Applying Contextual Teaching Strategies to Boost Learning Interest in Religious Education at SMP Muhammadiyah Mayangan, Probolinggo

Ahmad Fuad Afifi[1), Andriana[2)
UIN Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq Jember[1], Universitas Islam KH Ruhiat Cipasung[2]
fuadafifi123@gmail.com, andriana@unik-cipasung.ac.id

Abstract:
The Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach integrates academic material with students' real-world experiences, encouraging them to apply their knowledge in daily life. CTL fosters natural learning through active student participation in projects rather than traditional teacher-centered instruction. This approach emphasizes students as active learners, enhancing their engagement and understanding. Learning interest, defined as a stable tendency to engage with specific activities, plays a vital role in shaping students' academic attitudes. Educators play a crucial role in nurturing this interest. This study explores three key aspects of CTL in Islamic religious education at Muhammadiyah Mayangan Middle School, Probolinggo: planning, implementation, and evaluation. Data was gathered through field research methods, including interviews, observations, and documentation, supported by primary and secondary sources. Findings reveal that lesson planning incorporates CTL strategies to create structured and engaging lessons. The implementation of CTL includes seven components: constructivism, questioning, discovery, modeling, learning communities, reflection, and authentic assessment, all aimed at fostering meaningful learning experiences. Evaluation methods extend beyond written tests to include active classroom participation, such as expressing opinions, answering questions, and participating in quizzes. The results highlight the effectiveness of CTL strategies in increasing student interest and engagement in Islamic religious education.

Keywords: *Character, Implementation, Application. Learning Strategy, Interest in Learning*

Introduction

The Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach is a learning concept that helps teachers link the material taught to the real-world situations of students and encourages students to make connections between the knowledge they have and its application in their lives as family and community members. The advantage of this approach is that learning outcomes are expected to be natural, in the form of student activities and experiences, rather than a transfer of knowledge from teacher to student.[1] Currently, the application of CTL learning is often promoted in training sessions with the hope of positively influencing learning outcomes. The CTL approach is an alternative learning approach where educators position students as subjects, not objects of learning.

---

[1] Muhammad Iwan Abdi, "Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) dalam Pembelajaran PAI", Dinamika Ilmu 11.1 (2011), 9.

Based on initial observations and interviews with Islamic Education teachers at Muhammadiyah Middle School, it was found that teachers still play a dominant role in the learning activities of Islamic Education, whereas students are less active. This is evident in Islamic Education classes where teachers tend to deliver material while students listen and receive the information presented by the teacher. During the learning process, it is rare for students to ask questions even if they do not understand the material. Additionally, many students are not yet confident enough to express their opinions when asked by the teacher. Students also often feel bored during the lessons and lack interest, possibly because they cannot see the relevance or function of the material in their daily lives.

Given the various issues faced by students at Muhammadiyah Mayangan Middle School in Probolinggo City, effective efforts are needed to address them. One effort is to find a learning approach in Islamic Education that can help students see the benefits of the material in their daily lives. An alternative learning approach is the CTL (Contextual Teaching and Learning) approach. By increasing students' learning activities, their interest in learning can be enhanced. Thus, in the CTL approach, teachers aim to increase students' interest in learning and design a learning environment that connects various life experiences to achieve good learning outcomes. Utilizing the CTL approach will create a classroom environment where students become active participants.

In the field of education in Indonesia, Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) is known as Pembelajaran dan Pengajaran Kontekstual (CTL). This teaching strategy is one solution for achieving academic excellence that can be followed and enjoyed by all students. The Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) strategy helps teachers link the material taught with real-world situations that students face. CTL is a learning approach that emphasizes the involvement of students in discovering the material they learn and connecting and applying it in their lives. Thus, the role of students in CTL is as active learners who discover and construct their own concepts.

Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) is a teaching system compatible with the brain, which generates meaning by connecting academic content with the context of students' daily lives. Contextual learning emphasizes the full involvement of students in the learning process. In CTL, students do not merely listen and take notes, but engage in a direct experiential process. Through this direct experience, it is expected that students' development will be holistic (balancing cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects).

Article 31, paragraph (3) of the 1945 Constitution mandates the government to strive for and organize a national education system that enhances faith, piety, and noble character in order to enlighten the life of the nation. The national education goals, as mentioned in Article 3 of Law

Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, are to develop the potential of students to become individuals who are faithful and pious to God Almighty, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens.[2] The selection of an appropriate learning strategy is crucial in education as it is closely related to the success of the educational process. One such strategy that aligns well with curriculum implementation is Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL). There are four reasons for using CTL: (a) the view that knowledge is a fact that must be memorized; (b) the foundation of constructivist philosophy; (c) knowledge and skills must be discovered by the students themselves; and (d) knowledge is a skill that can be applied. In this context, students need to understand the meaning of learning, its benefits, their current status, and how to achieve their goals. Students must realize that what they learn is useful for their future lives. According to Nur Hadi, Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) is: "A learning concept where teachers bring the real world into the classroom and encourage students to make connections between their knowledge and its application in their daily lives. Meanwhile, students acquire knowledge and skills in a limited context, gradually, and through the process of constructing it themselves, as a provision to solve problems in their lives as members of society".

Interest in learning is a stable mental tendency to pay attention to and remember certain activities. Someone who is interested in an activity and pays consistent attention to it does so with enjoyment. Learning interest shapes a specific academic attitude that is highly personal for each student. Therefore, learning interest must be cultivated individually by each student. Others can only strengthen and nurture this interest to maintain it. Learning interest plays a very important role and is also included in Bloom's taxonomy in the affective domain, which aims for educational purposes. If a student does not have significant interest and attention towards the subject being studied, it is difficult to expect that student to be diligent and achieve good results from their studies. Conversely, if the student learns with great interest and attention to the subject, the results will be better.

Similarly, if the lack of interest in learning among students towards a subject is ignored, the objectives of the learning will not be achieved as expected. This also applies to Islamic Religious Education; if student interest in this subject is uneven—some students are interested while others are not—the goal of this education, which is to impart knowledge, attitudes, personality, and skills in practicing Islamic teachings, will not be effectively achieved. Therefore, from the above explanation, it can be understood that there is a difference between students who have an interest

---

[2] Undang-undang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional Beserta Penjelasannya (Yogtakarta:Pustaka Pelajar, 2007), 8

in learning and those who do not. This difference can be seen in their diligence in learning and the intention they have. Students who have an interest in learning will be consistently diligent, while those who do not have interest, even if they are willing to learn, will not maintain diligence.

The main goal of the CTL (Contextual Teaching and Learning) approach is to help students relate meaningfully to their academic lessons. When students find meaning in their lessons, they will learn and remember what they have studied. CTL enables students to connect academic content and subjects with their everyday life contexts to find meaning, thus expanding their personal context. By providing new experiences that stimulate the brain to form new connections, we help them discover new meanings.

Methods

This research uses a qualitative approach aimed at understanding the meaning behind behaviors, symbols, and phenomena. Qualitative research involves data in the form of statements, sentences, and documents. This type of research employs field studies, which involve observing, interacting, and understanding behaviors within a relevant environment. The chosen research location is SMP Muhammadiyah Mayangan, Probolinggo, located at Jl. D.I. Panjaitan No.73, Sukabumi, Mayangan, Probolinggo.

The researcher acts as both an instrument and a data collector. In this study, the researcher directly observes the activities being studied on-site, allowing for a direct view of the sociological and psychological conditions and background of the research subjects. This enables the researcher to comprehensively describe the conditions and subjects of the research. Informants in this study include the Principal, Vice Principal of Curriculum, Teachers, Head of the Library, and students. The data sources used in this research are primary and secondary data. Primary data sources include the Vice Principal of Curriculum, Head of the Library, educators, and students. Secondary data are obtained from documents such as literacy activity analyses, projects, literacy activity results, and photos. Data collection techniques include interviews, observations, and document studies. Data analysis in this research involves data collection, data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The validity of the data in this research is ensured through triangulation, a technique that combines various data collection methods and sources.

Results and Discussion

In this part, the researcher will clarify the research findings and examine them in accordance with the predefined research goals, specifically:

1. Planning the Implementation of CTL Learning Strategies to Enhance Learning Interest in Islamic Religious Education at SMP Muhammadiyah Mayangan, Probolinggo.

Before conducting teaching activities, teachers prepare a lesson plan where teachers at Muhammadiyah Mayangan Middle School in Probolinggo are required to develop a lesson implementation plan (RPP). The planning process for middle school teachers involves each teacher preparing a lesson implementation plan as steps before carrying out the learning process, especially for Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers who prepare the RPP. PAI teachers create the RPP before the learning activities in class VIII. Within the RPP, there are directions on the material to be taught, serving as evidence of a teacher instructing students. This is supported by Andi Prastowo's theory stating that lesson planning includes anticipatory steps to interpret the curriculum applied by the school into classroom learning activities. From this, researchers can analyze how lesson planning identifies steps that a teacher will take during the learning process. Therefore, this learning implementation design facilitates teachers in allocating time for more conducive learning. According to Sukemi, each teacher's lesson plan is different, designed by considering various factors such as student factors adjusting to student abilities, school environment, availability of facilities and infrastructure, and others.[3]

Here, researchers can analyze that it is not easy for a teacher to create a lesson plan, which also needs to consider several factors so that what is planned can be achieved. Therefore, the selection of learning objectives is also tailored to the material to be discussed, and the use of teaching methods also considers the students' abilities whether they can apply them in the learning process or not. With the existence of a lesson plan, the PAI teacher proves that he teaches in class VIII using the Contextual Teaching and Learning Method because the method used by the teacher is also listed in it.

In classical conditioning theory, according to Pavlov, learning is a process of change triggered by conditions that elicit responses. Therefore, to foster learning based on conditioning theory, continuous practice is required. This notion of conditioning manifests in practices such as reading Juz 30 of the Quran, reciting Yasin on Fridays, and reciting Al-Ma'tsurat for female students unable to attend Dhuha prayer. These practices are aimed at learning and are established as routines for students.

---

[3] Sukemi, *Perpaduan Pembelajaran Blended Learning Secara Daring dan Tattap Muka Pada Kurikulum 2013 dan kurikulum 2022*

2. The Process of Strengthening Character in Reading Enthusiasm through Literacy Movement at SMP Muhammadiyah Mayangan during the Development Phase.

During the implementation of teaching, a teacher must also be able to manage the classroom environment effectively, ensuring that the learning space begins well. This is supported by the theory presented by Moh Toharudin, who states that classroom management involves creating an effective learning atmosphere to inspire students' learning spirit. One way is by organizing the classroom layout or environment to achieve the learning objectives.[4] The learning activities conducted by teachers also need to consider several aspects so that the teaching material can be easily understood by students. Teachers need to prepare teaching materials in the form of content to be delivered to students. However, for the material to be understood by students, teachers also need teaching methods. The presence of teaching methods facilitates teachers in delivering material during the learning process. This is supported by the theory presented by Nining Marianingsih, who states that methods serve as the means to implement well-structured plans aimed at achieving optimal teaching outcomes.[5] This is also supported by Tamam Syaifudin's theory, where using the Contextual Teaching and Learning strategy can help students understand the academic material they are learning and connect it to daily life. It is known that Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teaches guidelines based on the knowledge in the Qur'an and practical teachings from Hadith, so it seems appropriate if the Contextual Teaching and Learning strategy is applied in the PAI learning process because the knowledge built is also implemented by students in their lives.[6] Based on the findings from both data and theory above, further supported by Suyadi's theory, this strategy serves as a learning concept that helps teachers connect instructional material with learners' real-life situations. It encourages learners to relate their knowledge to daily life by applying the seven components of Contextual Teaching and Learning: constructivism, questioning, discovery, learning communities, modeling, reflection, and authentic assessment.[7] In the implementation of teaching and learning, teachers also go through several stages in learning activities where

---

[4] Moh Toharudin, *Buku Ajar Manajemen Kelas,* (Jawa Tengah: Lakeisha, 2020), 4

[5] Nining Mariyaningsih dan Mistina Hidayati, *Bukan Kelas Biasa Teori dan Praktek Berbagai Model dan Metode Pembelajaran Menerappkn Inovasi Pembelajaran di Kelas-Kelas Inspiratif* (Surakarta: Kekata Publisher 2018), 10

[6] Tamam Syaifudin, et al., "Contextual Teaching and Learning Model to Student Improve Learning Outcome at Senior High School of Model Terpadu Bojonegoro," Resent Educational Research, 2, 5 (September 2021), 65

[7] Suyadi, *Strategi Pembelajaran Pendidikan Karakter*, (Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya, 2013), 86.

these stages are used to manage the success of the learning process conducted directly, including opening, core, and closing activities.[8]

From this theory, the researcher can analyze that in teaching Islamic Religious Education (PAI), it consists of opening, core, and closing activities. Based on observation and interview data, during the opening phase, the teacher greets the students, prepares for prayer, takes attendance, and reviews last week's material. In the core activity, the teacher explains the lesson content. In implementing the teaching and learning process using the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) strategy, the PAI teacher applies seven components of CTL.

However, unlike other strategies, in the Contextual Teaching and Learning strategy, the emphasis is on the core activity of delivering the material, where the teacher acts as a facilitator or guide for students to understand the content. Each teacher explains the material by engaging students through interaction, asking questions, or encouraging students to inquire. When explaining the material, the teacher also connects it to real-life contexts.

From the collection of observation data and interviews, the researcher can analyze that the implementation of the Contextual Teaching and Learning strategy involves applying the seven components of CTL: constructivism, questioning, discovery, learning communities, modeling, reflection, and authentic assessment. The focus of the study is on terms of hadith, where at the beginning, the teacher explains the meaning of the material to help students understand the concepts discussed. By explaining the meaning of hadith as everything attributed to the Prophet, whether in words, deeds, approvals, or qualities, after he became a messenger. After explaining the material, the teacher immediately asks the students about what has been explained to assess their understanding.

Based on the field data obtained, researchers can analyze the application of the learning process using the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) strategy. Teachers do not merely lecture on the material but also facilitate discussions to allow students to understand each other. They encourage collaboration among students to solve problems collectively. Teachers respect the diversity among students, ensuring that those who do not grasp the material can gain knowledge through discussions with peers. Additionally, teachers conduct brief quizzes at the end of lessons to enhance classroom engagement.

This approach was observed in the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) classes at Muhammadiyah Mayangan Middle School in Probolinggo City. Students in eighth grade

---

[8] Haudi Wijoyo, *Strategi Pembelajaran*, (Sumatra Barat: Insan Cendekia Mandiri, 2021), 10-11

mentioned that the PAI learning process using CTL encourages independent learning. If students do not understand, they are encouraged to ask questions to clarify their understanding. The contextual relevance of the topics discussed in class mirrors students' real-life experiences, facilitating easier comprehension and deeper engagement. Furthermore, classroom discussions provide opportunities for less active students to learn from their peers. Teachers ensure equal treatment of all students, fostering a supportive learning environment.

Understanding PAI through the CTL strategy proves to be practical as it integrates seamlessly with everyday life experiences, enabling students to relate classroom learning to real-world contexts. This approach nurtures students' awareness and responsibility for their learning, encouraging them to seek information independently or through peer discussions. Ultimately, this enriches the learning experience and enhances student satisfaction with the educational process.

3. Evaluation of Implementing CTL Learning in Religious Education at SMP Muhammadiyah Mayangan, Probolinggo

Evaluation activities in teaching are carried out by each teacher using instruments such as test papers or questions, and non-test evaluations like assignments are used to assess students' abilities. This is also supported by Indra's theory, which states that learning evaluation is useful for assessing the effectiveness of the learning system concerning objectives, content, methods, media, learning resources, environment, and assessment systems themselves.[9] From the results of observation and interviews on the evaluation activities conducted at Muhammadiyah Mayangan Middle School, Probolinggo City, evaluations are carried out after teaching sessions are completed. This practice is also followed by Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers, where learning evaluations occur in the fourth meeting after the completion of the lesson materials. The evaluation instruments used include question sheets, assessment tools for practical activities, and answer sheets.

According to the observation and interview data gathered by the researcher, it is analyzed that PAI teachers utilize evaluation instruments not only in the form of test sheets but also through oral assessments. These methods are employed to actively involve students in understanding the lesson materials, assessing their participation, and enhancing learning through brief quizzes. Furthermore, the need for such evaluations is to assess the success of the learning process. Based on the researcher's data collection and analysis, it is found that

---

[9] Indra Perdana dan Misnawati, *Evaluasi Pembelajaran,* (Palagka Raya: Guepedia, 2021), 7-10

each teacher develops their teaching and learning activities after evaluating the students' learning process, considering the assessment results. This practice aligns with Ngalim Porwanto's theory that emphasizes evaluation in learning to determine students' success after learning activities and to gauge the effectiveness of educational programs.[10]

Conclusion

In conducting Islamic religious education at Muhammadiyah Middle School, teachers apply the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) strategy, which comprises seven main components: Constructivism, Questioning, Inquiry, Learning Community, Modeling, Reflection, and Authentic Assessment. CTL is a learning concept where teachers bring the real world into the classroom and encourage students to make connections between their existing knowledge and its application in their daily lives. Students acquire knowledge and skills from limited contexts, gradually and through their own construction, as a foundation for solving problems in their lives as community members. The application of the CTL strategy at Muhammadiyah Middle School has positive impacts, such as motivating students to increase their interest in learning and enhancing their active participation in the learning process.

This improvement is reflected in better academic performance, as seen in the results of the odd semester final exams and daily scores, which are mostly above average. This is because Muhammadiyah Middle School uses the CTL strategy in delivering material. The implementation of the CTL strategy has had very positive effects on students. It makes it easier for them to grasp the material presented, creates a more enjoyable classroom atmosphere, and makes the material more relevant and realistic. Thus, the CTL strategy indirectly improves the quality of Islamic religious education. The interest in learning biology among eighth-grade students at Muhammadiyah Mayangan Middle School in Probolinggo City, after the implementation of the CTL strategy, falls into the high category, with a significant percentage of students showing an average score, as conducted by the Ministry of Religion or other institutions.

Acknowledgment

---

[10] M. Ngalim Purwanto, *Prinsip-Prinsip dan Teknik Evaluasi Pengajaran*, (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2010), 5-7

unwavering support. To all involved, directly or indirectly, our sincere appreciation for being part of this enriching journey.

References

Muhammad Iwan Abdi, "Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) dalam Pembelajaran PAI." Dinamika Ilmu 11.1 (2011)

Yeni Rahmawati dan Idris Harta "Keefektifan Pendekatan Open-Ended dan CTL Ditinjau dari Hasil Belajar Kongnitif dan Afektif' (Program Studi Pendidikan Matematika 1.1 (2014)

Undang-undang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional Beserta Penjelasannya (Yogtakarta:Pustaka Pelajar, 2007)

Kurniawan, Wisnu Aditiya. (2018). *Budaya Tertib Siswa di Sekolah*. Sukabumi: Jejak.

Krisyani, Pengerti Widarti. (2018). *Desain Induk Gerakan Literasi Sekolah*. Jakarta: Direktoran Jendral Pendidikan Dasar dan Menengah

Muhammad Noer Cholifuddin Zuhri. (2018) "Studi tentang efektifitas Tadarus Al-Qur'am dalam pembianaan Akhlak di SMPN 8 Yogyakarta", Jurnal Cendikian, 11 (1), 11. http://dx.doi.org/10.21154/cendekia.v11i1.730

Nugroho, Puspo. (2021). "Efektiitas Program Tahfiz Al-Quran dalam Membentuk Karakter Siswa". Jurnal: Institut Agama Islam Negeri kudus, 6 (1). https://doi.org/10.15575/isema.v6i1.10689

Peneliti, Observasi, Gebang Kamis 16 Februari 2023

Salinan Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesi.a Nomor 20 Tahun 2018 tentang Penguatan Pendidikan Karakter

Sapendi. (2015). "Internalisasi Nilia-nilai moral Agama Pada Anak Usia Dini". At-Turats, 19 (2), 27. https://doi.org/10.24260/at-turats.v9i2.313

Priasti, Silia Nuri. (2021). "Penerapan Pendidikan Karakter Gemar Membaca Melalui Gerakan Literasi di Sekolah". Jurnal kependidikan IKIP Mataram, 7 (2), 402. https://doi.org/10.33394/jk.v7i2.3211

Widarti, Pangesti. (2018). *Panduan Gerakan Lierasi Sekolah di Sekolah Menengah Atas*. Jakarta: Direktoran Jendral Pendidikan Dasar dan Menengah.

Widarti, Pangesti. (2016). *Desain Induk Gerakan Literasi Sekolah*. (Jakarta: Direktorat Jandral Pendidikan Dasar dan Menengah Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan.

Yusron Aminullah & Satria Dharma. (2016). *Membumikan Gerakan Literasi Sekolah*. Bantul: Pustaka

Nun & Azyan Publishing.

Website :

https://www.kominfo.go.id/content/detail/10862/teknologi-masyarakat-indonesia-malas-bacatapi-cerewet-di-medsos/0/sorotan_media

https://ppid.diskominfo.jatengprov.go.id/daftar-info-hoax-per-hari/.