

Exegetical translation of the Qur'an: An action research on prospective Islamic teachers in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

To accomplish the mission of spreading the message of the Quran, prospective Islamic teachers need to be equipped with the ability to translate the Qur'an. However, in reality, they face difficulties in understanding the messages of the Qur'an because of their low Arabic language skills. This research aims to find practical steps to improve the competence of prospective Islamic teachers in translating the Qur'an. This research involved 35 prospective Islamic teachers, consisting of 20 men and 15 women from various districts at a tertiary institution in West Java Indonesia. Data were collected using surveys, observations, and semi-structured interviews. Data were thematically identified, coded, evaluated, categorized, and analyzed using the analytical tool of content analysis. This research produced six learning steps (summarized in an acronym TARJIM as developed from the Tamyiz method). The Tamyiz method was a hypothetical model that was used as the foundation of this action research. These steps were able to improve the ability of prospective Islamic teachers in translating the Qur'an from the beginner level to the skilled level as many as 27 (77.14%) participants, from the basic level to the skilled level as many as five (14.28%) participants, and from the basic level to advanced level as many as three (8.57%) participants. Moreover, the six steps provided skills for the prospective teachers in translating the Qur'an verses that have exegetical nuances. The findings show that the six steps were effective steps to increase the competence of translating the Qur'an for prospective teachers of Islamic Religious Education.

Keywords: Action research; exegetical; Qur'an learning; *tafsir*; translation

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INTRODUCTION

Every Muslim has to spread the messages of the Qur'an to the best of their ability (Peachy, 2013). Since the messages of the Qur'an are in Arabic, they must be delivered in a form that everyone understands. This shows that Qur'an translation is important and mandatory. Conceptually, translation is delivering the meaning of a certain text from one language into another by using the closest possible equivalent (Mahasneh, 2018). According to Nida (1964, in Munday, 2016), formal equivalence

focuses attention on the message itself, in both form and content, meanwhile, dynamic equivalence is where the relationship between receptor and message should be substantially the same as the one that existed between the original receptors and the message. Therefore, conveying the messages of the Qur'an must be accompanied by a good understanding of its contents (Supriyadi et al., 2019; Supriyadi et al., 2020). For prospective Islamic teachers, the competence to translate the Qur'an is a necessity because they have a strategic

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role and responsibility to convey the messages of the Qur'an to their students as a manifestation of the prophetic mission in spreading the Qur'an (Shihab, 1996). According to Hanafiah and Suhana (2009), students' learning model is not only related to the learning and teaching style but also interpreted as an approach to deal with changes in student behavior in an adaptive manner. Hence, it can be inferred that learning to translate Qur'an is hoped to generate expected manner.

One way to understand the Qur'an is by understanding the Arabic language (Ashim & Rasyid, 2019; Ibrahim et al., 2015). This implies that prospective teachers need to have good Arabic language skills (Abdelnasser et al., 2014; Alqahtani & Atwell, 2016; Dukes & Buckwalter, 2010; Jimoh, 2018). Historically, the translation of the Qur'an has undergone a long dialectical process, from the question of the authority or legitimacy of the translator, the law of translating, and the presence of translations made by Orientalists. The process resulted in many differences among scholars in their response to the translation of the Qur'an in various regions (Baihaki, 2017). Some classical and contemporary scholars argue that translating the Qur'an is *haram* (forbidden), while others allow it (Chirzin, 2018). The prohibition of translating the Qur'an is based on the notion that translating the Qur'an into another language will reduce the miracles of the Qur'an. However, those who allow it has based it on a thought to convey the message of the Qur'an to all mankind from every level of society by determining the criteria and conditions that must be met in the process of translating the Qur'an (Al-Zarqani, 1995; Jalaluddin bin At-Tahir, 2008; Qassem, 2021).

However, in reality, prospective teachers tend to face difficulties in understanding the messages of the Qur'an because their Arabic language skills are minimal. The majority of these prospective teachers do not have a special educational background in the field of the Arabic language. As a result, they only rely on translations circulating on the internet without being accompanied by criticism regarding the credibility of the translators. This raises concerns about the potential growth of radicalism and even terrorism, which is allegedly caused by only relying on translation to understand the Qur'an. In specific, the literal translation of the Qur'an without proper interpretation might lead to justification of sinful behavior.

The Qur'an is the holy book of Muslims that has extraordinary literary height and serves as the main source of teaching for Muslims (Rohmana, 2019; Supriyadi et al., 2019) and is written in Arabic (Savaskan, 2019). Those who cannot understand Arabic cannot read the Qur'an in the original language. However, regardless of the conditions, the messages of the Qur'an as the holy book and God's revelation need to be communicated so that

everyone can understand these messages. The translation of the Qur'an in various languages in the world including Indonesian is an effort to communicate and promote Qur'an (Baihaqi, 2019; Chirzin, 2018). In Indonesia, Qur'an is not only translated into the national language but is also translated into various local languages such as Sundanese or Javanese (Hanafi, 2011). According to As-Suyuti (2008), there are 15 branches of science that an exegete should master, namely: linguistics, *al-Nahw* (grammar), *al-Ṣarf* (morphology), *al-Ishtiqāq* (semantics), *al-Ma'ānī* (clear expression), *al-Bayān* (embellishment), *al-Badī'* (beautiful style), *Qirā'āt* (variation of readings), *Uṣūl al-Dīn* (theology), *Uṣūl al-Fiqh* (Principles of Islamic jurisprudence), *'ilm Asbāb al-Nuzūl* (occasion of revelation), *al-Naskh* (abrogation), *al-Fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), *al-Hadīth* (prophetic tradition), and *'ilm alMauhibah* (the science beyond the power of human beings bestowed by God upon those who practice what they know). Moreover, Fee (2002) states that an exegete should have the ability to ask the right questions to get the intended meaning by questioning the content (what is said) and the context (why it is said). Fee (2002) further elaborates that the contextual questions should consider the historical and literary contexts, while the questions of content should emphasize textual criticism, lexical data, grammatical data, and historical-cultural background.

According to Stolze (2012), semantic in a text provide context-specific strategies to present the meaning of the text. Moreover, semantic translation attempts to render, as closely as the semantic and syntactic structures of the second language allow, the exact contextual meaning of the original (As-Safi, 2011). Therefore, Abdelaal and Md Rashid (2015) stated that the only acceptable translation is exegetical—a translation based on commentary books. Concerning this, Baker (2011) states that the acceptance of text, including translation work, is not based on its correspondence with a certain situation, but its relation with the interlocutor.

Furthermore, the translation method also needs to be mastered because it greatly affects the results of the translation of the text as a whole. Newmark, (1988, p. 45) grouped translation methods into two big groups. The four first methods emphasize the source text, namely word-for-word translation, literal translation, faithful translation, and semantic translation; and the four-second methods focus on the target language, namely: adaptation, free translation, idiomatic translation, and communicative translation.

In addition to Arabic, a translator should also have insight related to Qur'an interpretations to understand the messages of the Qur'an. Without having excellent knowledge of the interpretive books, a translator will undoubtedly fail in translating the Qur'an (Abdelaal & Md Rashid,

2015). Translation only explains the meaning of the verses into the language of people who have not mastered Arabic (Baihaki, 2017). Translators have their style of language. However, what needs to be maintained is the purpose of a verse. The meaning of the verse must be clearly expressed in translation (Bakry, 1983). With exegetical analysis, this goal can be achieved. Chang (2004) affirms that exegetical papers must seek to discover and explain what the text meant for the original author and his readers. After an exegetical study, the student must offer the best understanding of what the biblical author intended to communicate to the first readers

Concerning understanding of the exegetical text, there are two crucial implications that the exegete should comprehend, namely the ability to communicate a particular historical situation with God's own intention for that situation and the effort to comprehend the scripture in the light of grammar principle and historical facts (Piper, 2013). On its most basic level, exegesis consists of expounding linguistic meaning in its appropriate historical context (Dahan, 2015; Matin & Alwi, 2020; Ocker, 1999). Therefore, the exegete (*mufasssir*) should portray the quality of an ethical person imbued with perfect intelligence (Pregill, 2020; Qadafy, 2019) They should also have good intentions, morality, willingness, credibility, *tawaddu'*, nobleness, and the courage to speak the truth, polite gestures, clear speech, a willingness to prioritize those who are more entitled to interpret the Qur'an, and good preparation and delivery (Hasan, 1984).

Exegesis is the act of explaining a text, which is done through careful analysis of the text based on a careful and objective analysis (Aichele & Phillips, 1995; Pepinsky, 1982; Williams, 1973). In specific, Porter and Clarke (1997) defined exegesis in written text as reading out the text meaning. In carrying out the analysis, it should discover the true meaning of the text by respecting its grammar, namely the morphology, syntax, and setting. This process involves observation, interpretation, and application stages. First, the observation is done to see what the text says by looking for clues, understanding the context, and examining the text based on the terms, structure, literary form, atmosphere, and suggested markers. Second, the interpretation is done to know what the text means by consulting to available helpful tools (such as commentaries or encyclopedia), solving which interpretation best fits the passage, and evaluating questions answered, and the meaning of the passage understood. Third, application stage is to know how the truth behind the text relates to the readers (Pepinsky, 1982; Williams, 1973). Furthermore, the exegetical paper aims at presenting the most plausible, well-supported translation, explanation, and interpretation of a given passage, argued by means of rigorous research, critical judgment, and accepted

methods of biblical exegesis (Iqbal & Ja'far, 2019; Piper, 2013).

If we adhere to the paradigm that the Qur'an cannot be translated, only the Arabs will understand the contents of the Qur'an (Baihaki, 2017). For people who do not understand Arabic, practicing the values of the Qur'an and knowing the meaning of a verse can at least be done through translation works (Ali et al., 2012; Halimah, 2014; Imamuddin et al., 2020; Raharjo et al., 2018). However, the depth of understanding the Qur'an of the people who already have Arabic language skills will certainly be different from people who do not have Arabic language skills. Therefore, in the Islamic tradition, learning Arabic is a necessity because the life of a Muslim in various aspects, especially in ritual worship, cannot be separated from the use of Arabic language, more specifically because Arabic is the language of the Qur'an (Baihaki, 2017; Baihaqi, 2019; Hanafi, 2011).

There have been several studies on the exegesis of the Qur'an. Qadafy (2019) conducted a study that analyzed two scholarly *tafsir* books circulating throughout modern Indonesia. He found out that these two books are concerned with attracting the attention of lay readers and, accordingly, endeavour to present their information in a comprehensible and accessible manner. In terms of content, the two books limit their discussion to the apparent (*zāhir*) meaning of the Qur'an, an understanding that depends on a reader's knowledge of Arabic; one might call it an immediate understanding of the text. Woodward (1993) conducted a study that is primarily concerned with the ways hadith translations are used to legitimize cooperation between the conservative Muslim organization Nahdlatul Ulama (hereafter NU) and the secular government and as critiques of modernism, radical activist rhetoric, and of *kejawan* (Javanese) Islam, which stresses local formulations of Sufism while neglecting the ritual requirements of Islamic law. Ikhwan (2015) focuses on examining Quraish Shibab's exegetical thoughts and articulation of religion in the modern and pluralistic context of Indonesia. His research discovered the role of Quraish Shihab, a popular cleric in Indonesia in re-centring the position of the Qur'an as the guidance to address current exigencies of Indonesian Muslim society. Peachy (2013) studied the English translation of the Qur'an and suggested the importance of the four questions in translating the Qur'an, namely: Why was the Qur'an translated? Who translated the Qur'an? Whom is the translation for? How is the Qur'an translated? These four questions are important guides for the translators because they are responsible for making many difficult and crucial decisions that will affect the accuracy, clarity, and acceptability of their work. Meanwhile, Abdelaal and Md Rashid (2015) investigated the semantic loss in the translation of

Surah al-Waqi'ah by Abdullah Yusuf Ali. They suggested that there were semantic weaknesses in the English translation of Surah al-Waqi'ah. Translators sometimes choose incorrect words in their semantic field.

In the context of Indonesia, there have been at least two studies on Qur'an translation done. Afan (2014) reported that an Islamic organization in Indonesia, the Indonesian Mujahidin Council (MMI, *Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia*), claimed that there are many errors in the Qur'an translation published by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia (Kemenag RI). Ahmadi (2015) and Chirzin (2018) support these findings by comparing the Qur'an translation produced by Kemenag RI and that of Muhammad Thalib. Thalib found that the 2010 edition of Qur'an translation by Kemenag RI contains 3,400 errors. For example, the translation of Al-Baqarah (verse 191) used the phrases of "kill them", which can lead to partial understanding that can make people unable to contextualize their understanding in a concrete situation. He claimed that the Kemenag RI Team used *harfiyah* (textual) approach that was forbidden by scholars. Thus, Thalib formulated the Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Tafsiriyah as a correction to the translation work of the Kemenag RI Team. Although the accusation was denied by Kemenag RI, it indicates that the product of the translation is debatable and becomes an interesting discourse to reveal. Chirzin (2018), however, found that the difference between the two translations was only on their respective emphasis points, in which the translation of the Kemenag RI was oriented towards faithful language translation, while Thalib's translation was oriented towards *tafsiriyah* translation with its advantages and disadvantages

Researchers' interest above indicates that the study of Qur'an translation is quite in demand. However, based on literature in reputable journals taken from Scopus data for the period 2010-2019, research related to the Qur'an translation is limited to content analysis that examines translated products by comparing one translation result with another. There has been no research in the context of producing Qur'an translators. Therefore, this research is focused on how to improve the Qur'an translation competence of prospective Islamic teachers by implementing an exegetic approach in Qur'an translation to address the limitations of *harfiyah* and *tafsiriyah* approaches. It aims at finding solutions to address low Qur'an translation competency possessed by prospective Islamic teachers. In specific, the research activities were done in the following stages: (1) exploring research participants' ability to translate Qur'an; (2) developing strategic steps to address the problem found; and (3) evaluating the results.

METHOD

Research design

Action research (AR) as developed by McTaggart (1996) has been used as the method of the research. Theoretically and politically, AR has always been used as a basis for exploring an issue related to critical pedagogy (Gibbs et al., 2017; Supriyadi & Julia, 2019). With this AR design, solutions to problems related to the ability of prospective teachers in translating the Qur'an are sought.

One of the characteristics of AR is the collaborations with other parties (Bruce et al., 2011; Creswell, 2002; Ferguson-Patrick, 2007; Jaipal & Figg, 2011; Leeman et al., 2018; Somekh, 2010). On this base, four people, namely an expert of Qur'an interpretation, two lecturers with expertise in the Arabic language, and a lecturer with expertise on Islamic Religious Education were made the collaborators to this research. A study prior to the research was conducted to determine the indicators of success in this research. The indicators were based on the need for prospective Islamic teachers to actualize their knowledge later in schools both at the primary and secondary levels. The success indicators of prospective Islamic teachers in achieving competence in translating the Qur'an are presented in Table 1.

Research site and participants

This research was conducted at one of the universities in Indonesia that produce educators and education personnel in the field of Islamic religious education. These research participants were 35 university students consisting of 20 male students and 15 female students who were taking *Ulum al-Qur'an* (science of Qur'an) subject in their third semester. They were 19 to 20 years old prospective teachers of Islamic religious education coming from various regions in West Java province, Indonesia. They were high school graduates and had minimal Arabic skills.

Data collection

Data were collected using surveys, observations, and semi-structured interviews. The survey was carried out using the Google Document with the Likert and Guttman scales. The research procedure was carried out in three stages. The first stage was exploring problems related to the participants' ability to translate the Qur'an. The second stage was compiling strategic steps to improve the ability of the participants in translating the Qur'an based on the problems identified. The third stage was evaluating all actions given and matching the results of the previous stages by referring to the predetermined indicators. In each stage, reflections were made to improve and to take needed actions in the next step

Data analysis

Data collected from the survey, observations, and semi-structured interviews were thematically identified, coded and evaluated, categorized, and

analyzed using the analytical tool of content analysis offered by Krippendorff (2018). The analysis was discussed and examined by the collaborating experts involved in this research.

Table 1

Indicators of Competency Achievement in Translating the Qur'an for Prospective PAI Teachers

No	Level	Indicator	Assessment
1.	Beginner	1. The recitation of the Qur'an is good and correct.	Poor
		2. Can mention the meaning of only a few words contained in a verse of the Qur'an.	
2.	Basic	3. Can distinguish <i>isim</i> (noun), <i>fi'il</i> (verb) and letters used in the composition of a verse of the Qur'an	Fair
		4. Can distinguish the sentence structure of <i>Ismiyah fi'liyah</i> used in a verse of the Qur'an.	
		5. Can say and look up the meaning of each word in a verse of the Qur'an with the help of a dictionary and memorize vocabulary in the verse that is read.	
3.	Skilled	6. Can mention the position of words in each sentence contained in a verse of the Qur'an and how to translate them into Indonesian.	Good
		7. Can mention the background of the descent (<i>asbabun nuzul</i>) of a verse or surah in the Qur'an.	
4.	Advanced	8. Can mention the meaning of each word in a verse of the Qur'an	Excellent
		9. Can mention the meaning of every word in a verse or surah of the Qur'an lexically and grammatically, and can also choose the appropriate diction in translating the verse	
		10. Can deliver the purpose of a verse based on references of <i>tafsir</i> (interpretation)	

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of pre-action

The 35 participants were given several tests to classify them based on their level of ability. The tests were written tests to measure the participants' Arabic dictation skills and oral tests to measure their language skills, especially the vocabulary. They analyzed the sentence structure in the editorial of a verse of the Qur'an, the types of words used, and the meaning of each word in a verse. The test also measured other knowledge related to the Qur'an such as *asbabun nuzul* and insight into *tafsir*. Surah Al-Baqarah was used as the test tool chosen because 75% of the vocabulary in the Qur'an was contained in it (Abaza, 2010; Himam & Raswan, 2017; Supiana et al., 2018). To facilitate the mastery of vocabulary, the participants memorized the words by using the song rhythm. Intrinsically, singing a song can help motivate, maintain focus, and be quite enjoyable for students of all ages (Good, et al., 2015). In addition, songs can embody and summarize memories (Funabiki & Konishi, 2003; Harvey, 2010). The verses used as test instruments are those having *asbabun nuzul*, which is based on the verse division in Figure 4. The test results can be seen in the following table.

Table 2 shows that the majority of the participants' ability to translate the Qur'an is in the poor category. Twenty-seven (77.14%) participants showed poor assessment indicators. This means that their ability was at the beginner level. Eight

(22.86%) participants were in quite good assessment indicators. This means that their ability was at the basic level.

Table 2

Results of Initial Ability Test in Qur'an Translation

Level	Number	Percentage
Beginner	27	77.14%
Basic	8	22.86%
Skilled		
Advanced		
Total	35	100%

The test results indicated that the participants' Arabic language skills needed to be improved through a number of intensive, brief, and effective learning experiences given the time allocated in lectures was very limited. Increasing the Arabic language skills is important because Arabic is a supporting knowledge in translating the Qur'an. Moreover, the ability to speak Arabic also has a positive influence on one's religious behavior (Mustofa, 2019).

In addition to Arabic, the participants' insights and experiences related to other supporting knowledge such as *tafsir* and *asbabun nuzul* needed to be strengthened through a number of literacy experiences of *tafsir* and *asbabun nuzul*. This was important because without insight of *asbabun nuzul*, it was difficult to understand the context of a verse or surah in the Qur'an. The translation that misses its historical context is caused by a person's lack of

insight regarding *asbabun nuzul* (Alifuddin, 2012; Bakri, 2016; Rippin, 1988). Likewise, without interpretive insight, the Qur'an translation will fail (Abdelaal & Md Rashid, 2015).

Even though the participants' level of ability is at the beginner level, they already had the most fundamental capital to start understanding the Qur'an: the ability to read the Qur'an well. The ability to read is a must to understand and actualize the messages of the Qur'an in life (Alhamuddin et

al., 2018; Hakim, 2019; Rahman et al., 2017; Supriyadi et al., 2020). In addition to reading, motivational capital is also very important because underachievement is not caused by a lack of ability, but by the lack of motivation to learn.

Regarding the participants' motivation in improving the competence of translating the Qur'an, a survey was conducted. The survey results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Motivation of Prospective Teachers Regarding the Competence of Translating the Qur'an

Statement	SD	D	RD	A	SA
1. Prospective Islamic Education teachers must have the ability to translate the Qur'an.				27	8
2. To find out the translation of the Qur'an, I only need to look at existing translation results.	16	19			
3. To be able to translate the Qur'an, I need to have good Arabic language skills.				11	24
4. To be able to translate the Qur'an, I need to have insights of <i>asbabun nuzul</i> and <i>tafsir</i> of the Qur'an.				5	30

Note: SD: Strongly Disagree D: Disagree RD: Rather Disagree A: Agree SA: Strongly Agree

Table 3 shows the participants' high motivation and awareness of the importance as prospective teachers of Islamic Education to have the ability to translate the Qur'an and the importance of other supporting knowledge that must be possessed to achieve competency in translating the Qur'an.

Implementation of action

Based on the results of the analysis, this research offered six steps as an action to improve competence in translating the Qur'an for prospective Islamic Education teachers. The six steps are explained as follows.

Arabic language training with the Tamyiz Method

The success of learning depends on the method used and the material presented (Sani, 2013). To improve Arabic language skills, the Tamyiz method was used. The Tamyiz method was developed by Zaunal Fatin from the Bayt Tamyiz Islamic boarding school, which offers mastery of Arabic within 100 hours (Himam & Raswan, 2017). Many researchers in Indonesia conducted studies on Tamyiz method and have proven its effectiveness (el Fauzy, 2018; Farhan, 2017; Mukroji, 2014).

The material presented in the Tamyiz method is not much different from the Arabic language material in general, namely *Nahwu* (rules that can recognize Arabic both in terms of *i'rab* and *bina'*) and *Sharaf*. Through the *Nahwu*, the participants were provided with concepts related to the division of words in Arabic such as *isim*, *fil* and *huruf* used in the editorial of a verse, distinguishing *fi'liyah* and *ismiyah* of sentences, and the position of a word in a

sentence. Examples of *nahwu* material in the Tamyiz method are as shown in Figure 1. Through the *Sharaf*, the participants were equipped with the ability to analyze a word-formation and the origin of words in the editorial of the Qur'an verse. The ability to search for the origin of words made it easier for the participants to look for the meaning of a word in Arabic dictionaries. The difference between the Tamyiz method and other methods is the ability of Tamyiz method to reconstruct complex *nahwu* and *sharaf* materials into simple ones and can be reached in a relatively short time to achieve Arabic language skills, which took 100 hours (Farhan, 2017). In addition, Tamyiz has a vocabulary compiled in the *Kawkaban* dictionary (Abaza, 2010).

The implementation of the 100 hours program using the Tamyiz method was adjusted to the time allocation presented in the lecture system. The number of credits for the Arabic course each week is three credits (510 minutes), which consists of 150 minutes for face-to-face sessions, 180 minutes for structured assignments, and 180 minutes for independent assignments based on initiative. The Tamyiz method spent approximately 14 weeks with 12 face-to-face sessions and 2 comprehensive evaluations. Based on several tests given and a comparison of pretest and posttest results, the Arabic language skills of prospective Islamic teachers are described in Table 4.

Table 4 shows an increase in the participants' Arabic language skills with an average increase of 84.28%. At this stage, the participants showed the ability to translate the Qur'an in Surah Al-Baqarah.

Figure 1
An example of materials in the Tamyiz Method

AL-QURAN TRANSLATION TAMYIZ METHOD

الحرف				
15	12	8	4	1
الْأَسْتِفْهَامُ 'is/are/do/does/ has/have (?)' remember which one (?) where (?) 'is/are/do/does/ has/have (?)' who (?) when (?) how much/ many (?) how (?) 'is/are/do/does/ has/have (?)' 'is/are/do/does/ has/have (?)' why (?) why (?)	الْأَسْتِفْتَاءُ except/unless do not never 13 الْعَطْفُ and or then or meanwhile then even until however	أَنْ يَنْصَبَ that never if so so that so that thus 9 لَا تَجْزِمُ do not 10 لَمْ تَجْزِمِ no no let (do) let (do) let (do)	لَا تَنْصَبَ لِلتَّكْرَةِ no 5 إِلَّا تَنْصَبَ لِلْمُسْتَفْتَاءِ except/unless 6 يَا تَنْصَبَ لِلْمُضَافِ O (call) 7 يَا نِدَاءُ O (call) O (call) O (call)	بِ جَزْرٍ with/by like/such to for on from inside from 2 كَانَ رَفَعٌ تَنْصَبُ is/are not 3 إِنْ تَنْصَبُ رَفَعٌ really/truly that as if but hopefully if/suppose
16 الْتَوْكِيدُ really/truly really/truly really/truly	14 الْقَرْظُ if if if not meanwhile when although why not why not	11 الْقَرْظُ if who (?) what (?) wherever (go) wherever (be) whatever (manner)	17 الْإِسْتِغْنَاءُ will later	18 الْقَافِي not not
19 the best the worst				

Table 4
Results of the Arabic Language Intensive Training with the Tamyiz Method

Arabic Language Skills	Pretest		Posttest		Improvement	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Able to distinguish types of <i>Isim</i> , <i>Fiil</i> and <i>Huruf</i> in each verse contained in Surah Al-Baqarah	5	14.28	35	100	30	85.71
Able to distinguish the number of <i>Ismiyah</i> and <i>Fi'liyah</i> used in every verse in Surah Al-Baqarah	3	8.57	32	91.42	29	82.85
Able to explain <i>I'rob</i> of Sentence in every verse in Surah Al-Baqarah	2	5.71	29	82.85	27	77.14
Able to translate Surah Al-Baqarah	2	5.71	34	97.14	32	91.42
Average Arabic Language Ability	4.25	12.14	32.5	92.86	29.5	84.28%

However, their ability was limited to textual translating or *harfiyah*, while the Qur'an cannot be translated using the *harfiyah* approach alone (Abdelaal & Md Rashid, 2015). With *harfiyah* translation, there is a potential loss of the semantic meaning of the Qur'an due to the inaccuracy of the

selected vocabulary, which can cause a shift in meaning (Abdelaal & Md Rashid, 2015). The lack of similarities in several cultural words between the Qur'an and Indonesian requires a translator not only to have great skills in both languages but also great knowledge of literature and the culture in which the

Qur'an was revealed (Peachy, 2013). As a solution to this, the collaboration team referred Abdelaal and Md Rashid's (2015) concept of exegetical translation as a style based on *tafsir* books so that the direction of the participants' competence in translating the Qur'an was focused on exegetical translation.

Text analysis and collecting meaning of words

To minimize the inaccuracy in choosing the meaning of words, the participants needed to have a deeper insight into the meaning of Arabic vocabulary. Therefore, this step was focused on enriching the vocabulary of the meaning of each Qur'anic word. The participants were instructed to analyze, collect, and compile other possible word meanings contained in the Kawkaban dictionary, which was the initial guideline and reference in translating the Qur'an. This stage was important so that the participant's knowledge regarding the meaning of a word in the Qur'an does not only rely on the meaning contained in the dictionary. An Arabic word can be translated into several words in Indonesian. For example, the verb ضَرَبَ can be translated into *memukul* (to hit), *membuat* (to make), or *menjadikan* (to become). Another example is Arabic letter ل that can mean *untuk* (to/for), *karena* (because) and *milik* (to belong) in Indonesian.

Equipped with *sharaf* knowledge obtained from the first stage, the participants searched for other meanings or equivalent words related to a *lafadz* (pronunciation) in the Qur'an in the Kawkaban dictionary or in representative Arabic-Indonesian dictionaries and reliable examples such as Warson's (1997) *al-Munawir* dictionary, Ali and Muhdlor's (1996) *Contemporary Dictionary*, and Bisri's (1999) *Al-Bisri Dictionary*. All 35 participants in this research succeeded in making an inventory and enriching the meaning of every word in the Kawkaban dictionary, on average of 1-3 other meanings. Enriching the Kawkaban dictionary was hoped to help them in choosing the right words in translating the Qur'an. Diction in translating the Qur'an is a necessity because the choices of the right words and usage must be able to represent the idea of a verse so that certain effects are obtained as desired by the verse itself.

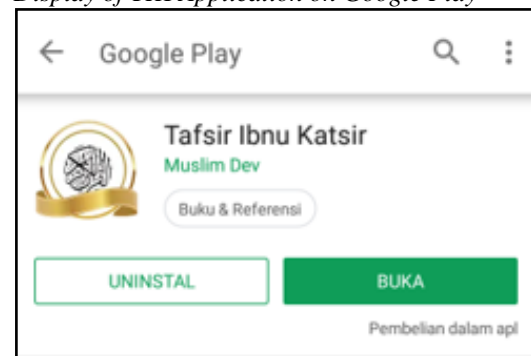
Tafsir Ibnu Katsir (TIK)-based reading of Tafsir and Asbabun Nuzul

Regarding the possibility that a *lafadz* in the Qur'an has multiple meanings, then, the next problem was deciding which meaning was the most appropriate to be used in translating a *lafadz* or a verse. This required understanding of the context of the verse so that the translation did not become obscure or was only based on the translator's subjectivity. Therefore, a translator must have understanding of the sciences of the Qur'an in translating it. Two of these sciences are *tafsir* and *asbabun nuzul*, which will help the translator grasp the context of a verse. By reading *tafsir* and *asbabun nuzul*, the

participants could at least understand and classify the content of verses into three categories, namely verses that contain credal (*aqidah*), Islamic law (*syariah*), or moral (*akhlak*) aspects, because the Qur'an as the source of Islamic teachings contains those three aspects of teachings (Majid, 1995).

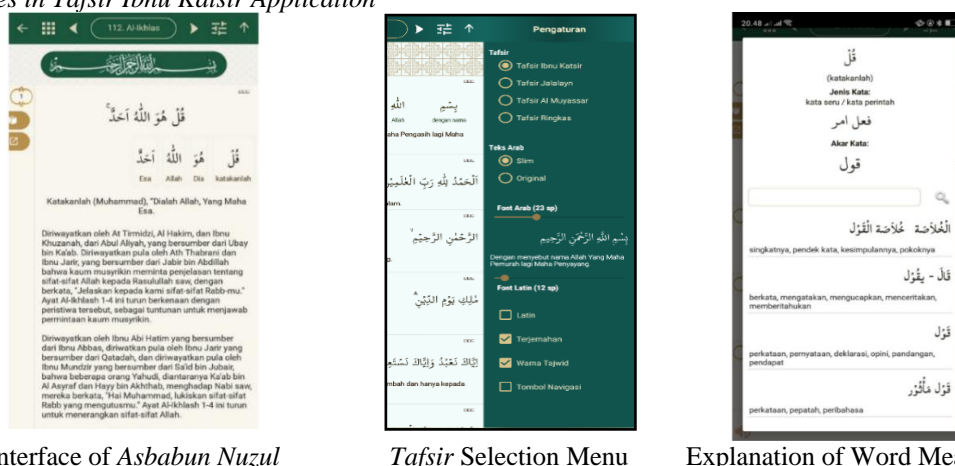
To make it easier for them to study the *tafsir* and *asbabun nuzul*, an Android-based information technology was used as a learning medium in this step. The participants were instructed to install the TIK application developed by Muslim Media on their smartphones. The application was chosen because (1) everyone has a smartphone; (2) the application has representative features for *tafsir* learning, such as (a) complete presentation of the Qur'an (30 *juz* and 114 *surah*/chapter), (b) good translation of verses and interpretations, (c) a collection of four *tafsir* works of credible scholars (Tafsir Ibnu Katsir, Tafsir Jalalain, Tafsir al-Muyassar, and the tafsir issued by The Ministry of Religious Affairs of Republic Indonesia), which have become references in almost all Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia; d) an explanation of the background to the passage of the verse or *surah* (*asbabun nuzul*), (e) a feature for studying the *hadiths* (a collection of traditions containing sayings of the Prophet Muhammad) that are relevant to a verse, (f) a search engine feature to search for translations of the Qur'an based on the desired keywords, (g) thematic verse features, and so on; and (3) in terms of costs, the TIK application is more efficient than buying the printed versions of the four books. Figures 2 and 3 show the application's display and description of the features on Google Play.

Figure 2
Display of TIK Application on Google Play



The instructional steps in the learning process started from the guide to install, to understand the features, and to do the *tafsir* learning process. The material for the *tafsir* was focused on examining Surah Al-Baqarah from the perspective of the *mufasir* (expert of Qur'an interpretation) in the application. At the end of the learning activity, the participants' perceptions related to *tafsir* learning using TIK application were surveyed. The survey results can be seen in Table 5.

Figure 3
Features in Tafsir Ibnu Katsir Application



Interface of *Asbabun Nuzul*

Tafsir Selection Menu

Explanation of Word Meaning

Table 5
Perceptions of the Research Participants of TIK-based Interpretation Learning

Statement	SD	D	RD	A	SA
5. This application can be accessed and used easily.				21	14
6. The features in this application are very helpful in assessing the interpretation of the Qur'an.				34	1
7. This application helps me categorize verses with credal, moral, and ritual dimensions.				33	2
8. This application increases my insight and understanding of the content of the Qur'an.				31	4

Note: **SD**: Strongly Disagree **D**: Disagree **RD**: Rather Disagree **A**: Agree **SA**: Strongly Agree

Table 5 shows that all participants responded positively to the TIK application as a learning medium in studying the *tafsir* of the Qur'an. The participants perceived that the application was easily accessible and practical. They agreed that the features in the application helped them in studying the *tafsir* of the Qur'an, helped them classify the

verses of the Qur'an, and increased their insight and understanding of the contents of the Qur'an.

To support the results of this survey, the participants were tested to mention the views of the *mufasir* regarding the content of verses 1-20 in Surah Al-Baqarah through this application. The test results are presented in Table 6:

Table 6
Test Results of TIK-based Tafsir Learning

Assessment Indicator	Total	Percentage
9. Able to mention <i>asbabun nuzul</i> of a verse	33	94.28 %
10. Able to mention relevant hadiths related to a verse	34	97.14 %
11. Able to mention the topic of a verse (topic of <i>aqidah</i> , <i>syariah</i> , or <i>akhlak</i>)	35	100.00 %
12. Able to express the content of a verse based on the explanation of the <i>mufasir</i>	33	94.22 %

Table 6 shows the congruity between the participants' statements regarding *tafsir* learning with their abilities based on the test results. As the table shows, all of the participants were able to mention the topic of a verse and classify the verses into the categories. This implies that the participants already had *tafsir* literacy skills even though it was still limited to the four *tafsir* works.

Joint assessment on translated works

Equipped with the insights and skills they already had in the previous stages, the participants were then divided into seven groups to review eight translated works of the Qur'an published in Indonesia. Each group was instructed to review three works and

compare one translation with another. Henceforth, they provided feedback and assessment.

The focus of the comparison was limited to Surah Al-Baqarah. They investigated the diction and style of translation used by each translator. Based on their review and assessment, the participants reported that six (75%) works tended to be *harfiyah* or textual translations and two works (25%) tended to be *tafsiriyah* translations. This implied that the tendency for the Qur'an translation in circulation was dominated by the literal translation style. Newmark (1981) states that literal translation is the best approach in both semantic and communicative translation. However, in translating Qur'an, this literal translation should then be either combined with exegetical translation or not against

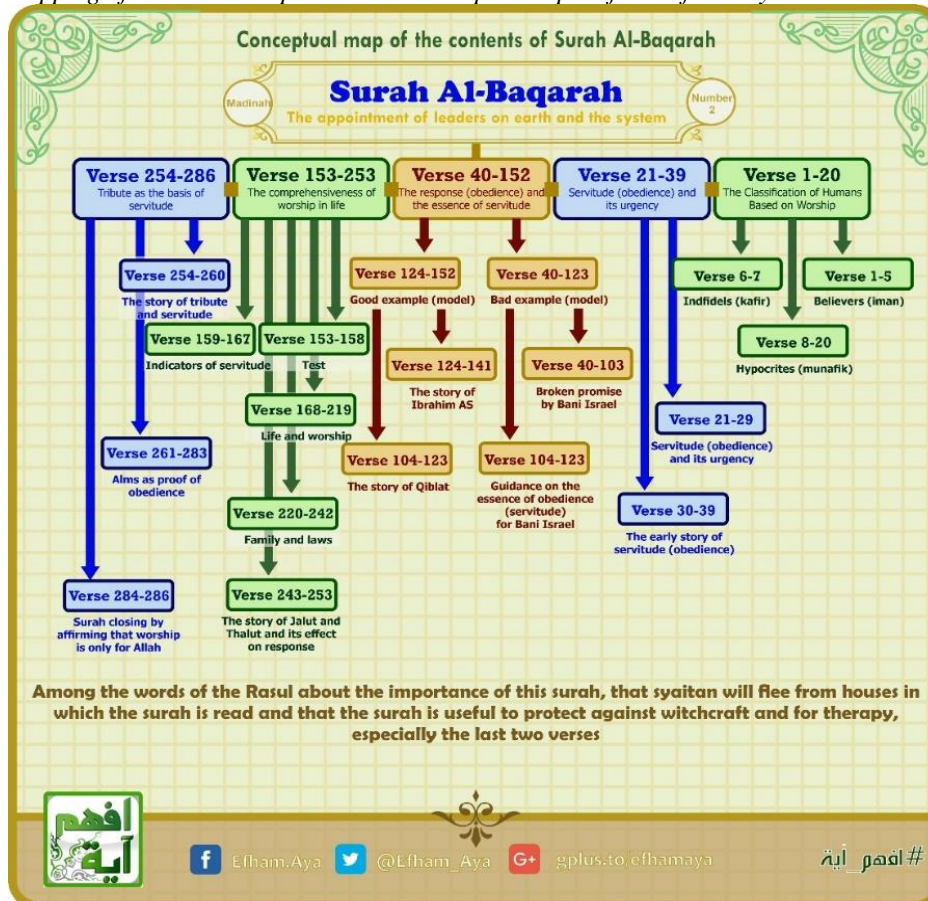
its principles because as Abdelaal and Md Rashid (2015) stated, the only acceptable translation is exegetical translation—a translation based on commentary books.

Improvement

As a follow-up to the participants’ findings regarding the translation works circulating in Indonesia and as a form of their contribution to the

translation of the Qur’an, the participants were directed to compile translated works based on books of *tafsir*. As stated by Abdelaal and Md Rashid (2015), an acceptable translation is a translation based on the books of the *mufasir*. To facilitate them, the participants were given a guide in the form of mapping of verses in Surah Al-Baqarah that was adopted from a fan page Efhama Aya as in Figure 4.

Figure 4
Mapping of Surah Al-Baqarah based on Topic Adopted from Efhama Aya



Source: modified from https://www.facebook.com/efham.aya/?ref=page_internal

The above concept map guided the participants in translating the Qur'an so that the translation practice did not deviate from the context of the verse. The verse mapping was divided into five groups of verses, namely verses 1-20 related to human in worshipping God with all its characteristics, verses 21-39 related to the importance of worship for humans, verses 40-152 related to the nature of worship, verses 153-253 related to the scope of worship in life, and verses 254-286 related to the principles of worship.

The practice of translating the Qur'an with the exegetical style

This was the final stage in the learning process. The participants were given a project to translate Surah

Al-Baqarah based on five groups of verses as explained in the previous stage. They were instructed to describe the *I'rab* (the changing of the word endings due to the addition of specific elements to find out whether they are actual or supposed) of each verse and the meaning of each *lafadz* and to provide an explanation of the meaning of a verse based on the *tafsir* references they had read. The following table summarizes the findings related to the participants’ ability to translate the Qur'an. The majority is in the good category and the rest are in the very good category. The number of participants included in the good category was 32 (91.43%) participants, while three (8.57%) participants were included in the very good category.

Table 7
Representation of Participants' Ability in Translating the Qur'an

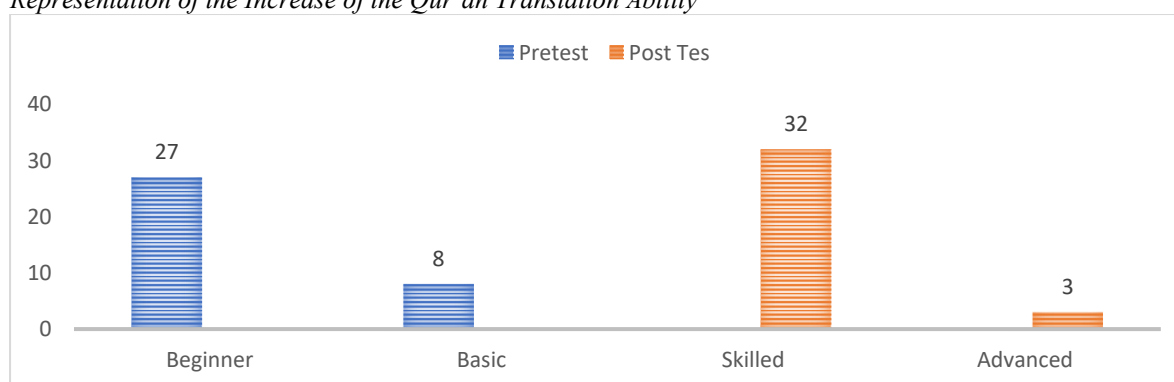
Ability	Poor	Rather Poor	Fair	Good	Very good
13. Translating every word				32	3
14. Explaining the <i>I'rab</i> in each verse				31	4
15. Providing an explanation of <i>asbabun nuzul</i>				32	3
16. Providing an explanation of the intent based on interpretation				33	2
Average				32	3

Evaluation results of the action

The findings in each learning stage represented an increase in the ability of the prospective teachers in translating the Qur'an. By referring to the indicators

set in Table 1 and comparing the results of the pre-action and post-action stages, this increase is illustrated as in Figure 5.

Figure 5
Representation of the Increase of the Qur'an Translation Ability



The figure shows that by implementing the six steps of action, the participants' ability increased. As for the form of this increase, it was identified that the participants experienced an increase of one to two levels. The increase of one level is from the basic to the skilled level, and the two-level increase is from beginner to skilled and from basic to advanced level.

A total of 27 (77.14%) participants, who were in the beginner level at the time of pre-action, experienced an increase of two levels to the skilled level. This means that the increase occurred by 100%. At the time of the post-action, there were no more participants who were at the beginner or basic levels.

From the eight (22.86%) participants who were in the basic level at the time of pre-action, five participants experienced one level increase to the skilled level. Therefore, the increase was 62.5%. Three participants increased two levels to the advanced level. This means that there was an increase of 37.5%. The increase that occurred based on the results of the post-action showed that the majority of the participants' ability to translate the Qur'an was in a good category.

CONCLUSION

The research results have revealed the fact that to improve the competence of prospective teachers in

translating the Qur'an, educators must always reflect on themselves and strive to improve the quality of learning and understand learning and teaching styles that can create a change in the learning process. This means that teachers must be fully aware that the learning steps taken in the current learning process have not been able to provide satisfactory results so that it is necessary to develop or compile an innovative and futuristic model. This research contributes to the development of the science of tafsir learning through strengthening Arabic language skills as an effort to improve the competence of prospective Islamic religious education teachers in understanding the sources of Islamic teachings.

It was revealed that to increase the competence of prospective Islamic Education teachers in translating the Qur'an, six stages can be taken as a critical reflection. These stages are called TARJIM, where T=Training, A=Accumulation, R=Reading, J=Joint Assessment, I=Improvement, M=Make as the stage to actualize the insights and skills from the previous stages to compile a translation product.

These six stages were developed from the Tamyiz method in improving the ability to translate the Qur'an. Therefore, TARJIM can also be called a learning method in translating the Qur'an that has exegetical nuances. In addition to being an acronym, *tarjim* is an Arabic word, in the form of an imperative verb, which means an order to translate.

This has an implication that every Muslim should be able to convey the messages of the Qur'an. Therefore, for anyone who wants to have and improve the ability to translate the Qur'an, the TARJIM method is a sure solution.

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