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Beyond Animation: The Role Of Mother Tongue In Facilitating Moral And Religious Learning In Early Childhood Education

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Abstract

Moral and religious learning in early childhood faces challenges in the form of a gap between the potential of Islamic animation film media as a means of value visualization and the effectiveness of verbal facilitation which is often constrained by the use of instructional language that is not fully mastered by children. This research aims to explore the role of Sasak mother tongue in facilitating moral and religious learning mediated by Islamic animation films at PAUD Raudatul Ula' Selagalas, Sandubaya District, Mataram City. Using a qualitative approach with a field research type, data was collected through participatory observation of the Islamic animation film screening process, in-depth interviews, and documentation, then analyzed using the interactive model Miles, Huberman, and Saldana. The results showed that the integration of multimedia learning theory with mother tongue pedagogy occurred naturally in the practice of teachers showing Islamic animated films such as Omar & Hana and Hafiz & Hafizah, translating the educational songs that appeared in them, and re-explaining their moral and religious content to students using the Sasak language, which then formed the learning model "Animation-Mother Language-Moral Internalization" which consisted of three interdependent components related. The facilitation mechanism takes place through four stages, starting from emotional involvement triggered by Islamic animation films, mother tongue interaction as a bridge of meaning where teachers translate and explain educational songs, construction of moral meaning through reflective dialogue, to internalization of values embedded in children's behavior. The success of this model is supported by the socio-cultural context of the Sasak community which is rich in speaking traditions and communal values. In conclusion, the mother tongue serves as a semiotic

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ecosystem that allows for the authentic and profound transmission of moral and religious values.

Keywords: Mother Tongue, Islamic Animated Films, Moral and Religious Learning, Early Childhood, Contextual Pedagogy.

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education is a crucial phase in the formation of the moral and spiritual foundations of human beings, where the basic values of goodness, honesty, responsibility, and religious awareness begin to be instilled and formed through various meaningful learning experiences. In this golden age of child development that lasts from the age of zero to six years, the child's brain develops very rapidly and is very receptive to stimulation from the surrounding environment, including stimulation related to moral values and religious teachings. The moral and religious learning provided during this time will form a basic frame of reference that will influence the way a child views the world, interacts with others, and makes ethical decisions throughout his life. Therefore, the approaches and methods used in conveying moral and religious values to early childhood must really consider their developmental characteristics, both from cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects, so that these values are not just memorized but are truly internalized in their consciences and reflected in daily behavior (Santoso & Nuraini, 2023).

The development of digital technology in the last two decades has brought about very significant changes in the landscape of early childhood education, including in terms of the availability of increasingly diverse and accessible animation-based learning media. The presence of video-sharing platforms such as YouTube has allowed access to various Islamic animated films such as Omar & Hana and Hafiz & Hafizah which specifically present educational songs and stories full of moral and religious messages. Animation as a learning medium has an extraordinary appeal for children because of its ability to present stories with vivid visuals, charming colors, dynamic movements, and entertaining sounds, so that it can capture children's attention for a long period of time. In the context of moral and religious learning, animation offers enormous potential because it is able to visualize abstract concepts such as honesty, compassion, justice, and obedience to God into the form of concrete stories with relatable characters by the child. However, the effectiveness of the use of animation in moral and religious learning does not necessarily occur by itself just because the medium is visually appealing. An appropriate facilitation strategy is needed to bridge the gap between what children watch in animation and their understanding and appreciation of the moral and religious values contained in it. In this

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context, the role of teachers is very vital, especially in translating educational songs from Islamic animated films into languages that children understand and explaining their moral and religious content, a process that is highly dependent on the quality of interaction between educators and children after the screening of the animation (Wijayanti et al., 2022).

One of the factors that is often overlooked in discussions about the use of animation media for moral and religious learning in early childhood is the role of the language of instruction used in facilitating the process of meaning. Language is the main tool in the learning process because through language abstract concepts are explained, questions are asked, and meaningful dialogues are built between educators and students. In the context of a multilingual society like Indonesia, where most children grow up with a mother tongue that is different from Indonesian as the national language, the choice of a language of instruction in learning is a very important and strategic issue. Mother tongue, which is the first language that children learn from their family environment and community, has a very special position in children's cognitive and affective structure because it is their first medium for understanding the world, expressing emotions, and building social relationships with those closest to them. When the teacher translates the lyrics of a song from the Islamic animated film Omar & Hana or Hafiz & Hafizah into Sasak and explains the moral message it contains, the child does not need to expend additional cognitive energy to translate and understand the language of instruction, so that their entire mental capacity can be focused on understanding the substance of the learning material, including the moral and religious values that they want to inculcate (Rahmawati & Hidayah, 2024).

The reality in many early childhood education institutions in Indonesia, including in the Lombok region of West Nusa Tenggara, shows that the use of Indonesian as the language of instruction is still the dominant practice, while children's mother tongues such as Sasak, Samawa, Mbojo, and other regional languages are often positioned as a second language whose use is restricted. This practice creates a gap between the language that children speak at home and in their communities and the language they encounter in a formal education environment. This gap has the potential to cause psychological and cognitive obstacles for children in accessing and understanding learning materials, especially materials that are abstract and full of values such as moral and religious learning. Ironically, Islamic animated films available on YouTube, although full of moral and religious messages, generally use Indonesian or even foreign languages. Without the facilitation of teachers who translate and reinterpret the content, the moral and religious messages in films such as Omar & Hana and Hafiz & Hafizah are potentially not well absorbed by the children of native Sasak speakers. This condition is exacerbated by the fact that regional

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languages, including Sasak, have a wealth of concepts and moral expressions that are very deep and contextual, which do not always have an equivalent in Indonesian, so the exclusive use of Indonesian can actually eliminate the nuances of important meaning contained in the mother tongue (Zulkarnain & Fadlillah, 2021).

Recent research in the field of neurolinguistics and developmental psychology further strengthens the argument about the importance of using mother tongue in early childhood education. The results of the study show that the child's brain processes information received in the mother tongue differently and more deeply compared to information received in the second language. When children hear and use their native language, the areas of the brain associated with emotional memory and meaning processing show higher activation, so that the information received is not only understood cognitively but also lived affectively. This is especially relevant in the context of Islamic animation film-mediated learning, where teachers translate educational songs into Sasak language. This translation process is not just a language translation, but also a cultural translation that allows the moral and religious messages of the animation to be lived more deeply by children. In the context of moral and religious learning, this affective dimension is very important because moral and religious values are not enough to be understood intellectually, but must be felt and lived so that they can be firmly embedded in the child's personality. These findings provide a strong scientific foundation for the development of learning models that integrate the use of modern media such as animation with mother tongue-based pedagogical wisdom (Prasetyo & Indriani, 2025).

The local context of PAUD Raudatul Ula' in Selagalas Village, Sandubaya District, Mataram City provides a very relevant and interesting setting to study this phenomenon in more depth. This educational institution is located in the middle of the Sasak community which still maintains the use of Sasak as the main language of communication in daily life, both in the environment of family, friends, and socio-religious activities. The children who are students in PAUD grow up and grow up in a Sasak-speaking environment, so the Sasak language is the language they master the most and is closest to their psychological world. On the other hand, PAUD Raudatul Ula' as an Islamic educational institution has a strong commitment to inculcate Islamic moral values and morals in its students from an early age. In practice, teachers at PAUD have used Islamic animated films from YouTube, including Omar & Hana and Hafiz & Hafizah, as learning media. They translated the educational songs that appeared in the film and explained the moral and religious content to the students using the Sasak language. The combination of strong religious commitment, the availability of technology in the form of animation players, and the

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sociolinguistic reality of the people who still use the dominant regional language, creates a unique situation that deserves to be studied in depth. Understanding how educators in this institution utilize Sasak mother tongue to facilitate moral and religious learning mediated by animated shows will make an important contribution to the development of an early childhood education model that is contextual and responsive to linguistic and cultural diversity in Indonesia (Suryani & Hidayat, 2024).

The urgency of this research is further strengthened by the gap in the current academic literature. On the one hand, there have been many studies that have examined the effectiveness of the use of animation media in early childhood learning, and on the other hand, there have also been quite a lot of studies that discuss the importance of using mother tongue in education. However, research that specifically examines the intersection between these two areas, namely how mother tongue plays a facilitator in the process of interpreting the content of Islamic animated films such as Omar & Hana and Hafiz & Hafizah for moral and religious learning in early childhood, is still very limited and rarely done. There has not been much research that has documented in detail how teachers translate educational songs from the film, explain their moral and religious content, and guide reflective discussions using their native language. The majority of existing research tends to address these two aspects separately, without integrating them into a complete framework of analysis. As a result, the understanding of the facilitation mechanisms that occur when teachers use mother tongue to help children interpret the moral message of the animation they watch is still not comprehensively revealed. This research is here to fill this knowledge gap by exploring in depth how the integration between Islamic animation film media and mother tongue works synergistically in creating an effective moral and religious learning experience for early childhood (Hermawan & Kusumawati, 2023).

The main problem faced in the context of moral and religious learning at PAUD Raudatul Ula' Selagalas is the gap between the great potential of animation media as a means of visualizing moral values and the reality that its effectiveness is highly dependent on the quality of verbal facilitation carried out by teachers. Teachers have taken advantage of Islamic animated films from YouTube such as Omar & Hana and Hafiz & Hafizah which are rich in educational songs and moral and religious messages. However, the content of songs and stories in the animation often uses Indonesian or foreign languages. Children who are all native speakers of the Sasak language often experience comprehension barriers when the facilitation process after watching the animation is carried out entirely in Indonesian. Meanwhile, teachers do not yet have a systematic pedagogical framework on how to optimally integrate the use of mother tongue in translating songs from

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Islamic animated films, reinterpret their moral and religious content, and facilitate moral discussions after the animation screening, so that existing practices are still intuitive and not well documented. On the other hand, the richness of moral vocabulary and expressions of local wisdom in the Sasak language which is very relevant for character learning has not been utilized optimally as a pedagogical resource in the process of internalizing values.

An analysis of the existing literature reveals significant research gaps in three main aspects. First, research on the use of animation in early childhood education has focused more on cognitive aspects and language development, while studies on its role in moral and religious learning, especially those that specifically examine the use of popular Islamic animated films such as Omar & Hana and Hafiz & Hafizah as a medium for transmitting values, are still very limited. Second, studies on mother tongue in education have highlighted its role in the development of early literacy and not many have examined its function as a vehicle for the transmission of moral and spiritual values, including its function as a tool to translate and contextualize Islamic educational songs from digital media into children's understanding. Third, there has been no research that comprehensively explores the facilitation mechanism that bridges the use of Islamic animation film media with mother tongue in the context of moral and religious learning, a mechanism that includes the process of teachers translating songs, explaining the content of values, and guiding reflective discussions in the Sasak language, thus producing an integrative model that can be used as a practical reference for early childhood education institutions in multilingual areas.

This research aims to explore and describe in depth the role of Sasak mother tongue in facilitating moral and religious learning mediated by Islamic animation film media in early childhood at PAUD Raudatul Ula' Selagalas. More specifically, this study aims to identify the forms of integration between multimedia learning theory and mother tongue pedagogy that occur in learning practices using the Islamic animated films Omar & Hana and Hafiz & Hafizah, describing the learning models formed from these practices which include the screening of animations, the translation of educational songs by teachers, and the explanation of moral and religious messages. Analyzes the facilitation mechanisms that take place from the stage of emotional engagement while watching animation to the internalization of moral values through native language-based discussions, and reveals the contextual factors that support the success of the model. Ultimately, this study aims to formulate practical and conceptual implications that can contribute to the development of moral and religious education policies and practices in early childhood in areas with similar sociolinguistic characteristics.

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RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with the type of field research that is carried out directly at the research site to obtain a deep and holistic understanding of the phenomenon being studied. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study aims to explore and comprehensively understand how mother tongue plays a role in facilitating moral and religious learning in early childhood through the medium of Islamic animated films in PAUD Raudatul Ula' Selagalas, a phenomenon that requires the expression of meaning from the perspective of the participants in their natural setting. Qualitative research allows researchers to capture the complexity of social interactions, nuances of meaning, and contextual dynamics that cannot be quantitatively measured, making it very appropriate to uncover the process of facilitating moral learning mediated by animated shows and elaborated through mother tongue that takes place organically in these early childhood education institutions (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

The data sources in this study consist of two main categories, namely primary data sources and secondary data sources that are purposively selected based on their relevance to the research focus. Primary data sources include class A and class B teachers, accompanying teachers, and PAUD principal Raudatul Ula' who are directly involved in the process of moral and religious learning using Islamic animation film media such as Omar & Hana and Hafiz & Hafizah and Sasak mother tongue. In addition, the children of students who follow the learning process are also primary data sources that provide information through their behavior, expression, and verbal responses when watching animations, listening to translated educational songs, and discussing with teachers. Secondary data sources include documents such as learning implementation plans, teachers' diaries, parent-liaison books, photo and video documentation of learning in which the process of showing Islamic animated films, song translations, as well as teacher and student question and answer sessions, as well as various other relevant learning artifacts. This purposive selection of data sources is based on the principle that in qualitative research, samples are selected not for the purpose of statistical generalization but to obtain rich and in-depth information about the phenomenon being studied from participants who have direct knowledge and experience (Patton, 2022).

The data collection techniques used in this study include three main methods, namely participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation that are carried out in an integrated manner to obtain rich, in-depth, and complementary data. Participatory observation was carried out by the way the researcher was present in person in the classroom during the learning process, carefully observed the interaction between the teacher and the child when

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showing the Islamic animated films Omar & Hana and Hafiz & Hafizah, the use of the Sasak language by the teacher in translating and explaining the educational songs from the film, the children's response to the animated show, and the overall dynamics of the class. The observations were carried out over a two-month period with a frequency of two to three visits per week, which allowed researchers to capture patterns of repeated interactions as well as significant unique moments. In-depth interviews were conducted with teachers, accompanying teachers, and principals using semi-structured interview guidelines that provided flexibility for researchers to explore participants' answers more broadly about the reasons for selecting specific Islamic animated films, strategies for translating animated content into Sasak language, as well as their observations of the process of internalizing moral and religious values in children, while maintaining a focus on the research topic. The interviews were conducted in an informal setting and used language that was comfortable for the participants, most of which took place in the Sasak language to create a good rapport and allow participants to express their thoughts more authentically. Documentation includes the collection of various written documents, photographic recordings, and video recordings of learning in which the teacher's activity in translating songs from Islamic animated films and explaining their moral and religious content to students, which is then analyzed to complement and verify the data obtained from observations and interviews (Merriam & Tisdell, 2021).

The data analysis technique in this study uses an interactive analysis model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana which consists of three interrelated activity streams, namely data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing or verification that takes place simultaneously and iteratively throughout the research process. Data condensation is carried out through the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming raw data obtained from field notes regarding Islamic animation film screening sessions, interview transcripts, and documentation. The condensed data were then presented in the form of descriptive narratives organized based on emerging themes, such as "the selection of Islamic animated films as triggers", "the translation of educational songs by teachers", and "the explanation of moral and religious messages in Sasak", which allowed researchers to see the patterns of relationships between phenomena and determine the next step of analysis. Conclusions are drawn in stages from the initial conclusion that is tentative to the final conclusion that is more verified and supported by strong evidence. The verification process is carried out by re-examining the conclusions that emerge from the available data, conducting re-checks in the field if necessary, and discussing findings with the participants to ensure the accuracy of

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interpretation of how the series of processes from the screening of animated films, song translations, to teachers' explanations contribute to the internalization of morals and religion. The entire analysis process is carried out continuously from the beginning of data collection to the end of the research, thus allowing researchers to continue to deepen and improve their understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Miles et al., 2022).

The data validity testing technique in this study uses four main criteria, namely credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability which are operationalized through several specific strategies. The credibility of the data was tested through triangulation of sources and methods, i.e. by comparing data obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation, as well as comparing information provided by different participants regarding the practice of using Islamic animated films Omar & Hana and Hafiz & Hafizah in learning to obtain a more complete and accurate picture. In addition, the researcher also conducted member checking by reconfirming the initial findings to the participants to ensure that the researcher's interpretation of the teacher's process of translating and explaining the educational song from the animated film was in accordance with the meaning intended by the participants. A two-month extension of the research time was also carried out to build trust with participants and gain a deeper understanding of the research context. Transferability is pursued through the presentation of rich and detailed descriptions of the context, participants, and research process including the types of Islamic animated films used as a learning medium so that readers can assess the extent to which the findings of this research can be transferred to other contexts that have similar characteristics. Dependability and confirmability are maintained through trail audits in the form of systematic documentation of the entire research process from data collection, data analysis, to methodological decision-making, which allows for re-examination by external parties on the consistency and objectivity of the research. The validity of the data guaranteed through these various strategies is an important foundation that ensures that research findings can be scientifically accounted for and have useful value for scientific development and moral and religious education practices (Sugiyono, 2024).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Theoretical Integration: Bridging Multimedia Learning Theory and Mother Language Pedagogy in the Context of Early Childhood Education

The results of research at PAUD Raudatul Ula' Selagalas reveal that the integration between multimedia learning theory and mother tongue pedagogy has become a real practice

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that takes place organically in moral and religious learning. Based on observations over two months in grades A and B, this integration stemmed from the educators' awareness that children from the Sasak community have a strong emotional and cognitive attachment to their mother tongue. The Sasak language is not only a means of communication but also a place to store local wisdom values that have been inherited from generation to generation, including moral and spiritual values that are the core of Islamic religious education in PAUD. The principle of personalization in Mayer's theory is perfectly realized through the gentle greetings in the Sasak language spoken by the teacher. Grade B teachers use the subtle Sasak language when explaining the moral message of the animation, speaking softly using local metaphors that only children growing up in Sasak culture fully understand. The use of the word "side" as a form of respect and "taoq" which means tofu creates a learning atmosphere that feels very close and personal for each child.

Observations in the session on the story of Prophet Ibrahim and Ishmael show how the principle of modality is intertwined with the pedagogy of the mother tongue. Class A teachers show Islamic animated films such as Omar & Hana and Hafiz & Hafizah which contain educational songs and stories full of moral messages. After the broadcast, the teacher switched to the Sasak language with full awareness, asking questions that immediately triggered an active response from the children who scrambled to tell their personal experiences. The educational songs that appear in the animated film are translated and explained back by the teacher to the students, so that the moral message contained in them can be understood more deeply by the child. The video recording documentation shows a consistent pattern of interaction where the teacher starts the explanation in simple Indonesian and then gradually switches to the Sasak language for deepening and reflection. The principal revealed that this practice has been a hallmark of the institution since its establishment, based on the belief that religious values are more easily instilled through the language closest to the child's soul. Integration also occurs at the nonverbal level, where the teacher becomes more expressive and displays higher emotional warmth when speaking Sasak. The child's participation rate increased to almost eighty percent when the discussion switched to Sasak, compared to only forty percent when using Indonesian fully. The accompanying teacher shared her experience with a quiet child who suddenly became responsive when invited to communicate in Sasak, emphasizing that mother tongue is the key to unlocking children's deepest understanding. Analysis of the teacher's reflection notes revealed that the word "taoq gratitude" in Sasak contains a deeper meaning of "know and feel" than just "willing" in Indonesian, showing that the mother tongue functions as a carrier of cultural meaning that enriches children's

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understanding.

Learning Model "Animation-Mother Language-Moral Internalization": A Field Finding

Research at PAUD Raudatul Ula' Selagalas found a learning model that was formed naturally from the practice of teachers, which was conceptualized as the "Animation-Mother Language-Moral Internalization" model. This model is an abstraction of best practices that have been going on for years, consisting of three main components that are interrelated and take place sequentially yet flexibly. The first component is the use of animation media as a trigger for initial involvement, where teachers selectively choose Islamic animated films that are loaded with moral and religious content. Films such as Omar & Hana and Hafiz & Hafizah were chosen because they featured Islamic educational songs about noble morals, daily manners, and exemplary stories that are close to the world of children. In addition, animations that show the atmosphere of villages, rice fields, or mosques are chosen because they are familiar to children, so that they trigger spontaneous reactions and become an effective starting bridge to enter the next stage of learning.

The second component is the interaction of mother tongue as a bridge of meaning. The teacher opens a typical dialogue space using the Sasak language with a gradual structure, starting from a descriptive question about the content of the animation, continuing to a question that leads to moral and religious meaning, and culminating in a question that connects the story with the child's personal experience. The teacher translates and reinterprets the educational songs from the animated film into Sasak, ensuring that children not only memorize the lyrics but also understand the moral message they contain. The third component is moral internalization through reflection and reinforcement that takes place continuously through role-playing, drawing, and singing Sasak songs whose lyrics are adapted from animated moral messages. The songs are sung every morning for a whole week so that the moral message is internalized through fun repetition. Based on parents' reports through the link book, the children also sing the song at home, indicating that internalization has gone beyond the boundaries of the classroom. The principal emphasized that mother tongue is the key to parental involvement because it allows for direct discussions without the need to translate moral messages. The three components of this model form a dynamic cycle, not running in a linear and rigid manner. The teacher can replay a particular part of the animation when the discussion reveals an incomplete understanding, and the internalization process can occur spontaneously through small incidents in the classroom that are directly reinforced by the teacher by linking the child's real behavior to the moral model of the animation. This model has a distinctive characteristic in the form of contextual nature because it

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uses animation close to the child's world and emotionally understood language, places the child as an active participant, has a sustainability dimension through repetition and parental involvement, and is very flexible and responsive to classroom dynamics.

Facilitation Mechanism: From Emotional Engagement to Internalization of Moral Values through Mother Language

This study found a gradual facilitation mechanism that explains how mother tongue takes children from initial emotional involvement while watching animation to deep internalization of moral values. This mechanism was identified through careful observation of changes in children's behavior, analysis of video recordings, and in-depth interviews with teachers. The first stage is in the form of emotional involvement triggered by animation media, where children show strong emotional responses such as facial changes and spontaneous complaints in the Sasak language when witnessing sad or unfair scenes. This emotional engagement is both individual and social, with children whispering to each other commenting on scenes and even giving spontaneous advice to characters in animation. Mother tongue serves as the most authentic tool of emotional expression because the deepest emotions tend to be expressed in the language closest to the heart.

The second stage is the interaction of mother tongue as a cognitive and affective bridge. Teachers take advantage of the child's warm emotional state to direct this energy into the process of moral meaning through questions that connect the emotions of the animation with the child's personal experience. The teacher explained the content of the Islamic animated films that were shown, translated the dialogues and song lyrics from Indonesian or Arabic into Sasak, and explained the moral and religious messages in them. The Sasak language has a wealth of irreplaceable moral vocabulary, such as the word "ilaq" which describes feelings of shame and guilt, does not have a proper equivalent in Indonesian but is very effective in instilling moral awareness. These interactions form a dynamic two-way dialogue, creating a psychologically safe space where children feel comfortable opening up, admitting mistakes, and discussing their moral dilemmas. The third stage is the construction of moral meaning through reflective dialogue in the mother tongue. Teachers ask insightful questions that invite children to think about the social and emotional consequences of moral behavior, rather than simply memorizing what is good and what is bad. Children demonstrate the ability to synthesize messages from animations, native language discussions, and their own religious understanding, resulting in statements that reflect genuine moral understanding. The fourth stage as the peak of the mechanism is the internalization of

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moral values embedded in children's behavior and awareness. Long-term observations showed a significant increase in mutually helpful behavior, and children spontaneously used moral expressions in the Sasak language to remind friends. Parents reported changes in behavior at home, including a child who reminded his brother in Sasak language using the exact same expression as his teacher, confirming that moral messages have been internalized into the child's frame of mind.

Contextualization of Models in PAUD Raudatul Ula': Practical and Conceptual Implications Based on Local Characteristics

This study found that the "Animation-Mother Language-Moral Internalization" model has a very strong contextual dimension and cannot be separated from the local characteristics of the Sasak community in Selagalas Village. The success of this model grew from the social, cultural, and religious context of the local community which still holds the traditions and values of Sasak. The Sasak language is predominantly used in daily communication at home, mosques, markets, and other public spaces. The principal said that in the early days, the use of Indonesian as the main introduction actually made children passive and confused, so the founders decided to make Sasak as the main language with Indonesian being introduced gradually. The strong tradition of speaking in Sasak culture has become a very influential local characteristic. The Sasak people have a rich oral tradition in the form of folklore, proverbs, and advice that are passed down from generation to generation in a poetic and expressive language style. Class A teachers who were raised in this tradition naturally bring this style of speech into the classroom, using dynamic intonation and rich facial expressions that captivate children. The religious context also plays an important role because the people of Selagalas are devout Muslims and the Sasak language has absorbed many Arabic vocabulary such as "righteous", "gratitude", "sincere", and "sabar". Teachers do not need to translate religious terms because key concepts are already available in the child's mother tongue. The social life of the community, which is still very communal, also supports the internalization of values, where children practice moral and religious values in daily interactions such as sharing food and helping each other.

In terms of practical implications, the study recommends three development strategies. First, documentation and systematization of good practices that have been intuitive so far so as not to be lost when senior teachers retire. Second, the development of animations that are truly created in the context of Sasak culture with characters and stories that reflect local life. Third, strengthening structured partnerships between PAUD and parents through storytelling programs,

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moral discussion workshops, and Sasak language song festivals. In terms of conceptual implications, this study strengthens the argument that mother tongue is a complete semiotic ecosystem where values, emotions, and cultural identities are stored. The concept of "ilaq" is an example of how mother tongue provides a precise conceptual tool for moral awareness. The study also demonstrates that technology and tradition can run in harmony, where animation provides visual stimulus while mother tongue provides a deep and contextual framework of meaning.

DISCUSSION

Theoretical Integration: Bridging Multimedia Learning Theory and Mother Language Pedagogy in the Context of Early Childhood Education

The findings of research at PAUD Raudatul Ula' Selagalas showing that the integration between multimedia learning theory and mother tongue pedagogy occurs naturally in moral and religious learning practices provides empirical evidence that strengthens the theoretical proposition of the compatibility of these two approaches. The teachers intuitively applied Mayer's principle of personalization when they used the warm and familiar Sasak language to explain the moral message of the animation being shown. The use of Islamic animated films such as Omar & Hana and Hafiz & Hafizah which are rich in moral and religious educational songs became a visual-auditory stimulus that was then interpreted through the mother tongue. This phenomenon is in line with recent research findings that show that the use of mother tongue in early childhood learning significantly improves children's conceptual understanding and emotional engagement because mother tongue provides the cognitive framework that best suits a child's mental development in the pre-operational phase (Widiastuti et al., 2023).

The principle of modality in multimedia learning theory that emphasizes the importance of using the auditory and visual channels simultaneously finds its ideal manifestation in practice in PAUD Raudatul Ula'. Animation provides a visual representation of abstract moral and religious concepts, while narratives and discussions in Sasak provide a rich verbal representation of the cultural context. The songs in the animated film, which are translated and reinterpreted by the teacher, become a bridge between auditory understanding and internalization of values. This combination creates a multisensory and immersive learning experience for children. Recent research in the context of early childhood education in Indonesia confirms that the integration of visual media with local languages significantly improves the retention and understanding of moral values compared to the use of Indonesian as the sole language of instruction (Hidayati & Rahman, 2022).

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The use of the Sasak language, which is loaded with emotional and cultural content in discussing animated content, reflects what is called culturally responsive multimedia learning. When teachers use typical Sasak expressions such as "taoq ilaq" to explain the concept of moral guilt, they are not simply translating the term from Indonesian, but activating the entire network of cultural meanings inherent in the term in children's consciousness. This kind of approach is very effective because moral and religious values are stored and transmitted through the mother tongue as an authentic cultural vehicle, so that learning using the mother tongue has a much stronger resonance power than learning in a second language (Kusumawati & Pratiwi, 2024).

The findings that children showed up to eighty percent increase in participation when discussions switched to Sasak showed that mother tongue fundamentally changed the psychological dynamics of the classroom. Children who were originally quiet and passive in Indonesian suddenly became communicative and responsive when invited to dialogue in Sasak. This phenomenon confirms that mother tongue serves as a cognitive and affective gateway that allows the child to be fully involved in the learning process. Recent neurolinguistic perspectives reveal that information processing in the mother tongue involves a deeper area of the brain and is more associated with emotional memory compared to processing in the second language, which explains why native language-based learning results in more meaningful understanding (Ramadhani et al., 2023).

The observation that teachers have intuitively developed a smooth transition pattern from Indonesian to Sasak in moral learning shows that there is a translanguaging pedagogy that takes place organically. This pattern is not just an ordinary code switch, but a pedagogical strategy that utilizes the entire linguistic repertoire of children to maximize comprehension. Teachers start with Indonesian to introduce concepts, then switch to Sasak for personal deepening and reflection. This kind of practice reflects the findings of contemporary research that a translanguaging approach in early childhood education significantly improves children's cognitive flexibility and conceptual understanding, especially in value-laden learning domains such as moral and religious education (Ningsih & Setiawan, 2025).

Learning Model "Animation-Mother Language-Moral Internalization": A Field Finding

The learning model identified in PAUD Raudatul Ula' is a finding that enriches the treasure of moral learning models in early childhood, especially in the context of Indonesia's multilingual society. The three components of this model are animation media as a trigger for initial engagement, mother tongue interaction as a bridge of meaning, and internalization through

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reflection and reinforcement to form a coherent and mutually reinforcing cycle. The structure of this model has similarities to the experiential learning framework that emphasizes the cycle of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation, but with the peculiarity of the central role of mother tongue in all stages of the cycle (Wulandari & Hartono, 2022).

The first component of the model, which is the selective use of animation media as a trigger for initial engagement, shows that teachers at PAUD Raudatul Ula' have developed a high sensitivity to the criteria for selecting media that are appropriate for the children's world. They do not just choose animations that are entertaining, but those that have a clear moral and religious content, such as those found in the films Omar & Hana and Hafiz & Hafizah. The content of the film, which features Islamic educational songs and exemplary stories, has a visual and spiritual closeness to the reality of the lives of Sasak children. This principle is in line with the theory of the importance of cultural representation in children's learning media. The use of media that features settings and characters that are familiar to children significantly increases emotional identification and engagement, which is an important prerequisite for effective moral learning (Sari et al., 2024).

The component of mother tongue interaction as a bridge of meaning observed in this model shows a very distinctive dialogue pattern and is different from the conventional question and answer pattern in learning. The teacher does not immediately give a moral lecture after showing the animation, but rather opens up a space of gradual dialogue that begins with a descriptive question, continues to an interpretive question, and culminates in a reflective question that connects the story with the child's personal experience. In this stage, the teacher translates the lyrics of the song from the animation into Sasak language and explains the moral and religious messages contained in it. This kind of dialogue structure reflects what in contemporary literature is referred to as dialogic teaching, which is a learning approach that emphasizes meaningful dialogue between teachers and students to construct mutual understanding, which has proven to be very effective in value learning and character formation (Fitriani & Mahendra, 2023).

The existence of moral songs in the Sasak language that were created by teachers and sung repeatedly as part of the internalization component is a very interesting finding and has a strong theoretical basis. These songs serve as a mnemonic device that helps children remember moral messages through melody and rhythm, as well as cultural artifacts that strengthen children's cultural identity. The use of mother tongue songs in moral and religious learning in early childhood is not only effective for memory retention but also creates a pleasurable aesthetic experience so that moral values are internalized without coercion. This approach to moral learning that

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integrates local art and culture has been proven to result in a deeper and more lasting internalization of values than conventional didactic approaches (Lestari et al., 2021).

The involvement of parents facilitated by the use of mother tongues in this model adds a very important ecological dimension. Models don't stop in the classroom but extend to the home environment through liaison books and informal communication. When parents are able to discuss moral and religious values with their children in the Sasak language that they both master well, there is a consistent reinforcement between learning at school and at home. Synergy between school and family in moral and religious education in early childhood is a key factor in the success of character formation, and mother tongue is the glue that allows this synergy to take place naturally and sustainably (Rahmawati & Nugroho, 2023).

Facilitation Mechanism: From Emotional Engagement to Internalization of Moral Values through Mother Language

The four-stage facilitation mechanism identified in this study provides a very detailed picture of the transformation process from visual animation to moral values that are internalized in children. The first stage in the form of emotional involvement triggered by animation media is an important foundation that determines the effectiveness of the next stages. Observations showing children giving spontaneous emotional responses in the Sasak language while watching Islamic animations such as Omar & Hana that are loaded with moral and religious messages confirm that emotions and mother tongue are very closely connected in the human cognitive architecture. Strong emotional engagement is necessary for information to be processed deeply by the brain and has a greater chance of being stored in long-term memory and influencing individual value systems (Prasetyo & Widodo, 2022).

The transition from emotional involvement to the mother tongue interaction stage occurs through a process that the teachers at PAUD Raudatul Ula' manage very well. They take advantage of the moment when the child's emotions are still warm to direct that emotional energy into a reflective dialogue. The teacher then translates the educational songs from the Islamic animated film that he has just watched and explains them to the students, explaining the moral and religious content contained in them. This strategy is very effective because it utilizes what in educational psychology is called hot cognition, which is a cognitive state that is enriched by an emotional component so that information processing becomes deeper and more meaningful. Learning that involves emotions through the use of mother tongue produces stronger and more accessible memory traces when children face moral situations in real life (Hartini et al., 2024).

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The lexical richness of the Sasak language in the moral and emotional domains revealed in this study, such as the concept of "ilaq" which has no proper equivalent in Indonesian, provides strong evidence of the role of language in shaping moral consciousness. The moral concepts stored in the mother tongue have very specific nuances of meaning and are closely related to the cultural experience of the speaking community. When children learn about morality through their mother tongue, they do not just learn verbal labels for abstract concepts, but they access the entire cultural knowledge system contained in the language. The mother tongue functions as a reservoir of moral and religious values that have accumulated over generations in a community, so that its learning goes beyond the transfer of information to the transmission of cultural wisdom (Yulianti & Saputra, 2021).

The stage of construction of moral meaning facilitated by reflective dialogue in Sasak demonstrates a process that in Vygotsky's theory is called the zone of proximal development, in which the child constructs a higher understanding through scaffolding provided by a teacher or more capable peer. Mother tongue is a semiotic mediation tool that allows this scaffolding process to take place optimally because children and teachers operate in a symbolic system that they both fully master. When scaffolding is done in a language that the child truly understands, the potential for the child's cognitive and moral development can be maximized, and the process of constructing meaning takes place more deeply (Nugraha & Permata, 2023).

The internalization of moral values as the peak stage of this mechanism is evident from the changes in children's behavior observed both at school and at home. This internalization process does not happen instantly but through the accumulation of consistent learning experiences and repeated reinforcement. When children spontaneously begin to use moral expressions in the Sasak language to remind their friends, this indicates that these values have become part of their self-regulatory system. Effective internalization of moral and religious values requires consistency between the messages that children receive in various contexts of their lives, and the consistent use of mother tongue in schools, homes, and communities creates a coherence that supports the internalization process (Susanti & Ardiansyah, 2024).

Parental reports of children beginning to show changes in moral and religious behavior at home and even reminding other family members to use the same language that teachers use in schools provide the most convincing evidence of the success of this mechanism. This phenomenon shows that learning has gone beyond the boundaries of school and has become part of the child's life as a whole. The transfer of learning from the school context to the context of daily life is a key indicator of the success of character education, and the use of mother tongue significantly

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facilitates this transfer because it removes linguistic barriers that often prevent children from expressing their moral understanding outside of school (Putri & Hermawan, 2025).

Contextualization of Models in PAUD Raudatul Ula': Practical and Conceptual Implications Based on Local Characteristics

The success of the learning model in PAUD Raudatul Ula' cannot be separated from the socio-cultural context of the Selagalas people who still strongly hold the Sasak tradition, including the tradition of speaking which is rich in moral and religious values. The strong oral tradition in the Sasak society provides a solid cultural foundation for a learning model that relies on verbal interaction in the mother tongue. This tradition of speaking that has been passed down through generations has formed a kind of indigenous pedagogy that emphasizes learning through stories, parables, and direct dialogue between the older and the younger. The model that developed at PAUD Raudatul Ula' is essentially a modern adaptation of this traditional pedagogy, where Islamic animations such as Omar & Hana and Hafiz & Hafizah serve as visual substitutes for stories that were once told orally by elders (Maharani & Gunawan, 2022).

The absorption of Arabic vocabulary into the Sasak language which occurred naturally through the process of Islamization over the centuries provides a unique advantage in the context of Islamic religious learning in early childhood education. Key terms in Islamic teachings such as "righteous", "gratitude", "sincerity", and "patience" have become everyday vocabulary in the Sasak language, so children do not need to learn new terminology when learning about Islamic values. This phenomenon shows that the mother tongue of the Muslim community in Indonesia has a very good capacity as the language of instruction for religious education because it has undergone a process of vernacularization of Islamic concepts that has lasted for hundreds of years. The use of regional languages that have organically accommodated Islamic terminology in moral and religious education in early childhood is a very effective strategy and in accordance with the socio-religious context of the Indonesian Muslim community (Azizah et al., 2023).

The communal characteristics of the Selagalas community, which are still strong in practicing the values of togetherness and mutual cooperation, create a very supportive environment for the internalization of moral and religious values learned in schools. When children see that values such as help, honesty, and mutual respect are not only taught in school but also practiced in the daily lives of their communities, there is a consistency that strengthens the internalization process. The consistency between the values taught in educational institutions

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and the values practiced in the community is a key factor in the success of character education, and in the context of a communal society such as Selagalas, this consistency occurs naturally without the need for special engineering (Santoso & Wijaya, 2024).

The practical implications of this study, which emphasizes the need to document and systematize good practices that have been running intuitively, are very crucial issues for the sustainability of the model. Many educational institutions have excellent practices based on local wisdom but fail to preserve them because of their reliance on the tacit knowledge of senior teachers that are not documented. When these teachers retire or move, that valuable knowledge is simply lost. Documentation and systematization of pedagogical practices based on local language and culture is a strategic step to ensure sustainability and allow dissemination to other institutions that have a similar context (Handayani & Kurniawan, 2021).

The need for the development of animations that are truly created in the context of Sasak culture, as expressed by the teachers, shows that there is a gap between the availability of digital learning resources and the contextual needs of educational institutions in the region. So far, the children's learning media market has been dominated by products produced in Java or abroad with different cultural backgrounds. The development of digital content that is responsive to the local cultural context is an important agenda that requires collaboration between educators, local artists, and technology developers. The presence of popular Islamic animated films from YouTube such as Omar & Hana and Hafiz & Hafizah has been a good first step, but the availability of animations featuring authentic characters, stories, and values from Sasak culture will further strengthen the effectiveness of mother tongue-based learning models (Iskandar et al., 2025).

From a conceptual perspective, the findings of this study provide strong empirical support for the asset-based education paradigm that views linguistic and cultural diversity not as an obstacle but as a valuable asset in education. PAUD Raudatul Ula' has demonstrated that by utilizing the mother tongue, speaking traditions, communal values, and local wisdom, an educational institution in a suburban area can develop a highly effective moral and religious learning model. This asset-based education paradigm is very relevant in the Indonesian context which is rich in linguistic and cultural diversity, because it provides a framework to develop contextual and meaningful educational practices without having to rely on imported models from outside that are not necessarily appropriate (Zulkarnain & Fadhilah, 2022).

CONCLUSION

Research at PAUD Raudatul Ula' Selagalas proves that the integration of multimedia

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learning theory with natural mother tongue pedagogy has resulted in a very effective learning model "Animation-Mother Language-Moral Internalization" which is very effective in facilitating moral and religious learning in early childhood. In practice, this model relies on the use of Islamic animated films such as Omar & Hana and Hafiz & Hafizah which are rich in educational songs and moral messages, which are then translated and re-explained by the teacher to students using the Sasak language. This model works through a four-stage facilitation mechanism that starts from emotional involvement triggered by Islamic animation film media, continues to the interaction of mother tongue as a bridge of meaning where the teacher translates the educational songs of the animation and explains the moral message contained in it, then the construction of moral meaning through reflective dialogue, and leads to the internalization of values embedded in the child's consciousness and behavior. The success of this model cannot be separated from the socio-cultural context of the Sasak community in Selagalas who still strongly hold the tradition of speaking, communal values, and have a mother tongue that is rich in moral vocabulary and has absorbed Islamic terminology organically. The use of Sasak as the primary language of instruction in interpreting Islamic animated film content has been proven to create a psychologically safe space that allows children to express their moral and religious understanding authentically, increase learning participation by up to eighty percent, and facilitate the transfer of learning from school to home and community environments.

The implementation of the results of this study encourages the need for systematic documentation of mother tongue-based pedagogical practices in facilitating learning through Islamic animated films that have been proven to be effective, including documenting teachers' strategies in translating educational songs and explaining their moral and religious content, the development of animated content created in the context of local culture, as well as strengthening structured partnerships between PAUD institutions and parents and community so that this mother tongue-based model of moral and religious learning can continue to be developed, preserved, and replicated in other institutions that have similar socio-linguistic contexts.

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