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Hermeneutics As A New Paradigm In Learning Tafsir: Efforts To Revive The Dialogue Between Students And The Text Of The Qur'an

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Abstract

This study explores the application of hermeneutics as an alternative paradigm in the transformation of learning Qur'an interpretation in Indonesian Islamic educational institutions. The main problem identified is methodological stagnation in traditional interpretive teaching that tends to be monological, textualist, and one-way, thus creating a distance between sacred texts and the realities of students' lives. The urgency of this research lies in the urgent need to formulate learning models that are responsive to the challenges of the 21st century, including radicalism, digital literacy, and moral crises. The methodology used is qualitative research with a hermeneutical-phenomenological approach, supported by case studies in various institutions such as pesantren and madrasas. The results of the study show that the hermeneutic paradigm is able to transform the role of students from passive recipients to active interpreting subjects through the dialogical process of "horizontal fusion." Statistical evidence shows a significant improvement in students' contextual understanding from an average of 67.40 to 85.30 through a project-based learning model. The research concludes that the integration of hermeneutics in the tafsir curriculum not only enhances critical literacy, but also strengthens the internalization of the universal ethical-values of the Qur'an that are relevant to contemporary social dynamics.

Keywords: Hermeneutics, Interpretation Learning, Student-Text Dialogue, Islamic Education, Contextualization.

INTRODUCTION

The dynamics of Islamic education in Indonesia are currently at a crucial crossroads between maintaining the originality of tradition and responding to the demands of fast-paced

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modernity. Islamic educational institutions, especially Islamic boarding schools and madrasas, face complex socioreligious challenges, ranging from the collapse of moral joints due to the transformation of global values to the stigmatization of pesantren as a locus of the seedbed of radical thought. In this digital era, challenges are increasing with the emergence of the need for digital literacy skills and the change in traditional learning styles towards more innovative and open patterns towards civilization. The phenomenon of materialism and consumerism is also a serious threat to the spiritual life of the people, which demands a religious interpretation that is able to provide real solutions to human problems such as poverty, unemployment, and social injustice.

Literature facts show that the discourse of learning tafsir in Indonesia has undergone significant development since the 20th century, moving from a taḥlīlī (analytical-atomistic) approach to a more systematic thematic interpretation. However, at the practical level, much of the teaching of tafsir is still trapped in a partial classical scientific system, where there is a sharp separation between the Qur'an as a methodological framework and the science of Tafsir as a product of understanding. As a result, students often only memorize the product of past interpretation without understanding the process of producing their meaning. The dominance of a single theological-normative perspective in learning results in a lack of room for dynamic critical analysis, whereas the Qur'an was revealed to be a solution to human problems in all ages. The need for "productive reading" (al-qira'ah al-muntijah) is becoming increasingly urgent to replace repetitive reading that is mechanical.

The main purpose of this research report is to formulate hermeneutics as a new paradigm that can revive the dialogue that had been interrupted between students and the text of the Qur'an. Through this approach, interpretive learning is directed to be a dynamic interaction process between three horizons: the author's horizon, the text's horizon, and the reader's (student) horizon. This writing is important to provide a theoretical and practical foundation for educators in transforming the classroom into an inclusive interpretive arena, where students are invited to discover the "spirit" or universal moral value of each verse and apply it in the contemporary context.

The central argument in this study is that hermeneutics provides a valid methodological bridge to bridge the historical and cultural distance between sacred texts and modern readers. The hypothesis proposed states that by applying the hermeneutic circle in learning, students will develop a growth mindset, improve critical literacy, and achieve a more complete and transformative understanding of religion. This paradigm is believed to be able to unravel the shock

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of thought and produce the output of a generation that not only understands the text literally, but is able to feel it emotionally and practice it in real life.

DEFINITION AND PHILOSOPHICAL ROOTS OF HERMENEUTICS

Etymologically, the term hermeneutics has its roots in the Greek language, which is the verb *hermeneuein* which means to interpret, translate, or express thoughts into words. The resulting noun, *hermeneia*, means the interpretation or result of the process of meaning. Historically, hermeneutics has often been associated with Hermes, a god in Greek mythology who was in charge of conveying and explaining the messages of the gods in the sky to humans on earth so that messages that were initially vague and foreign became clear and understandable.[16] This analogy shows that hermeneutics is essentially the process of transforming a situation of ignorance or darkness of meaning into a brightly lit understanding.

In its development, hermeneutics transformed from a mere practical technique of interpreting difficult texts to a philosophical discipline that examines the essence of understanding itself. As a theory of biblical interpretation, the term first appeared definitively in the 17th century through J.C. Dannhauer's work, *Hermeneutica Sacra*, which focused on the standard rules of Bible interpretation among theologians. However, it was figures such as Friedrich Schleiermacher who later raised hermeneutics as the "art of common understanding" whose principles apply to all types of texts, both oral and written. Schleiermacher emphasized the importance of reconstructing the author's mental processes to avoid misunderstandings, an approach that came to be known as methodological hermeneutics.

CATEGORIZATION AND KEY TRENDS IN HERMENEUTICS

Hermeneutics can be mapped into several major streams that have different patterns of interpretation of texts, authors, and readers. This mapping is essential for understanding the position of hermeneutics in a pedagogical context:

The School of Hermeneutics	Key Characteristics	Interpretation Pattern
Objective Flow (Methodological)	Focusing on the search for the original meaning of the author through philological	The interpreter must step out of his own world and into the author's tradition

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	and historical analysis.	in order to achieve objectivity.
Subjective (Philosophical) Stream	Emphasizing the role of the reader and the current context; Understanding is seen as an ontological event.	There is a "*fusion of horizons*" between the text and the reader; meaning is never fixed and is constantly evolving.
Critical Flow (Liberation)	Focuses on dismantling communication distortions and ideologies hidden in texts or interpretations.	Hermeneutics is used as a tool of struggle against oppression and exploitation (as in the thought of Hasan Hanafi).

In the context of learning interpretation, the philosophical school of Hans-Georg Gadamer made a major contribution through the concept of "historical consciousness." Gadamer argues that understanding is not just the reproduction of original meaning, but the production of new meanings born from the dialogue between past traditions and present needs. This pattern supports the creation of dialogical interactions in the classroom, where students bring their pre-understandings to interact with sacred texts.

ANIMAL SKIN MATERIALS: DEFINITION AND CATEGORIZATION

The use of animal skins in binding Islamic books is a tradition that has lasted for centuries. Conceptually, tanned or dry-processed animal skins (parchment/vellum) have different physical characteristics depending on the species of origin. In the archipelago, the use of goat and cow skins is the most dominant. Animal skin identification patterns scientifically involve observation of hair follicles and pore arrangements in the grain layer.

The categorization of leather materials in manuscript studies can be seen from several patterns. The first pattern is species-based: adult cowskin has regular, evenly spaced follicles, while calfskin is smoother and thinner. The second pattern is goat skin characterized by alternating groups of large, smooth follicles, making it a favorite material for flexible binding. The third pattern is sheepskin which has uniform follicles and tends to be small, but the structure is looser due to

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the presence of a layer of fat. Weaknesses in visual identification often arise when the manuscript has suffered severe damage or surface weathering, thus requiring more advanced technologies such as DNA or peptide analysis to ascertain the species.

HERMENEUTICS IN THE CONTEMPORARY QUR'ANIC STUDY TRADITION

The integration of hermeneutics into the study of the modern Qur'an is an attempt to ensure the eternal relevance (sholihun li kulli zaman wa makan) of the heavenly messages. Figures such as Fazlur Rahman introduced the Double Movement method , a systematic step that involves: first, understanding the socio-historical context of the descent of the verse in order to capture its moral-legal principles; and second, applying the principle to the current socio-cultural situation. This method aims to produce an interpretation that is not atomistic or literalist, but comprehensive and contextual.

In addition to Rahman, other figures such as Abdullah Saeed offer a contextualist approach that distinguishes between fixed universal-ethical values and legal provisions bound by the context of 7th-century Arab culture. Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd also contributed through the theory of texts as a "product of culture" that at the same time "produces culture," emphasizing that sacred texts must be understood within the framework of living linguistic communication. However, the application of this hermeneutics has not escaped sharp criticism. Opponents consider the use of this "Western" method as an attempt to desacralize the Qur'an and eliminate the authority of revelation, which it is feared that could lead to relativism of interpretation or the superficialization of the faith. Nevertheless, in many Islamic universities in Indonesia, hermeneutics has now become a compulsory course that is recognized for its urgency in enriching the scientific treasures of interpretation.

Improved Comprehension Score Through Project-Based Learning

The first evidence of the effectiveness of this new paradigm was found in the implementation of *Project Based Learning* (PjBL) at MA Muhammadiyah Bantaeng. The data showed a positive correlation between providing space for students to produce interpretive works and their level of understanding of the content of the Qur'an.

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Research Cycle	Average Value of Interpretation Comprehension	Percentage Increase
Cycle 1	67.40	-
Cycle 2	85.30	26.5%

The explanation of the data above shows that in the first cycle, students still tend to understand texts literally and passively. However, after the intervention in the form of a group project that demanded analysis and presentation of meaning, there was a significant spike in scores. This proves that when students are positioned as "dialogue partners" of the text, their cognitive power is optimally activated, beyond just memory retention or memorization abilities.

Affective and Character Transformation in Dialogical Learning

The second evidence relates to the qualitative impact of hermeneutics-based learning on the formation of students' character and moral awareness. At SDIT Al Khawarizmi, teachers' efforts in improving the hermeneutic skills of learning materials are considered "very good" based on the perception of students and peers.

The results of observations and interviews in various PAI classes showed a marked change in behavior patterns:

1. **Activeness and Enthusiasm:** Teachers who apply varied and dialogical learning models report that students become more active, enthusiastic, and enjoy the learning process, which effectively addresses boredom in the classroom.
2. **Internalization of Values:** In elementary school, values such as honesty, responsibility, and empathy begin to emerge in everyday behavior. Children who are invited to dialogue about the meaning behind the actions of the characters in the story or verse tend to show a help-helping attitude and patience more often.
3. **Changes in Social Views:** The application of hermeneutics in fiqh materials at the Madrasah Aliyah level shows a significant change in the way students view gender issues. They become

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more fair and able to give rational arguments when discussing the rights and role of women in Islam.

This data relationship strengthens the argument that educational hermeneutics does not only stop at intellectual understanding, but touches on the affective (emotional) and psychomotor (action) dimensions, which in the Islamic tradition are referred to as the achievement of *ma'rifah* or inner awareness.

Comparison of Learning Dynamics in Islamic Boarding Schools

The third evidence presents a comparison between traditional methods and dialogical methods in the context of pesantren. Historically, pesantren used *the bandongan* and *sorogan* methods that placed the kiai as the central authority.

Learning Features	Traditional Method (Bandongan)	New Paradigm (Dialogical/Hermeneutical)
The Role of the Teacher	An active text reader, the sole authority of the meaning.	Facilitator, dialogue guide, "Hermes" meaning.
Role of Students	Passive listener, footnote giver (*maknani*).	Active interpreter, critical responder, subject of dialogue.
Interaction	One way, there are rarely questions and answers.	Multi-directional, warm discussion, exchange of ideas.
Focus on Achievement	Textual mastery of the yellow book.	Relevance of meaning and behavioral transformation.

At the Al Furqon Sanden Islamic Boarding School, the combination of verse reading and response sessions from worshippers creates a more lively learning atmosphere than the rigid tiered classroom system. On the other hand, research reports show that the weaknesses of the

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lecture method or *pure bantong* often inhibit students' critical power and make them bored quickly. However, the transition to this new paradigm still faces obstacles in the form of a huge attitude of tawadu' students in the face of the authority of the kiai, which sometimes limits their courage to engage in critical discussions.

DISCUSSION

Synthesis of Results: Hermeneutics as the Energy of Transformation

The summary of the results of the research confirms that hermeneutics is able to become a paradigm that brings to life the dialogue between students and the text of the Qur'an. The improvement of cognitive scores in MA Muhammadiyah Bantaeng and the transformation of character in elementary schools prove that when text is treated as a "talking partner," it ceases to be a dead dogma and begins to become a dynamic guide to life. This is in line with the vision of "*deep learning*" which emphasizes that the success of education does not lie in grades, but in changes in students' manners and spiritual awareness.

Discursive: The Position of Hermeneutics in the Mainstream of Islamic Education

The results of this study strengthen the debate regarding the relevance of hermeneutics in Islamic studies. Although some traditional scholars reject this method because of its origins in the Western-Christian tradition, field data show that the seeds of a hermeneutical approach actually exist in the history of Islam, as did Umar bin Khattab or Imam Abu Hanifah through the anticipatory fiqh model. The main difference between the results of this study and the classical study is its emphasis on the "context of the reader." If classical interpretation deals more with the text itself, the hermeneutic paradigm gives students a broad dimension to creatively explore the world of meaning without having to lose their footing in the Islamic faith. This integration creates what Gadamer calls "horizon fusion," where the wisdom of the past meets the intelligence of the present to produce future solutions.

Reflections and Implications: Why Does This Paradigm Work?

Why is the hermeneutic approach more effective in shaping students' characters? The answer lies in the processes of "empathic understanding" (*Verstehen*) and "appropriation". Students no longer simply swallow information rawly (*recitation*), but they engage in speculative reflection that links new data with old knowledge they already have.

1. **So-What:** The implication of this result is the need for a revision of the PAI curriculum that focuses more on the components of spiritual reflection and value application rather than just cognitive knowledge competencies.[9]

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2. **Why:** This paradigm works because it recognizes that each reader brings a different "personal bias" and background. By accommodating these differences in a dialogue space, the truth can emerge naturally and be understood by every student.
3. **Now-What:** The next step is to equip educators with hermeneutics training so that they are able to create a critical, tolerant, and non-judgmental learning climate.

Technology Integration and Future Challenges

The use of digital, audio-visual, and artificial intelligence (AI) technology has been shown to increase students' enthusiasm and focus in interpreting learning. However, the results of the study also provide a warning that technology is just a tool; The dialogical element remains at the heart of the hermeneutic experience. Major challenges ahead include the potential misuse of technology by students and the validity of AI answers in sensitive religious content. Therefore, the role of teachers as filters and facilitators of meaning has become increasingly irreplaceable in this digital era.

CONCLUSION

Based on a comprehensive analysis of various field findings and theoretical reviews, this study concludes that hermeneutics is an effective new paradigm to revive the dialogue between students and the text of the Qur'an in learning tafsir. The most important findings show that the shift from monological to dialogical methods is able to significantly improve students' contextual understanding as well as encourage behavioral transformation based on religious ethical values. This paradigm makes a conceptual contribution to the development of an Islamic education curriculum that is more inclusive, responsive, and adaptive to the dynamics of the times.

The main contribution of this research is the formulation of a learning method that balances the authority of the sacred text and the creativity of young interpreters, so that the Qur'an remains a living source of inspiration for the Z and Alpha generations. However, this research has limitations in terms of the diversity of infrastructure readiness in various traditional Islamic boarding schools as well as ideological resistance to the term "hermeneutics" itself. Therefore, the direction of further research is suggested to focus on the development of tafsir learning modules that use terms that are more familiar in the Islamic tradition (local genius) but still carry the spirit of hermeneutics, as well as examine the long-term impact of transformational evaluation models on social stability and religious moderation in Indonesia.

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FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Based on a comprehensive analysis of field findings and theoretical reviews, this study concludes that hermeneutics serves as an effective new paradigm to revive the dialogue between students and the text of the Qur'an in tafsir learning. The empirical evidence demonstrates that shifting from monological to dialogical methods significantly improves students' contextual understanding and fosters behavioral transformation grounded in religious ethical values. Conceptually, this paradigm contributes to developing an Islamic education curriculum that is more inclusive, responsive, and adaptive to contemporary dynamics.

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