



Integrating English, Arabic, ICT skills, and Tahfidz in An Islamic School Curriculum: An Intercultural Perspective

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Abstract

The aim of the study is to hear teachers' voices in relation to curriculum development in an Islamic school in Pattani, Thailand. With their experiences as intellectuals and practitioners of teaching in Islamic schools, curriculum development cannot neglect them, as has been happened in the past. Teachers were not involved in the curriculum development, and let it be decided by politicians. With many aspects occur in the global life change, come up an idea to integrate English, Arabic, ICT skills, and tahfidz in an Islamic school curriculum in Thailand. The study employed qualitative research using a questionnaire with a combination of closed- and open-ended items. 14 teachers participated in the study and filled out the questionnaire. The open-ended items' results were calculated using percentage, and the open-ended items' responses were analyzed using Christensen's theory of the job-to-be-done. The result shows that teachers' perception was negative, indicating that their involvement in the curriculum was not accommodated. However, in the context of curriculum development, teachers actually know the job to be done, what experiences needed so the job to-be-done, and has conducted limited actions or practices for the job-to-be-done. This study implies that teachers' voices should be heard more than before, especially in the context of curriculum development. With the limitation of the study, such as numbers of participants participated, this study can be used as a basis for further discussion and curriculum empowerment using intercultural perspective for the development of school curriculum, especially the curriculum of Islamic schools.

Keywords: Arabic language, curriculum development, English, Islamic school, teachers' voices

1. Introduction

Education in rural areas and borders, such as in Arun Wittaya School face significant challenges for curriculum development, incorporating different aspects and sciences. Foreign language (e.g. English and Arabic), tahfidz (memorizing) Quran, and information technology are keys aspects in the integration of Islamic teachings and what students' needs in global era. Islamic sciences (including Arabic and tahfidz Quran mastery) as foundation of students' characters need to be somehow blended in the curriculum as they also need to master technology and communication skills using international languages. Effective education curriculum would integrate knowledge and skills component, including technology, language, and religious aspects (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). As such, comprehensive, inclusive, and holistic approach in curriculum design may offer better education for preparing students in the global world.

Arabic and Quran studies are foundations of Islamic studies. For Muslims, it is the main reference and source of knowledge from God. It is "a book of knowledge" containing "roots of all true knowledge" (Mahmoud, 2021). The position of Quran is so crucial that all Muslims has to hold on. Understanding Islam needs understanding Quran. Specifically, Quran is written in Arabic. Thus, mastering Arabic is the key to open understanding of Quran. Mastering Arabic and Quran are what Islamic students required for understanding Islam (Mahmoud, 2021). Here is the crucial position of learning Arabic as the key to master understanding of Islamic teaching.

Mastering Arabic, in short, mastering the language for understanding Islamic teachings. However, the widespread of Islam throughout the world, where many Muslims are non-Arabic speakers, learning Arabic is not simple, especially with the hegemony of English as an international language. Communicating using English is easier, and to some extent, is more universal. Almost all people in the world learn and use English, but not Arabic. This is a fact that cannot be neglected that makes English as a more acceptable to be used worldwide, including for learning about Islam.

Muslims or non-Muslims learn Islam for their own purposes. This requires a clear concept of how Muslims now can use English for delivering messages about Islamic thought and teaching. For Islamic students, learning English become important for they will be messengers sending information and messages about Islam. They need to learn "English with precision in order to ensure that what is said is what is meant, and that what is meant is what is true" (Ogunnaike & Rustom, 2019). With mastering the language, the students as future Islamic scholars can "producing works on truth, beauty, goodness, and justice that are written from Islamic perspectives" (Ogunnaike & Rustom, 2019). The combinations between mastering English, Arabic, and tahfidz benefit students to have "a deep knowledge" of Islamic teachings "as well as a profound grasp of English and the traditions that have shaped it" (Ogunnaike & Rustom, 2019).

Students in specific and schools in general face significant challenges for the future, with what is so called "uncertain future." Research in the area of Islamic schools in Thailand covers some concerns, including language and communication skills (Hayeehasa et al., 2022; Fadila et al., 2023; Islamic school management (Permana et al., 2023; Permana et al., 2024), Islamic school curriculum (Yulianto & Fitri, 2021; Hilmin et al., 2023), education systems of Islamic school in general (Mamat & Rahman, 2019; Hawaesoh, 2022; Basyit et al., 2023; Mawardi, 2022; Isnaini, 2020), and character education at Islamic schools in Pattani (Salaeh, 2023; Maduerawae, 2021). To sum up, of the research, the main concern is the quality improvement of such schools and enrich the programs, balancing between skills for the students living in the world and religious knowledge and practices

for (what to believe as) hereafter life. What missing from those studies abovementioned are the integration of all concerns, including the engagement of schools with local community.

Local community of Pattani are strong in its culture and religiosity, rooted on Islamic education and local traditions. Community engagement in educational process enhances relevance and continuity of educational programs in the places where religious values exist (Ives & Kidwell, 2019; Pandey & Kumar, 2019). At Arun Wittaya School, the inclusion of tahfidz Quran as a component of Islamic education may be easily integrated. However, when greater challenges occur when it comes to integrating this aspect with the needs of learning foreign languages and technological mastery. In fact, different aspects integration in the curriculum support students' skills development, including critical thinking, problem solving, and interdisciplinary (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). At the moment, at Arun Wittaya School, all aspects are not taught simultaneously leading to students' loose opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills comprehensively. More integrative approaches in curriculum and teaching and learning are needed for students to master all learning aspects in the local and global context. For this, all components can contribute to the development of the curriculum, sounding their voices. Teachers are the most crucial components in the school.

Teachers, especially teachers in the school, are intellectuals and practitioners at the same time, making them as sides that can see most of their schools' strengths and weaknesses. Their voices are crucial for the development of schools' curriculum (UNESCO, 2024). Teachers as practitioners can produce knowledge in the form of "meaningful, context-sensitive pedagogic knowledge (Kumaravadivelu, 2012). The involvement of teachers as practitioners in the curriculum development is expected to develop "teaching professionals become strategic thinkers, exploratory researchers and transformative intellectuals" (Kumaravadivelu, 2012). Thus, teachers can and should function "as designer of curriculum, shifting from passive consumer of information to transmit, to one of active creator or co-creator to transform and transfer in tandem with the learner" (Eddy, 2022).

Eddy (2022) argues that current foreign language curricula often neglect intercultural competence by emphasizing grammatical accuracy over communicative and adaptive skills. This creates a need for a curriculum that equips learners to face unpredictable real-life interactions through intercultural language use. Furthermore, Elias & Mansouri (2023) emphasize that "systematic and transformative intercultural approaches" are essential to creating inclusive education that extends beyond classroom boundaries.

Boyle & Charles (2016) highlight that curriculum should not only address cognitive goals but also support learners' spiritual, social, and emotional development. Integrating religious teachings with life skills such as communication and digital literacy is not just innovative—it is necessary. Yet, despite existing calls for curriculum renewal, many Islamic schools still lack a cohesive strategy to integrate these domains effectively. Recent research has shown that holistic integration of curriculum components enhances student adaptability and resilience in dynamic global contexts (Siregar et al., 2023). For example, Kurniawan et al. (2021) emphasized that Arabic instruction in integrated Islamic schools should combine cognitive, collaborative, and communicative elements.

While studies have discussed aspects of Islamic education, technology, and language learning separately, there is a lack of research exploring how teachers conceptualize and implement the integration of English, Arabic, ICT, and tahfidz in a single, coherent curriculum from

an intercultural perspective in the context of Southern Thailand. This study aims to fill that gap by focusing on the perceptions of teachers at Arun Wittaya School in Pattani. Specifically, the question to answer is "how teachers see the-job-to-be-done in the school curriculum development integrating English, Arabic language, tahfidz, and ICT skills?" Specifically, the answers would cover teachers' understanding of the-job-to-be-done, experiences needed in order to the job to be done, and achievement in their current position.

2. Literature Review

Islamic curriculum renewal agenda, teachers' voices, intercultural perspective of curriculum design, and theory of "job-to-be-done" frame this study. Curriculum development is a part of education in which education serves as "a social microcosm" reflecting "the growing levels of religious and cultural diversity" (Elias & Mansouri, 2023). This brings educators to respond "pedagogically and interculturally" to issues that the come up in this context.

2.1. Islamic School Curriculum Renewal Agenda

Curriculum changes over time following the changes in human beings' life, which is happening all the time. The voice of curriculum renewal agenda for Islamic schools has been sounded worldwide. Educational gaps in different level of Islamic schools need addressing, starting from curriculum production, curriculum resources of Islamic materials, to teaching "teaching Islam for awareness about religion in public/state school settings" (Memon & Abdalla, 2021). The reasons of curriculum renewal as Memon & Abdalla (2021) point out are for uninteresting way of how Islam taught, irrelevant to real life situation, not contextual, dogmatic, disengagement with law rationale, and neglecting differences and diversities among Muslims. Therefore, motives or purposes of curriculum changes should be clear in the beginning.

The beginning of the curriculum development is the identification of "curriculum orientation" (Memon & Abdalla, 2021). Curriculum developer understanding leads to clear framing of why orientation can be a direction for the curriculum change. Orientation leads the change by means of understanding that learning contexts are different, clear orientation as a drive, and aspirational to other orientations (Memon & Abdalla, 2021). With clear goals and orientations, curriculum developing will embrace aspects or components relevant, for the current situation or even for students' and graduate future.

Ability to foresee future can help curriculum developers imagine what will happen in the future and what kinds of knowledge or skills will be beneficial for graduates. Students do not live in the present moment only, but will go through the time, far beyond the teachers or curriculum developers' life. Lifelong learning is a concept that need to be included in any elements of curriculum. Thus, a school curriculum "should be structured in a way to extend beyond the teacher-controlled classroom and include learning beyond the school context and beyond school years through the concept of the 'lifelong learner' who constantly works to become self-determining" (Boyle & Charles, 2016). In such a way, curriculum do not only taught content or learning materials, but also life skills.

Life skills have been demanded by employers or graduate users, as those will benefit graduates in their life and jobs. Government, employers and also parents ask schools to facilitate students in developing "flexibility of mind, initiative, adaptability, creativity, communication skills, competence in problem-solving, multi-skills, ability to collaborate and work in a team situation,

etc.” (Boyle & Charles, 2016). These skills are guarantee for students’ ability to adapt into different kinds of situations or even jobs. Curriculum should include of these skills as content in relation to other components.

The curriculum content alignment is an intellectual process involving some components. The main components of the curriculum include objectives, content (materials), methods, and evaluation (assessment and feedback) (Nicholls & Nicholls, 2019). Another important component to be assured to be present in the curriculum, in term of content, is students’ personal development. This includes several aspects, including “students spiritually, morally, emotionally, socially and culturally plays a significant part in their ability to learn and to achieve” (Boyle & Charles, 2016). In addition, communication skills such as (English) language and mathematics also appear to be significant, as suggested from a study by (Boyle & Charles, 2016). Thus, curriculum should incorporate “development of self-awareness (personal development); physical, social, moral, spiritual and cultural (PSMSC) values and development; broad and balanced curriculum; curriculum related to real world and real life; academic development and development of skills; emphasis on English and mathematics” (Boyle & Charles, 2016). Here is where teachers can play its role for the position of teachers in curriculum development is centric for “teachers are curriculum makers” (Facer, 2009). Teachers can work on it individually or in groups (Nicholls & Nicholls, 2019).

2.2. Teachers’ Voice

Education from time to time always have challenges, for many local and global challenges accompanying it. The issues cover broad topics, including “educational goals, students, curricula, classroom routines, and have offered a multitude of recommendations for reforming the schools” (Altenbaugh, 2005). Government, academicians, industries, parents, and teachers need to work hand in hand to develop good curriculum. What most important is knowing the conditions at school, as well as understanding situations outside for engineering plans for improved curriculum. Teachers can play their influential roles in this development.

Key game changers at schools are teachers. With their “strategic position”, teachers often neglected especially by “policy makers” (Altenbaugh, 2005). In fact, the position of teachers is so crucial that their experience and engagement with all school community member makes “the teacher holds the key to a humanistic process of schooling as well as permanent school reform” (Altenbaugh, 2005). Altenbaugh (2005) illustrates that in the US, for long time, teachers’ voices often not heard and used for the betterment of education quality. In fact, teacher voices are a way of teachers expressing themselves, elaborating their experiences and reflecting for them, and as a result, “driving force for personalized professional learning” (Rodman, 2019).

Teachers run their classes using many variables as considerations. As the most influential person in the classroom, teachers are supported to express their “thoughts, needs, and concerns”, making their “voice be heard” carrying insight that can shape education world (Johnson & Johnson, 2024). Frequently, in the teaching professionalism and teachers’ learning, teachers cannot sound their voices as they are covered by “education policies, programs, and processes constructed by individuals who will never be called upon to implement them” (Rodman, 2019). This is a space left behind following future jobs to accommodate.

Government, school administrators, and school principals can take advantage from teachers in developing policies for schools. Teachers’ voices are useful and beneficial to build “a vision for growth—inviting learners to share in “the what” and “the how” of learning early in the process”

(Rodman, 2019). Teachers' voices are potential for the basic and future development of schools by "identifying school goals and growth opportunities and balancing and aligning these goals with individual teacher needs and interests" (Rodman, 2019). Teachers can contribute to this agenda as an escape and a way in relating all matters in their classes. Teachers are often burdened with job-related loads such as "complex bureaucratic structure, lack of resources, overcrowded classrooms, stacks of assignments to grade, multiple class preparations with few preparation periods, insubordinate students, burnt-out colleagues, inadequate facilities, and inane curriculum materials" (Slattery, 2006).

Teachers delivering their ideas, sharing their experiences, and contribute to curriculum development. This can add their roles in teaching and learning from early stages, that is the curriculum planning. Their voice, when sounded and heard, can "establish a vision for growth" which leads to "self-discovery" and "value learning" (Rodman, 2019). During the journey, teachers actively learn their jobs and bring about personalized professional learning. Teachers may use this opportunity "to take an active role in their growth and honors both their voice and choice" (Rodman, 2019). Listening to teachers' voices can engage them in the whole educational process at school.

2.3. Intercultural Perspective of Curriculum Design

The-job-to-be-done in the school curriculum development embraces many aspects involving diverse sides. Integrating aspects and content like language learning (English, Arabic language), tahfidz, and current technological advancement (ICT skills) requires understanding of sides involved in the job. Teachers' understanding of the-job-to-be-done, experiences needed in order to the job to be done, and achievement in their current position may benefit the curriculum implementation. In the context of curriculum development, perspectives of teachers determine how the format of curriculum is and how they run the curriculum in the global era.

This is the era where people live in such a global world and diverse society. To engage with different people from different backgrounds and culture, intercultural competence is needed. The presence of intercultural competence as skills to be developed as a result of education in the global era has been recognized by international organisations, such UNESCO and the Council of Europe (Schauer, 2024). Intercultural competence will benefit people from being prejudice or ignorant to others' culture (Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2012), resulting to miscommunication and misunderstanding. In this context, language plays its significant roles in manifesting intercultural competence. For that, language "can be considered the window to a culture because it provides insights and understandings that cannot be acquired elsewhere" (Wepa, 2020).

The instrument to interact and deliver materials in learning is using language. Specifically, there are lessons of language. Language learning, including foreign language learning, is not only learning about vocabulary, grammar, and other linguistics elements (Eddy, 2022). It includes what is so called communicative competence with pragmatic competence in it (Schauer, 2024). In addition, it is getting worse that it seems that communicative competence is not enough, as intercultural competence has been neglected, leaving "World Language Education curricula have been typically organized by coverage of grammar rather than focusing on performance task design for use in intercultural contexts" (Eddy, 2022). Language learning (and research) leaves a serious gap, putting aside intercultural competence as an important aspect of understanding messages in any situation occur and be encountered by learners. It is important to note that language teaching

and learning focuses on how to make learners are able to communicate in many different kinds of situation or “for the inevitable unexpected” (Eddy, 2022). Curriculum can incorporate this issue by designing intercultural based curriculum, using intercultural perspective.

Learners will live outside of the school and classroom buildings. Learning should be created in somehow prepare them for life in their world. Curriculum, including language curriculum, have to be relevant to “what our learners can do with the language when they are out there, how they can participate in the language within community, work and world” (Eddy, 2022). Curriculum design does not only focus on school environment, but also “includes participation in neighbourhoods, groups and organizations” (Eddy, 2022). Elias & Mansouri (2023) point out that “[t]he implementation of systematic and transformative intercultural approaches in schools can create more inclusive pedagogic practices and respectful intercultural relations that transcend the boundaries of the schoolyard and extend into broader society.” Learning materials, for this reason, should embrace different kinds of possible settings learners will face in the current and future situations.

Materials prepared for learning “requires flexible use of language from performance tasks which practice adaptability” (Eddy, 2022). Adaptability functions most in facing various conditions, mostly uncertain situations that it needs practice for “a habit best accomplished early and often” (Eddy, 2022). Intercultural competence-based materials are needed for “[t]he only thing predictable about life in the language realm is how unpredictable it really is” (Eddy, 2022). In real life, we may know the situations, but the real conversations are never set up. Eddy (2022) reminds that:

“The amazing thing about language and consequently its most daunting prospect is that we really don’t know what is going to happen after we say something to someone else. We can’t be entirely sure of their reaction to us and then our retort. We don’t know how the scene is going to play out. This requires adaptation, which comes only from practice at both flexibility and agility, early and often. The only thing predictable about thriving in the language is how unpredictable it really is. To fully understand, flourish and thrive within language and cultures, it is not through rules remembered and lines rehearsed. It is through exploration, participation, creation and reflection, via varied and novel interactions of intercultural experience along the lifespan.”

Teaching intercultural communication aims at achieving “intercultural communication flexibility” (Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2012). With this aim put at first place, curriculum designers can break them down into several reasons of studying intercultural communication. The practical reasons to study intercultural communication, according to (Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2012), range from “adjusting to global workplace heterogeneity” to “adapting to domestic workforce diversity”. In addition, it also covers more functions such as “engaging in creative multicultural problem solving, comprehending the role of technology in global communication, facilitating better multicultural health care communication, enhancing intercultural relationship satisfaction, fostering global and intrapersonal peace, deepening self-awareness and other-awareness” (Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2012).

2.4. The Theory of the “Job-to-be-done”

The job of curriculum integration with other components needs clear framing. Framing the integration of foreign languages (e.g. English and Arabic), tahfidz (memorizing) Quran, and

information technology into curriculum is a job to be done in this context. One of the most prominent figures in developing theoretical framework of analysing how the jobs of companies can reach their target is Prof Clayton M. Christensen of Harvard Business School (Christensen, 1997; Christensen et al., 2016). This approach has been applicable used in analysing data of a different field of research, that is language education research. The concept can be used and applied in educational case study "as its method is designed to investigate phenomena, rather than examining variables whose connections to any events may be only statistical" (Nashruddin, 2020). The concept can help teachers understand their jobs in curriculum development. Realizing that "jobs exist" and recognizing "the job to be done" allow companies to know their goals in a better way (Christensen et al., 2016):

"Each company will have to understand the Job to Be Done in all its rich complexity. Then they'll have to consider and shape their offerings around the experiences that consumers will seek in solving their jobs—and help them surmount any roadblocks that get in their way of making progress. Competitive advantage will be granted to whoever understands and best solves the job."

Successful companies have their own characteristics. Christensen et al. (2016) observed that companies often regarded as successful over time tend to lose market share or disappear entirely. Their conclusion was that understanding the customer is not the primary factor in ensuring success. Instead, the critical element is what Christensen refers to as the "job to be done"—the company's purpose. According to Christensen (2012), once the "job to be done" is clearly defined, the company can begin making decisions about the various experiences involved in purchasing and using the product. These experiences must be designed "so that they will sum up to nailing the job perfectly." In other words, understanding the necessary experiences guides the integration of different elements to ensure the job is completed successfully. Measurement plays a key role in this process, and knowing what to measure is crucial. As Christensen et al. (2016) state, "What gets measured, gets done ... but data also creates a model of the external world," and, they note, "in the modern world, there's so much you can easily measure."

Relations from observations may mean for any other circumstances. (Christensen et al., 2016) developed the "job-to-be-done" framework by examining companies like Sony and Mini Mills, which successfully embraced emerging technologies—not to do existing things in a different way, but to create entirely new experiences, needs, desires, and, in effect, new markets and customers. They also draw a comparison with the iPhone, which enabled Apple to grow during a period of economic stagnation. According to Christensen et al. (2016), the iPhone facilitated experiences for a market that, in his view, did not yet exist at the time. Christensen et al. (2016) argue that many companies mistakenly define themselves by their products rather than the job they aim to accomplish: "Even in some of the best companies, the Job to Be Done that brought them success in the first place can somehow get lost in the shuffle of running and growing the business. They define themselves in terms of products, not jobs. And that makes a very big difference."

In the context of the present study, a similar question can be raised: The potencies are in place, but what is the job that needs to be done for the systems implemented by the Islamic schools to produce the desired "product"? In other words, what is the job that must be done for the new curriculum to be meaningful to, and effectively enacted by, those responsible for their implementation?

For this question to be addressed, it was necessary to break down the "job" of content integration into curriculum into its many components for its many dimensions to reveal themselves and to relate them to the various themes and subthemes that a thematic analysis would help identify. To this end, the data from a questionnaire were organised in relation to each of the three levels of the architecture of a "job-to-be-done" (Weise & Christensen, 2014; Christensen et al., 2016). As defined by (Christensen, 2010), the questions interrogating the different dimensions of the "job" are:

- i. What is the fundamental job or problem the customer is facing?
- ii. What are the experiences in purchase and use which, if all provided, would sum up to nailing the job perfectly?
- iii. What are the product attributes, technologies, features that are needed to provide these experiences?

In relation to the jobs to be done for companies, (Christensen, 2010; Christensen et al., 2016) explain that the foundation of our approach is the Theory of Jobs to Be Done, which emphasizes the importance of deeply understanding customers' struggle for progress and then designing the right solution and accompanying experiences to ensure that customers' jobs are solved effectively, every time. As Christensen et al. (2016) explain, learning about the "job-to-be-done" does not reduce to "a single piece of data," which is why the model includes a three-step method of analysis. It is essential to measure whether a system is "providing the experiences in purchase and use" that customers (in this case, students and parents) are seeking when "hiring" Islamic schools.

"When we buy a product, we essentially "hire" something to get a job done. If it does the job well, when we are confronted with the same job, we hire that same product again. And if the product does a crummy job, we "fire" it and look around for something else we might hire to solve the problem" (Christensen et al., 2016).

3. Research Methodology

The research instruments and process were reviewed and approved by the ethic board of ELT Department of UIN Siber Syekh Nurjati Cirebon.

3.1. Research Design

Qualitative research was employed, expecting that the data will be more bottom up, expanding to diverse topics or themes identified by the participants of the research. The emphasis of this kind of research is on the comprehensive description of "a particular activity or situation" (Fraenkel et al., 2023). Researchers as main instrument in qualitative research collects data in the form of words rather than numbers (Fraenkel et al., 2023). In this study, case study was used to frame the research, involving the researcher in collecting data from in "natural settings", not relying on derived data, and examining "What is happening or has happened?" or "How or why did something happen?" (Yin, 2012). Case study research is not applied to find out cause and effect, but to explore and describe a phenomenon, assuming that examining the context and related conditions are integral to understanding the case (Nashruddin, 2020).

3.2. Participants of the Study

There were 20 teachers work at school and the participation in this study was voluntary. There were 14 teachers participated in the study, 10 females and 4 males, teaching various

subjects, including Islamic Studies and general subjects. Teaching experience ranges from less than a year to over 10 years. Less than 1 year: 2 teachers, 1 to 5 years: 5 teachers, 6 to 10 years: 5 teachers, more than 10 years: 2 teachers

There were 10 female teachers and 4 male teachers filled out the questionnaire. 7 teachers (all female) teach general subjects (Science, chemistry, Malay Language, Thai Language, social studies, Mathematics, and English) and 7 teachers (male and female) teach Islamic Studies (Fiqh/ Islamic jurisprudence, Nahwu, Arabic language, Tawheed/Oneness of God, Qur'an, and Jawi/Arabic script used for Malay). The participants are identified using codes as follows: R for respondent, number 1 until 14 as the sequence of responses recorded in the questionnaire submission, F for female respondents and M for Male respondents. R1M, R2F, R3F, R4F, R5F, R6F, R7F, R8F, R9M, R10M, R11F, R12F, R13F, and R14M are codes to identify the participants' responses.

3.3. Instruments

An open-ended questionnaire was sent to the participants. The items were generated through reviewing literature in relation to Islamic curriculum renewal agenda, teachers voice, intercultural communication, and the job to be done. After reviewing the literature (Memon & Abdalla, 2021; Boyle & Charles, 2016; Slattery, 2006; Rodman, 2019; Johnson & Johnson, 2024; Eddy, 2022; Schauer, 2024; Christensen, 2010; Christensen et al., 2016; Christensen et al., 2020), 6 topics emerged as frames for items in the questionnaire: teachers' identification, curriculum understanding and relevance, curriculum development and implementation, curriculum strengths and weaknesses, future curriculum development, and foreign language learning. The items do not directly state issues in the literature, but somehow can elicit answers addressing the issues. By referring to the literature and how each concept was broke down into questions, the instrument should have what is so-called content validity evidence.

The term intercultural perspective or intercultural competence were not mentioned to make responses more naturally elicited and taken originally from the respondents' subconscious mind (Nashruddin, 2020). Teachers' educational background was not asked for protecting their identity. 12 items were asked using rating scales targeting at portraying teachers' perception. The items in the questionnaire were 12 closed-ended and 10 open-ended. The scoring for open-ended items is that the higher the responses are, the more positive and vice versa. 10 open-ended items needed written responses for answer clarity and elaboration. Please see Appendix 1 for the items for teachers' questionnaire and Appendix 2 for the matrix of questionnaire development.

3.4. Data Analysis Techniques

Two kinds of responses asked in the questionnaire, the closed-ended and open-ended. The teachers' responses of closed-ended items are described in percentage. First, the responses were recorded by noting teachers' choice. Then, the calculation were counted per options' value number. After that, the responses were grouped into positive values (option no. 3 & 4) and negative values (option 1 & 2). Finally, the group responses calculation were counted by percentage, group score was divided by the number of all responses.

Written responses are analysed using the architecture of a "job-to-be-done" model of Prof. Clayton M. Christensen (Christensen, 1997; Christensen, 2010; Christensen et al., 2016; Christensen et al., 2020). The analysis model was used by Nashruddin (2020) in analysing open-ended questionnaire data for it can see how the job can be done. In this case, the job is the curriculum

development. The data is analysed using thematic analysis by "identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The guides for themes were questions to answer from the data, they are:

- i. "What does the job of integrating English, Arabic language, tahfidz, and ICT skills into school curricula involve?"
- ii. "What experiences need to be provided for the job of integrating English, Arabic language, tahfidz, and ICT skills into school curricula to be done?"
- iii. "What has been achieved in the area of your responsibility?"

The thematic analysis was conducted using AI namely Chat GPT for it "[...] offers an intuitive, conversational interface that simplifies the analytical process, potentially enhancing the quality and efficiency of research outcomes" (Turobov et al., 2024). It is used considering "diverse viewpoints" in understanding the themes "are essential" and enhancing thematic analysis by offering in-depth and subtle insights into "multifaceted" discussions (Turobov et al., 2024).

Steps of thematic analysis using Chat GPT are adapted from Turobov et al. (2024):

1. *Familiarisation of the data*. "The thematic analysis process begins with familiarisation with the data [...] integrated with the coding stage [...]" (p. 8).
2. *Giving tasks and rules*. "[...] the model was provided with a concrete set of rules and tasks [...]" (p. 8).
3. *Clustering data*. "[...] the model undertakes clustering, aiming to abstract preliminary codes into broader categories that aid in manual theme development" (p. 8).
4. When needed, *giving tasks and rules (again) to enhance precision of themes and codes*. "[...] the final steps involve detailed instructions for the GPT model to enhance precision in coding" (p. 8).
5. *Doing manual review for themes and code checking*. "[...] manual review in the thematic analysis to ensure that codes and the resulting themes accurately reflect the document content" (p. 16). "The primary adjustment required involves manually checking the model's paraphrased outputs against original texts to ensure the accuracy and appropriateness of the quotations, thereby maintaining the rigour and depth of analysis. " (p. 18).

4. Results

4.1. Teachers' Perception on Integrated Curriculum at School

Positive and negative perceptions are counted for closed-ended items in the questionnaire. The questionnaire include 4 rating scale with 4 as the highest and 1 as the lowest point. 4 and 3 are counted as positive responses, and 2 and 1 are counted as negative responses, while 0 is neglected for it has no clarity. 100 responses are counted as positive responses and 131 are counted as negative responses. 3 responses were not clear as they leave blanks in the form. The data shows that teachers in the school have more negative perspective than positive ones. Teachers' low understanding of the curriculum design, teachers' low involvement on the curriculum design, and low implementation of what should be there in the curriculum were founded in the respondents responses. Table 1 shows responses counted on teachers' perceptions on school curriculum development.

Table 1: Teachers' perceptions on school curriculum development

Points	Response counted	%	Labels	
			Positive	
4	31	13%	100	43%
3	69	29%		
			Negative	
2	69	29%	131	56%
1	62	26%		
			Undecided	
no response	3	1%	3	1%
Total	234	100%	234	100%

4.2. The Job of Integrating English, Arabic Language, Tahfidz, and ICT Skills into School Curricula

Three main themes were identified from respondents: (i) curriculum integration and development, (ii) teacher development and empowerment, and (iii) use of technology and resources. This may mean that the job of integrating English, Arabic language, tahfidz, and ICT skills into school curriculum at least has three components: the content of the curriculum, teacher professional development, and resource supports.

4.2.1. Curriculum Integration and Development

The content of the curriculum identified by the teachers are foreign languages (English and Arabic), technology, religious and general education, character education (professionalism, career skills, discipline). Language curriculum become the main point of interest in the curriculum content. In general R6F and R12F identified this by stating:

"There needs to be development in the language curriculum." (R6F)

"Those who need improvement should study languages." (R10M)

"Add language." (R12F)

In addition, the development of the curriculum can be focused on the integration of the teaching Islamic knowledge with other form of knowledge and sciences and language as a means of communication for students to share their knowledge. As have been identified by R8F and R3F, such integration is an important point in curriculum development.

"I want there to be an integration of the religious and general education curriculum, with an emphasis on language." (R8F)

"Add the subject [English] in the religious section." (R3F)

An important point is to bring in technology as a component in the curriculum. Technology might be believed as a tools to boost students mastery of the content taught at schools. The inclusion of the integration of technology as a tool for learning and skills has been identified by R2F, R5F, and R4F.

"The curriculum should be integrated with English and technology." (R2F)

"We should follow what is in the curriculum and it is appropriate to add foreign languages and technology in lessons." (R5F)

"There should be development in the use of Arabic, English, and technology." (R4F)

"I would like to see an increase in technology skills." (R7F)

What more important is that the lesson should not forget the main "menu" of Islamic schools. Islamic teachings as the main component of Islamic schools has been stressed by R10M and R5F.

"Teachers' hope to develop the future Islamic curriculum." (R10M)

"The school curriculum needs to strengthen subjects, especially in the aspects of Islamic texts for students to understand Sharia law." (R10M)

"There should definitely be content related to both religion and academics, but not in conflict with Islam." (R5F)

Character education also attracts attention from the participants. R3F, R4F, R8F, R9M, and R13M mention skills and characters which should be included in the integration of curriculum

"Profession." (R3F)

"Career skills." (R4F, R8F)

"Increase sports skills." (R9M)

"Discipline." (R13M)

Curriculum development, according to some respondents, need to be conducted regarding several points, such as matching with students' abilities, frequent review of the curriculum (every year), accommodating students' needs, and making sure teachers understand the curriculum. R6F, R3F, R12F, R9M, and R10M identified these issues.

"Develop the curriculum to match the students' abilities." (R6F)

"The curriculum should be developed frequently." (R6F)

"Special education every year to improve shortcomings." (R3F)

"Teachers can teach what the students need." (R12F)

"Understanding of the curriculum." (R9M)

"To understand of the curriculum." (R10M)

One thing to note is a comment from a respondent thinking to change the curriculum using school based curriculum, leaving national curriculum. As Islamic school, the curriculum should be all about Islam. R9M states that his suggestion regarding curriculum development is to *"Be able to change from the Thai government curriculum to 100% Islamic curriculum"* (R9M).

4.2.2. Teacher Development and Empowerment

In order to run the curriculum, teachers also need trainings for adjusting to the structure and the materials in the curriculum. The trainings can be in form of teaching any skill trainings. R2F, R4F, R9M, and R11F propose the trainings in their responses.

"Organize teacher training to align with the curriculum." (R2F, R4F)

"Organize teacher training." (R3F)

"Develop or empower the potential of teachers." (R9M)

"Teachers need to be empowered in their teaching." (R9M)

"Provide specialized teachers, and teachers should also teach to add knowledge." (R11F)

Specifically, the trainings scope also can be specified to language and technology skills. R2F and R4F suggest the trainings.

"Teachers should develop skills in using technology and the English language." (R2F)

"Teachers should develop their skills in using technology and language to improve the school curriculum." (R4F)

Supports can also come from outsiders that are considered professional and relevant. Experts from different countries may be able to share what they know from practices in their country. Neighbour countries, such as Indonesia, are identified to be able to support the school development as identified by R11F, stating that they may *"Need education teachers from Indonesia."* (R11F). What most important is that the development and empowerment should happen not only in short period of time, but in form of continuous professional development. As R11F suggests, *"It will continue to advance in the future."* (R11F).

4.2.3. Use of Technology and Resources

In term of resources, classrooms equipped with computers and technological tools to support learning, language laboratory, and teaching materials are needed for enhancing the curriculum integration. Computers and technological tools are identified by R2F, R4F, R5F, R7F, R8F.

"Provide sufficient computers for the number of students." (R2F)

"Provide sufficient computers for the students." (R4F)

"I hope the school will advance students, for example, there should be computers to advance them." (R5F)

"Computers." (R7F, R8F)

"I would like to see more promotion and development of computer skills." (R8F)

Language laboratory is proposed by R6F when she states that the school needs to *"Add more language rooms"* (R6F). In addition to that, the classroom should be equipped with sufficient learning materials and can be used for learning with native speakers of foreign languages. R5F states that *"There must be a fully equipped classroom and teaching materials to help students understand, and they must learn directly with native speakers"* (R5F).

4.3. Experiences Need to be Provided for the Job of Integrating English, Arabic Language, Tahfidz, and ICT Skills into School Curricula to be Done

Four themes were identified from the respondents: (i) language learning with native speakers, (ii) practical language use and engagement, (iii) technology integration, and (iv) cultural and religious education. These may suggest that experiences need to be provided for the job of integrating English, Arabic language, tahfidz, and ICT skills into school curricula to be done include at least four components: interaction with native speakers, language learning practice and engagement, technology integration, and cultural and religious content.

4.3.1. Language Learning with Native Speakers

Native speakers seem to be believed as promoters of language learning. Learning experiences with native speakers of foreign language, for example English, is needed by the students. R2F, R3F, R4F, R6F, R7F, and R8F. They state that students need to:

"Learn directly with native speakers." (R2F, R4F)

"Learn with native speakers." (R7F, R8F)

"Learn directly with language teachers." (R6F)

"Learn directly with native speakers or complete directly." (R3F)

"I would like to see a focus on the English language." (R7F)

"Promote language learning with native speakers." (R3F)

To support the learning, R5F adds that *"There must be a fully equipped classroom and teaching materials to help students understand, and they must learn directly with native speakers"* (R5F). The result of the learning should be able to *"Increase skills and go abroad to visit the language's native speakers"* (R9M) and perform *"Foreign language dialogue well"* (R10M).

4.3.2. Practical Language Use and Engagement

The exposure of language for students can be given in varied ways. The lesson can be started from *"Learning from basic words in daily life"* (R11F) using learning materials to support students' mastery with put stress on *"Memorize vocabulary before and after lessons"* (R3F), *"Teachers' suggestion to memorize words"* (R10M), and *"Suggestions to improve the quality of memorizing texts and words"* (R10M). In practice, the suggestion is that *"Maybe you need to the meaning of the word instead of matching English words to Thai"* (R12F).

Conditioning of the learning environment also needs to support students *"Speak the language only at certain times during teaching"* (R6F). This is for students *"[I would like students] to be able to use the language they learn in daily life"* (R8F). In general, speaking is a focus of learning as suggested by R7F to *"Add subjects on language speaking"* (R7F). R5F gives an example for the practical language learning. *"For example, in the discussion of teaching Arabic, there should be a picture or conversation related to the language"* (R5F). More time is required to practice the language as indicated by R7F stating that students need *"Time used for teaching and learning"* (R7F).

4.3.3. Technology Integration

The learning of foreign language should be integrated with computer and technology skills. R2F, R6F, and R8F think that language skills can be learn with the support of computer and technology skills. Being questioned about what needed for language learning, R2F and R6F mentioned *"Technology skill"* (R2F) and *"Technology"* (R6F). In addition, R2F states that *"The curriculum should be integrated with English and technology"* (R2F). R8F as a teacher *"[I] would like to see more promotion and development of computer skills"* (R8F).

4.3.4. Cultural and Religious Education

Exposure to cultural and religious education is also identified by the teachers. This is in order to benefit students by having various knowledge. *"The advantage is that students know a lot of knowledge"* (R5F). The combination between cultural and religious education can benefit students, that *"Those who study religion can learn the traditional knowledge"* (R9M). Culturally, *"The good can study rural texts"* (R10M) and in Islamic religion, the students can memorize Quran, *"In terms of Hafiz and language"* (R7F). The benefit is for students that *"Those who study academics can work well"* (R9M). One thing to note is balancing in all contents because the curriculum burden can hinder students' success. *"The disadvantage is that students don't have time for review"* (R5F).

4.4. What has been achieved in the area of teachers' responsibility

Only one theme identified in what has been achieved by teachers around teachers' responsibility. Language skills and performance have been identified where teachers have done a part of the job. However, tensions occur here, showing that the teachers have not done many. Teachers did not say many things on their achievement in curriculum development, except in language skills and performance. Some teachers have conducted the use of English language in their classes, with limited use. R2F, R4F, R7F, and R8F use English only in English classes (*"Used only in the English subject"* (R2F, R4F, R7F) and *"Used in the English subject"* (R8F)). *"Using some words intentionally"* (R11F) and *"To translate the words"* (R12F) *"That I don't understand"* (R13F) are some practices that have been presented at the school. As a result, R12F limit the learning result as *"For English subject we're good at grammar in writing but comprehension in reading gets trouble. We can listen to English pronunciation but we don't have motivation enough to speak"* (R12F).

Some challenges identified by the teachers including teachers' qualifications, insufficient time, and students' low foreign language skills. R2F, R3F, R4F, and R6F identified this by stating:

"Lack of teachers according to the major." (R2F)

"Lack of teachers teaching according to the major." (R4F)

"The number of teachers does not meet the curriculum requirements." (R3F)

"The instructor does not teach according to the curriculum." (R6F)

About the time limitation, R5F and R8F identified this challenge by noting that *"The materials and time are insufficient for the students"* (R5F) and *"The time is insufficient for organizing teaching and learning"* (R8F). In addition, students low foreign language mastery make it burden for teachers in upskilling students' skills. R5F, R9M, R10M, R11F, and R14M identified this by stating that:

"Most of the students lack proficiency in both English and Arabic, and in lessons, students are often asked to memorize words)." (R5F)

[Foreign language use] *"It is very lacking and needs improvement."* (R9M)

"It's good to use Arabic, but there is much more to improve in foreign languages." (R10M)

"It is good now, but lacking in language." (R11F)

[Foreign language use] *"None."* (R14M)

5. Discussion

The question raised in the beginning of the study was "how teachers see the-job-to-be-done in the school curriculum development integrating English, Arabic language, tahfidz, and ICT skills?" Bringing the context of intercultural perspective, teachers' responses were expected to cover the following: understanding of the-job-to-be-done, experiences needed in order to the job to be done, and achievement in their current position. In general, teachers show understanding of the-job-to-be-done for the curriculum development, ability in identifying experiences to be provided so the job of curriculum development to be done, and limited achievement to support the curriculum development.

In terms of curriculum contents (objectives, content (materials), methods, and evaluation (assessment and feedback)), the study shows that teachers have paid attention to almost all curriculum contents. Objectives of the curriculum development have been identified well by the

teachers. Contents or materials of the curriculum also has been identified by teachers vast, from the religious content to technological materials. This somehow brings good news that teachers know the content of the curriculum. In addition, methods of running the curriculum also have been identified with very limited scope of possible practices. However, one aspect seems to be missing, that is what Nicholls & Nicholls (2019) identified as the final but important part of reflection on the curriculum, that is evaluation. Participants did not mention any responses regarding evaluation, whether as assessment or feedback of the learning. This may mean that they tend to focus on content and show little concern of evaluating what has been achieved (or not achieved).

Intercultural competence as a part of intercultural curriculum design was also mentioned not specifically. Foreign languages skills such English and Arabic were mentioned, with a limited attention to cultures. Only one comment mention culture in terms of traditional knowledge. Thus, such limitation makes intercultural competence unseen. In fact, culture is not about making it knowledgeable only, but more on practice. Corbett (2003) reminds that "cultures are in play as habitual patterns of interaction, routine forms of social practice, recurrent uses of symbol, sedimented frameworks of value and belief" not as separated classroom learning. The finding shows that teachers need "long-term intercultural understanding trainings" (Elias & Mansouri, 2023) to empower them better understand that curriculum also need other aspects more than content knowledge.

During the years teachers had been involved in teaching, not many have been done in terms of the job-to-be-done in the integration of English, Arabic language, tahfidz, and ICT skills into school curriculum. Teachers admitted that they the use of English language in their classes, with limited use, especially only in foreign language classes, i.e. English and Arabic language. The possibility of having low engagement of teachers in foreign language use may also be caused by some unmatched teachers' qualification. Without qualification, teachers' skills cannot be assessed for "macro-credentials (e.g., diplomas, certifications, awards, publications)" demonstrate teachers' "experience and skills" (Rodman, 2019). Lack of time has also come up as a reason for not doing potential jobs of teachers. They feel they lack of time, as also identified by (Johnson & Johnson, 2024) that teachers have "limited time and energy." Teachers sounded the issue that students have low foreign language skills. In fact, this is a reason why new curriculum should be developed.

It is interesting to note that teachers involved in this study seem to be familiar with the job-to-be-done in the integration of English, Arabic language, tahfidz, and ICT skills into school curriculum. In detail, they identified the materials or content of the curriculum include foreign languages (English and Arabic), technology, religious and general education, character education (professionalism, career skills, discipline). This is in line with the needs of Islamic school curriculum development as indicated by (Memon & Abdalla, 2021), (Boyle & Charles, 2016). In addition, the idea of teaching Islamic knowledge with other form of knowledge and sciences and language also exist. Islamic teachings as the main component of Islamic schools. matching with students' abilities, frequent review of the curriculum (every year), accommodating students' needs, and making sure teachers understand the curriculum. As Islamic school, the curriculum should be all about Islam.

Teachers also identified that the-job-to-be-done is preparing teachers for the new curriculum. Teachers also need trainings for adjusting to the structure and the materials in the curriculum as a part of professional development (Kumaravadivelu, 2012; Rodman, 2019). The trainings scope also can be specified to language and technology skills. Experts from different

countries may be able to share what they know from practices in their country. It is also interesting to note that teachers understand and ready for continuous professional development.

In form of resources for learning as a part of curriculum support, equipment is needed. One of the most important is technological advancement that need to be included in the process of learning. Classrooms equipped with computers and technological tools to support learning, language laboratory, and teaching materials are needed. These supports and resources will benefit the curriculum implementation in form of experiences needed in order to the job-to-be-done including language learning with native speakers. Interaction with native speakers of English can increase learners' motivation in learning English (Pawlak, 2012). Practical language use and engagement, technology integration, and cultural and religious education are also parts that need to be there in the curriculum implementation. Nevertheless, the concept of learning "as the acquisition of knowledge by reasoning" (Schneider, 2024) was never mentioned. Critical aspect of curriculum which frame the whole process of learning at school, somehow, was neglected, showing that teachers tend to underestimate the concept of learning.

The findings indicate that teachers perceive the integration of English, Arabic, ICT, and tahfidz as necessary and feasible, yet acknowledge several obstacles such as time limitations, student proficiency levels, and a lack of relevant training. Similar concerns were raised in a study by Hayeehasa et al. (2022), who found that students in Southern Thai Islamic schools struggle with foreign language proficiency due to limited practice opportunities and underqualified instructors. Abdelaziz (2019) similarly found that while Islamic studies teachers were open to integrating ICT in classrooms, they often lacked the necessary professional training to do so effectively.

Teachers' recognition of the need to integrate content areas aligns with Christensen et al. (2016)'s "job-to-be-done" theory, emphasizing the importance of designing educational experiences that fulfill learners' real needs. This is consistent with Eddy (2022), who advocates for language learning that prepares students for "the inevitable unexpected" of intercultural interactions. In this light, Alsaif (2023) suggests that technology integration in religious education has the potential to promote lifelong learning and broaden access.

In contrast to studies like Isnaini (2020) and Mamat & Rahman (2019), which focus heavily on the Islamic aspects of the curriculum, this research emphasizes integration with equal attention to global competencies. According to Rizqi & Anugrah (2021), integrating digital and religious literacies fosters students' ability to participate meaningfully in both local and global spheres. This highlights a novelty of the present study: it does not merely suggest curriculum enhancement, but frames it within a systemic understanding of job-based curriculum design and intercultural responsiveness. This is supported by Dalimunthe et al. (2024), who examined how the integration of Tahfidz and digital literacy improved Arabic education outcomes in Indonesian madrasahs.

Furthermore, the pedagogical implication is significant. Teachers are not just implementers of policy but co-creators of curriculum. Their involvement, as shown by Kumaravadivelu (2012), can lead to context-sensitive and transformative education. As highlighted by Rahman et al. (2020), empowering teachers to take ownership of curriculum development increases innovation and contextual alignment. Moreover, Myori et al. (2023) argue that supporting teachers' digital competencies is essential to sustaining tech-based curriculum innovations. Therefore, professional development programs should prioritize not only content knowledge but also intercultural competence and technological literacy. This study supports a shift from passive to active

curriculum design, involving teachers in the strategic integration of diverse knowledge areas to prepare learners for both global participation and local rootedness. Indeed, Setiawan & Maryani (2022) argue that meaningful curriculum integration depends on reflective collaboration between teachers, administrators, and communities. As Hafidzah (2020) observed in her case study of Islamic boarding schools, successful integration also demands careful alignment with national curriculum standards and religious values.

6. Conclusion

Overall, teachers are willing to be involved in the curriculum development. The fact that little engagement and involvement can be improved by hearing their voices. Teachers can contribute a lot in the process of curriculum development by identifying objectives, content, and method, with little attention to evaluation. Teachers' involvement in the curriculum development is a part of their training for professionalism and training so they are brave to speak up and ready to be heard. However, more learning on issues in education, such as intercultural perspective of education and language education are required to enrich their perspective of curriculum and teaching and learning. This will be their continuum professional process. To some extent, the study has shown that the teachers are eligible to be involved in curriculum development, with more academia and community to be involved in the process. In the end, teachers' voices have been recorded for further curriculum development.

Teachers' voices should be heard more than before, with the elicitation of current issues to frame their perspectives, especially in the context of curriculum development. Workshops and focus group discussion (FGD) can be held for teachers to better understand the changing world of education and society in the general and sound their voice on the issues discussed in the events. With the limitation of the study, such as numbers of participants participated, this study can be used as a basis for further discussion and curriculum empowerment using intercultural understanding for the development of school curriculum, generally the curriculum of Islamic schools, especially in Thailand, and more specifically in **Arun Islam Wittaya School, Pattani** as this study base. Further studies can invite more sides in the curriculum framing and development, such as parents, students, and academics along with the government hand in hand work together for more advanced curriculum for Islamic schools. In addition, more data collection techniques can be applied, such as interviews and observation of current curriculum implementation practices.

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