

**Developing English Speaking Materials for Islamic High School Students:  
Learning Needs and Practicality**

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**ABSTRACT**

The development of English-speaking materials that meet with students' learning specific needs of Islamic high school students is essential for enhancing their communicative competence. However, these learning resources, such as textbooks, are rarely found in the literature. Therefore, this study aims to design, validate, and assess the practicality of English-speaking materials that support the speaking skill of these learners. Using Research and Development study (R&D) consisting of four stages: define, design, develop, and disseminate. Thirty students were involved in this study at one of Islamic Senior High Schools in West Nusa Tenggara Provinces, Indonesia. A comprehensive needs analysis was conducted through surveys and classroom observations to identify students' linguistic requirements, preferences, and challenges. The findings showed that most of the students aim to master the speaking skill that incorporating Islamic themes and communicative activities as it meets with their context and culture. Expert evaluations confirmed the validity of the learning materials, highlighting their linguistic accuracy, relevance, and cultural appropriateness which clearly showed 93%, and 90% respectively. The practical implications of this research are significant for curriculum developers, educators, and policymakers in Islamic educational institutions. The study concludes that the development of learning resources that integrating Islamic values and communicative language teaching principles is fundamental for Islamic senior high school students to support their speaking skill.

**Keywords:** English Speaking Materials; Islamic High Schools; Needs Analysis

## INTRODUCTION

The increasing importance of English as a global lingua franca has emphasized the need for immerse in English language education across diverse educational contexts, including Islamic high schools. In these institutions, English proficiency is not only a tool for global communication but also a means to engage with Islamic studies resources, many of which are available in English (Al-Khatib, 2015). Speaking skills play a critical role in enabling students to express ideas, participate in discussions, and perform communicative tasks in academic and real-world settings (Purwati, Ubaidillah, & Restall, 2023).

Despite the significance of speaking skills, many Islamic high schools face challenges in delivering effective English-speaking instruction. These challenges often stem from misaligned teaching materials that fail to address the unique cultural and academic needs of students in Islamic contexts (Kusumastuti, 2020). Additionally, generic English textbooks lack relevance, as they do not integrate Islamic values or content, leaving students disengaged and underprepared for real-life speaking scenarios (Rohman & Sutopo, 2018).

However, the unique cultural and academic contexts of Islamic high schools present distinct challenges in teaching English speaking skills. Students in these institutions often require learning materials that integrate Islamic values and content to stay relevant and meaningful. Generic English textbooks typically lack this cultural and contextual alignment, resulting in disengaged learners who struggle to connect their language learning to their lived experiences and academic goals (Rohman & Sutopo, 2018). Moreover, these materials often fail to address the specific linguistic and communicative needs of students, such as discussing Islamic topics or engaging in culturally dialogues (Kusumastuti, 2020). Research on English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and English for Islamic Studies underscores the importance of contextualized teaching materials. However, there is a scarcity of resources that cater specifically to the needs of Islamic high school students, particularly in speaking skills (Mubaligh & Sari, 2022). Furthermore, the practicality and applicability of existing materials in classroom settings remain underexplored.

This study aims to address these gaps by developing English speaking materials meet Islamic high school students' learning needs and contexts of Islamic high school students. By focusing on the students' learning needs and its effectiveness of the materials, this research seeks to provide educators with tools that not only enhance students' speaking skills but also align with their cultural and educational contexts. Through a needs analysis and the validity implementation, the study strives to contribute to the broader field of English language teaching in Islamic educational institutions, promoting communicative competence while fostering students' connection to their cultural and religious identity.

Although speaking learning resources, such as English textbook, for high school students has been developed evolve, current studies that discussing the English

textbook meeting with EFL Islamic high school students and evaluating its effectiveness are scarcely found in the literature. This study, therefore, fills this gap by developing teaching and learning material for supporting EFL students' speaking skill at Islamic Senior High School context that meet with their learning needs, and measure its effectiveness through the validity results of two experts. The findings are expected to contribute to the broader field of English language teaching, particularly in Islamic educational settings, by promoting communicative competence while fostering a stronger connection to students' cultural and religious identities.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Speaking is a critical component of communicative competence, which is the goal of language learning in many EFL (English as a Foreign Language) contexts (Rusdin & Purwati, 2023). Richards (2008) emphasizes that speaking involves multiple sub-skills, such as fluency, accuracy, and the ability to use language appropriately in different situations. In the context of Islamic high schools, the focus on speaking skill is different from the general speaking skill as the speaking skill in this context requires students to communicate based on the religious and academic discussion (Al-Khatib, 2015; Abudhahir, 2018). Thus, equipping the students' speaking skill with supporting learning resources is essential to reach its effectiveness.

In EFL environments, however, speaking is often considered one of the most challenging skills for learners to develop due to limited exposure to authentic communication, lack of confidence, and anxiety (Brown, 2007; Purwati, Ubaidillah, Restall, 2023). Additionally, teachers in these contexts frequently struggle to implement effective speaking activities due to resource limitations, large class sizes, and inadequate training (Ur, 2012). These challenges are visible in Islamic high schools, where traditional teaching methods and culturally unsuitable materials often hinder students' speaking proficiency.

Recent studies highlight significant challenges in developing speaking skills among Islamic high school students, emphasizing the need for culturally relevant and pedagogically effective approaches. The available learning resources to support speaking skill led to the several problems for them, such as disconnects to real-world communication and diminishes their motivation to participate actively in speaking activities (Rohman & Sutopo, 2018; Kusumastuti, 2020). Integrating Islamic values and contextualized content into speaking materials has shown promise in fostering engagement and relevance (Mubaligh & Sari, 2022). Task-based approaches, such as oral presentations and experiential learning, have proven effective in enhancing speaking proficiency by encouraging active participation and practical language use, particularly when tasks incorporate Islamic themes (Ningsih et al., 2023; Richards, 2008). Furthermore, the integration of digital tools, including multimedia resources and online platforms, offers interactive opportunities for students to practice fluency and pronunciation beyond traditional classroom

settings, promoting autonomous learning (Heinrich & Green, 2020). Despite these advancements, there remains a lack of comprehensive resources specifically tailored for Islamic high school students, underscoring the need for innovative curriculum development that bridges linguistic and cultural learning (Mubaligh & Sari, 2022; Kusumastuti, 2020). Addressing this gap is crucial for enhancing communicative competence while supporting students' cultural and religious identities in EFL learning environments.

The development of effective teaching materials is essential in addressing the challenges faced by learners and teachers in EFL contexts. According to Tomlinson (2011), supporting teaching materials should be engaging, relevant, and aligned with learners' needs and interests. In Islamic high schools, this entails integrating content that reflects the students' cultural and religious identities while also meeting the demands of communicative language teaching. English for Specific Purposes (ESP) provides a theoretical framework for the development of such materials. Basturkmen (2015) argues that ESP materials should be learner-centered, focusing on the specific needs of the target audience. To reach its efficiency, needs analysis needs to be conducted. Needs analysis, which involves identifying learners' goals, linguistic challenges, and preferences, is a fundamental step in this process (Pranoto & Suprayogi, 2020). However, existing research suggests that many textbooks used in Islamic high schools fail to conduct proper needs analysis, resulting in materials that are neither practical nor contextually relevant (Kusumastuti, 2020).

Needs analysis is the key of effective ESP material development, as it ensures that the content and tasks align with the learners' real-world requirements (Eka & Manurung, 2020). For Islamic high school students, needs analysis must consider both linguistic and contextual factors, including their religious background, the role of English in their academic and professional aspirations, and the specific speaking tasks they are likely to encounter. Tools such as surveys, interviews, and classroom observations are commonly employed to gather data for needs analysis (Graves, 2000). Several studies have highlighted the importance of tailoring materials to the needs of Islamic high school students. Rohman and Sutopo (2018), for instance, found that integrating Islamic themes into English materials significantly increased students' motivation and engagement. Similarly, research by Kusumastuti (2020) demonstrated that contextualized materials improved students' speaking performance and reduced anxiety.

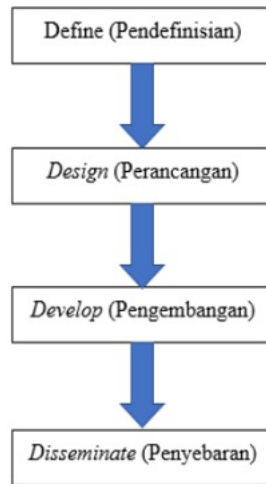
The validity of teaching materials refers to the extent to which they achieve their intended learning outcomes. This includes alignment with curriculum standards, linguistic accuracy, and the appropriateness of tasks and content for the target learners (Nunan, 1991). In the context of Islamic high schools, validity also encompasses cultural appropriateness and the integration of Islamic values (Al-Khatib, 2015). Practicality, on the other hand, pertains to the ease with which the materials can be implemented in real classroom settings. Factors such as teacher training, resource availability, and the flexibility of the materials play a crucial role

in determining their practicality (Tomlinson, 2011). While studies on material validity and practicality are abundant in general EFL contexts, there is limited research specifically focusing on Islamic high schools.

Despite the growing interest in ESP and contextualized teaching materials, several gaps remain in the literature. First, there is a lack of comprehensive studies that focus on the speaking needs of Islamic high school students. While many studies have explored general language skills or specific skills such as reading and writing, speaking has often been overlooked. Second, the interplay between material validity and practicality in Islamic contexts remains underexplored. Existing research has primarily focused on one aspect or the other, with few studies examining how both factors can be balanced to create effective teaching materials. This study seeks to fill these gaps by developing and validating English speaking materials specifically designed for Islamic high school students. By conducting a rigorous needs analysis and evaluating both the validity and practicality of the materials, the research aims to provide valuable insights for educators and material developers in similar contexts.

## **METHOD**

This research was conducted at one of State Islamic Senior High Schools in West Nusa Tenggara Province, Indonesia. The number of students was thirty students who were in eleventh grade. The reason why this number of students were chosen because the chosen sample size ensures manageability within the constraints of time, resources, and the scope of the study and it represents a practical the eleventh-grade population at the school. Although relatively small, it is sufficient to draw meaningful insights about the effectiveness of the developed teaching materials for this group. Employing a Research and Development (R&D) design, the study utilized the 4-D model including four steps: Define, Design, Develop, and Disseminate, which guided the systematic creation and evaluation of English teaching materials focused on Islamic studies. Several research instruments were used in this study: the validation sheets from material and media experts to validate the book which was adapted from Reski (2021), students' response questionnaire and a semi- structure interview were also used for analyzing the students' learning needs. The following is the step of 4-D model:



Picture 1. 4-D Research Model (Supriyaddin et al., 2023)

The 4-D model of research and development consists of four systematic steps: Define, Design, Develop, and Disseminate. In the Define stage, researchers identify the learners' needs and establish goals for developing effective textbook. The Design phase involves creating a blueprint for the product, including designing instructional materials, activities, and assessment tools, ensuring alignment with the research objectives. During the Develop stage, the prototype is constructed and refined through iterative testing and feedback, ensuring its quality and effectiveness. Finally, the Disseminate phase focuses on implementing and sharing the validated product with a broader audience, such as educators or institutions, often through publications, workshops, or integration into practice. This structured approach ensures that the product is both theoretically sound and practically impactful (Yunus, Fransisca, & Saputri, 2022).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Students' Learning Needs Analysis

The purpose of Need analysis is to identify the specific learning needs and goals of EFL learners at the Islamic High School. The questionnaire was distributed and it was written in Bahasa Indonesia in order to avoid ambiguity among students. The following is the result of questionnaire.

Table 1. The Students' Analysis Learning Needs

No.	Statement of Students' Learning Needs	Likert Scale Result (1-5)
1	I want to improve my speaking skills in English related to Islamic studies.	4.5

2	I need English materials that are relevant to Islamic concepts and teachings.	4.8
3	I find it difficult to speak in English about complex Islamic topics.	4.2
4	I prefer learning to speak through group discussions and role-playing activities.	4.6
5	I need more opportunities to practice speaking in real-life situations, such as giving khutbah or sermons.	4.7
6	I struggle to find appropriate vocabulary and expressions in English related to Islamic topics.	4.4
7	I feel less confident when speaking in English about Islamic topics.	4.3
8	The current learning materials do not help me enough in improving my speaking skills.	3.9
9	I need more activities that involve speaking practice in English related to Islamic studies.	4.6
10	I want to learn how to deliver speeches or presentations in English, particularly based on Islamic studies more fluently.	4.7

Based on table 1, the results of the students' need analysis using the Likert scale shows that it is evident that the majority of students have a strong desire to improve their speaking skills in English, particularly in the context of Islamic studies, as reflected by a score of 4.5. Most students (4.8) expressed a clear need for English materials that are relevant to Islamic concepts, highlighting the importance of integrating Islamic content into their English learning. However, they also find it challenging (4.2) to discuss complex Islamic topics in English, which suggests the need for targeted support in this area. This high score result represents the high demand among the students to learn English based on their cultural and religious needs to support their speaking skill.

Furthermore, students strongly prefer interactive learning methods, with a score of 4.6 indicating their preference for group discussions and role-playing activities as effective ways to practice speaking. There is also a high demand (4.7) for opportunities to practice speaking in real-life situations, such as delivering sermons or khutbah, demonstrating the importance of practical application in their learning. This interactive learning methods were highly scored as the students realise that equipping them with supporting learning methods would result in a positive impact for their speaking skill.

In terms of language proficiency, students acknowledged difficulties (4.4) in finding the appropriate vocabulary and expressions to discuss Islamic topics in English. Confidence issues are also evident, as students rated their lack of confidence when speaking about Islamic topics at 4.3. The existing learning materials appear to be insufficient (3.9) in helping them improve their speaking skills, further reinforcing the need for materials that are specifically designed for

their context. Lastly, students expressed a strong desire (4.7) to learn how to deliver speeches and presentations in English more fluently, underscoring the importance of enhancing their public speaking abilities within an Islamic framework. This result has highlighted that the EFL students at Islamic institution have a strong willingness in improving their islamic vocabulary and topics to support their speaking skill.

### The Validation Results

To check the validity of the book, two experts: Media and materials experts were asked to evaluate the book. In detail, here is the points that had been evaluated by the first validator (media expert).

*Table 2. The Validation Results (The First Expert)*

Statements	Score
<b>Book Validity</b>	Average: 5
1. This book presents information in a clear and easy-to-understand way.	5
2. The content of this book is relevant to the current curriculum.	5
3. This book covers important topics for understanding the material.	5
4. The sources used in this book are reliable and up-to-date.	5
5. The structure of the book is very detailed.	5
<b>Book Content</b>	Average: 4.8
6. The material presented in this book is deep enough for the targeted learning level.	5
7. The examples and exercises in this book help better understand the concepts.	5
8. This book has a good structure and makes it easy for readers to navigate.	4
9. The use of images, tables, and graphs in this book supports material comprehension.	5
10. The language used in this book is appropriate for the targeted readership level.	4
<b>Book Relevance</b>	Average: 5
11. This book is relevant to the latest developments in its field.	5
12. This book provides useful insights for practical fieldwork.	5
13. The material presented in this book can be applied to real-world contexts or practical cases.	5
<b>Book Quality</b>	Average: 4.67
14. The quality of the book is satisfactory.	4
15. The print and layout quality of this book is adequate and does not disturb the reader.	5



16. This book is free from distracting typographical and printing errors.	5
<b>Overall Total Average</b>	<b>4.87 (93%)</b>

The validation results by the media expert in table 2 clearly shows that overall positive evaluation on the four categories of evaluations (with 4.87 total average): book validity, book content, book relevance, and book quality. In terms of book validity, the book was rated positively across all statements. It was considered to present information in a clear and easy-to-understand way (5). The book also considered contain several important points : content relevant to the current curriculum (5), cover important topics (5), utilize reliable and up-to-date sources (5), and have a highly detailed structure (5). This section received a total average score of 5.

In terms of the Book Content, the book's material was rated as deep enough for the target learning level (5), and its examples and exercises were helpful for understanding the concepts (5). It was noted that the book has a generally good structure, although slightly less ideal in aiding navigation (4). Additionally, the use of images, tables, and graphs was praised for supporting comprehension (5), while the language used was deemed appropriate for the target readership, though with some room for improvement (4). The total average score for this section was 4.8. Regarding Book Relevance and the book quality, the book was seen as highly relevant to the latest developments in the field (5), providing useful insights for practical application (5), and being applicable to real-world contexts or practical cases (5). This section achieved a total average score of 5. In terms of Book Quality, the quality of the book overall was rated favorably (4), with high marks for print and layout quality (5) and the absence of distracting typographical errors (5). The total average score for this section was 4.67 or 93%.

*Table 3. The Validation Result Assessed by the Second Expert (Media Expert)*

No	Statements	Score
	Design Quality	Average: 4
1	The layout of this book is attractive, easy to read, and not confusing.	4
2	The use of colors and fonts enhances readability and attracts readers.	4
3	This book is free from typographical errors.	4
4	The use of images, tables, and charts in this book supports understanding of the material.	4
5	The pictures and illustrations in this book are relevant to the material.	4
	Aesthetic Aspects	Average: 4
6	The choice of colors on the book cover is able to attract readers' attention.	4

7	The selection of images in the book grabs readers' attention.	4
8	The print quality and layout of this book are adequate and do not distract readers.	4
9	This book is printed with good quality, making it easy for students to read.	4
10	In terms of design and aesthetics, this book is suitable for use in the learning process.	4
<b>Overall Total Average</b>		<b>4 (90%)</b>

The table 3 discussed the components of evaluating a book from design quality and aesthetic perspective using Likert scales (1–5). Based on the second validator assessment, the first part, "Design Quality," clearly show that the whole book had layout and usability (including discernment through appropriate use of colours/fonts/design). This also has been used cooperatively with supporting visual aids, such as images/charts. This aiding users on their path to comprehensively assimilating information. Every item in this part was scored a 4, having been highly satisfied with the design elements of the book leading to it being nearly free-of-typo-visually-friendly text that is also easy-to-read. The second section, "Aesthetic Aspects," assesses the visual of the book, including the choice of colors, images, and the overall print quality. The score of this item is high which shows each statement is scored 4, indicating that the book's cover, image selection, and print quality are all adequate and engaging for the readers. The overall total average score of 4 across both sections demonstrates that the book meets high standards in both design and aesthetics, making it suitable for use in the learning process.

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the development of English-speaking materials tailored to the needs of Islamic high school students. This section discusses the results in relation to the research objectives, theoretical underpinnings, and previous studies related to this study. The needs analysis revealed that Islamic high school students require speaking materials that are not only communicative but also culturally and contextually relevant. The data indicated a strong preference for materials integrating Islamic themes, such as moral values, religious practices, and Islamic history. This finding aligns with Al-Khatib (2015), who emphasized the importance of contextualized content in supporting learner motivation and engagement. These findings also highlight that the students have a strong motivation in learning English based on Islamic context. Alqunayeer and Zamir (2016) clearly point out that needs analysis has been considered as an essential part of developing the learning resources for students, particularly in the development of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Similarly, this also was highlighted by Zaitun and Wardani (2018) that incorporating the Islamic values into teaching resources would lead to positive impacts for students' motivation, particularly in the Islamic institution.

The importance of integrating Islamic values into the materials also reflects the dual purpose of English education in Islamic contexts: to achieve communicative competence and to strengthen religious identity. This dual focus distinguishes the

needs of Islamic high school students from those in other EFL settings, as highlighted in prior studies by Kusumastuti (2020) and Rohman and Sutopo (2018). Moreover, students highlighted the need for structured speaking activities that build confidence and reduce anxiety. Role plays, discussions, and presentations emerged as preferred tasks, supporting the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach advocated by Richards (2008). These activities enable students to practice real-life communication, enhancing both fluency and accuracy.

The validation process demonstrated that the developed speaking materials are highly relevant, linguistically accurate, and culturally appropriate for Islamic high school students. The materials align with curriculum standards and incorporate Islamic content, which enhances their suitability for the target learners. Expert evaluations rated the materials as valid, particularly in terms of language accuracy and the appropriateness of speaking tasks. The relation between the materials and students' needs further supports the argument that teaching resources should reflect the cultural and academic contexts of learners (Tomlinson, 2023). The inclusion of Islamic themes not only motivates students but also provides a meaningful context for language use. This contextualization has been shown to improve learning outcomes, as learners are more likely to engage with materials that resonate with their identities and experiences (Vermunt, Vrikki, Dudley, & Warwick, 2023). The practicality of the materials was assessed through teacher feedback and classroom trials. Teachers reported that the materials were easy to use, with clear instructions and flexible activities that could be adapted to different classroom settings. This practicality addresses a common concern in EFL contexts, where resource limitations often hinder the implementation of new teaching materials (Nguyen, Warren, Fehring, 2014).

The study also highlights the importance of teacher training in maximizing the effectiveness of the materials. Teachers need guidance on how to facilitate communicative activities, manage classroom interactions, and integrate Islamic content into language teaching. This finding underscores the need for ongoing professional development to support the adoption of innovative materials in Islamic high schools. The study contributes to the literature by addressing gaps in the development of speaking materials for Islamic high school students. While previous research has focused on general English or specific skills such as reading, this study emphasizes the unique needs of Islamic high schools in developing speaking proficiency. By integrating Islamic values and addressing practical classroom concerns, the study offers a comprehensive framework for creating effective teaching materials in similar contexts. Additionally, the research validates the importance of combining needs analysis with expert evaluations to ensure the quality and relevance of teaching materials. This methodological approach can serve as a model for future studies seeking to develop ESP materials for culturally specific learner groups.

While the study provides significant insights, it is not without limitations. The research focused on a specific group of Islamic high school students, which may

limit the generalizability of the findings. Future studies could explore the validity of the materials across diverse Islamic educational institutions to determine their broader relevance. Furthermore, this study primarily evaluated the materials' validity and practicality. Future research could examine the long-term impact of the materials on students' speaking proficiency, particularly in terms of sub-skills such as fluency, pronunciation, and grammatical accuracy. Exploring the integration of technology in delivering speaking activities could also enhance the practicality and accessibility of the materials, especially in rural or resource-constrained schools.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study highlights the development of English teaching materials and Islamic studies focusing on discussing the students' learning needs and the practicality for supporting EFL learners' speaking skill at one of Islamic Senior High Schools in West Nusa Tenggara Province, Indonesia. Employing Research and Development, 4-D model, this study involves several stages: Define, Design, Develop, and Disseminate. Based on the study, the development of English-speaking materials for Islamic high school students have to consider both linguistic and cultural dimensions. This study demonstrates that contextualized materials, aligned with students' learning needs and validated for their relevance and practicality, can significantly enhance speaking instruction in Islamic high schools. By addressing gaps in the literature and offering practical recommendations for implementation, the study contributes to the broader field of English language teaching in Islamic educational contexts. Because this study only used a small sample of study and only focused on Speaking skill, future studies could expand by recruiting a larger number of students to participate and investigating how these materials impact other language skills, such as reading, writing, and listening, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of their overall effectiveness.

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