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KEMENTERIAN PENDIDIKAN TINGGI



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***Amsal* Alive: Visualising Quranic Parables through Educational Comic**

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ABSTRACT

The Quran serves as the primary source for shaping Islamic creed (Aqidah), morality (Akhlaq), and intellectual development, conveyed through various pedagogical approaches, including *Amsal* (parables). Quranic parables employ vivid imagery and real-life analogies to encourage reflection and deeper understanding; however, many students experience difficulties in grasping these parables due to language barriers, limited foundational comprehension, and the lack of engaging visual learning resources. To address these challenges, *Amsal* Alive introduces an innovative educational comic as a multimodal learning solution for teaching and learning Quranic parables. This innovation integrates visual storytelling, concise explanatory text, and QR-linked audio reflections, catering to diverse learning styles while maintaining the authenticity of the Quranic message. The development of *Amsal* Alive adopts a design-based qualitative approach using content analysis, in which selected Quranic parables are analysed to identify their core meanings and moral themes based on authoritative tafsir before being translated into structured comic narratives. As an educational innovation, *Amsal* Alive functions as a pre-learning and self-review tool that enhances learner engagement, facilitates clearer interpretation of abstract parables, and promotes reflective thinking by contextualizing Quranic values within relatable daily experiences. This approach offers a creative, accessible, and meaningful contribution to contemporary Quranic calculation without overreliance on complex textual explanations.

Keywords: Quranic parables (*Amsal*), educational comics, Islamic Education

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of digital technology and modern education has changed the way teaching and learning take place nowadays. Students are now more exposed to multimedia tools and usually respond better to learning materials that are visual, concise, interactive, and flexible compared to traditional text-based methods. This change has encouraged educators in academic to improve their teaching strategies as well as pedagogies so that they are more approachable for current learners, especially Generation Z students (individuals born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s) who are highly familiar with digital platforms and visual content (UNESCO, 2020).

This transformation is particularly significant in the field of Islamic study and Quran-related education. Although the divine message in Quran is timeless, universal, and relevant to every generation, the methods used to teach and communicate its teachings should continue to evolve in line with current educational needs. The effective delivery is essential to help learners understand, appreciate, and apply Quranic knowledge in their daily lives. Our goal as educators is for them to not only read Quran but also ensure the message from the Quran can be

internalised and practised in their daily life activities. Therefore, innovative teaching approaches are needed to connect classical Quranic wisdom with contemporary learning practices.

1.1 Scope of the Project

The scope of this project focuses on the development of *Amsal* Alive as an innovative educational comic created to enhance the teaching and learning of selected Quranic parables (*Amsal*). In the Quran, parables are presented as an effective pedagogical method to convey lessons related to faith, morality, wisdom, and reflection through meaningful analogies and vivid imagery. These parables invite learners to think critically, appreciate divine guidance, and relate spiritual values to real-life experiences. Recognising the educational significance of Quranic parables, this project aims to transform selected parables into a more engaging and learner-friendly format that is suited to the present-day educational settings.

The project covers several systematic development phases. First, selected parables are identified based on their relevance to student learning needs, moral values, and suitability for visual adaptation. Second, content analysis is conducted using authoritative tafsir references to ensure accurate interpretation and preservation of the original Quranic meanings. Third, the selected messages are rewritten into simplified and student-friendly language without compromising authenticity. Fourth, storyboard planning and comic narrative development are carried out to create coherent visual storytelling sequences. Finally, multimodal learning elements such as illustrations, concise explanatory text, QR-linked audio reflections, and guided reflection prompts are integrated into the final product.

This project also emphasises inclusive pedagogy by addressing different learner preferences and learning styles. Visual learners benefit from illustrations and visual storytelling, while auditory learners gain support through audio reflection features. Furthermore, active learners are engaged through reflective tasks, discussion-based activities, and follow-up exercises included at the end of each section to strengthen understanding. All these strategies are consistent with the research demonstrating that multimodal instructional materials can significantly improve learner motivation, comprehension, and long-term retention when compared to single-mode text delivery (Mayer, 2009).

The primary target users of this innovation are students from the courses Islamic Revealed Knowledge (IRK), Quranic Studies, and other related Islamic education courses at secondary school, foundation, and tertiary levels. The resource is intended to strengthen students' understanding of Quranic messages, deepen appreciation of Islamic values, and improve their ability to apply these teachings in contemporary daily life. In addition, *Amsal* Alive is designed to be flexible to use in various educational contexts, including face-to-face classrooms, blended learning environments, online teaching, self-paced learning, and revision sessions.

Beyond classroom application, the project also has potential for future expansion into digital comics, mobile learning applications, multilingual editions, and interactive educational platforms. Therefore, the scope of *Amsal* Alive extends beyond a printed comic module and represents a scalable innovation that contributes to innovative Quranic pedagogy while preserving the sacredness and authenticity of the Quran content and discussion.

1.2 Problem Statement

The teaching and learning of Quranic parables (*Amsal*) through conventional methods are often less effective because the content is abstract, symbolic, and metaphorical in nature, making it challenging for many students to understand. These parables frequently contain meaningful comparisons, vivid imagery, and deeper messages that require explanation, reflection, and guided interpretation. However, in many educational settings, the topic is still delivered mainly through lecture-based teaching, textual explanation, and one-way communication. As a result, many students face difficulties in grasping the intended messages, wisdom, and values embedded in the parables.

In addition, students often experience challenges in connecting Quranic parables with contemporary real-life situations. Although the parables contain timeless guidance related to faith, morality, human behaviour, and decision-making, learners may struggle to see their relevance when examples are not contextualised to current realities. This limits students' ability to reflect critically, internalise the lessons, and apply Quranic values meaningfully in their daily lives. Consequently, the learning process may become theoretical rather than transformative.

Furthermore, the learning preferences of present-day students have changed significantly in line with digital and learner-centred educational trends. Many students are more responsive to visual, interactive, concise, and technology-supported learning materials (Neil Fleming, 2001). However, there remains a limited availability of innovative resources in Islamic education, particularly for the teaching of Quranic parables, that effectively combine authentic content with engaging delivery methods. The absence of creative and immersive learning tools may reduce learner motivation, participation, retention, and overall learning effectiveness (Richard E. Mayer, 2009).

Therefore, there is a clear need for an innovative educational approach that adapts Quranic parables in a more accessible, engaging, and meaningful format without compromising the sacredness and authenticity of the Quran teachings.

1.3 Objectives

The objectives of this project are as follows:

- (i) To enhance students' understanding of selected Quranic parables (*Amsal*) through visual storytelling.
- (ii) To strengthen students' ability to connect Quranic teachings with real-life situations, fostering meaningful reflection.
- (iii) To develop *Amsal* Alive as an innovative multimodal educational comic that improves engagement and supports Islamic learning.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative design-based approach in developing *Amsal* Alive; an educational comic grounded in Quranic parables (*Amsal*). This approach is suitable as it allows the systematic integration of authentic Quranic content with innovative instructional design. As illustrated in Figure 1, the overall process is structured into five main phases: selection, analysis, visual translation, multimodal integration, and production.

The first phase involves the selection of relevant Quranic parables (Amsal) from the Quran based on their relevance to students' real-life experiences and alignment with the existing curriculum. The selected parables are those that convey clear moral messages and are closely related to situations encountered by students in their daily lives. Priority is given to parables that are familiar within the curriculum and carry meanings that are close to students' understanding, allowing for more meaningful engagement and reflection. This ensures that the content is not only academically relevant but also personally meaningful and applicable in students' lives.

In the second phase, a qualitative content analysis is conducted using authentic tafsir sources, such as *Tafsir Ibn Kathir* and *Tafsir Al-Azhar* to extract core meanings, moral lessons, and contextual interpretations. This process ensures that the content remains accurate, authentic, and aligned with established Islamic scholarship. The analysed content is also reviewed to maintain consistency and clarity before proceeding to the design phase.

The third phase focuses on visual design translation, where the analysed meanings are transformed into structured comic narratives. This includes the development of storyboards, character representations, and scene compositions. Visual metaphors and symbolic elements are carefully constructed to reflect the original message of the parables while enhancing clarity and engagement for the target audience.

The fourth phase is multimodal integration, where textual and visual elements are combined into a cohesive learning format. The integration includes narrative text, dialogue, illustrations, and QR-linked audio recitation or reflection to support diverse learning styles. These elements are designed to enhance comprehension, engagement, and accessibility of Quranic messages through interactive learning experiences.

The final phase involves the production of the educational comic, where *Amsal Alive* is developed as a complete learning module. The output is standardised in terms of layout, visual consistency, and readability. Furthermore, feedback from students is integrated to improve the clarity and usability of the materials. The final product functions as a supplementary learning, reflection, and self-review tool that effectively communicates the intended moral and educational messages while remaining engaging and user-friendly.

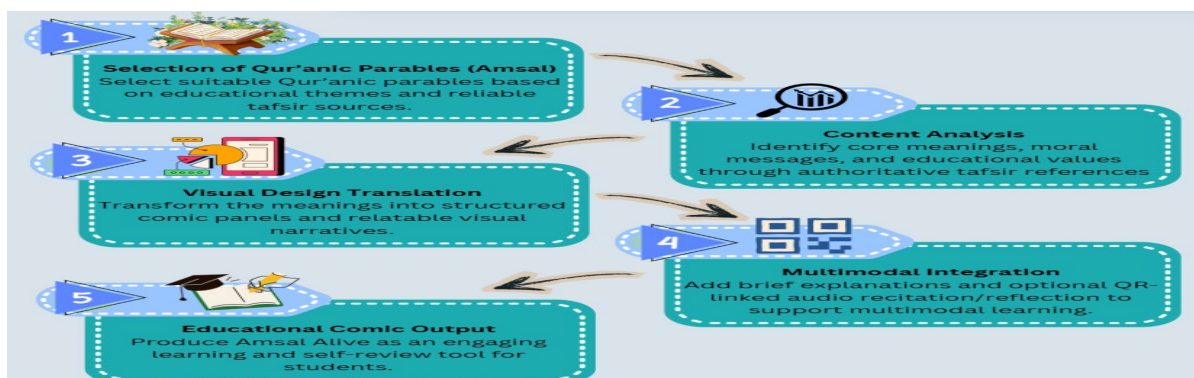


Figure 1. The Process of the Design

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Finding

Amsal is often taught using text-heavy explanations that require high linguistic and interpretive abilities. Many foundation students struggle to understand them due to abstract symbolism, linguistic complexity, and limited engaging learning resources. To substantiate this issue, a questionnaire study was executed with 40 IRK students from the Centre for Foundation Studies, International Islamic University Malaysia (CFS IIUM), subsequent to their classroom instruction on *Amsal*. The tool used a 5-point Likert scale, as well as cognitive load measurement to figure out how hard it was to understand (Leppink et al., 2013), and principles of multimedia learning for text-heavy instruction (Mayer, 2009; Creswell & Guetterman, 2021).

The findings revealed that students strongly agreed that learning *Amsal* in the classroom is difficult to understand when lecturers explained it only through written text, with a mean score of 4.67. This is in line with the principles of multimedia learning, which stress that presenting text in only one way is often not enough to optimize students' understanding, especially if the subject is difficult. They also perceived the symbolic nature of *Amsal* as highly challenging to interpret, evidently with a high mean score of 4.75. Furthermore, students also struggled to relate Qur'anic parables to real-life situations, with a mean of 4.65. These results highlight a high and significant level of learning difficulties in terms of cognitive and interpretive comprehension of *Amsal*, thereby necessitating the pull away from traditional methods and moving towards the development of innovative, visual-based pedagogical interventions for the students.

4. CONCLUSION

Amsal Alive revolutionized how Quranic parables are taught in classrooms by transforming abstract and symbolic meanings to be more accessible and engaging to the students. This innovation enhances student engagement, comprehension, and reflective thinking through the integration of visual storytelling, concise explanations, audio reflections, and reinforcement exercises. Students are better able to grasp and connect the messages and teaching of the Quran to their real-life situations. As a result, students develop a deeper understanding and are able to apply Quranic values in their daily life activities. From the educational perspective, *Amsal* Alive supports learner-centred pedagogy and provides educators with an effective and creative teaching tool to deliver complex Quranic concepts. It also contributes to the development of critical thinking and value-based learning, which are crucial in contemporary education.

In terms of sustainability aspects, *Amsal* Alive demonstrates high potential for long-term implementation and expansion. *Amsal* Alive can be further developed into digital formats such as e-comics, mobile applications, and interactive learning platforms, as well as adapted into multilingual versions for wider accessibility. Its flexible design allows versatility across various educational contexts, including traditional classrooms, online learning environments, and community-based programmes. As a scalable innovation, *Amsal* Alive contributes to the advancement of contemporary Quranic pedagogy while preserving the sacredness and authenticity of the Quran's teachings.

In conclusion, *Amsal* Alive highlights the potential of educational comics as an innovative approach in Quranic education. By bridging classical Islamic knowledge with modern pedagogical practices, this innovation offers a relevant, engaging, and impactful learning

experience. It not only improves students' understanding of Quranic parables but also promotes meaningful reflection and internalisation of values. This innovation reflects how timeless Quranic wisdom can be effectively communicated through contemporary educational approaches.

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