

Teaching English through an Islamic Worldview: Curriculum Innovation in the Digital Age Aligned with Kurikulum Persekolahan 2027

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Abstract: *Digitalisation has reshaped English Language Teaching (ELT) through AI, learning platforms, and multimodal resources, yet the rapid expansion of digital ELT also raises questions about identity, values, ethics, and the moral purpose of education. In Muslim-majority contexts, English is often perceived as both a gateway to global participation and a site of cultural negotiation. This conceptual paper proposes an integrated curriculum model for teaching English through an Islamic worldview; one that advances language proficiency while nurturing ethical digital citizenship, adab-oriented character, and balanced human development. Anchored in Islamic educational philosophy and contemporary scholarship on values in ELT and ethical technology use, the paper develops a conceptual framework in which the Islamic worldview functions as the foundation shaping curriculum goals, pedagogical mediation, and digital tool selection. The paper further aligns the framework with Kurikulum Persekolahan 2027 (KP2027), highlighting how worldview-grounded digital ELT can support KP2027 emphases on character development, integrated learning, thinking skills, and digital fluency. Implications are proposed for curriculum design, teacher professional learning, material selection, and assessment.*

Keywords: Adab; Curriculum Innovation; Digital Pedagogy; ELT; Ethical Digital Citizenship; Islamic Worldview; KP2027

1. Introduction

Due to recent digital technologies, there has been a major change in learning English and designing English Language Teaching (ELT) at the school level. Today, learners are accessing the language in a transformative way with social media, bite-sized videos, online games, AI-based chatbots and digital learning management systems outside the confines of traditional classrooms. Such advancements may widen access to learn a language, but simultaneously pose questions over English's neutrality and cultural influence (Ali & Mokhtar, 2026; Ali & Azamri, 2023; Hashim & Langgulung, 2020; Sahin, 2021). The ideologically neutrality of English has always been debated, but this question is particularly urgent in the context of digital age

Muslim-majority countries such as Malaysia, where values, ethics and identity formation have taken front position among educational concerns (Ali & Azamri, 2023; Rahman & Pandian 2021).

In the context of ELT, there is a tendency to treat value integration as an add-on initiative rather than embed values within systemic curriculum design (Rashid et al., 2024; Al-Qahtani, 2021). Simultaneously, the proliferation of AI and digital platforms presents ethical risks such as data privacy issues, algorithmic bias, misinformation, and dependence on technology (Kabilan & Zahar, 2022; Othman & Saat, 2020). These trends underscore the importance of ensuring that students are both linguistically competent and ethically digitally responsible (Rahim & Jalaluddin, 2024; Khan & Bashir, 2023).

The formation of Malaysia's Kurikulum Persekolahan 2027 (KP2027) provided a strategic policy context for the integration of moral values, character development and digital literacy in language education (Zainal & Mustafa, 2024; Ali & Azamri, 2023). Focusing on holistic development, integrated learning, and ethical use of technology, KP2027 allows us to develop an ELT model based on a well-integrated Islamic worldview (Hassan & Jamaludin 2023; Al-Zahrani 2022). By this reform frame, ELT encompasses not only language proficiency but also thinking skills, communication ethic, digital citizenship and moral reasoning in the world context (Rahman & Pandian, 2021). Thus, teaching English from an Islamic perspective is a curricular innovation not simply content "Islamization" (Al-Zahrani, 2022).

This study synthesizes our scholarship in these four domains within the framework of Islamic educational philosophy, value integration in ELT, integrated curriculum design, and ethical digital pedagogy to propose a conceptual framework for worldview-grounded digital ELT (Muhammad Nurfaizri et al., 2026; Wan Hamed et al., 2025; Citra Dwi Safitri et al., 2023) The frame also aligns with the broader KP2027 priorities character formation, critical thinking and boosting digital literacy, and the ethical use of technology (Wan Hamed et al., 2025; Hussein et al., 2025; Alamri, 2021; Maulida Z. Niesrina & Faizal Risdianto, 2026) and provides implications for shaping curriculum design and pedagogy and developing both teachers and materials. Learning approaches are highlighted that develop linguistic competence and ethical communication, reflective thinking, and responsible digital engagement (Hussein et al., 2025; Hashim & Langgulung, 2020).

Digital transformation has changed how teachers plan their instruction as well. As an increasing number of students learn within interactive and globalized platforms, educators must respond as strong mediators of values and ethical considerations (Wan Hamed et al., 2025; Farisia & Syafi'i, 2024; Kabilan & Zahar, 2022). These guiding principles such as manners, balance, accountability and purpose which are part of an Islamic worldview can guide us in the process of Weaving the goals with using technology (integrative pedagogy) Such an approach promotes fluency-enhancing activities and cultivates ethical awareness, critical thought and social responsibility in the digital space (Rahman & Pandian, 2021; Al-Zahrani, 2022).

2. Literature Review

Technology democratization has already taken place in the area of English practice and how to design ELT at school level. Today, learners are surrounded by social media content, short videos, online games, AI-powered chatbots as well as digital learning management systems that allow language to be integrated outside of traditional classrooms. Although these changes increase accessibility to language learning, they also invite pressing questions about the

neutrality of English and its cultural significance (Ali & Mohktar, 2026; Ali & Azamri, 2023; Hashim & Langgulung, 2020; Sahin, 2021). The question of whether or not English is ever ideologically neutral has a long history and is renewed in urgency with the advent of the digital age, particularly in contexts where Islam is a majority religion, such as Malaysia, which situate values, ethics and identity formation as primary concerns of education (Rahman & Pandian, 2021).

Through this literature review, various strands of academic discussion positioned around the Islamic perspective in education, ELT as a socially constructed practice and considerations for digital pedagogy and ethics in contemporary educational contexts will be outlined. This review aims to conceptually provide the basis for developing an ELT model based on Islamic worldview that follows the call of 21st-century education and KP2027. Thus, the literature examined contributes towards an understanding of how values, ethics and educational purposes can increasingly be integrated into English language teaching in a new world shaped by technology and AI.

2.1 Islamic Worldview and the Aims of Education

Digital technology has developed rapidly and greatly changed students' English learning, in addition to the school-based systematic development of the English Language Teaching (ELT) curriculum. Today students interact with language outside of traditional classrooms on social media, through short videos, online games, AI-based chatbots and digital learning management systems. Though these advancements widen opportunities for accessing second or foreign language lessons, they raise challenging concerns regarding the ideological neutrality of English and how it potentially represents culture (Ali & Azamri, 2023; Hashim & Langgulung, 2020; Sahin, 2021). The question of whether English lacks ideological bias was posited earlier, but in the digital age this question has never been so urgent, particularly in Muslim-majority contexts like Malaysia where issues surrounding values and ethics in addition to identity formation are paramount (Ali & Azamri, 2023; Rahman & Pandian, 2021).

Islamic educational philosophy never wavers from the tenet that education is not a simple transfer of knowledge, but an endeavour to cultivate people in their intellectual, spiritual, moral and social dimensions (Saada 2023; Abdalla 2025). The goal of education in Islam is primarily to produce civilized human beings, people who are knowledgeable as well as moral, responsible towards themselves, society and God (Hamzah et al 2022; Rochman et al 2024). Considerable amount of literature is there on adab which implies the art and science of education, intellectual discipline, politeness, correctness in diverse scenarios of life (Puspitasari & Yuliana 2022).

The framework of Islamic worldview justifies the fact that knowledge is never neutral, at least not in values. Only knowledge oriented to truth, justice and the well-being of all human beings can have a significant meaning (Sunardi et al., 2025; Nurhakim et al., 2025). Consequently, the aims of the curriculum ought not to bifurcate academic success from moral and social responsibility formation. This principle requires an integrated approach to curriculum design that aligns cognitive, affective and ethical objectives at the same time (Hadi et al., 2024; Memon et al., 2024).

Echoes of this are being heard in the digital sphere, where academics have argued that technology cannot be treated as a value-free implement that students use to think, engage with one another and build identities and information (Eraku et al., 2021; Hirzulloh & Annadhif, 2024). Islamic ethical principles like amanah (responsibility), wasatiyyah(balance) and niyyah

(clarity of purpose) are therefore suggested as essential guides for technology and AI use in education (Al-Jayyousi et al., 2022).

2.2 ELT as a Values-Laden Practice

Contemporary ELT research recognises that language teaching is not ideologically or culturally neutral (Ali & Mohktar, 2026; Ali & Azamri, 2023; Crookes, 2022; Siqueira, 2021). Language carries implicit values through the hidden curriculum, often reflected in textbooks and digital materials that promote dominant cultural narratives and shape students' identities and worldviews (Ali & Mohktar, 2026; Ali & Azamri, 2023; Brown, 2022, 2024; Dalimunte & Suryani, 2025). Thus, ELT influences not only linguistic competence but also communication norms and ways of thinking (Keleş & Yazan, 2023; Samuell, 2024). For Muslim learners, the challenge lies in engaging with English critically and ethically while maintaining Islamic identity (Hino, 2021; Jung, 2025), as proficiency does not require cultural assimilation (Yang & Forbes, 2024; Hiratsuka, 2025).

The Islamic worldview can serve as a curricular anchor, framing English as a tool for communication, knowledge sharing, and intercultural dialogue rather than value imposition (Memon et al., 2024; Ali & Azamri, 2023; Saada, 2023). However, current approaches remain fragmented, often limited to isolated value insertion rather than full curriculum integration (Hadi et al., 2024; Abdalla, 2025). Therefore, there is a need for a holistic, ethical, and worldview-based ELT framework that integrates Islamic perspectives, digital pedagogy, and national curriculum demands such as KP2027.

2.3 Digital Pedagogy, AI, and Ethical Risk in Education

Digital pedagogy enhanced by AI enables multimodal learning, flexible pacing, collaboration, and personalized feedback, improving engagement and outcomes (Abimbola et al., 2024; Chen et al., 2022; Haroud & Saqri, 2025; Hussein et al., 2025; Adiguzel et al., 2023; Prather et al., 2023). AI tools also automate tasks, personalize instruction, and support inclusive learning environments (Kamalov et al., 2023; Abimbola et al., 2024; Chen et al., 2022; Haroud & Saqri, 2025; Tohänean et al., 2025).

However, AI integration raises ethical concerns, including privacy risks, data security issues, algorithmic bias, lack of transparency, and learner over-dependence (Hussein et al., 2025; Nawaz et al., 2025; Kamalov et al., 2023; Holmes et al., 2021; García-López & Trujillo-Liñán, 2025; Nguyen et al., 2022; Klimova et al., 2023; Williams, 2024; Alzahrani, 2024; Adel et al., 2024; Li & Huang, 2025). Surveillance-based systems may increase anxiety, reduce motivation, and disproportionately affect marginalized learners, while over-reliance can weaken critical thinking and academic integrity (Nawaz et al., 2025; Alzahrani, 2024; Adel et al., 2024; Li & Huang, 2025; Gray et al., 2025; Williams, 2024; Francis et al., 2025; Alhur et al., 2025). These risks impact curriculum design, trust, learner behaviour, and assessment validity, raising concerns about plagiarism and authenticity (Gray et al., 2025; Giannakos et al., 2024; Celik, 2022; Francis et al., 2025; Mulaudzi & Hamilton, 2025; Mortlock & Lucas, 2024; Gustilo et al., 2024).

Value-based frameworks, including Islamic perspectives, promote ethical digital pedagogy grounded in integrity, privacy, critical thinking, and respectful engagement, aligning with initiatives such as KP2027 (Nawaz et al., 2025; Nguyen et al., 2022; Haroud & Saqri, 2025; Mirnawati & Rosadi, 2025; Abulibdeh et al., 2024; Holmes et al., 2021; Azman & Tümkaya, 2025). Overall, while AI offers transformative potential, ethical, policy, and research efforts are essential to ensure responsible and character-focused learning.

2.4 Fragmentation in Current Literature

The literature on Islamic education, values in ELT, and digital pedagogy remains fragmented, with studies often addressing these domains separately. Bibliometric analyses show limited intersection between cultural-philosophical foundations, tech-driven education, and traditional Islamic pedagogy, alongside epistemological tensions between Islamic and secular frameworks (Astuti et al., 2024; Riyadi et al., 2025; Barry et al., 2025; Hidayatulloh & Afyah, 2025; Moslimany et al., 2024).

There is a clear lack of comprehensive frameworks integrating Islamic worldview principles into digital ELT curriculum design. Most efforts are piecemeal, focusing on values in materials, digital tools, or character development, with only limited conceptual models and weak empirical validation (Astuti et al., 2024; Munif et al., 2025; Anggaira et al., 2025; Qoyyumillah et al., 2025; Alfisuma et al., 2025; Pendidikan et al., 2024; Maulidi et al., 2025; Sopyan, 2025; Arif et al., 2025; Riyadi et al., 2025; Moslimany et al., 2024; Hidayatulloh & Afyah, 2025).

Emerging studies suggest integration pathways, including embedding Islamic values in materials, leveraging digital platforms, applying models like TPACK and value-based digital literacy, and strengthening teacher competencies (Astuti et al., 2024; Munif et al., 2025; Anggaira et al., 2025; Qoyyumillah et al., 2025; Alfisuma et al., 2025; Kholis et al., 2025; Pendidikan et al., 2024; Jima'ain et al., 2025; Sakdiah et al., 2025; Maulidi et al., 2025; Riyadi et al., 2025; Siregar et al., 2025; Fadlilah et al., 2025; Hidayatulloh & Afyah, 2025; Arif et al., 2025; Azman et al., 2025). While aligned with KP2027 goals, empirical evidence on long-term outcomes remains limited (Maulidi et al., 2025; Qoyyumillah et al., 2025; Anggaira et al., 2025; Kholis et al., 2025; Sopyan, 2025; Arif et al., 2025).

Overall, the field lacks coherent, integrative frameworks. There is an urgent need for approaches that position the Islamic worldview as foundational, define clear pedagogical pathways, and align learner outcomes with KP2027, while addressing teacher readiness, infrastructure, and assessment.

3. Proposed Conceptual Framework

3.1 Framework overview

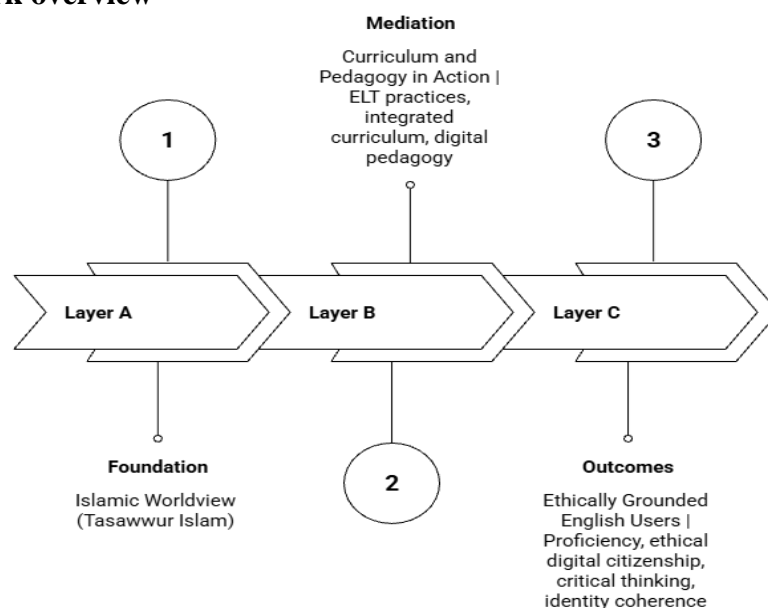


Figure 1: The Proposed Conceptual Framework

The proposed framework situates ELT within an Islamic worldview–grounded digital learning ecosystem, addressing the need for ethical, integrated, and future-ready education. It conceptualises values, language skills, and digital competencies as interdependent rather than separate elements shaping learner development.

At its core are Islamic principles *adab*, *amanah*, *wasatiyyah*, and *niyyah* which guide not only language learning but also communication, digital interaction, and knowledge engagement. English is thus framed as a medium for ethical expression, reflective thinking, and responsible digital participation.

The framework integrates language skills, discourse practices, and values-based learning within curriculum design, ensuring values are structurally embedded in teaching and assessment. It also incorporates ethical digital pedagogy, positioning digital tools and AI as instructional supports governed by integrity, privacy, and responsible use.

Overall, the framework aims to develop learners who are linguistically proficient, ethically grounded, reflective, and responsible in digital contexts, aligning with national and future education goals.

4. Alignment with Kurikulum Persekolahan 2027

Kurikulum Persekolahan 2027 (KP2027) provides strong policy support for the proposed framework, emphasising holistic development, character formation, and future-ready competencies aligning with its ethical, integrated, and digital orientation. KP2027 promotes integrated and project-based learning, encouraging authentic, cross-disciplinary tasks. This aligns with the framework’s approach of embedding language skills, values, and digital practices within meaningful communication. English is thus taught through collaboration, reflection, and ethical engagement rather than in isolation. The curriculum also highlights *fasih digital* (digital fluency), including information management, content creation, and digital citizenship. The framework supports this through ethical digital pedagogy, ensuring learners are both technically competent and socially responsible. By aligning Islamic worldview principles with KP2027 priorities, the framework demonstrates how values-based education can enhance national curriculum goals, making it both policy-relevant and pedagogically innovative.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this study.

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