

Strengthening Discipline and English Proficiency: EFL Preservice Teachers' Perspectives on Reciting Qur'an with English Translation

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Article Info

Keywords:

Discipline;
English Proficiency;
EFL Preservice
Teachers
Reciting Qur'an;
English Translation.

ABSTRACT

This study explores EFL preservice teachers' perspectives on reciting the Qur'an with English translation as a strategy to strengthen discipline and English proficiency. Descriptive mixed methods was employed at the English Education Department of UMNU Kebumen, involving 47 preservice teachers from second and fourth semesters. Data were collected through questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, observations, and documentation over one semester. The findings revealed that students held highly positive perspectives, perceiving the practice as an educational consequence rather than punishment. The activity effectively reduced tardiness frequency, enhanced students' awareness of punctuality, and facilitated internalization of discipline as personal value. Regarding language development, students reported perceived improvements in vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation skills, and recognition of Islamic-English lexical equivalents. The integration of religious values made English learning more meaningful and identity-relevant. All interviewed students expressed intention to implement similar approaches in their future teaching careers with contextual adaptations. This study contributes to the theoretical frameworks of Liberating Discipline Pedagogy, Sociocultural Theory, and CLIL in Pre-Service Teacher Education by demonstrating how religious texts can function as mediational tools for simultaneous behavioral regulation and perceived language development. The findings offer practical implications for English teachers and curriculum developers in Islamic educational contexts.

Informasi Artikel

Kata Kunci:

Disiplin;
Kemahiran Bahasa
Inggris;
Calon guru Bahasa
Inggris sebagai
Bahasa Asing;
Membaca Al-
Qur'an;
Terjemahan
Bahasa Inggris.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi perspektif calon guru Bahasa Inggris tentang membaca Al-Qur'an dengan terjemahan Bahasa Inggris sebagai strategi untuk memperkuat disiplin dan kemahiran berbahasa Inggris. Desain metode campuran deskriptif digunakan di Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris UMNU Kebumen, melibatkan 47 calon guru dari semester dua dan empat. Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner, wawancara semi-terstruktur, observasi, dan dokumentasi selama satu semester. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa memiliki perspektif yang sangat positif, menganggap praktik ini sebagai konsekuensi edukatif bukan hukuman. Kegiatan ini efektif mengurangi frekuensi keterlambatan, meningkatkan kesadaran mahasiswa tentang ketepatan waktu, dan memfasilitasi internalisasi disiplin sebagai nilai pribadi. Terkait pengembangan bahasa, mahasiswa melaporkan peningkatan yang dirasakan dalam penguasaan kosakata, keterampilan pengucapan, dan pengenalan padanan leksikal Islam-Inggris. Integrasi nilai-nilai keagamaan membuat pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris lebih bermakna dan relevan dengan identitas. Semua mahasiswa yang diwawancarai menyatakan niat untuk menerapkan pendekatan serupa dalam karir mengajar mereka di masa depan dengan adaptasi kontekstual. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada kerangka teoritis Liberating Discipline Pedagogy, Sociocultural Theory, dan CLIL dalam Pre-Service Teacher Education dengan mendemonstrasikan bagaimana teks keagamaan dapat berfungsi sebagai alat mediasi untuk regulasi perilaku dan pengembangan bahasa secara simultan. Temuan ini menawarkan implikasi praktis bagi guru Bahasa Inggris dan

pengembang kurikulum di konteks pendidikan.

Article History

Received : 15/03/2026

Revised : 28/05/2026

Accepted : 25/06/2026

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1. Introduction

Discipline constitutes one of the essential pillars of character education in higher learning institutions, serving as both a foundation for academic success and a preparation for professional life. Beyond the conventional understanding of rule enforcement, discipline in educational contexts encompasses the cultivation of self-regulation, moral integrity, and social responsibility [1,2]. Despite its recognized importance, student tardiness persists as a significant challenge in university classrooms, disrupting instructional processes and indicating students' inadequate awareness of their academic obligations [3]. This issue is particularly critical within teacher education programs, where preservice teachers are expected to develop professional habits that will later shape their own pedagogical practices. Addressing this challenge, therefore, demands disciplinary approaches that are educational and developmental in nature, enabling students to internalize discipline as a personal value rather than merely complying with externally imposed sanctions.

The intersection of language education and character development has garnered increasing scholarly attention, particularly within Islamic higher education institutions where the integration of religious values into academic instruction represents both an institutional mandate and a distinctive characteristic. Recent studies have demonstrated that incorporating Islamic themes into English teaching materials significantly enhances students' language skills while simultaneously connecting with their religious backgrounds, thereby fostering an inclusive learning environment that aligns with students' identities [4]. Such integration supports both academic growth and ethical development, suggesting that language learning need not be value-neutral but can actively contribute to character formation.

Among the various strategies employed to address student tardiness, the implementation of educational measures rooted in religious values has emerged as a promising approach. Unlike conventional punitive methods that focus exclusively on sanctions, educational measures are designed to create constructive deterrents without demeaning students' dignity [5]. These approaches encourage self-reflection and foster positive behavioral changes by helping students understand the rationale behind rules and the importance of discipline in academic life [6].

In the context of Islamic education, reciting the Qur'an as an educational measure for disciplinary purposes is considered particularly relevant, as it addresses the cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions of students simultaneously [7]. This activity not only addresses deviant behavior but also guides students back to the values of faith and Islamic ethics, transforming what might be perceived as punishment into a meaningful spiritual character-building process [8]. The practice of reciting the Qur'an along with its English translation adds an academic dimension to this religious activity, potentially strengthening students' spiritual connection with the holy book while simultaneously improving their foreign language proficiency [9].

The theoretical foundations of this study draw upon three contemporary frameworks. First, Liberating Discipline Pedagogy proposed by Ahmad [10] re-conceptualizes discipline

not as external control but as a process of internal growth. Within this framework, discipline is viewed as liberation from indiscipline rather than punishment, integrating Indonesian local values such as *ikhlas* (sincerity), *mujahadah al-nafs* (self-discipline), and *ta'dhim al-mu'allim* (respect for teachers). This perspective is particularly relevant for understanding how Qur'an recitation with English translation can foster inner discipline among EFL (English Foreign Language) preservice teachers. Second, Sociocultural Theory and L2 Developmental Education as extended by Poehner and Lantolf [11] and Komariah et al. [12] emphasizes the role of language as a mediational tool that connects social interaction with cognitive development. The act of reciting the Qur'an with English translation serves as a mediational tool for simultaneous behavioral regulation and language acquisition, particularly through the concept of dialogic mediation and transfer of learning. Third, CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) in Pre-Service Teacher Education as examined by Mortimore et al. [13] provides a framework for understanding how content and language can be integrated in teacher education programs. This framework highlights that CLIL training for preservice teachers remains limited, thus underscoring the need to explore natural forms of content-language integration such as the practice investigated in this study.

Several previous studies have examined the relationship between Qur'anic recitation and student discipline, yet significant gaps remain in the literature. Fatiyah et al. [14] investigated the influence of Qur'anic reading on santri discipline in an Islamic boarding school context, finding that high-intensity Qur'anic reading correlated positively with improved discipline in worship, study habits, and adherence to institutional regulations. However, this study was situated within a traditional pesantren environment and focused exclusively on Arabic Qur'anic recitation without any English language component.

Siroz and M. Dahlan [15] examined the role of Islamic Education teachers in internalizing Islamic values through Qur'anic reading activities to shape student discipline at a public senior high school. Their research highlighted teachers' roles as guides, role models, facilitators, motivators, and evaluators. Nevertheless, this study focused on secondary school contexts and teacher perspectives rather than student voices, particularly within EFL settings.

Rahmat [16] explored students' perspectives on reading the Qur'an as a punishment for tardiness in an EFL classroom, revealing positive student perspectives with participants viewing this approach as educative, motivating, and spiritually rewarding. However, this study employed only Arabic Qur'anic recitation without English translation, thereby limiting its potential contribution to English language development.

Pratiwi et al. [17] investigated Sharia Economic Law students' perspectives on Qur'an recitation and its English translation as a disciplinary measure for tardiness. However, the participants were Sharia students rather than EFL preservice teachers, whose primary academic orientation differs fundamentally from that of English education students. The present study addresses this gap by examining EFL preservice teachers' perceptions of both disciplinary and language learning outcomes.

Andini et al. [18] examined Ismuba teachers' perspectives on reading the Qur'an as a condition for late students at SMK Muhammadiyah 3 Wates. The research revealed that teachers framed the practice not as punishment but as a substitute for missed morning tadarus activities. Yet this study did not explore student perspectives nor focus on English language learning outcomes.

The novelty of this research resides in four interconnected aspects. First, no previous study has specifically examined the perspectives of EFL preservice teachers regarding the use of Qur'an recitation with English translation as a disciplinary strategy, despite this population's unique position as both language learners and future language educators who will eventually implement or reject such practices in their own classrooms. Second, prior research has treated discipline and language learning as separate outcomes, whereas this study investigates how a single activity might simultaneously strengthen both discipline and English proficiency—a dual-benefit approach not yet explored in the existing literature. Third, this research addresses the intersection of character education and language pedagogy within the specific context of Indonesian Islamic higher education, contributing to the growing body of scholarship on value-based language instruction. Fourth, there is no previous research that combines these 3 theories of Liberating Disciplinary Pedagogy, Sociocultural Theory for second language development, and CLIL in Pre-Service Teacher Education as the major theories used.

The urgency of this research is underscored by the persistent challenge of tardiness in higher education settings, necessitating innovative approaches that address behavioral issues while contributing positively to student development. Furthermore, the integration of Islamic values into English language teaching is increasingly relevant in Indonesia's Islamic higher education context, where institutions seek to produce graduates who are both linguistically competent and spiritually grounded [19, 20]. As EFL preservice teachers will eventually implement discipline strategies in their own classrooms, understanding their perspectives on religiously grounded approaches provides crucial insights for teacher education curriculum development.

Based on the background and research gap identified above, this study addresses the following research questions: 1. What are EFL preservice teachers' perspectives on reciting the Qur'an with English translation as a strategy to strengthen discipline among classroom latecomers? 2. How do EFL preservice teachers perceive the contribution of Qur'an-English recitation practice to their English language proficiency?

This research is expected to make three types of contributions. Theoretically, it extends the contemporary frameworks of Liberating Discipline Pedagogy, Sociocultural Theory for second language development, and CLIL in Pre-Service Teacher Education by demonstrating how religious texts can function as mediational tools for simultaneous behavioral regulation and language development. Practically, it provides empirical evidence for English teachers and curriculum developers in Islamic educational contexts. For policy, it offers guidance for developing discipline policies that align with institutional religious identity while simultaneously supporting academic

language development.

2. Research Method

This study employed a descriptive mixed-methods design to explore EFL preservice teachers' perspectives on reciting the Qur'an with English translation as a strategy to strengthen discipline and perceived English language development. Mixed-methods research combines quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a more comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon [21]. In this study, quantitative data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative data were gathered through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and documentation and analyzed using thematic analysis. The integration of both quantitative and qualitative findings enabled a deeper understanding of students' perspectives regarding the disciplinary and language-learning benefits of the practice.

The research was conducted at the English Education Department of UMNU Kebumen. This setting was selected because the institution promotes the integration of Islamic values into academic instruction, making it a relevant context for examining students' perspectives on religiously-based disciplinary practices. The participants of this research were EFL preservice teachers enrolled in the second and fourth semesters of the English Education program. The total number of participants was 47 students, consisting of 25 students from the second semester and 22 students from the fourth semester. Moreover, the researcher serves as a lecturer in this department, teaching both second and fourth semester students. This study conducted during six month (one semester).

As the researcher also serves as the lecturer implementing the disciplinary policy, several measures were implemented to address potential bias and power dynamics. First, explicit informed consent was obtained from all participants, clearly stating that participation was voluntary and would not affect their academic standing. Second, participants were assured of anonymity in all reporting such as questionnaire; pseudonyms are used in this manuscript. Third, interviews were conducted outside of class time. Fourth, reflexive journaling was maintained throughout the research process to document and critically examine the researcher's positionality and potential biases. Fifth member checking was conducted with interview participants to verify the accuracy of interpretations.

This study is grounded in three contemporary theoretical frameworks. First, Liberating Discipline Pedagogy (Ahmad, 2025) which reconceptualizes discipline as internal growth rather than external control, integrating Indonesian local values such as *ikhlas* (sincerity), *mujahadah al-nafs* (self-discipline), and *ta'dhim al-mu'allim* (respect for teachers). Second, Sociocultural Theory and second language developmental Education (Poehner & Lantolf, 2024; Komariah et al., 2025) which emphasizes language as a mediational tool that connects social interaction with cognitive development. Third, CLIL in Pre-Service Teacher Education (Mortimore et al., 2025) which provides a framework for understanding content and language integration in teacher education programs. These

three theories collectively inform the development of research instruments and the analysis of data.

Data were collected through four instruments: closed-ended questionnaire, semi-structured interview, observation, and documentation. The use of multiple instruments serves to triangulate the data, thereby enhancing the credibility and trustworthiness of the research findings [22]. Closed-ended questionnaire was distributed to all 47 participants. The questionnaire used a likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) covering two main dimensions corresponding to the research questions: (a) perspectives on using Qur'an recitation with English translation to strengthen discipline, and (b) perceptions of the contribution of this practice to English language proficiency. The questionnaire was developed based on theoretical indicators derived from the literature review.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 selected participants (5 from semester 2 and 5 from semester 4). In qualitative research, it is neither necessary nor common to interview all participants. The purpose of interview is to gain deep, rich, and contextual understanding, not numerical generalization. A small number of participants is sufficient as long as data saturation has been reached, meaning no new information emerges from additional interviews [23, 24]. Participants were selected purposively based on the diversity of their questionnaire responses and their willingness to participate.

Observation and documentation was carried out by the researcher during regular class meetings throughout one semester. Observations focused on students' punctuality, their behavior when reciting the Qur'an, their engagement with the English translation, and any changes in their discipline over time. Field notes were written after each observation session. Documentation included photographs of classroom activities, and attendance records.

Data analysis followed the thematic analysis procedure by [25], consisting of six phases: familiarization, coding, theme searching, theme reviewing, theme defining, and report writing. For the closed-ended questionnaire, descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) were calculated. For interviews, observations, and documentation, qualitative thematic analysis was applied. Coding was conducted manually using a systematic process to ensure transparency. Examples of initial codes include "perception of educational value," "awareness of punctuality," "vocabulary learning," and "religious identity integration." These were subsequently grouped into broader themes such as "positive perspective on disciplinary consequence," "internalization of discipline," and "perceived language development."

3. Result and Discussion

Result

This section presents the findings based on data collected through four research instruments: questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and documentation over one semester. These four sources of data

complemented one another and were analyzed integratively to address the two research questions.

3.1 EFL preservice teachers' perspectives on reciting the Qur'an with English translation as a strategy to strengthen discipline among classroom latecomers

Based on the triangulation of questionnaire, interview, and observation data, the findings revealed that the students held highly positive perspectives toward this policy. All participants perceived the activity not as a punishment but rather as an educational consequence that fostered character development.

Perception as Educational Consequence. Questionnaire data indicated that 100% of the students (55.32% strongly agreed and 44.68% agreed) believed that reciting the Qur'an with English translation was more educational than physical punishment or other forms of disciplinary sanctions. This finding was further supported by the interview data. A fourth-semester student stated:

"I completely agree with this rule, Miss. Reciting the Qur'an feels much more educational because it reminds us of Allah as well. It helps train our sense of responsibility and discipline." (S4-1, interview, 6/05/2026

Similarly, a second-semester student remarked:

"I strongly agree because physical punishment is too harsh. By reciting the Qur'an, we gain benefits such as expanding our vocabulary and, of course, earning spiritual rewards. For me personally, it serves as a deterrent, making me reluctant to repeat the same mistake. Even though the consequence is beneficial, I still try not to be late. Therefore, I think reciting the Qur'an along with its English translation is much more useful." (S2-2, Interview, 13/05/2026)

Another student explained:

"I also strongly agree because physical punishment leaves only a temporary impression. By reciting the Qur'an and its English translation, we gain rewards and learn new vocabulary. It is more beneficial and can make us think twice before being late again." (S2-3, Interview, 13/05/2026)

Likewise, another participant stated:

"I strongly agree, Miss. Honestly, physical punishment feels burdensome. Through this activity, I became motivated to search for the meanings of the verses because I rarely did that before. As a result, I gained a deeper understanding of the Qur'an and its translation. This consequence is much better than other punishments, such as singing or similar activities. It even creates a fun atmosphere in class when everyone asks, 'Who arrived late today?' We become more enthusiastic." (S2-4, Interview, 13/05/2026)

Observation data supported these findings. Throughout the semester, the researcher, who also served as the lecturer,

observed that students eagerly awaited attendance-taking because anyone who arrived after attendance was considered late. Students who arrived late were required to recite verses from the Qur'an along with their English translations in front of the class. No student refused to participate or displayed signs of resentment. Some students recited the Qur'an with remarkable devotion and beautiful *tilawah* intonation, creating a calming atmosphere that captivated their classmates.

Awareness of Punctuality and Internalization of Discipline. The findings further indicated that this policy effectively increased students' awareness of punctuality. Questionnaire results showed that 93.61% of students agreed or strongly agreed that the activity heightened their awareness of the importance of arriving on time, while 86.9% reported that the consequence encouraged them to become more disciplined. These findings were corroborated by interviews with ten students, all of whom stated that the requirement to recite the Qur'an with English translation increased their awareness of punctuality.

Observation data also revealed a substantial decline in the frequency of tardiness throughout the semester. At the beginning of the semester, approximately one to five students arrived late during each class meeting. By the middle of the semester, this number had decreased to only one or two students per meeting, and in many sessions no students were late at all. Several students maintained perfect punctuality throughout the semester. Students' understanding of the rationale behind the policy was also highly positive. Questionnaire data indicated that 87.9% of students understood why the rule was implemented rather than merely fearing the consequence itself. Not a single student disagreed with this statement, suggesting that the learning contract established at the beginning of the semester was effectively communicated.

Another important finding concerned the internalization of disciplinary values. Questionnaire results showed that 87.1% of students agreed that the activity helped them internalize discipline as a personal value. Again, no student expressed disagreement. Interview data revealed that students perceived discipline as emerging from within themselves. As one fourth-semester student explained:

“Yes, Miss, definitely. Because of the rule requiring us to recite the Qur'an and its English translation, I try harder to be on time, and I feel that discipline is growing from within me.” (S4-5, Interview, 6/05/2026)

Reduction in Tardiness Frequency. Documentation data from attendance records revealed a substantial decline in the frequency of tardiness throughout the semester. At the beginning of the semester, approximately one to five students arrived late during each class meeting. By the middle of the semester, this number had decreased to only one or two students per meeting, and in many sessions no students were late at all. Several students maintained perfect punctuality throughout the semester. Classroom observations indicated that the learning environment remained positive throughout the implementation of the policy. In fact, students often became more engaged whenever a classmate was required to perform the recitation. They listened attentively to the *tilawah*, recorded memorable moments, and learned from one another. An additional benefit was that the lecturer discovered several students with exceptional *tilawah* talents and melodious voices.

Future Teaching Intentions. Importantly, all interviewed students (10 out of 10) expressed full support for the program and indicated their intention to implement a similar approach in their future teaching careers, particularly in Islamic educational settings. One second-semester student commented:

“Honestly, I am very inspired by Miss Zulfa. Her classes are always enjoyable, and they never leave negative impressions. If I become a teacher in the future, whether in elementary school or higher levels, I would like to implement a similar approach. This consequence serves as a learning opportunity, helps students gain knowledge, improve their Qur'anic recitation, and understand the meanings of the verses. In my opinion, it is a beneficial consequence, and I would like to apply it in my future teaching.” (S2-2, Interview, 13/05/2026)

Another student stated:

“Yes, I would honestly like to apply it as well. The teaching method is not monotonous. We are not forced; instead, we are guided to understand things through enjoyable activities. That is why this consequence works—it has many benefits. Unlike physical punishment, which can make students resent their teachers, reciting the Qur'an provides meaningful benefits and helps students understand the purpose behind the consequence.” (S2-3, Interview, 13/05/2026)

Nevertheless, students also demonstrated professional sensitivity. A fourth-semester student wisely explained:

“If I teach in a public school with students from different religious backgrounds, I would need to think carefully. I would not want to impose my beliefs on students of other faiths. In such contexts, I would seek alternative educational consequences that are not associated with a particular religion. However, if I teach in an Islamic school, I would definitely implement the practice of reciting the Qur'an and its English translation.” (S4-1, Interview, 6/05/2026)

This finding suggests that students did not merely accept the policy passively; rather, they were able to critically evaluate its contextual appropriateness and implementation as future educators.

3.2 EFL preservice teachers perceive the contribution of Qur'an-English recitation practice to their English language proficiency?

Based on data triangulation, it was found that students perceived this practice as having a positive contribution to various aspects of their English proficiency, particularly in vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation, and the recognition of Islamic-English lexical equivalence.

Vocabulary Acquisition. The questionnaire data showed that 91.3% of students (40.2% strongly agree and 51.1% agree)

stated that reading the English translation of the Qur'an could increase their English vocabulary (see Table 2). None of the students disagreed with this statement. In the interview, all participants stated that reading the Qur'an with English translation helped them enrich their vocabulary and practice pronunciation. A second-semester student stated:

“Yes, it increases vocabulary. It also makes me... for example, when I do not know certain surahs, I want to read other surahs, so I usually search for them. Then I learn, ‘Oh, this surah means this,’ something like that.” (S2-1, Interview, 13/05/2026)

A fourth-semester student also added:

“That’s true, it increases my vocabulary.” (S4-3, Interview, 6/05/2026)

Observation data indicated that several students who were late carefully read the text slowly and repeated difficult words, indicating active learning efforts.

Pronunciation Practice. Findings related to pronunciation were also highly positive. Questionnaire data showed that 91.4% of students (34.0% strongly agree and 57.4% agree) believed that this activity could improve their English pronunciation. None of the students disagreed.

A fourth-semester student explained in the interview:

“Words like ‘blessings’, ‘mercy’, and ‘guidance’ when I read them became pronunciation practice for me, Miss. I used to be unsure about how to pronounce them, but now I feel more confident.” (S4-1, Interview, 6/05/2026)

Observation also showed that students who were late read aloud clearly and attempted to pronounce words correctly. The lecturer occasionally corrected pronunciation errors, and students responded positively to the feedback.

Recognition of Islamic - English Lexical Equivalents. The most significant finding concerns students’ recognition of Islamic-English lexical equivalents. Questionnaire data showed that 97.17% of students (36.17% strongly agree and 61.7% agree) stated that they became familiar with Islamic terms in English, for example:

“Bismillāhir-rahmānir-rahīm” is translated as “In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.”

Integration with Religious Values. Another meaningful finding relates to the integration of this activity with religious values. Questionnaire data showed that 91.5% of students (48.9% strongly agree and 42.6% agree) stated that the activity served as a meaningful medium for learning English because it is connected to their religious values. Only 4.3% were neutral.

A fourth-semester student expressed enthusiastically:

“Learning English feels more meaningful, Miss. Usually, English learning is about

things that are sometimes far from my daily life. But this is different, because I learn English from my own holy book. So I feel closer to Allah while learning English. It feels amazing.” (S4-2, Interview, 6/05/2026)

Another student stated:

“This activity reminds me that learning English does not mean forgetting my identity as a Muslim. Instead, I can combine both.” (S2-4, Interview, 13/05/2026)

Table 1. Questionnaire Result on Discipline Perception

Statement	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
Reciting Qur'an with English translation is more educational than physical punishment	40.20	51.10	8.70	0	0
The activity increased my awareness of punctuality	34.00	57.40	8.60	0	0
The consequence encouraged me to become more disciplined	36.17	61.70	2.13	0	0
I understand the rationale behind the policy	48.90	42.60	8.50	0	0
The activity helped me internalize discipline as a personal value	40.20	51.10	8.70	0	0

Table 2. Questionnaire Result on Language Development

Statement	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
Reading English translation increased my vocabulary	40.20	51.10	8.70	0	0
The activity improved my pronunciation	34.00	57.40	8.60	0	0
I became familiar with Islamic terms in English	36.17	61.70	2.13	0	0
Learning English feels more meaningful because it connects to religious values	48.90	42.60	8.50	0	0
Reading English translation increased my vocabulary	40.20	51.10	8.70	0	0

Discussion

Based on the findings above, this study reveals that English Education students hold a highly positive perception of the policy of reading the Qur'an with English translation as a consequence of late arrival. This finding aligns with Liberating Discipline Pedagogy proposed by Ahmad (2025), which views

discipline not as external control, but as a process of internal growth. The practice of reading the Qur'an and its English translation was perceived not merely as a disciplinary consequence but also as an engaging activity, while students simultaneously developed self-discipline. They understood the purpose of the policy and experienced internal growth in discipline. This is reflected in students' statements that discipline "grows from within" and that they try to be punctual "because I know it is good for me."

The success of this policy is also closely related to the learning contract established at the beginning of the semester. Because the rules were mutually agreed upon, students felt a sense of commitment rather than coercion. This finding is consistent with Sukanta [6], who states that when students understand the rationale behind a rule, they are more likely to internalize behavioral norms as personal commitment rather than external pressure. All interviewed students stated that they understood that the policy was implemented for collective benefit, namely to improve discipline, responsibility, and English proficiency.

The finding of a significant decrease in the frequency of lateness (from 1–5 students to 1–2 students per meeting) provides observational evidence of the policy's perceived effectiveness in changing behavior. However, it is important to note that this finding reflects observed behavioral change rather than establishing causality. As stated by Rofiq [5], educational approaches are designed to create constructive deterrent effects without degrading student dignity. The observed reduction in tardiness suggests that this approach may be more effective than conventional punishment, though controlled studies would be needed to establish this conclusively.

From a language learning perspective, this study supports Sociocultural Theory expanded by Poehner and Lantolf [11], which views language as a mediational tool connecting social interaction and cognitive development. In the practice of reading the Qur'an with English translation, students do not merely memorize words but connect them with familiar spiritual meanings. The high percentage of students (97.17%) recognizing Islamic-English lexical equivalence demonstrates this mediational process. Furthermore, 91.5% of students perceiving the activity as meaningful due to its connection with religious values supports the CLIL in Pre-Service Teacher Education framework proposed by Mortimore et al. [13]. When students perceive learning as relevant to their identity and beliefs, their engagement and motivation increase. This is in line with Jabri et al. [4], who found that integrating Islamic themes into English learning materials creates an inclusive learning environment aligned with students' identities.

From a pedagogical implication perspective, the finding that all interviewed students support this program and intend to apply it in the future (with contextual adaptation) indicates strong professional awareness among pre-service teachers. They do not passively accept the policy but are also able to critically consider when and where it is appropriate to implement. This is important because Mortimore et al. [13] note that CLIL training for pre-

service teachers is still limited. This study suggests that English Education students in Islamic universities demonstrate a natural readiness to integrate religious content into English language teaching.

Overall, this study extends previous research. Unlike Fatiyah et al. [14], which examined Qur'an recitation in Islamic boarding schools without English translation, this study shows that adding English translation provides dual benefits: discipline and language development. Unlike Rahmat [16], which used Arabic Qur'an recitation as punishment, this study frames the practice as an "educational consequence" that produces positive perceptions. Unlike Pratiwi et al. [17], which focused on Islamic Studies students, this study focuses on English Education students, revealing unique insights into language learning benefits that would not emerge from non-EFL participants.

4. Conclusion

This study examined EFL preservice teachers' perspectives on reciting the Qur'an with English translation as a strategy to strengthen discipline and English proficiency. Based on the triangulation of questionnaire, interview, observation, and documentation data, two main conclusions were drawn.

First, EFL preservice teachers at UMNU Kebumen demonstrated highly positive perspectives toward the policy of reciting the Qur'an with English translation as a disciplinary consequence for classroom lateness. Students perceived this practice not as punishment but as an educational consequence that fosters character development, self-reflection, and spiritual growth. The activity effectively increased students' awareness of punctuality and facilitated the internalization of discipline as a personal value, as evidenced by the substantial decrease in tardiness frequency throughout the semester. Students understood the rationale behind the policy and expressed commitment to the mutually agreed learning contract. Importantly, all interviewed students expressed intention to implement similar approaches in their future teaching careers, demonstrating professional readiness and sensitivity to contextual appropriateness, particularly regarding the suitability of religiously-based practices in different educational settings.

Second, students perceived the Qur'an-English recitation practice as significantly contributing to their English language proficiency. The activity facilitated vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation practice, and recognition of Islamic-English lexical equivalents. Students found English learning more meaningful when connected to their religious identity, as the practice enabled them to learn the language of their holy book while simultaneously developing spiritual connections. This dual-benefit approach addressed both academic and character development, demonstrating that language learning need not be value-neutral but can actively contribute to ethical and spiritual formation.

The theoretical contributions of this study are threefold. First, it extends Liberating Discipline Pedagogy by demonstrating how religiously-grounded educational consequences can facilitate internal discipline growth through meaningful spiritual

engagement. Second, it enriches Sociocultural Theory by showing how the Qur'an with English translation functions as a mediational tool that simultaneously regulates behavior and facilitates second language development through dialogic mediation. Third, it contributes to CLIL in Pre-Service Teacher Education by providing empirical evidence of natural content-language integration in Islamic higher education contexts, addressing the limited CLIL training for preservice teachers noted in previous research.

The practical implications suggest that English teachers in Islamic educational contexts may consider implementing Qur'an recitation with English translation as an educational consequence for disciplinary issues, as it addresses both behavioral and academic objectives. Curriculum developers in Islamic universities should recognize the potential of integrating religious texts into language instruction to enhance both linguistic competence and character development. Teacher education programs should prepare preservice teachers to design value-based instructional approaches that respect students' identities while achieving academic goals.

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