

Students' Interest on the Use of Islamic Teaching Materials in English Language Teaching

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Abstract: The aim of this research is to find out the student's interest on the use of Islamic teaching materials in English Language Teaching (ELT). The use of such teaching materials is a kind of using authentic materials. The use of authentic materials is mostly recommended since it is in touch with the real life of the students, because based on Islamic belief, Noble Quran as one of the greatest miracles of Allah was revealed to the prophet Muhammad as the premium source of discourse. So much knowledge can be originated from the noble Quran include some teaching materials that can be adopted and adapted for English learning. The method applied in this research is descriptive qualitative. The instrument used is a set of questionnaires which was addressed to 60 college students from two classes in the same academic year. The data gained were classified and calculated using Likert scale. After conducting the research, the data shows the students interest based on the mean score and category of group A is 80.16 as well from group B is 82.26. This result directs that students from both group A and B are interested in learning English using Islamic teaching materials.

1 INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is the world's most populous Muslim-majority country, as just over 87% of Indonesians declared Muslim on the 2010 census (Indonesia Population 2018). It indicates that English learners in Indonesia are mostly Muslim. For the learners, Islamic education is really needed because it has a very crucial position and strategic since it is the Law of National Education System that Islamic education conquers a point as a sub-system of the National Education System (Daulay & Tobroni, 2017). What about English Education? Students also need English teaching materials integrated with Islamic values since that condition accustomed to their living as Muslims. These will make them easier to understand the form by content. Foreign language with foreign teaching materials surely will be more difficult to understand, since the students do not accustom to the culture. These reasons lead the researcher to make a research on the use of some Islamic teaching materials. The materials are being integrated with Islamic values and use them as teaching materials in the classroom. The word 'integrated' has various interpretations. One possible meaning of 'integrated' is the co-joining between Science and non-Science

subjects (Lubis, 2015), as well Islamic values and English teaching.

The use of Islamic teaching materials in ELT might be included in English for Specific Purpose (ESP). Moreover, it is a kind of using authentic materials. The use of authentic materials is mostly recommended since it is in touch with the real life of the students. Authentic materials refer to the use in teaching of the texts, photographs, video selection and other teaching resources that were not specially prepared for pedagogical purposes (Richards, 2001). In curriculum, especially related to materials development we used to hear the term of adopting and adapting. That is the use of authentic materials and adapting them with the needs of the students in the classroom. The goal is to create or prepare materials that can serve as resources for effective learning.

Noble Qur'an as one of the greatest miracles of Allah was revealed to the prophet Muhammad *sallallahu alaihi wasallam* as the finest source of discourse "It is He who has sent amongst the unlettered a messenger from among themselves, to rehearse to them His signs, to sanctify them, and to instruct them in Scripture and Wisdom although they had been, before, in manifest error." (QS. Al Jumu'ah verse 2). So much knowledge can be originated from the noble Qur'an include some models of language

that can be used in language field especially in ELT (Djamdjuri, 2014). As one of the best miracles from Allah the Almighty, Noble Qur'an have been translated into many languages include English in order to spread the teaching inside. Its translation also has been completed so carefully to avoid any misinterpretation on its meaning. That is why the translation of the meaning into various languages should always be accompanied by its authentic scripts written in Arabic.

Research recently has mostly focused on any other sources of language teaching materials whether in fact, the Islamic materials will broaden students' knowledge based on Qur'an as the best guidance from the Almighty Allah along with improving students' English skills. So that constructing researches related to the Islamic materials as teaching materials especially in ELT are found very interesting. Based on the previous background, the writer conducted a research on the title of: "Students' Interest on the Use of Islamic Teaching Materials in English Language Teaching," with the aim is to find out the student's interest on the use of Islamic teaching materials in English Language Teaching (ELT).

2 THE INTEGRATION OF RELIGION AND EDUCATION

It is very important to be balance between religion and education. This is supported by Albert Einstein's famous quotation in his essay that science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind. Based on his quote, we can say that it is very important to ensure equilibrium between religion and science or education.

Religion provides a basis of thinking about humans, who he is, where he comes from, where he is, and what humans should do in this world. On the basis of this thought, educational experts can prepare the goals of education in whole, deep and comprehensive. The formulation of the goals is then specified into a more specific objective in which the learning materials can also be chosen suitably to the purpose. Contributions in the findings of various sciences, psychology, sociology, and other sciences can be utilized as well as possible in an effort to achieve the goals of education.

Religion regulates all aspects of life of its adherents as individuals, members of society and their environment. When talking about religion, it will never be separated from education. Religion is always educational because there is a transfer of dogmatic knowledge in it. Otherwise, talking about

education is not always related to religion, but education must be in line with religion in the educational process and they must also complete each other so that the output generated by education is comprehensive (Ashraf, 1991, p. 35).

Religion is a belief that is owned by everyone and regulates in all aspects of human life. Religion cannot be separated from human life; therefore, it must also be applied seriously in education. All the religions teach a set of directions for living together in a society where other religions coexist (Syah, 2014, p. 85). Relationship between religion and education is common in Indonesia. This is seen from the curriculum in Indonesia that implements religion in learning activities at schools.

We know that nowadays in Indonesia there are so many Islamic boarding schools have implemented not only religious education but also general education such as English subject. The officially recognized religions have been incorporated into the curriculum since Indonesia was established (Syah, 2014, p. 85).

But how is English education at universities? Has it been applied? Unfortunately, it is still rare for universities to implement education which is integrated with religion. The wisdom of educators appears to be that students can learn everything they need without learning about religion. They prefer the absence of religion from the textbooks and the curriculum by reason of avoiding enmity against religion. This has made the culture wars that are now been divided into many communities. Many of the culture-war debates about religion in public education have been framed in terms of the combat between two polarized groups: those religious conservative who would restore prayer to school activities and add creationism to the curriculum, and the other one who keep religion out of the curriculum (Nord & Haynes, 1998, p. 5).

Religion provides a basis for thinking about humans, who he is, where he comes from, where he is, and what humans should do in life in this world. On the basis of this thought, educational experts can prepare the basis and goals of education intact, comprehensive and depth. The goal formula is translated into more specific objectives with the selection of learning materials that are more suited to that purpose. Contributions in the findings of various sciences, psychology, sociology, science and other sciences can be utilized as well as possible in an effort to achieve the goal of education. Religion regulates all aspects of the life of its adherents as individuals, members of society and their environment. When talking about religion, it will never be separated from education. Religion is always educational because

there is a transfer of dogmatic knowledge in it. Otherwise, talking about education is not always related to religion, but education must be in line with religion in the educational process and they must also complete each other so that the output generated by education is comprehensive. (Ashraf, 1991, p. 35).

Based on the discussion above, it is seen clearly that education and religion cannot be separated from human life. Therefore, the research on students' interest on the use of Islamic teaching materials in English language teaching is really necessary to be conducted to increase the awareness of English teachers, lecturers and students about the importance of religion in English education, and also to inspire and motivate teachers and lectures to integrate religion more willingly in English learning activities.

3 ELT IN SOME MUSLIM COUNTRIES

As English has become International communication amongst most of the countries, it is important for Muslim country to put their priority in English language teachings. In Turkey for example, from primary school to the university, English is taught as a foreign language in all education levels. It is nearly a rate of 100% English has been taught as a foreign language in state high schools and private high schools (Grocer, 2015). Although some issues convey that teachers viewing little interest in the excellence of work that they put into exercise at their schools, one of the central reasons is that teachers' deficiency the time and vitality to devise communicative teaching resources and actions due to their substantial workload (Zekariya Ozsevik, 2010).

In Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), though Arabic is the authorized language of Saudi Arabia and separately from some colleges it is the regular of instruction up to the university level, English is taught as a foreign language. Previously a little importance was given in teaching and learning of English in the Saudi education system. Nowadays it was presented as a compulsory subject from class seven. The students had been given any emphasis in obtaining the competence in English; instead they only considered it as a language to pass in the examination (Rahman & Alhaisoni, 2013).

Moreover, currently Saudi Arabia established various committees and bodies for the English education. These were setup by the government to develop appropriate curriculums for the different levels of education. The government, with the help of the educational institutes, is spending billion dollars

time to time for English teachers' recruitment, language labs, curriculum development and teachers' training. Currently English is the medium of instruction in technical education, medicine and many other colleges. Besides it, the students have realized that English is no longer a language to pass in the examination, but an important subject for higher education, international communication and business and trade. They consider the value of English as highly practical; opportunistic and prestige. As a result, a tremendous growth of students' enrollment has been taken place in various English language institutes (Rahman & Alhaisoni, 2013).

Still in Saudi, in *Taif*, the study was applied to all English teachers in embodied by 103 parameter international sample of the study. After analyzing the respondents' responses, the results showed that in the elements of the curriculum, there were many problems such as: - The curriculum does not emphasis on the cultural aspects and it generates problems regarding using English outside classrooms. - The content does not inspire student self-learning. - There is a lack of content of interesting themes and its length does not equal with the reserved time. - There is an insufficiency of modern teaching aids (Khankar, 2001).

In Jordan, study investigates a new paradigm of teaching and learning English as a foreign language. Among of the solutions to the problem that were recommended are that by paying attention to the following points: (a) the methods need is a combination of methods that enable students to master the four English basic skills (b) teachers of English should be as the following: should understand the intimate relation between a language and its culture. It is necessary for an understanding of the culture and (c) One aspect in curriculum should include a variety of subjects some of which anecdotes, folk-tales, short stories and short plays which appeal to their attitude and background, as well students should read things which they understand and be pleased by reading it (Alodwan, 2012).

In short, many things have to be noticed in ELT such as the methods need is a combination of methods that empower students to master the four English basic skills, significance training of competent language teachers, a variety of subjects which appeal to the learners' attitude and background. Careful determination of the strategy and the method which will be followed during the learning and teaching process, and making the environment interesting for the students can be shaped with the knowledge and experience of the teachers (Grocer, 2015). As well,

this research tries to convey students' respond on the use of Islamic teaching materials.

4 QUR'AN AS THE SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE AND SCIENCE

3.1 Islamic Scientific Philosophy of Knowledge

According to (Husaini, 2013), Islamic epistemology is important in its relation with the sources of knowledge and how human acquires the knowledge. Epistemology is usually defined as a branch of philosophy which discusses the knowledge globally or generally and fundamentally. Knowledge is something fundamental in human life. Islam is a religion that praises the knowledge and Qur'an gives its huge attention toward the activity of thought and knowledge. We can find 823 times the word '*al-ilm*' which means knowledge occurs in the Qur'an. Moreover, the first lessons which were taught to Prophet Adam were the names of things. In QS. Al-Baqarah verse 31, the first command was '*iqra*' (read!) and activity of writing was symbolized with '*qalam*' (pen). The process of learning (read and write) should not being separated with the foundation of faith. Everything should be based in the Name of Allah, so that from the beginning, Islamic scientific tradition should be always in the frame of '*tawheed*' or Islamic monotheism.

The effect of Islamic scientific philosophy which is based on revelation of Allah as sources of knowledge leads the knowledge tradition into inseparable knowledge and action (conducts). Islamic knowledge tradition was being known put the morality or Islamic behavior and good deeds into their precious position. This condition is so different from the reality of secular scientific tradition in the west (Husaini, 2013). West against all sources of knowledge from the holy books (God's revelation) so that west only based their findings of seeking the origin of nature and human from senses (positivism) and ratio (rationalism). In the contrary, the concept of Islamic worldview bore the integrated and compact knowledge which be based on hereafter orientation. This is one of the precious concepts in Islam. West epistemology is only based on empiric and rationalism whether in Islam there are four sources of knowledge: senses, ratio, intuition and divine revelation of God. As al-Attas stated: "God is not a myth, an image, a symbol, that keep changing with the times, He is reality itself, "as cited in (Husaini,

2013). Belief has cognitive content, and one of the main points of divergence between true religion and secular philosophy and science is the way in which the sources and method of knowledge are understood" (Husaini, 2013). Recently, the damage of understanding toward knowledge especially Islamic knowledge is being so general. Ignorance of religious knowledge is being extent. Some scholars could not read holy Qur'an well. In fact, knowing and understanding Islam is a must. It is obligation from Allah. We can find so many evidences from the Qur'an about the importance of knowledge.

3.2 The Connectivity of Knowledge and *Adab* (Islamic Character)

In relation with Islamic teaching materials, it is important to discuss the connectivity of knowledge and '*adab*' (morality or Islamic behavior), because one of the aims of using Islamic teaching materials is to enhance students' good behavior by accustomed to the good characters immersed in the teaching. In Islam, '*adab*' or good characters become one of some important issues. They are being integrated each other such as two inseparable sides of a coin. Knowledge without Islamic behavior is just like a mango tree or a pineapple tree without their fruits. In the contrary, behavior without knowledge is just like a traveler making a journey without any direction. Moreover, knowledge and Islamic behavior are two of the important points as result of beneficial knowledge. Allah the Almighty commanded Prophet Muhammad to always asking for the beneficial knowledge (QS. Taha verse 114). Ibn Uyainah said that Prophet Muhammad was always asking for beneficial knowledge till the end of his life. Ibn Katheer stated that *Rasulullah* never asked addition of anything except the additional of useful knowledge due to the prayer that always asking by *Rasulullah* (Husaini, 2013).

The useful or beneficial knowledge will call *iman* or faith. Faith leads one to act good deeds or good characters. The integration of these two most important points in Islam lead to the straight path. We can say if one has knowledge without good deeds mean his knowledge is not useful. And it means he went astray. Ibn Jauzy stated that the useful knowledge affects '*khashyah*' or feeling scary or frightening toward Allah. This feeling guides a believer to have obedience, dignity to Allah and feel His Mercy. In addition, Imam Shafi'i stated that *Iman* is not only what we memorize but what we actualize in the form of good behavior and give benefits. The important of Islamic behavior reinforced some of

Muslim intellectual to write the concept of knowledge and Islamic behavior comprehensively. Imam Bukhary (194-256 H.) with his *Adab al-Mufrad*, Ibn Sahnun (202-256 H.) with his book entitled *Risalah Adab al-Mu'allimin*, Al Qabisi (324-403 H.) with his book *Risalah al-Mufaasilah li Ahwal al-Mu'ta'allimin wa Ahkam al-Mu'allimin wa Muta'allimin*, Al Mawardi (d. 450 H.) wrote a book entitled *Adab al-Dunya wa al-Diin* and *Adab al-Wazir*, etc (Husaini, 2013).

Moreover, *Adab* or character education is one of the noble tasks preached by the Prophets and Messengers. As cited in the Qur'an *surah* Al-Jumua verse 2 which means, it is He (God) who had sent among them the unlettered messenger originated from themselves, to rehearse to them His signs, to bless them, and to educate them in Scripture and Wisdom although they had been, before, in obvious error. As well as in *surah* Al-Baqarah verse 129 which means: "Our Lord, and send among them a Messenger from themselves who will recite to them Your verses and teach them the Book and wisdom and purify them. Indeed You are the Exalted in Might, the Wise."

Those verses from two *surah* in the Qur'an stating the important position of character and could not be separated from human, as (Syafri, 2014, p. 68) stated that moral character distinguishes man from other creatures. Moreover, current study shows 80 % of states have mandates regarding character education. These states trend reflect the public expectation that school be places where children gain support for the formation values such as honesty (97 %), respect for others (94 %), democracy (93 %), respect for people of different races and backgrounds (93 %) (Nucy & Narvaez, 2008).

As one important teaching in Islam, Islamic behavior, good deeds or good character have central function in Education. Islamic behavior should become prior attention of those who concern their life with knowledge. Among the Islamic behavior are: Behavior of a scholar or scientist towards his-self, Behavior of scientist in teaching process, Behavior of scientist toward his students, Behavior of those who seek the knowledge: Behavior of students toward him-self, toward his teachers, toward the lesson, toward the tools, etc. (Husaini, 2013). Moreover, due to teacher vigorous role, a teacher should prepare himself with acquaintance, skills, good character, behavior and attitude to encourage themselves as a good teacher as well as a Muslim with good qualities and appearances (Lubis, 2015). So that the use of Islamic teaching materials in ELT as one of good efforts to immerse good characters (*adab*) towards

student's personality. Furthermore, it is become one-way solution since it has been mentioned that Indonesia today confronted moral issues and very serious character damage whereas the good resolution is integrating Islamic values into all aspects has become trends (Djamdjuri & Rohmah, 2014).

5 AUTHENTIC MATERIALS

The use of authentic materials in the form of the Islamic materials becomes one way to bring the real language context into the classroom interaction. The real context of the materials is being a good model for students to apply the language inside and outside of the classroom. The ability of the students to read, to understand the structure, to imitate the form of the materials will improve much better by using the authentic materials. Advantages claims by the experts for authentic materials are having a positive effect on learner motivation, providing authentic cultural information about the target culture, providing exposure to real language, relating more closely to learners' needs, supporting a more creative approach to teaching (Philips and Shettlesworth. 1978; Clark 1989; Peacock 1997) as cited in (Richards, Curriculum Development in Language Teaching, 2005).

Some experts stated: "Authentic material refers to the use in teaching of the texts, photographs, video selection and other teaching resources that were not specially prepared for pedagogical purposes," as Richards stated (Richards, 2005). Moreover, Kilickaya assumed: "Authentic materials enable learners to interact with the real language and content rather than the form. Learners feel that they are learning a target language as it is used outside the classroom. Moreover, he claimed that: "Considering this, it may not be wrong to say that at any level authentic materials should be used to complete the gap between the competency and performance of the language learners, which is a common problem among the nonnative speakers" (Ferit, 2012).

6 INTEREST AND MOTIVATION

Good defines interest as a subjective objective attitude, concern or condition involving a perception or idea in attention and a combination of intellectual and feeling consciousness may temporary or permanent, based on native curiosity, conditioned by experience (Good, 1959). Interest as a feeling of

curiosity or attentiveness, it cannot be defined as the power to arouse curiosity or attentiveness also, something that has such power. Interest is a feeling of wanting to know or learn about something where someone has a positive attitude towards something him or her really like and enjoy.

Hansen, *et.al.* categorized interest into four types, namely: a) expressed interest; b) manifest interest; c) tested interest and d) inventoried interest. Manifest interest is displayed by participation in an activity or occupation. In manifest interest an individual does not express his or her interest through words, rather he or she does it through action what is observable, in this case, is the individual's participation in a given activity, this type interest, however, can also misleading, for participation in a given activity may be necessary for certain fringe benefit to occur. It is usually valuable to observe activities related to the events as well as individual's participation to determine the degree of manifest interest. Lack of participation not means lack of interest. Factor like cost or time may affect participation and manifest interest (Hansen, 1982) .

In tested interest, someone's interest is measured by objective test which are based on subjective self-estimates or it can be ascertained by measuring the knowledge of vocabulary or other information on the examiner has in a specific interest area. The measures assume that interest result in the accumulation of relevant information as well as specialized vocabulary. Inventoried interest is determined by interest checklist. Someone's interest is measured by asking him or her to answer a number of particular questions or to choose certain activities that have been prepared. An examination usually is asked to check whether she or he likes or dislike certain activities or situations. Patterns of high and low interest normally result so that test taken can begin to determine areas of liking and disliking.

There are two factors which can affect students' motivations as well as their interest in learning, namely, "Extrinsic motivation" and "intrinsic motivation". Extrinsic motivation is concerned of factors outside the classroom while intrinsic motivation is concerned what take place in the classroom. As well as basically, there are two factors that can influence the students' motivation as well as their interest in learning. They are internal factors such as students' attitude towards a subject and the students' aptitude. While external factors such as school factors can involve the teachers, the students and the lesson material. In addition, Ostrov states that the more a student relates her interest to what she needs to study, the more successful she can be (Ostrov,

2003). To extent Ostrov claims, if a reader is interested in something, it is usually meaningful to him/her. With interest and enjoyment for motivation, the mind finds it much easier to learn and recall the data.

Moreover, a study had been conducted at School of English Language Studies, Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin, Terengganu, Malaysia. The paper is a study of the reading trends and perceptions of Muslim Malaysian undergraduate students towards Islamic English websites as pedagogical materials in English language classrooms. Data was collected through a set of questionnaires to 180 students from the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) and Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin (UniSZA). The findings exposed that the students were self-motivated to read the materials to increase spiritual knowledge and to use the knowledge to covenant with personal challenges. It also shows that the students declare that the materials are used for pedagogical purposes in the learning of the English language. The study proposed kind of texts that bring enjoyment, inspiration, spiritual knowledge and personal development are used as reading materials in English lessons for Muslim students. This would heighten the motivation to read more whilst enlightening the English language proficiency (Khairuddin, Shukry, & Sani, 2014).

7 METHODOLOGY

The method applied in this research is descriptive qualitative approach (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2006). The instrument is a set of questionnaires contained 20 items of related questions. Population of the research is the college students of English Education program in the Faculty of Teachers Training and Educational Science, Bogor Ibn Khaldun University. The sample is taken from two classes of Reading for General Communication course consist of 60 students. The students are in the same background level since they are at the same semester within the second semester of the first-year study. The questionnaire used to obtain information about the students' interest or perception on the use of Islamic teaching materials. It is distributed to the students after the treatments are given. The data from the questionnaire are classified used Likert scale and then analyzed in percentage to see the students' interest toward the used of Islamic teaching materials (Sugiono, 2008).

8 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

According to the research problem: "How are the students' interests toward the use of Islamic teaching material in English language teaching?" In order to know whether the students are interested in the use of Islamic materials, the researcher distributed a set of questionnaire to the students. The questionnaire was distributed to the students after they experienced treatment. The questionnaire contains 20 closed items which are hoped to invite students' interest in reading activity by using Islamic materials. The expressions of the interest are: (1) strongly agree, (2) agree, (3) un-decide, (4) disagree, (5) strongly disagree.

The result proves that, the Islamic teaching materials are able to motivate the students to be interested in learning more. Such spiritual text would heighten the motivation to read more whilst enlightening the English language proficiency (Khairuddin, Shukry, & Sani, 2014).

The data displays the students' interest in learning English through Islamic materials. There are 12 students or 40 % out of thirty students are categorized into very high interest classification, 16 students or 53.33 % are categorized into high interest classification, 2 students or 6.66 % out of thirty students are categorized in moderate interest classification. It means that from group A 100 % of the students are interest to learning English through Islamic materials. There is none of the thirty students from class A are categorized into very low and low interest classification.

Likewise, in group B it shows that there is none of the thirty students are categorized into very low and low interest classification. There are 14 students or 46.67 % out of thirty students are categorized into very high interest classification, 14 students or 46.67 % are categorized into high interest classification, 2 students or 6.66 % out of thirty students are categorized in moderate interest classification. From the total amount of the students, they show their interest on the Islamic materials since basically, there are two factors that can influence the students' motivation as well as their interest in learning. They are internal factors such as students' attitude towards a subject and the students' aptitude as well external factors (Ostrov, 2003). The results show that teaching materials containing spiritual values are interested to the students because interest is a feeling of wanting to know or learn about something where someone has a positive attitude towards something him or her really like and enjoy. Group B shows 100 % of the students are interesting to learning English through Islamic teaching materials.

Furthermore, from the calculation of the data shows that by providing 20 items of questionnaire to the 60 students from both group A and B as respondents with maximum score is 5 for each item, from group A it gets sum 2405 with the mean score of students' interests is 80.16, whether in group B with 30 respondents of interest it gets sum 2468 with the mean score of interest is 82.26. So, the mean score of the students' interest of both group A and B are classified in the high category of interest. Both groups are interested in learning English using Islamic materials. If a reader is interested in something, it is usually meaningful to him/her. With interest and enjoyment for motivation, the mind finds it much easier to learn and recall the data (Ostrov, 2003).

Because of this research is limited and focused on students' interest toward the use of Islamic teaching materials, so the research has been conducted well and the result has been displayed. By this, it has been proved that choosing Islamic teaching materials becomes one of the important factors enhanced students' interest in learning English.

9 CONCLUSION

We gain the mean score from the calculation of the students' responses. The mean score of the students' interest based on the mean score and category of group A is 80.16, it indicates that students are interested in learning English using Islamic materials. As well as the mean score of the students' interest from experimental group B is 82.26, it indicates that students from group B are also interested in learning English using Islamic materials.

So, it is strongly recommended to use the Islamic teaching materials in English Language Teaching, because by learning English through the Islamic teaching materials, students can attain character values or positive attitude, besides can comprehend what they have read easier because most of the Islamic students have background knowledge about the Islamic teachings. The use of Islamic teaching materials is interesting to the students as well affects positively toward the students' achievements. Moreover, the use of Islamic teaching materials has been proved is bringing the positive character into students' real life.

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