CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

Education plays a crucial role in every child's life because it concerns their success in the future. Education is an act of disciplining and forming human character, which is carried out by delivering knowledge, training, and skills development through a learning process.[1] The critical role of education has even made the Indonesian government not hesitate to establish a policy for every child to be educated for at least 12 years in order to improve the quality of education in the country. According to Law Number 20 year, 2003, concerning the national education system, it is explained that apart from general education, there is also religious education, which prepares students to become individuals who can teach and practice their religious values. One form of religious education in Indonesia is Islamic boarding schools.[2]

Islamic boarding school is one of the Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia, which the government has officially recognized to increase faith and devotion to Allah SWT. This is proven by the Republic of Indonesia Law Number 18 year 2019 concerning Islamic Boarding Schools. In this regulation, it is explained that Islamic boarding schools are community-based institutions and were established by instilling Islamic teachings in them. These teachings aim to instill noble morals in the students and uphold the Islamic teachings of Rohmatan Lil'alamin, which are reflected in character or personality, such as humility, tolerance, moderation, and so on.[3]

The law also states that the Islamic boarding school education system is divided into *kitab kuning* studies, Islamic studies, and other systems that are integrated with general education. Starting from the transition period from the old order to the new order, Islamic boarding school education has become

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[1] P.O. Adesemowo and Tumininu Sotonade, *Basic of Education*, ed. P.O. Adesemowo, 2022.

[2] Indonesia, "Undang-Undang Nomor 20 Tahun 2003 Tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional" (8 Juli 2003).

[3] Indonesia, "Undang-Undang Nomor 18 Tahun 2019 Tentang Pesantren" (16 Oktober 2019).

increasingly structured by implementing not only a religious curriculum but also general subjects by implementing the national curriculum.[4] Determining the system for implementing this type of curriculum is based on each Islamic boarding school's policies.

Islamic boarding schools that integrate the national curriculum alongside the religious curriculum are a form of effort to create the nation's next generation who are not only literate in religious knowledge but also in general knowledge and have a balance between the two. The integration of the national curriculum in the Islamic boarding school environment is in the form of madrasas, which include Madrasa Ibtidaiyah (MI) equivalent to Elementary School level, Madrasa Tsanawiyah (MTs) equivalent to Junior High School, and Madrasa Aliyah (MA) equivalent to Senior High School. Graduates from madrasas have the same rights as school graduates: continuing their education to the next level.[5]

On the other hand, as is known, in the national curriculum, English is one of the general subjects taught to students. In the era of globalization, English has become one of the languages that plays a very important role. English is the language most widely used by speakers worldwide, both in daily conversations, business relations between countries, and so on. Therefore, English is called an international language. So, in education, including Islamic education, English is part of what is taught to equip students to use it in the future.

For example, the development of English learning in Islamic boarding schools can be used for preaching. This is of course, related to English for Islamic Studies, which is a branch of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Spreading Islamic teachings is an obligation for Islamic students. Regarding the steps for spreading Islamic teachings, not all communities

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[4] Ramli Rasyid, "The Integration of the National Curriculum into Pesantren Education System," *Journal of Islamic Civilization in Southeast Asia* 1, no. 2 (2012): 1–16.

[5] Muh Barid Nizarudin Wajdi, Maya Puspita Dewi, and Muhammad Irfanudin Kurniawan, "The Future of Pesantren as Islamic Education," *EDUCATIO: Journal of Education* 7, no. 2 (2022): 115–20, https://doi.org/10.29138/educatio.v7i2.806.

understand the use of Indonesian or Arabic.[6] Thus, English can be used as the language of da'wah so that the spread of Islamic teachings continues and is not hindered by language differences. Apart from that, mastering English can provide access for students who want to read Islamic books written in English.

Mastering English, which is a foreign language for students in Indonesia, certainly has its own challenges. This includes students in Islamic boarding schools. Moreover, students at Islamic boarding schools, or sometimes called santri, have different and more busy activity schedules than ordinary students. In fact, some of them argued that they did not find a correlation between Islamic education and the development of foreign languages, which caused the feeling of laziness in learning English to increase.[7]

In the context of learning English in the classroom, students often face a number of problems involving low interest in learning, lack of basic knowledge, an unsupportive environment, and difficulty in understanding learning concepts, which sometimes leads to loss of memory about the material that has been studied, and limited time or learning opportunities due to the students' busy schedules.[8] In its implementation, teachers must innovate to make English learning classes more easily accepted by students.

One form of innovation to solve this problem is developing the use of teaching media. A study showed the validity of the data: Based on the teacher's perspective, 32% stated that the use of learning media was important, and 68%

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[6] Dewi Masitah, "English Learning Innovation at Al-Yasini Integrated Islamic Boarding School Pasuruan," *Darussalam English Journal* I, no. 1 (2021): 1–20, https://doi.org/10.30739/dej.v1i1.1033.

[7] Rabiathul Adhabiyyah Sayed Abudhahir and Afida Mohamad Ali, "English for Islamic Studies: Should I Learn English? – From the Eyes of Islamic Studies Students," *LSP International Journal* 5, no. 1 (2018): 71–79, https://doi.org/10.11113/lspi.v5n1.65.

[8] Umar, "English Learning Difficulties Faced by Santri in Islamic Boarding School: An Analysis," *Journal of English Language and Literature* 6, no. 2 (2021): 51–58, https://doi.org/10.37110/jell.v6i02.124.

indicated that it was very important.[9] The learning media used must be related to the material to be taught so that it helps students to grasp the material well.

The teaching method using the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach involves various learning techniques, including realia medium. Realia, as an integral part of the CLT method, refers to teaching materials that generally consist of real objects around us, especially in the context of learning English. Realia's specialty lies in its ability to create a lively and dynamic learning atmosphere in the classroom. In contrast to conventional teaching materials, the use of realia is considered unique and interesting because it can utilize students' senses, such as seeing, smelling, hearing, touching, and even tasting real objects that are used as teaching media.[10]

In relation to Islamic boarding schools, delivering English learning material to students must be accompanied by Islamic content. This is because Islamic values are a characteristic of Islamic boarding schools, and material containing Islamic content is the need of students who are in an Islamic environment.[11] So far, Islamic content related to English subjects is still limited. Therefore, English teachers must be creative in collecting media that can integrate Islamic values, one of which is realia medium. In English subjects, the integration of Islamic values uses realia medium, one of which can be applied in label text material, which will be studied further in this research for more details.

The importance of realia in the learning context lies not only in its unique aspect but also in its contribution to increasing students' understanding of learning material. Teachers can create a deeper and more memorable learning experience by integrating realia according to learning content. Students are not only brought to imagine but are also directly

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[9] Rizka Indahyanti and Ali Wira Rahman, "Teachers ' Perception on the Use Of Teaching Media in English Classroom," *Journal of Education, Language Teaching and Science* 4, no. 2 (2022): 187–96.

[10] Campugan Belen H, *A Realia Approach in Teaching Interdisciplinary Concepts*, 2014.

[11] Alfu Nikmah, "Developing Speaking Material Using Islamic Contents in MA Salafiyah Kajen," *Journal of English Teaching and Learning Issues* 1, no. 1 (2018): 1–12, https://doi.org/10.21043/jetli.v1i1.3922.

involved in the learning experience by seeing, feeling, and interacting directly with real objects around them. Therefore, it can be concluded that using realia not only enlivens the classroom atmosphere but also makes it easier for students to remember and understand the concepts taught in learning. Apart from that, realia is very useful for teachers in teaching when the things they want to convey to students are not stated in the textbook.[12] One of the advantages of realia is that it can improve students' vocabulary mastery. As is known, vocabulary mastery is very important before learning further skills such as reading, writing, speaking, and listening. According to Michelle Maxom, several real objects are included in realia, namely clothing, food, household items, even musical instruments, and so on.[13]

Based on an interview with Mrs. Suningsih as a teacher of English education subjects at Al-Hidayah Islamic Boarding School Gebog Kudus showed that the learning process in class does not run optimally if only using traditional methods or lecture methods. So, she tried to apply her innovation, namely by using realia as a media for teaching English. Therefore, researchers are interested in learning outcomes using realia medium and want to research more deeply about realia medium in English classrooms both through the perspectives of English teachers and students at Al-Hidayah Islamic Boarding School Gebog Kudus.[14] At the same time, researchers want to know the integration of Islamic values through English language learning, considering that Islamic values are necessary for students in Islamic boarding schools.

Based on the background explanation above, the researcher believes that the importance of conducting this research is to discover how realia medium can act as a media in integrating Islamic values in English language teaching. So, this research can be useful for teachers and prospective teachers outside the classroom as an inspiration for using realia teaching

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[12] Michelle Maxom, *Teaching English as a Foreign Language for Dummies* (New Jersey: Wiley, 2012), 121.

[13] Michelle Maxom, *Teaching English as a Foreign Language for Dummies*, 335.

[14] Suningsih, Interview with English Teacher of Al-Hidayah Islamic Boarding School Gebog Kudus, November 19, 2023.

media. The novelty or difference between this research and several similar existing studies is that it focused on the application of realia medium in a *Tahfidz* class in an Islamic boarding school by providing additional material in the form of developing Islamic values which are still related to the material presented as well as the media used. This also proves that English language education can be integrated into Islamic education. Therefore, researchers conducted this research titled **"The Use of Realia Medium to Integrate Islamic Values in English Classroom: A Qualitative Study at Al-Hidayah Islamic Boarding School Gebog Kudus".**

B. Research Focus and Scope

This research focused on the use of realia or real-objects as an English learning and teaching media. Researchers found several previous studies on the use of realia in elementary and middle schools, which focused on skill development in regular classes. Meanwhile, in this research, the researcher tried to explore the integration of Islamic values by using realia as an English learning media, specifically in label text material at Islamic boarding schools and focused on the Tahfidz class. The scope of this research is comprised of caretakers of Al-Hidayah Islamic Boarding School, English teachers, and several students from the Tahfidz class at the Al-Hidayah Islamic boarding school Gebog Kudus.

C. Research Questions

Based on the description of the background above, the following are the primary issues of this research:
1. How is the implementation of realia medium for integrating Islamic values in English Language Teaching (ELT)?
2. What are the supporting factors and obstacles faced in utilizing realia as a medium in English Classroom?

D. Research Objectives

From the explanation of the research problem above, the objectives of this research can be expressed as below:
1. To find out how realia can be used as a medium for integrating Islamic values in English Language Teaching (ELT).

2. To identify the supporting factors and obstacles faced in using realia as a medium in the English Classroom.

E. Research Significances

1. Theoretical Significances
   a. This research is intended to collect actual information regarding media development in teaching English directly from teachers who have implemented it. The media discussed is realia.
   b. With this research, it is hoped that progress can be made in the development of teaching media, especially in English subjects, so that improving teaching techniques can have a positive impact on students' learning motivation and academic achievement.
   c. This research is also intended to find information regarding the integration of Islamic values in an Islamic boarding school through the use of religious media in English classes so that students continue to receive Islamic material while learning general science.
2. Practical Significances
   a. This research described realia, a medium that is easy to find and apply and can inspire educators to pioneer innovations in implementing English language teaching in the classroom.
   b. This research aimed to provide facilities that support students in improving their understanding and ability to speak English.
   c. With this research, the researcher seeks to provide a valuable referential contribution for further research, especially regarding teaching media in the context of English language teaching.

F. Definition of Key Terms

1. Islamic Boarding School
   Islamic boarding school is a religious educational institution in Indonesia that teaches Islamic values and aims to spread the Islamic religion. The Islamic boarding school building is a dormitory, which is a place to live and carry out activities for the *santri*.

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2. Islamic Values

Islamic values cannot be separated from the lives of Muslims. This is because Islamic values contain basic teachings that serve as principles for Muslims living their daily lives. Islamic values consist of Aqidah values, Sharia values, and moral values.

3. English Language Teaching (ELT)

English Language Teaching is distributing knowledge about the English language to students, which can be in the form of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL), Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL), and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL).

4. Realia medium

Realia is one of the teaching media in English classes that can provide students with a direct experience. Realia are objects that can generally be found in everyday environments which can be interpreted as objects or entities that originate from real life.[15]

G. Organization of Thesis

1. The Front Pages

This page consisted of a cover, approval pages, declaration, abstract, *abstrak* in Bahasa Indonesia, motto, dedication page, acknowledgements, preface, and table of contents.

2. The Body (Content Section)

a. Chapter I (Introduction)

Chapter I of this research described the research background, research focus and scope, research questions, research objectives, research significances, the definition of key terms, and organization of the thesis.

b. Chapter II (Review of Related Literature)

Chapter II contained a review of theories related to the study topic, a framework of thinking, and a review of previous studies.

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[15] Rengganis Siwi Amumpuni and Brigitta Septarini Rahmasari, "Enhancing Students' English Ability by Using Realia," *Jurnal Pendidikan Edutama (JPE)* 6, no. 1 (2019): 59–64.

c. Chapter III (Research Methodology)

This chapter explained the methods used in the research process, including types and approaches, research settings, research subjects, data sources, data collection techniques, data validity testing, data analysis techniques, and research ethical considerations.

d. Chapter IV (Research Findings and Discussions)

In this chapter, the researcher presented the results and discussion, which contains a description of the research object, a description of research data, and an analysis of research data.

e. Chapter V (Conclusions and Recommendations)

Chapter V consisted of conclusions and supporting suggestions for both participants and future researchers.

3. The Closing Pages

This page is the final part of the research, consisting of a bibliography, appendixes, and curriculum vitae.