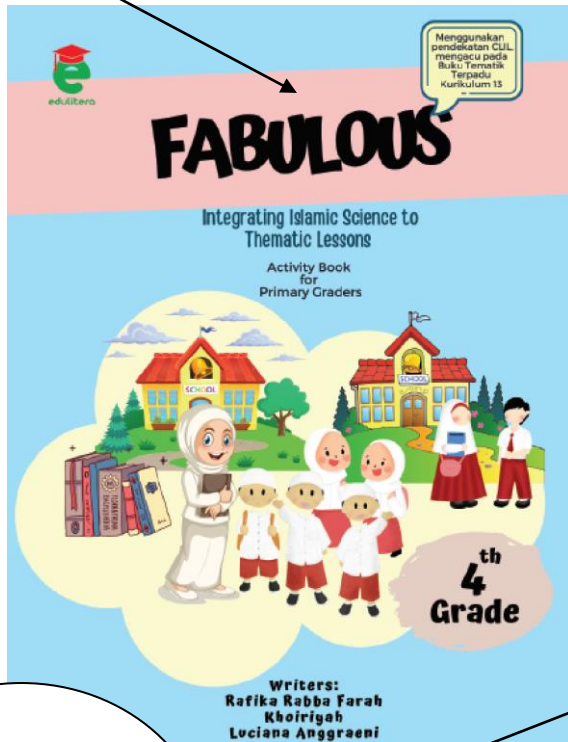
Meanwhile, to stimulate both content and language learning, the provided learning activities are in line with the framework of Content and Language Integrated Learning approach which includes content, cognition, communication, and culture. Hence, there are several varied learning activities such as vocabulary building (this activity aims to provide vocabularies related to the content), production (this session is projected to provide communication aspects such as speaking and performance), reading comprehension (this activity has the primary goals to integrate Islamic culture) and many more. For further detail, it can be seen in the following table.

Table 1. The syllabus of tree selected topics from thematic textbook that integrate Islamic values into CLIL materials

Theme	GETTING STARTED (General English)	SCIENCE	PPKN (Islamic science)	MATH (Basic Maths)	ARTS
TEMA 3: Peduli Terhadap Mahluk Hidup (Caring for Living Things)	Vocabulary (Listing): Living Vs Non Living Things	Short reading text: Living and Non Living Things	Reading: Allah the creator	Introduction: Addition and Substraction	Drawing: Nature Puzzle: Animals and their babies (Cat- Kitten, Cow- Calf, Chicken- Chick, Duck- Duckling, Rabbit-Bunny)
	Vocabulary in context: Loving Animals and Natures	Comprehension Question: Classifying Animals: Mammals, Insects, Reptiles, Birds	Worksheet: Animals mentioned in the Quran	Worksheet: Addition Under the Theme Animals	
	Production (Speaking and Writing): Plants I Eat	follow-up activity: Identifying Parts of Plants	production - speaking and/ writing: Herbal Medicine in the Quran and Hadith: Ginger, Olive, Black Seed, Dates Reading: Prophet Muhammad is a role model	follow-up activity: addition and Subtraction Under the Theme Plants	Craft: Parts of Flower
TEMA 5: Pahlawan- ku (My Hero)	Vocabulary: The characteristics of Hero	Short reading text: The Water Cycle	Worksheet: Biography of Muhammad	Introduction: Multiplication	Colouring: Water cycle
	Vocabulary in context: The Hero in Islam	Comprehension Question: True or False	production - speaking and/ writing: Biography of Prophet Muhammad	Worksheet: Multiplication Eight	Match The season
	Production (Speaking and Writing): Story Telling about Hero in Islam	follow-up activity: Identifying the weather	Reading: The famous Muslim scientists	follow-up activity: Worksheet Multiplication	Calligraph: Muhammad
TEMA 6: Cita-citaku (My Dream Job)	Vocabulary (word search): Job/occupations	Short reading text: Life cycle of animals	Worksheet: exercise based on the text (with pictures) "The famous Muslim scientists"	Introduction: Divisions	Craft: making caterpillar and butterfly
	vocabulary in context: Who am I (job and profession)	Comprehension questions: jumble sentences related to life cycle of animals	production - speaking and/ writing: hadits - Seeking the knowledge is an obligation upon every Muslim.	Worksheet: short story True or False (Divisions)	Painting: Ecosystem and Habitats
	(Production - speaking and/ writing): short introduction and talking about a dream job	follow-up activity: worksheets - life cycle of plans		follow-up activity: DIVISION (board games)	Planting: Planting a tree (save the earth)

The materials were adopted from thematic textbook for Grade 4.

The content knowledge includes science, math and Islamic education.



The learning activities are related to the framework of the 4C CLIL (content, communication, cognition and culture) and thematic learning (Curriculum 2013).

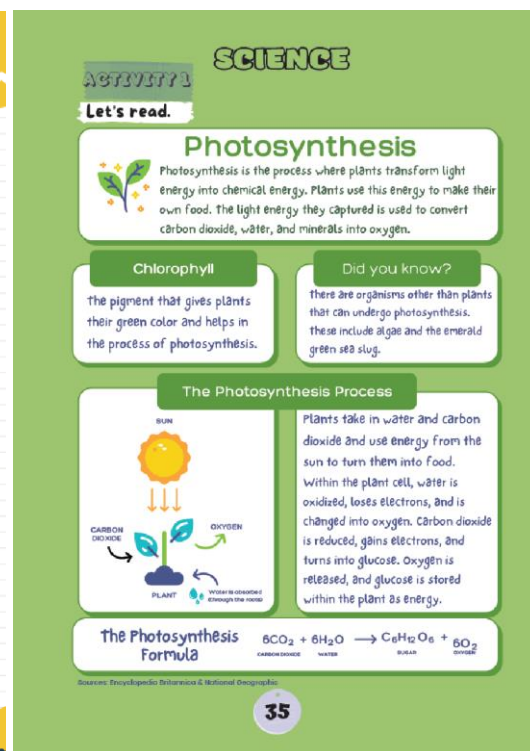
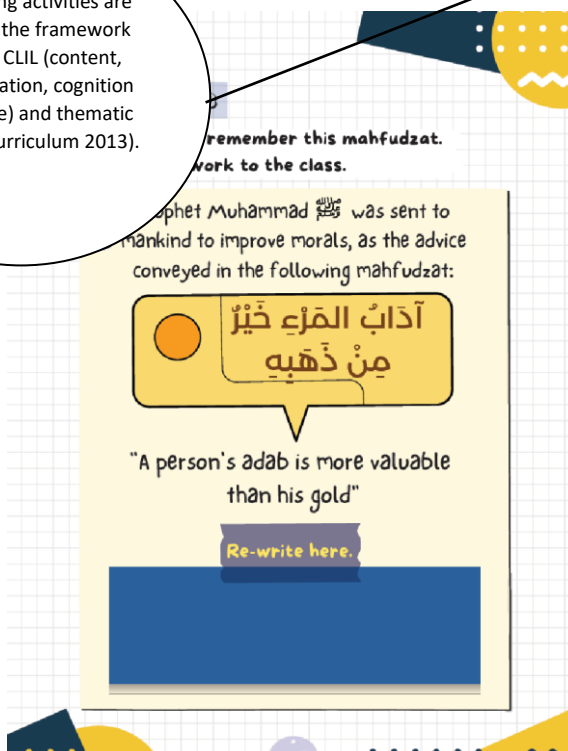


Figure 2. An exemplary of learning activities in the designed book

Considering the five phases in the ADDIE model, this project of syllabus design and textbook has reached the first cycle, namely Analysis, Design, and Development. Meanwhile, the second cycle of Implementation and Evaluation is still in its implementation process and not going to be detailed in this article.

DISCUSSION

CLIL materials commonly are similar to those in the ELT coursebook and subject textbook. Yet, in this study, the syllabus and book were designed by integrating thematic lessons "Curriculum 2013" as a mandatory teaching approach for primary school graders. These were supported by Khoiriyah (2018), Setyaningrum and Purwati (2020), and Waloyo et al. (2021). Their research confirmed that by considering the nature of thematic learning and the principles of CLIL, there are possibilities for adapting the CLIL approach in primary schools in Indonesia. This project also supports the previous work of Khoiriyah (2021). In her systematic literature review, CLIL approach is considered to be a promising way to improve students' learning outcomes in terms of both content comprehension and foreign language proficiency. As a result, many scholars in Indonesian EFL settings reported on their efforts to design the syllabus and teaching materials using the CLIL framework.

The syllabus was designed by integrating four aspects of the 4C framework including content, communication, cognition, and culture as is proposed by Coyle et al. (2010). The content knowledge includes science, math, Islamic content, and arts. Since the amount of CLIL materials depends on the school context, in this study, the materials were focused on vocabulary learning through word matching, gap filling, and so forth and at the world level with little communicative purpose. This model is justifiable because of the limited number of English lessons and the level of students' competence as is suggested by Ellison (2015). For the communication aspect, the learning activities for each theme are followed by speaking practice about the living and nonliving things in students' surroundings, their favorite heroes, and their dream job, also students' presentations. These activities are aimed to practice the vocabulary related to the content in production skills, either speaking or writing. Bentley (2010) encouraged that CLIL materials should provide activities for communicating the subject content orally as well as for supporting written or physical production. Further, in the cognition aspect, some worksheets are designed for stimulating students to have HOTS (higher-order thinking skills) activities such as in

math and science that ask students to analyze, evaluate, and create. Lastly, the most prominent aspect of this syllabus is culture. The project team was in attempt to introduce Islamic values into the materials related to the theme such as Allah is the creator, Muslim scientists, Muslim heroes and some related hadith. As a part of CLIL program, the materials are designed contextually about the school context by integrating local wisdom-based content, especially Islamic cultures and values as detailed in the syllabus. This can be done by integrating Islamic values in thematic units as CLIL context allows for "value-added" (Pokrivčáková & Sepešiová, 2015).

The result of this study is congruent to the study of Farah et.al (2020) puts a strong emphasis on the importance of developing an Islamic-based workbook for Islamic primary schools in English learning and teaching. This study also asserts that infusing Islamic values in the workbook is a way to find a school's own characteristics. As language teaching is exceptionally problematic to separate from its culture, designing a Muslim-friendly curriculum is one effort that Islamic primary school teachers need to undertake. To shed a light on this issue, Al-Attas (2005), a prominent Muslim scholar, affirms one main reason why Muslims need to find a new direction in designing their curriculum is that what Muslims do incorporate the-now and the hereafter, thus, if what Muslims learn contradicts to Islamic worldview, it has a serious consequence for their hereafter life. However, off the religious matters, Muslim (2007) found that students' familiarity with local context material can increase their skill and motivation in learning. This effort is significant to counterbalance the issue raised by Kachru (1985) saying that English materials are widely dominated by the inner circle authors (Shakouri and Esfandiari, 2015). It is to say that Western ideologies can be easily spread through English teaching and learning. Thus, as there is a clash of civilization between Muslim and Western culture, to produce our own textbook and design a contextualized syllabus that meet Muslim needs is our urgency.

CONCLUSION

The primary purpose of this study is to present instructional design that is Muslim-friendly for English learning and teaching by integrating Islamic contents into CLIL models so that Islamic primary schools, like the ones associated with the Muhammadiyah board, can find their new direction in designing syllabus and textbook. Thus, Islamic primary schools will have their specific content in their

curriculum and also, they will easily establish their characteristics in English learning and teaching.

In a nutshell, it is projected that the findings of this research enlighten the Muslim school organizers in producing instructional design by considering home culture (Muslim culture/value), and CLIL approach can be one way for its integration. It is also expected to provide pedagogical implications, which may be particularly relevant to teaching English for Muslim primary school graders. Additionally, further investigation and implementation of the CLIL approach in Islamic primary schools are needed.

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