

QUR'ANIC INSPIRATION FOR LEARNING LANGUAGE: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Language learning is a crucial phase in human cognitive development, as described in the revelations of the Qur'an. Verse QS. Al-Baqarah/ 2:31 illustrates how Allah SWT gave Prophet Adam As knowledge of the names (of objects) as a form of scientific initiation, which provides deep inspiration regarding a holistic and direct approach to language learning. This study aims to compare the inspirational approach of this verse with the Direct Method (DM) in modern language teaching, which prioritizes the direct use of the target language without translation, through verbal, visual, and real-life context interactions. The research methodology is qualitative with a hermeneutic approach, which involves the interpretation of the Qur'an (based on sources such as Tafsir Ibn Kathir and Tafsir al-Mishbah) and pedagogical literature analysis. The comparison focuses on key learning elements, such as the rejection of rigid and traditional grammatical methods, and an emphasis on direct experience and natural repetition to build language competence. The results of the study reveal similarities and differences between the two approaches: both emphasize direct experience and authentic interaction, but inspiration from the Qur'an enriches the Direct Method (DM) with a spiritual dimension, in which the learning process is seen as a divine mandate that triggers intrinsic motivation. The practical implications include the integration of Qur'an values.

Keywords: Qur'anic Inspiration, Learning Language, A Comparative Study

ABSTRAK

Pembelajaran bahasa merupakan fase krusial dalam perkembangan kognitif manusia, sebagaimana dijelaskan dalam wahyu Al-Qur'an. Ayat QS. Al-Baqarah/ 2:31 menggambarkan bagaimana Allah SWT memberikan pengetahuan tentang nama-nama (benda) kepada Nabi Adam AS sebagai bentuk inisiasi ilmiah, yang memberikan inspirasi mendalam mengenai pendekatan holistik dan langsung dalam pembelajaran bahasa. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk membandingkan pendekatan inspiratif ayat ini dengan Metode Langsung (DM) dalam pengajaran bahasa modern, yang memprioritaskan penggunaan langsung bahasa target tanpa terjemahan, melalui interaksi verbal, visual, dan konteks kehidupan nyata. Metodologi penelitian bersifat kualitatif dengan pendekatan hermeneutik, yang melibatkan interpretasi Al-Qur'an (berdasarkan sumber-sumber seperti Tafsir Ibn Kathir dan Tafsir al-Mishbah) dan analisis literatur pedagogis. Perbandingan berfokus pada unsur-unsur pembelajaran kunci, seperti penolakan terhadap

metode gramatikal yang kaku dan tradisional, serta penekanan pada pengalaman langsung dan pengulangan alami untuk membangun kompetensi bahasa. Hasil penelitian mengungkapkan kesamaan dan perbedaan antara kedua pendekatan: keduanya menekankan pengalaman langsung dan interaksi autentik, tetapi inspirasi dari Al-Qur'an memperkaya Metode Langsung (DM) dengan dimensi spiritual, di mana proses pembelajaran dipandang sebagai mandat ilahi yang memicu motivasi intrinsik. Implikasi praktisnya mencakup integrasi nilai-nilai Al-Qur'an.

Kata Kunci: Inspirasi Al-Qur'an, Pembelajaran Bahasa, Studi Perbandingan

A. Introduction

Language serves as the primary instrument of global communication, especially in the digital and globalization era, where foreign language proficiency and skills, such as English or Arabic, have become essential requirements. This mastery facilitates broader access to knowledge, career opportunities, and cross-cultural interactions. According to a UNESCO report (2020), more than 700 million individuals are learning a second language; however, the main challenge faced is the effectiveness of teaching techniques, which are often lacking in context and fail to motivate students.

In Indonesia, the education system faces crucial issues, including the relatively low language skills of students, as reflected in a reading literacy score of 359 points, which is below the global average. Based on the 2018 PISA results, Indonesia

ranked 69th out of 80 participating countries, with literacy scores below the average of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), accompanied by a lack of reinforcement of local and religious values. This situation necessitates a comprehensive educational approach that not only focuses on cognitive dimensions but also integrates spiritual and ethical aspects to achieve more holistic and sustainable learning. In QS. Al-Baqarah/2: 31:

وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى
الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

(And He taught Adam all the names (of things), then He showed them to the angels, and (Allah) said: "Tell Me the names of these things, if you are truthful. In the interpretations of Ibn Kathir and Al-Tabari, it is explained that this verse describes the process of language learning as the direct imparting of knowledge from

Allah to Adam, peace be upon him, which included the introduction of names (vocabulary) through real contexts, without intermediaries (Ibnu Kathiir, 1999), (Al-Tabari, n.d.).

Allah carried out teaching (*ta'lim*) directly, similar to the immersion approach, in which the student, Prophet Adam As, acquired knowledge through observation and direct interaction with objects (such as the names of objects). This process of demonstration to the angels, followed by questions from Allah SWT, reflects the element of formative assessment to evaluate understanding, while integrating spiritual (*tauhid*) and ethical aspects, so that language learning goes beyond mere linguistic skills.

The Qur'an, as a linguistic miracle (*i'jaz*), provides a timeless learning model and places language on a noble level, as explicitly mentioned as one of the signs of God's existence (Saifuddin, 2022). The language learning method in the Qur'an is representative and can be applied as a foundation in language teaching in general, including First Language (L1), Second Language (L2), and Foreign Language (FL),

starting with a listening and imitation approach (Dariyanto & Nabil, 2023).

The Direct Method (DM), which developed from the Natural Method by Francois Gouin in the late 19th century and was popularized by Berlitz is a language teaching approach that prioritizes the exclusive use of the target language without translation into the mother tongue (Richards & Rodgers, 2007); (Natalia, 2024). The teachers are expected to deliver material through visual demonstrations, activities, real-life situations, and pictures (Ratminingsih, 2021). Its main principles include teaching through direct interaction (immersion), focusing on vocabulary and grammar in real contexts rather than memorization, and active evaluation through questions and verbal responses. (Alfaruq & Hasyim, 2017) stated though effective in developing speaking and listening skills, this method often lacks emphasis on cultural or spiritual aspects, making it less relevant in the context of religion-based education in Indonesia.

The application of the Direct Method (DM) in English language curricula, such as the Merdeka

Curriculum, shows a low success rate without local adaptation (Kemendikbud, 2022). However, other studies (Ramdhani & Waluyo, 2020); (Awaliah et al., 2025) indicate that the Direct Method (DM) is effective in accelerating Arabic language skills, both spoken and written, by encouraging students to think and respond directly in the target language.

QS. Al-Baqarah/2:31 implies the concept of “direct teaching” which is in line with the Direct Method (DM), such as the use of direct context without translation; however, this verse adds a theological and ethical dimension that is absent in modern methods, thus opening up opportunities for integration (Labasor & Hestiana, 2023). The linguistic aspect in this context also plays a role in explaining the core of religious teachings, reinforcing values of faith through a linguistic approach.

Most research on the Qur'an tends to focus on theological interpretation, while integration with modern linguistic studies has not been conducted intensively. A specific comparison between the learning model in this verse and various methodologies, including the Direct

Method (DM), is an important and relevant alternative to enrich pedagogical practices (Irshadun Mutakin, 2025); (Ruslan & Musbaing, 2023). This comparison has the potential to produce a more effective hybrid learning model for students, by increasing motivation through Islamic principles and supporting the development of an inclusive national curriculum, especially in facing post-pandemic educational challenges.

How can the principles of language learning in QS. Al-Baqarah/ 2:31 be compared with the Direct Method (DM), and what is its impact on language teaching in educational institutions? This research is expected to bridge Islamic heritage with modern education, supporting the achievement of Indonesia Emas 2045 through quality education. The main sources include interpretations of the Qur'an, and language teaching methods books (H. D. Brown, 2007); (J. D. Brown, 1995) and journals related to language learning.

The Qur'an is not only considered a holy book, but also a rich source of inspiration in the fields of linguistics and pedagogy. Theoretically, language which includes the dimensions of lughah

(vocabulary) and *lisān* (speech) is positioned as a divine gift (*minnatullah*), as explained in QS. Ar-Rahman/ 55: 4, which links the process of human creation with the ability of *bayān* (explanation or communication). This concept places language learning as an essential component in fulfilling the human and spiritual mandate of mankind (Al-Attas, 2021).

Recent Islamic studies examine the concept of *al-Balāghah* (rhetoric and eloquence) in the Qur'an as a paradigm of perfect communication. Various studies emphasize how elements such as narrative structure (such as *qāṣaṣ al-Qur'ān*), word choice (lexicon), and stylistic variations in the Qur'an can be a source of inspiration for the development of four language competencies listening, speaking, reading, and writing with a focus on the effectiveness and aesthetics of communication (Shibah, 2004). Thus, Qur'anic inspiration in this context refers to the principles of ethos, intrinsic motivation, and linguistic superiority that can be integrated into contemporary language pedagogy practices.

The study such as an article by Muhammad Abdel Haleem in *Understanding the Qur'an: Themes and Style* explained that Qur'anic inspiration can to be implemented into foreign language learning methodologies. Haleem highlights how Qur'anic ethos principles such as empathy and honesty in communication can be applied to overcome motivation challenges in language classrooms (Haleem, 2010). Field research by educators, such as in the *International Journal of Islamic Education* the study by Ahmad et al., (2018), shows that Qur'an-based programs improve the language skills of Muslim students, with a focus on holistic communication effectiveness, including nonverbal and contextual aspects (Supriatna, 2025).

Overall, this literature review reveals that Qur'anic inspiration in language learning transcends technical aspects, offering an ethical and motivational framework that enriches pedagogy. Works such as Al-Attas and Shihab emphasize spiritual integration to enhance effectiveness, while empirical research demonstrates practical applications in skill development. However, the main challenge is

cultural context adaptation, where this approach needs to be tailored to the diversity of global students. This study encourages further research to measure the long-term impact on teaching-learning language methods.

B. Method

This study uses an interpretive qualitative approach that emphasizes in-depth analysis of sacred texts and educational literature, without involving quantitative measurements, to reveal contextual meanings in language learning. Hermeneutics is applied as the main method for interpreting verses from the Qur'an, with a focus on historical-cultural interpretation and understanding, as developed by Hans-Georg Gadamer in his work *Truth and Method* (Gadamer, 1975). Gadamer emphasizes dialogue between the text and the interpreter to produce philosophical insights. Furthermore, descriptive content analysis is used to elaborate on the principles of the Direct Method (DM) according to Richards and Rodgers in *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching* (Richards & Rodgers, 2007), which

outlines elements such as oral teaching and cultural immersion.

A thematic comparison is conducted to identify elements of language learning across sources, including direct teaching, evaluation, and spiritual dimensions, with reference to the comparative framework in Islamic education studies as proposed by Al-Attas in *Islam and Secularism* (Al-Attas, 1978), thus enabling an innovative synthesis between modern pedagogical approaches and religious values. This methodology ensures validity through source triangulation and researcher reflection, supporting interdisciplinary exploration relevant to the development of a Qur'an-based language education curriculum.

C. Finding and Discussion

INSPIRATION FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING: ANALYSIS OF VERSE AND INTERPRETATION OF QS. AL-BAQARAH/ 2: 31

The Qur'an serves as the primary reference in Islamic education, offering a comprehensive approach to learning by integrating language as a key instrument for understanding divine creation. QS. Al-Baqarah/2:31 is the main focus

because it illustrates the process of *ta'lim*, namely the teaching of language to Prophet Adam 'Alaihis salam, which reflects profound and timeless pedagogical principles.

Ibn Kathir (d. 774 AH) in Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azhim, explains this verse as evidence of the superiority of humans over angels through the direct imparting of knowledge of names (*asmā'*) from Allah, which involves contextual teaching without translation and evaluation through questions to encourage active learning and spiritual dimensions (Ibnu Kathiir, 1999). This approach not only emphasizes direct interaction, but also builds the foundation for a responsive learning model, which can be linked to contemporary practices to increase student engagement.

In contrast, Al-Tabari (d. 310 AH) in Jami' al-Bayan emphasizes that *ta'lim* includes vocabulary acquisition through observation of real objects, similar to immersion techniques, with the main objective of strengthening the principle of *tawhid* (Al-Tabari, n.d.). This analysis broadens the understanding of how this method integrates fundamental, empirical, and spiritual elements, offering opportunities for further exploration in

the context of contemporary education, where the incorporation of direct observation can enrich language curricula.

According to Shihab in his interpretation, this verse is interpreted as a model of inclusive education that unites language with ethical values, where language learning transcends mere technical skills to become a means of understanding the essence of divinity (Shihab, 2002). Research (Al-Faruq et al., 2024) highlights the linguistic *i'jaz* of the Qur'an, with verses such as this being applicable in contemporary Arabic language teaching through elements of memory reinforcement in a divine context, thus opening up new avenues for exploring the integration of spiritual aspects into innovative learning methods.

Furthermore, a study (Izzan & Nuraeni, 2023) in the Masagi journal analyzes Qur'anic verses related to *ta'lim*, including QS. Al-Baqarah/2: 31, as a contextual learning process that uses learning media with intensive introduction to *asma'* [names] as an important requirement. According to the study, this verse is the foundation of real-object-based learning media and integrates empirical and spiritual experiences. However, this study

focuses more on exploring contextual learning media and linking theological dimensions and integrating them with specific methods. Overall, this analysis underlines the importance of synthesizing classical interpretations with modern approaches in order to create a more inclusive and relevant hybrid learning model in today's era of global education.

THE DIRECT METHOD (DM) PRINCIPLE IN LANGUAGE TEACHING

The Direct Method (DM) stands out as a reformative approach in the field of foreign language teaching, consciously shifting the focus from rigid traditional methods to more natural and contextual practices. It is a direct response to the shortcomings of the Grammar-Translation Method, which is often criticized for its excessive emphasis on grammar rules, literal translation, and lack of authentic interaction. The Direct Method (DM) introduces a new paradigm that prioritizes the use of the target language as a means of everyday communication (Setiyadi, 2006). This approach, first developed by Francois Gouin in the 1880s and popularized by Maximilian Berlitz, aims to mimic the process of natural

language acquisition, similar to how children learn their mother tongue, through direct exposure, interaction, and hands-on experience without relying on translation (Richards & Rodgers, 2007).

The Direct Method (DM) emphasizes the natural use of the target language by integrating contextual elements, such as visual demonstrations, physical movements, and direct conversation, to build direct associations between words and everyday reality. This contrasts with the rigidity of the Grammar-Translation Method, which tends to isolate language elements (such as grammar rules and vocabulary lists) from practical contexts, resulting in mechanical learning that is less relevant to real communication needs (H. D. Brown, 2007). Thus, the Direct Method (DM) not only responds to these shortcomings but also reforms the learning process by promoting active student engagement, where language is learned through direct and responsive practice, rather than mere memorization or structural analysis.

The advantage of the Direct Method (DM) lies in its ability to improve language retention and fluency through a contextual

approach, which allows students to relate vocabulary and sentence structures to real-life situations, thereby accelerating the development of speaking and listening skills (Sahkholid Nasution et al., 2023). The Direct Method (DM) is effective in creating a more dynamic learning environment, but its application requires adaptation to suit specific cultural or educational contexts, such as in Indonesia, where the integration of local values can enrich the method (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2022). Overall, the Direct Method (DM) not only represents a structural reform in language teaching but also a more humane and effective evolution that remains relevant in today's era of educational globalization.

According to Richards & Rodgers (2007) in their book *Approach and Methods in Language Teaching*, the Direct Method (DM), also known as the Natural Method, was established by Francois Gouin in the 1880s and later promoted by Maximilian Berlitz. This approach prohibits the use of the students' native language, focusing on visual demonstrations, physical movements, and direct conversation to build vocabulary and grammar through real

contexts. Its core principle is "No translation, direct association between words and things," which ensures a direct association between words and objects.

(H. D. Brown, 2007) in *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching* outlines key elements such as direct instruction, inductive approach, understanding grammar through active practice, and oral assessment based on question and answer. This approach has been proven effective in improving foreign language speaking and listening skills, as supported by various studies, including (Sahkholid Nasution et al., 2023); (Jazuli et al., n.d.); (Widianingsih & Listyaningrum, 2019); (Sinta & Uyun, 2023), which also highlight similarities with Total Physical Response (TPR) in utilizing physical and contextual interactions.

A review by the Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud, 2022) in the *Merdeka Curriculum Report* shows that the Direct Method (DM) is very effective for developing listening and speaking skills in English language teaching; however, this approach is less than optimal if the goal is to strengthen comprehensive reading and writing skills. Although not detailed in the report, the principles of

the Direct Method (DM) are in line with the vision of the Merdeka Curriculum, which encourages collaborative and interactive learning and the development of student abilities through the integration of various methods. This curriculum encourages teachers to combine these approaches to improve students' communication skills.

Research by the Ministry of Education and Culture (2022) in the context of the Merdeka Curriculum reveals that the Direct Method (DM) is applied in English teaching at the secondary education level, despite facing challenges such as limited teaching materials and low student motivation. A study (Perkasa, 2025) in the P4I journal concluded that the direct method (DM) is a potential approach for Arabic language learning, but its effectiveness is highly dependent on the conditions of implementation and the readiness of students and educators. From the meta-study above, the comparison of the Quranic perspective with the Direct Method (DM) is a representative study to be reviewed in order to integrate theological aspects and other dimensions.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS BETWEEN QS. AL-BAQARAH/2:31 AND THE DIRECT METHOD (DM)

Several studies have investigated the synergy between Islamic sources and contemporary pedagogical approaches, although specific comparisons between QS. Al-Baqarah/2:31 and the Direct Method (DM) are still relatively limited (Setyawan, 2023). In his work, Setyawan (2023) describes how the Qur'an is not only a holy book but also a guide for developing foreign language learning through audio-lingual techniques. He describes the stages of this process, including curriculum analysis, vocabulary teaching that integrates pronunciation, repetition, listening, speaking, reading, writing, and presentation, thereby making foreign language learning more structured, simple, and interesting when based on the perspective of the Qur'an.

(Mufidah et al., 2025) This Quran-based language education model combines Islamic teaching principles with contemporary learning methodologies, including an audio-lingual approach that emphasizes verbal repetition and the use of situational contexts to deepen

linguistic understanding. The similarities identified in the aspect of repetition: the repetition of Qur'anic verses for memorization and context through the application of authentic narratives or scenarios from the holy text make this model pedagogically effective. However, the moral dimension, which includes ethics, integrity, and spiritual values, provides a unique feature compared to secular methods that tend to focus on cognitive mastery and development. The implementation of Qur'anic values not only encourages intrinsic motivation in students through the reinforcement of spiritual goals, but also forms a holistic learning ecosystem that integrates cognitive, affective, and ethical components. This model can be adopted in Arabic language or Islamic studies curricula, with the prospect of reducing boredom and improving long-term memory.

The study (Zefrizen et al., 2024) explains that the process of *ta'lim al-asma'* (teaching the names of objects) to Prophet Adam AS, as written in QS. Al-Baqarah/2: 30-31, plays a fundamental role in functional and cognitive aspects. Within a hermeneutical framework, this teaching (Allah SWT—names of

objects—Adam AS) serves as an epistemological foundation for humanity while also validating Adam's appointment as *Khalifah fil Ardh*. The methodological aspect of this process shows a strong parallelism with the basic principles of the Direct Method (DM) or Natural Method in language teaching. DM operates based on the principle of direct association between the target language (*al-asma'*) and real objects, concepts, or actions, without the intervention of translation from the mother tongue (Hermawan, 2011). This method explicitly relies on visual media and demonstrations that can be equated with the verbal context '*aradhum*' (showing them) in verse 31 as an essential mechanism for linking linguistic symbols with empirical reality. Several studies focused on comparative microanalysis, specifically comparing the direct method (DM) with the interpretation of the *ta'lim al-asma'* process in QS. Al-Baqarah/2: 31, suggest similarities and differences between the two. However, integrating fundamental Islamic values into a coherent interdisciplinary language learning model and demonstrating substantial methodological

approaches in learning is a necessity as a philosophical commonality.

Overall, the literature shows that although there are a number of studies on linguistic i'jaz in the Qur'an (Al-Faruq et al., 2024), the application of specific methods such as the Direct Method (DM) has not been explored in depth. A fundamental problem that arises is the lack of comparative

analysis to develop a hybrid model, especially in the Indonesian context, where 87.13% of the population is Muslim (BPS, 2025). This study is designed to address this shortcoming by emphasizing the integration of spiritual and modern approaches to enrich a more efficient and relevant language learning process.

Tabel 1: Comparison of Language Learning between QS. AL-Baqarah/2:31 with the Direct Method (DM)

No	Learning Aspects	Comparison	Equations	Difference
1	Teaching Methods	QS. AL-Baqarah/2:31	Emphasizing direct word-object associations, avoiding abstraction	Directly (ta'lim) through real contexts (observation of object names).
		Direct Method (DM)		Direct immersion without translation, using visual demonstrations/movements
2	Evaluation	QS. AL-Baqarah/2:31	Formative assessment through verbal interaction, focusing on student output	Verbal questions to test comprehension (Adam's response to the angel)
		Direct Method (DM)		Oral dialogue and teacher-student questions and answers
3	Focus and Contents	QS. AL-Baqarah/2:31	Starting with context vocabulary	The verse adds theological spiritual meaning (tauhid).
		Direct Method (DM)		
4	Motivation and Goals	QS. AL-Baqarah/2:31	Interpretation of Al-Baqarah/2: 31 and the Direct Method (DM) of learning through a direct, immersion-based approach, which makes	QS. Al-Baqarah:31 presents a holistic and comprehensive language teaching model: spiritual, ethical, and eschatological dimensions; the Direct Method (DM) is effective in oral immersion (speaking/listening) through active facilitators, but lacks ethical dimensions because it is pragmatic-secular,
		Direct Method (DM)		

			language teaching a natural and effective process.	focusing on worldly efficiency.
5	Skill	QS. AL-Baqarah/2 :31	Both approaches emphasize direct experience (such as showing an object while naming it), where speaking and listening serve as the primary means of testing and reinforcing understanding before moving on to other types.	This verse explicitly mentions only the teaching of names (knowledge). Oral communication skills (speaking) are only implied.
		Direct Method (DM)		
6	Role of teachers	QS. AL-Baqarah/2 :31	Allah SWT acts as the Perfect Teacher and ultimate role model; in the Direct Method (DM), the teacher acts as an active facilitator who guides students interactively without domination.	Allah SWT as the perfect teacher and role model
		Direct Method (DM)		Humans (teachers as active facilitators)

D. Conclusion

A comparative study examining the pedagogical basis in QS.AI-

Baqarah/2: 31 with the Direct Method (DM) in language learning reveals a fundamental epistemological coherence between fundamental

religious texts and contemporary linguistic methodological approaches. The Qur'anic interpretation that Allah SWT taught Prophet Adam AS the names of all things (wa'allama Adam al-asma'a kullaha) emphasizes that lexical competence (al-asma') is an essential prerequisite for discursive knowledge and functional communication. This similarity is illustrated through the harmony between direct and demonstrative teaching methods described in the verse, namely correlating terminology with entities or concepts of reality without the intervention of translation or excessive grammatical structural emphasis, which are core characteristics of the Direct Method (DM). This study also found that the Direct Method (DM) implicitly leads to a tauhid (unity-based) pedagogy that emphasizes the simultaneous association between linguistic representation and meaning. This principle serves to facilitate the development of authentic thinking and expression skills in the target language. With the goal of contextual and natural language acquisition, both the interpretation of QS.Al-Baqarah/2: 31 and the Direct Method (DM) prioritize vocabulary mastery as an

essential foundation for achieving holistic language competence.

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