



## Reconstructing the Epistemology of Islamic Religious Education: Integrating Naṣr Ḥāmid Abū Zayd's Hermeneutics with the Love-Based Curriculum

Muhdi Ali<sup>1</sup>, Ade Fakhri Kurniawan<sup>2</sup>, Iffan Ahmad Gufron<sup>3</sup>

Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten, Indonesia

[242631111.muhdiali@uinbanten.ac.id](mailto:242631111.muhdiali@uinbanten.ac.id),<sup>1</sup> [ade.fakhri@uinbanten.ac.id](mailto:ade.fakhri@uinbanten.ac.id),<sup>2</sup>

[iffan.agufron@uinbanten.ac.id](mailto:iffan.agufron@uinbanten.ac.id),<sup>3</sup>

**Abstract:** The teaching of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is still dominated by an epistemological framework that positions religious texts as fixed and closed sources of meaning, so that learning practices tend to be reduced to the transmission of interpretations. Previous studies generally focused on pedagogical aspects, without examining the epistemological assumptions underlying the way texts are understood. This study aims to reconstruct the epistemology of PAI learning through Naṣr Ḥāmid Abū Zayd's hermeneutics and the ma'nā-cum-maghzā approach within the context of a Love-Based Curriculum. This research employs a qualitative approach based on text analysis with a philosophical hermeneutical framework. The primary data come from Abū Zayd's works (*Mafhūm al-Naṣṣ and Naqd al-Khiṭāb al-Dīnī*), which are analyzed through textual identification, conceptual extraction, and hermeneutical interpretation, and then mapped comparatively with the ma'nā-cum-maghzā methodology. The research findings indicate that (1) the Qur'an is constructed as a historical-linguistic discourse formed in a dialectical relationship with social reality; (2) revelation functions as a communicative process involving text, context, and the reader; and (3) the distinction between al-ma'nā and al-maghzā serves as an epistemological mechanism that enables a balance between the reconstruction of historical meaning and the production of contextual significance. Based on these findings, the study identifies an epistemological shift from a transmission-based learning model toward a dialogical-interpretative process that positions learners as active epistemic subjects. These findings imply that without an epistemological reconstruction, value-based approaches such as the Love-Based Curriculum risk remaining merely affective, making the integration of Abū Zayd's hermeneutics crucial for developing reflective and contextual Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning.

**Keyword :** Abū Zayd, Epistemology, Hermeneutics, Love-Based Curriculum, Islamic Religious Education.

**Abstrak:** Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) masih didominasi oleh kerangka epistemologis yang memposisikan teks keagamaan sebagai sumber makna yang tetap dan tertutup, sehingga praktik pembelajaran cenderung direduksi menjadi transmisi tafsir. Penelitian yang ada umumnya berfokus pada aspek pedagogis, tanpa mengkaji asumsi epistemologis yang mendasari cara teks dipahami. Penelitian ini bertujuan merekonstruksi epistemologi pembelajaran PAI melalui hermeneutika Naṣr Ḥāmid Abū

*Zayd dan pendekatan ma'na-cum-maghzā dalam konteks Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif berbasis analisis teks dengan kerangka hermeneutika filosofis. Data utama berasal dari karya Abū Zayd (Maḥnūm al-Naṣṣ dan Naqḍ al-Khiṭāb al-Dīnī) yang dianalisis melalui identifikasi tekstual, ekstraksi konseptual, dan interpretasi hermeneutik, kemudian dipetakan secara komparatif dengan metodologi ma'na-cum-maghzā. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa (1) al-Qur'an dikonstruksi sebagai wacana historis-linguistik yang terbentuk dalam relasi dialektis dengan realitas sosial; (2) wahyu berfungsi sebagai proses komunikatif yang melibatkan teks, konteks, dan pembaca; serta (3) distingsi antara al-ma'na dan al-maghzā menjadi mekanisme epistemologis yang memungkinkan keseimbangan antara rekonstruksi makna historis dan produksi signifikansi kontekstual. Berdasarkan temuan ini, penelitian mengidentifikasi pergeseran epistemologis dari model pembelajaran berbasis transmisi menuju proses dialogis-interpretatif yang memposisikan peserta didik sebagai subjek epistemik aktif. Temuan ini mengimplikasikan bahwa tanpa rekonstruksi epistemologi, pendekatan berbasis nilai seperti Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta berisiko tetap bersifat afektif, sehingga integrasi hermeneutika Abū Zayd menjadi krusial untuk mengembangkan pembelajaran PAI yang reflektif dan kontekstual.*

*Kata kunci : Abū Zayd, Epistemologi, Hermeneutika, Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta, Pendidikan Agama Islam.*

Corresponding Author:

Muhdi Ali

UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten, Indonesia; [242631111.muhdiali@uinbanten.ac.id](mailto:242631111.muhdiali@uinbanten.ac.id)

## **Introduction**

The practice of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning in many madrasahs is still dominated by a one-way pattern, where teachers explain the meaning of verses based on established interpretations, while students take notes, memorize, and repeat the explanations without adequate space to question or interpret the texts independently (Ainiyah et al., 2025; Arif et al., 2025). Learning interactions are more oriented toward the accuracy of reproducing answers rather than the process of understanding, so student success is often measured by how well they can remember and convey the meaning that has been provided (Asy'arie & Mulyadi, 2023; Hasan & Aziz, 2023). In such situations, religious texts appear not as something that needs to be actively understood, but as an authority that must be accepted. This pattern indicates that issues in PAI learning are not solely related to teaching strategies, but are rooted in the way religious texts are positioned as sources of meaning that are considered final (Azizah et al., 2023; Masrufa et al., 2023).

A number of empirical studies confirm that this learning pattern is not an incidental phenomenon, but rather a relatively consistent tendency in PAI practice. Several studies indicate that the dominance of rote memorization and one-way lecture approaches correlates with the low reflective and interpretative abilities of students (Agbaria, 2024; Aziz et al., 2023; Piri & Avarsin, 2022; Saada, 2022). These findings are reinforced by studies showing that students with a reflective thinking

tendency possess a deeper quality of understanding compared to those who merely reproduce information (Al-Qahtani & Al-Otaibi, 2025). In addition, pedagogical practices based on taqlid not only limit the variation in learning methods but also hinder the development of critical awareness as a main prerequisite for interpretative activities (Altinyelken, 2021). Overall, these findings indicate that the problems in Islamic Education learning are not solely related to the effectiveness of the methods, but are related to the tendency to position religious texts as a source of meaning that is already complete, thereby limiting the possibility of an active and dialogical process of interpretation in learning.

In response to these conditions, various pedagogical innovations in Islamic education have been developed, particularly through value-based approaches and character strengthening (Ginanjar et al., 2025). The Love-Based Curriculum (KBC), for instance, emphasizes the importance of empathy, human relationships, and affective engagement in the learning process (Mujahidin et al., 2025). This approach offers a significant contribution in shifting the orientation of learning from merely transmitting knowledge to fostering the ethical awareness of students. Nevertheless, these approaches generally do not explicitly change the way religious texts are understood in learning. In this context, the meaning of the text is still assumed to be something stable and directly transmissible, so the innovations carried out tend to be limited to modifications in the method of delivery, rather than transformations in the process of meaning-making. As a result, although shifts occur in the affective and relational dimensions, the basic structure of learning continues to maintain the same pattern of meaning reproduction. Such a condition makes approaches like KBC potentially lose their transformative power, as they are unable to address the root problem, which lies in the epistemological assumptions regarding religious texts.

The limitations of this pedagogical approach indicate that issues in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) cannot be resolved without intervention at the epistemological level, particularly in the way religious texts are understood. In this context, the hermeneutics developed by Naṣr Ḥāmid Abū Zayd offers a framework that is specifically relevant to addressing this problem. Unlike other interpretative approaches that still assume the stability of meaning, Abū Zayd develops a distinction between al-ma'nā and al-maghzā as a mechanism to explain how the meaning of a text is formed as well as how it can be actualized in different contexts (Abū Zayd, 2017). This distinction enables a shift from learning oriented toward the reproduction of meaning to a process of interpretation involving a dialogue between the text, context, and reader. Thus, Abū Zayd's hermeneutics not only offers a theoretical perspective but also provides an operational tool that can be directly used to transform the way religious texts are understood in learning, particularly in

addressing the tendencies of meaning reduction that have been previously identified.

Although there have been studies on Abū Zayd's hermeneutics that have widely developed in contemporary Qur'anic exegesis studies (Kasim & Haddade, 2022; Moch, 2022; Mostfa, 2024; Mufid et al., 2023), research on value-based pedagogy, such as the Love-Based Curriculum, has also shown significant development in Islamic education (Hidayah et al., 2023; Mujahidin et al., 2025). Unfortunately, however, these two areas still develop within separate frameworks. This separation is not merely a matter of literature fragmentation but directly affects the limited transformation in learning practices. On one hand, the development of hermeneutics provides a framework to understand the dynamics of textual meaning, but it is not articulated in a pedagogical context. On the other hand, pedagogical innovations such as KBC seek to build ethical and relational dimensions in learning, yet they still operate within unchanged epistemological assumptions. As a result, there is a mismatch between the way texts are understood and the way texts are taught. In this context, without the integration of hermeneutical frameworks and pedagogical practices, efforts to reform PAI learning risk remaining trapped in methodological changes that do not touch the transformation of understanding. Therefore, the need to connect the two is not merely a research opportunity, but a prerequisite for substantive change in religious text learning.

Based on this problem framework, this study aims to reconstruct the epistemological foundation of religious text learning in Islamic education through the integration of Naṣr Ḥāmid Abū Zayd's hermeneutics with the principles of the Love-Based Curriculum. Specifically, this study not only examines the conceptual relationship between the two but also demonstrates how the distinction between *al-ma'nā* and *al-maghzā* can be operationalized as an epistemological mechanism in learning to shift the orientation from meaning transmission to a dialogical, reflective, and contextual interpretation process. Thus, this study seeks to bridge the gap between the development of hermeneutical theory and pedagogical practice, while also offering a conceptual framework that can be used to transform the paradigm of Islamic Religious Education learning more substantively.

### **Methods**

This research is qualitative research based on text analysis with a philosophical hermeneutic approach (Lyhne et al., 2025). This approach is used to gain a deep understanding of Naṣr Ḥāmid Abū Zayd's thoughts concerning the relationship between revelation, text, and human interpretation, as well as to explore its epistemological implications for Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning. Within this framework, the text is not understood as an object with a single and fixed meaning, but as a discourse whose meaning is formed through the interaction

between linguistic structures, historical context, and the reader's horizon of understanding (Abū Zayd, 2014).

The primary data sources of this study are the works of Abū Zayd that explicitly elaborate his hermeneutical framework, namely *Maḥmūm al-Naṣṣ: Dirāsah fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān* and *Naqd al-Khiṭāb al-Dīnī*. These two works were selected because they contain key concepts related to the Qur'an as a historical discourse, as well as the relationship between the text, context, and reader in the process of interpretation. To strengthen the analysis, this study also employs secondary literature that discusses and examines Abū Zayd's thought, particularly in the context of hermeneutics and contemporary Qur'anic studies.

The unit of analysis in this study is the conceptual statements in Abū Zayd's text related to the themes of revelation, language, the historicity of the text, and the relationship between textual meaning and contextual significance. Data identification was conducted by tracing parts of the text that explicitly or implicitly contain key concepts, such as the Qur'an as discourse, the historicity of meaning, and the distinction between al-ma'nā and al-maghzā. The determination of these parts was not carried out selectively, but rather based on the consistency of the appearance of concepts in various parts of the text and their relevance to the overall structure of Abū Zayd's argument.

The analysis process is carried out through four interrelated stages. First, textual identification, which is the systematic marking of parts of the text containing the main concepts related to text relations, meaning, and interpretation. Second, conceptual extraction, which involves grouping and formulating key concepts based on the interconnectedness of their meanings and conceptual functions within Abū Zayd's framework of thought. Third, hermeneutic interpretation, which is the process of understanding the relationships between concepts by considering the argumentative context and the overall structure of Abū Zayd's thought, through the principle of the hermeneutic circle between parts and the whole (Alsaigh & Coyne, 2021). Fourth, epistemological reconstruction, which is tracing the logical implications of these concepts for understanding religious texts, particularly in the context of Islamic Religious Education learning.

The epistemological reconstruction in this study is not carried out as a normative speculation, but rather as an inferential process grounded in the internal consistency of Abū Zayd's thought. Specifically, the distinction between al-ma'nā and al-maghzā is analyzed to demonstrate how the meaning of a text can be understood as something open to reinterpretation in different contexts. The results of this reconstruction are then conceptually mapped with the pedagogical principles in the Love-Based Curriculum to identify the potential contributions of Abū Zayd's hermeneutics in developing a more dialogical, reflective, and contextual Islamic education.

The validation mechanism encompasses several key approaches that ensure the accuracy and credibility of interpretation. First, textual triangulation involves comparing various portions of Abū Zayd's texts to verify the consistency of the identified concepts, preventing selective reading. Second, conceptual consistency

tests whether the interpretation aligns with Abū Zayd's broader theoretical framework as outlined in the secondary literature, ensuring coherence with his hermeneutical principles. Third, hermeneutical coherence applies the principle of the hermeneutic circle, maintaining that the interpretation of individual text segments remains consistent with the overall argumentative structure of Abū Zayd's work. Fourth, the reflexivity of the researcher acknowledges their own perspective and interpretive biases, encouraging repeated interpretation to minimize subjective distortion. This mechanism reflects Abū Zayd's emphasis on contextual and dynamic understanding of texts, as evident in his methodological proposal that integrates historical, social, and linguistic contexts to reveal objective meaning beyond literalism (Mufid et al., 2023).

Through these steps, the analytical process in this study is intended to be carried out in a systematic, transparent, and academically accountable manner, so that the results obtained are not merely subjective interpretations, but rather a reflection of a dialogue that is consistent with Abū Zayd's thought structure.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Results**

#### **The Construction of the Qur'an as a Historical-Linguistic Discourse**

An analysis of *Maḥmūd al-Naṣṣ* was conducted by tracing the sections addressing the relationship between language, the context of revelation, and the communicative function of the text. Through this process of textual identification, it was found that Abu Zayd consistently constructs the Qur'an as a linguistic text (*naṣṣ luḡhawī*) that does not exist independently; rather, it is formed through a dynamic interaction with the socio-cultural realities of Arab society during the period of revelation (Abū Zayd, 2014).

Moreover, through the process of conceptual extraction regarding the use of language terms and historical context in the text, this study found that language in the Qur'an functions as a system of signs that connects the message of revelation with the cultural experiences of the initial recipients (Abū Zayd, 2014). This indicates that the linguistic structure in the text is not neutral, but contains a historical dimension that influences the way meaning is produced and understood.

Based on a hermeneutic interpretation of these findings, this study indicates that the meaning of the text is not ahistorical, but is formed through a dialectical relationship between the message of revelation and the system of signs that exists within culture. Thus, the Qur'an text cannot be positioned as a closed structure of meaning, but as a discourse that is inherently open to the process of reinterpretation in different contexts.

#### **Revelation Model as a Communicative Structure**

An analysis of the conceptualization of revelation in the book *Maḥmūd al-Naṣṣ* is carried out by identifying sections of the text that discuss the relationship between God, language, and the Prophet in the process of revelation. From this identification

process, it is found that Abū Zayd does not position revelation as a metaphysical entity detached from reality, but rather as an event that occurs within a certain communicative structure (Abū Zayd, 2014).

Through a conceptual extraction of Abū Zayd's description of the elements of revelation, this study finds that the process of revelation involves three main components, namely the sender (God), the medium (language as a system of symbols), and the receiver (the Prophet as a human subject) (Abū Zayd, 2014). This structure indicates that the divine message is conveyed through linguistic and cultural devices that are familiar to a particular historical community, thus enabling the process of understanding.

Based on a hermeneutic interpretation of the structure, this study indicates that the meaning of the text is not solely determined by its divine source, but also by the communication mechanisms that link revelation with human experience. Thus, the construction of revelation as a communicative process reinforces the understanding of the Qur'an as a discourse formed in the relationship between text, language, and social context, so that analysis of the text requires attention to the communicative dimension involving historical and cultural contexts.

#### **The Dialectics of Text and Reality as the Basis for the Dynamics of Meaning**

An analysis of Abū Zayd's hermeneutical framework was conducted by identifying sections in *Mafhūm al-Naṣṣ* that discuss the use of the concepts of *asbāb al-nuzūl* and *al-nāsikh wa al-mansūkh* as instruments for understanding the text. From this identification process, it was found that these two concepts are positioned not only as classical tools in Qur'anic studies but also as indicators of the relationship between the text and historical reality (Abū Zayd, 2014).

Meanwhile, the conceptual extraction of the way Abū Zayd explains the function of *asbāb al-nuzūl* finds that the Qur'anic text is understood as a response to concrete situations faced by the early Muslim community (Abū Zayd, 2014). Meanwhile, the analysis of the concept of naskh indicates the existence of a normative change mechanism that reflects the dynamics of social needs during the revelation period (Abū Zayd, 2014). Together, these two concepts indicate that the text does not exist as a static structure, but as part of the process of interaction with reality.

Based on a hermeneutic interpretation of the findings, this study indicates that the relationship between text and reality is dialectical, where meaning is not fixed but is formed and evolves along with the dynamics of social conditions. Thus, within the framework of Abū Zayd's hermeneutics, the dynamics of meaning cannot be understood without considering the historical relationship between the text and its context, which simultaneously serves as the basis for reading the Qur'an as a discourse that continuously moves through history.

### **The Distinction between al-Ma‘nā and al-Maghzā as an Epistemological Mechanism**

The analysis of the works *Naqd al-Khiṭāb al-Dīnī* was conducted by identifying sections of the text that discuss the differences between historical meaning and significance in the process of interpretation. From this identification process, it was found that Abū Zayd explicitly distinguishes between al-ma‘nā as the meaning tied to the original context of the text and al-maghzā as the significance that emerges in the context of a new reading (Abū Zayd, 2017).

Through a conceptual extraction of Abū Zayd's argumentation structure, this study finds that *al-ma‘nā* functions as a reconstruction outcome of the linguistic and social context at the time of revelation, thus possessing a certain methodological stability (Abū Zayd, 2017). Conversely, *al-maghzā* is understood as a dynamic dimension that allows the text to continuously interact with changing social realities (Abū Zayd, 2017). Therefore, these two concepts do not stand in isolation but form a relational framework in the meaning-making process.

Based on a hermeneutic interpretation of the relationship between al-ma‘nā and al-maghzā, this study indicates that the process of interpretation within Abu Zayd's framework is dialectical, moving simultaneously between the reconstruction of historical meaning and the production of contemporary significance. Within this structure, al-ma‘nā functions as a methodological boundary that prevents interpretation from becoming speculative, while al-maghzā allows for the emergence of ethical and social relevance of the text in different contexts.

Moreover, the analysis of the examples used by Abū Zayd shows that this framework allows for the transformation of understanding from a normative form toward broader ethical principles (Abū Zayd, 2017). This indicates that the distinction between al-ma‘nā and al-maghzā is not merely conceptual but also functions as an epistemological mechanism that creates space for the production of contextualized meaning without losing its connection to the structure of the text. Consequently, this study finds that the distinction between al-ma‘nā and al-maghzā constitutes a foundational element in Abū Zayd's hermeneutics, enabling a balance between the historical dimension and the demands of contemporary interpretation, while simultaneously shifting the paradigm of text reading from a reproductive model to one that is productive and contextual.

### **Reconstruction of the Epistemology of Religious Text Learning**

The analysis of the works *Mafhūm al-Naṣṣ* and *Naqd al-Khiṭāb al-Dīnī*, conducted through stages of textual identification, conceptual extraction, and hermeneutic interpretation, was then continued with a comparative reading of the development of the ma‘nā-cum-maghzā methodology by Sahiron Syamsuddin.

Through this process, the study not only elaborates on the concepts but also reconstructs their epistemological implications in the context of religious text learning. Based on a synthesis of previous findings, this study identifies a fundamental shift in the construction of religious knowledge.

First, the analysis results show that within Abū Zayd's framework, the Qur'anic text is constructed as a historical-linguistic discourse open to the process of meaning-making (Abū Zayd, 2014). This conceptual transformation, when transposed into an educational context, indicates that the object of knowledge in religious learning can no longer be positioned as a final meaning, but as a field of interpretation that is open and dynamic. Thus, knowledge is not understood as an entity that is transmitted, but as the result of an interpretative process.

Second, through an analysis of the concept of *al-ufq al-ma'rifi* and the elaboration of *al-maghzā*, this study finds that the involvement of the reader's cognitive horizon is an inherent component in the process of understanding (Abū Zayd, 2014, 2017). In the context of learning, this finding is transformed into a recognition of the social and intellectual experiences of learners as part of the meaning-making process. In other words, the learners' experiences are no longer outside the text, but become part of the epistemological structure of understanding itself.

Third, based on the analysis of the distinction between *al-ma'nā* and *al-maghzā*, this study identifies the existence of a two-stage structure in the interpretation process (Abū Zayd, 2017). When translated into learning practice, this structure forms an epistemological framework consisting of the reconstruction of historical meaning and the production of contextual significance. Thus, religious text learning does not stop at the reproduction of past meanings but moves toward a reflective process that connects the text with contemporary reality.

Fourth, the analysis of Abū Zayd's critique regarding the objectification of exegesis shows a deconstruction of the monopoly of interpretive authority (Abū Zayd, 2017). In the context of educational epistemology, this finding indicates a shift in the position of learners from passive recipients to active interpretive subjects. This transformation signifies a change in the relationship between text, teacher, and learner from a hierarchical model to a dialogical model.

Fifth, the synthesis between Abū Zayd's framework and the *ma'nā-cum-maghzā* methodology shows that text interpretation inherently has ethical and social dimensions (Abū Zayd, 2014, 2017; Syamsuddin et al., 2020). In the context of learning, this indicates that the process of making sense of a text not only functions to understand normative meaning but also to articulate ethical values in concrete life situations. Thus, learning religious texts has the potential to become a medium for moral reflection and social transformation.

Thus, the epistemological reconstruction resulting from this analysis indicates that the learning of religious texts can be understood as a dialogical process involving the interaction among the text, context, and reader. This framework marks a shift from a transmission-based learning model towards a model based on the production of meaning that is reflective, contextual, and open to social dynamics.

### **Abū Zayd's Hermeneutical Mapping of a Love-Based Curriculum**

The mapping between Abū Zayd's hermeneutical framework and the principles of the Love-Based Curriculum (KBC) is carried out through a conceptual comparative analysis, positioning the results of previous epistemological reconstruction as the basis for reading the pedagogical orientation of KBC. Through this approach, the study does not attempt to assume conformity a priori, but examines the extent to which the epistemological structure of Abū Zayd's hermeneutics can correspond with the principles developed in KBC.

The analysis results indicate that there is a convergence at the level of understanding structure, particularly in the emphasis on dialogical processes in learning. Within Abū Zayd's framework, meaning emerges through the interaction between text, reader, and context (Abū Zayd, 2014), whereas in KBC, the learning process emphasizes the dialogical relationship between teachers and students as part of consciousness formation (Direktorat KSKK Madrasah, 2025). This correspondence suggests that the principle of dialogue in KBC has an epistemological foundation aligned with the hermeneutic interpretation model.

Furthermore, the analysis indicates a correspondence in acknowledging the subject's experience as part of the learning process. The concept of *al-ufq al-ma'rifi* in Abū Zayd's hermeneutics asserts that understanding always involves the reader's cognitive horizon (Abū Zayd, 2014), which in the context of KBC is reflected in the emphasis on the affective, social, and personal experience dimensions of learners (Direktorat KSKK Madrasah, 2025). Thus, experience functions not merely as a supplement to learning, but as an epistemological component in the process of meaning-making.

Nevertheless, this study also found limitations in the KBC approach when it is not accompanied by an adequate epistemological framework. As Yusgiantara and Ibrahim (2025) state, without a strong epistemological foundation, this approach risks becoming merely an emotional value without deep cognitive and spiritual integration, thereby reducing its effectiveness in the comprehensive transformation of education. This means that without a clear interpretative mechanism, such as the distinction between *al-ma'nā* and *al-maghzā*, value-based approaches have the potential to be reduced to reinforcing affective aspects without transforming understanding at the textual level. In this regard, Abū Zayd's hermeneutics provides

a methodological framework that allows for the integration of cognitive, interpretative, and ethical dimensions in learning.

Meanwhile, on the other hand, analysis shows that the integration between Abū Zayd's hermeneutics and the ma'nā-cum-maghzā approach allows the study of religious texts to be oriented not only towards normative understanding but also towards the production of significance relevant to the social context. This provides a conceptual basis for the development of learning that is not only pedagogically dialogical but also epistemologically reflective.

Thus, this study finds that the relationship between Abū Zayd's hermeneutics and KBC is not identical, but rather complementary. Abū Zayd's hermeneutics serves as an epistemological foundation that strengthens the pedagogical orientation of KBC, while KBC provides a practical framework for the actualization of the interpretative approach in the learning context. This relationship indicates that the main contribution of the study does not lie solely in the claim of compatibility, but in the effort to bridge epistemological and pedagogical dimensions in the teaching of religious texts.

### **Discussion**

The findings of this study indicate that the main problem in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning does not lie solely in the limitation of pedagogical strategies, but rather in the epistemological construction that positions religious texts as closed entities of meaning (Abū Zayd, 2014). In this context, the dominance of memorization and interpretation reproduction approaches is not merely a methodological choice, but a logical consequence of the assumption that the meaning of the text is final (Muhammad & Primarni, 2024). These findings simultaneously correct the tendency in the Islamic education literature, which offers more pedagogical innovations without addressing the underlying epistemological structure (Bachtiyar et al., 2025; Sugiarto, 2025).

Within this framework, the construction of the Qur'an as a historical-linguistic discourse, as found in the analysis of Abū Zayd's thought, challenges the normative paradigm that remains dominant in PAI (Islamic Religious Education) learning (Mardatillah et al., 2025). Compared to the traditional approach that emphasizes the stability of meaning (Hashim, 2025), This finding shows that the meaning of the text is, in fact, formed through a dialectical relationship between revelation, language, and social context (Abū Zayd, 2014). Thus, learning that maintains the assumption of a singular meaning is not only pedagogically problematic but also inconsistent with the epistemological character of the text itself (Abū Zayd, 2017).

Furthermore, the revelation model as a communicative structure identified in this study reinforces the argument that religious texts cannot be separated from

historical and cultural dimensions (Abū Zayd, 2014). In classical exegesis literature, this aspect is indeed acknowledged through concepts such as *asbāb al-nuzūl*, but it is often treated as supplementary information rather than as an epistemological foundation for understanding the text (Anshory et al., 2025). The findings of this study indicate that this communicative dimension is actually constitutive, so ignoring it in learning would mean reducing the way the text itself functions.

This implication becomes increasingly significant when associated with the distinction between *al-ma'nā* and *al-maghzā*. Unlike the textualist approach, which stops at the reconstruction of historical meaning (Sediq, 2024), the findings of this study indicate that adequate understanding requires a dialectical movement between the past and the present. In this context, Abū Zayd's approach is closely related to philosophical hermeneutics, particularly in the concept of the engagement of the reader's horizon. Nevertheless, this study shows that Abū Zayd's contribution goes beyond that framework by providing a more concrete operational mechanism through the differentiation between meaning and significance (Abū Zayd, 2017).

At this point, this study also implicitly critiques value-based educational approaches (Ginanjar et al., 2025), including the Love-Based Curriculum (KBC) (Mujahidin et al., 2025), which tend to emphasize the affective dimension without altering the epistemological structure of learning. The findings indicate that without a reconstruction of how texts are understood, value-based approaches risk becoming normative in a new form – that is, merely replacing content without changing the way meaning is produced. In other words, epistemological problems persist even when pedagogical approaches change.

The integration between Abū Zayd's hermeneutics and the KBC principles found in this study indicates that a dialogical approach in learning is not sufficient if it is based solely on relational values such as empathy or love, but must have an epistemological foundation that allows for the production of meaning. Within this framework, dialogue is not merely a method of interaction, but a consequence of the way of understanding texts as open discourse.

Moreover, the findings regarding the position of students as interpretative subjects have significant implications for Islamic education theory. Until now, interpretative authority has tended to be concentrated on teachers or tradition, while students are positioned as recipients (Agbaria, 2024; Al-Qahtani & Al-Otaibi, 2025; Aziz et al., 2023; Piri & Avarsin, 2022; Saada, 2022). This study demonstrates that such a position not only limits the potential for critical thinking but also contradicts the interpretative nature of the text itself. Therefore, the proposed pedagogical transformation is not merely an innovation in methodology, but a shift in the distribution of epistemic authority.

Theoretically, this study contributes by demonstrating that the integration between Abū Zayd's hermeneutics and the ma' nā-cum-maghzā approach is not only conceptual but also provides an operational framework for understanding how religious texts can be taught in a dialogical and contextual manner. This distinguishes this study from previous research, which tended to stop at the conceptual level without showing its epistemological implications in educational practice. Practically, these findings indicate that the reform of Islamic Education learning cannot be carried out merely through changes in curriculum or methods, but must begin with a reconstruction of the way religious texts are understood. Without changes at this level, pedagogical innovations will remain superficial and will not result in significant transformation in the way students understand religion.

Thus, this study affirms that the main problem in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is epistemological in nature, and therefore requires an approach capable of transforming the way texts are understood as objects of knowledge. In this context, Abu Zayd's hermeneutics and the ma' nā-cum-maghzā approach offer a framework that is not only theoretically relevant but also holds transformative potential in contemporary Islamic educational practice.

### **Conclusion**

This study shows that the main problem in the teaching of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) does not lie in methodological limitations, but in the epistemological construction that positions religious texts as entities of closed meaning. Through an analysis of Naṣr Ḥāmid Abū Zayd's hermeneutics and the ma' nā-cum-maghzā approach, this study affirms that the Qur'anic text is historical, communicative, and dialogical. Therefore, the assumption of a final and singular meaning not only limits the learning process but also does not align with the epistemological character of the text itself.

The findings of this study indicate that the understanding of religious texts should shift from a transmission model towards a dialogical interpretative process. The distinction between al-ma' nā and al-maghzā provides an epistemological mechanism that allows for a balance between the reconstruction of historical meaning and the production of contextual significance. Within this framework, learners are no longer positioned as passive recipients, but rather as interpretative subjects actively engaged in the production of meaning through the interaction between the text, context, and their experiences.

Theoretically, this study contributes by shifting the focus of Islamic education research from pedagogical issues to epistemological reconstruction as the foundation of learning. Practically, this study emphasizes that without changes at the epistemological level, various pedagogical innovations have the potential to remain superficial. Thus, the transformation of Islamic religious education requires

repositioning texts as open discourse and redefining the roles of teachers and students in a more dialogical and reflective relationship. Although this study is based on textual analysis and has not yet tested its empirical implementation, the framework generated opens up space for the development of more contextual and transformative learning models in the future.

## References

- Abū Zayd, N. Ḥāmid. (2014). *Maḥmūd al-Naṣṣ: Dirāsah fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*. Al-Markaz al-Tsaqāfī al-'Arabī.
- Abū Zayd, N. Ḥāmid. (2017). *Naqd al-Khiṭāb ad-Dīnī*. Mu'assasat Hindāwī.
- Agbaria, A. (2024). Education for Religion: An Islamic Perspective. *Religions*, 15(3), 309. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel15030309>
- Ainiyah, Q., Mirrota, D. D., & Khasanah, M. (2025). Religious Moderation: A Model for Internalizing Inclusive Islamic Values in Student Education. *Urwatul Wutsqo: Jurnal Studi Kependidikan Dan Keislaman*, 14(1), Article 1. <https://doi.org/10.54437/urwatulwutsqo.v14i1.2031>
- Al-Qahtani, A. A. Y., & Al-Otaibi, N. A. (2025). Effects of impulsive and reflective cognitive styles on metacognitive thinking and deep understanding of religious concepts. *Acta Psychologica*, 258, 105236. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2025.105236>
- Alsaigh, R., & Coyne, I. (2021). Doing a Hermeneutic Phenomenology Research Underpinned by Gadamer's Philosophy: A Framework to Facilitate Data Analysis. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 20. <https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069211047820>
- Altinyelken, H. K. (2021). Critical thinking and non-formal Islamic education: Perspectives from young Muslims in the Netherlands. *Contemporary Islam*, 15(3), 267–285. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11562-021-00470-6>
- Anshory, M. I., Khamdani, A. W., & Hidayah, N. (2025). Konsep Nuzulul Qur'an dan Asbābun Nuzūl: Implikasinya terhadap Metode Tafsir Ayat-Ayat Al-Qur'an. *TSAQOFAH*, 5(4), 4022–4031. <https://doi.org/10.58578/tsaqofah.v5i4.6624>
- Arif, M., Hassan, H. B., Sakdiyah, N. H., & Umah, F. (2025). Implementation of Islamic Religious Education for Children with Special Needs: A Systematic Literature Review 2020-2025. *Urwatul Wutsqo: Jurnal Studi Kependidikan Dan Keislaman*, 14(2), 540–566. <https://doi.org/10.54437/urwatulwutsqo.v14i2.2060>
- Asy'arie, B. F., & Mulyadi, M. (2023). Analisis Problematika PAI Dan Solusinya Dalam Menghadapi Era Globalisasi Dan Era Industri 4.0. *Irsyaduna: Jurnal Studi Kemahasiswaan*, 3(3), Article 3. <https://doi.org/10.54437/irsyaduna.v3i3.1310>
- Aziz, A. M., Mokodenseho, S., Komaruddin, K., & Majdi, A. L. (2023). Implementation of a Philosophical Framework to Foster Critical Thinking in Islamic Education for Boarding School Students in Indonesia. *West Science Interdisciplinary Studies*, 1(10), 1059–1067. <https://doi.org/10.58812/wsis.v1i10.297>

- Azizah, M., Jariah, S., & Aprilianto, A. (2023). Pembentukan Karakter Religius Siswa Melalui Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam di Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan. *Ngaos: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran*, 1(1), Article 1. <https://doi.org/10.59373/ngaos.v1i1.2>
- Bachtiyar, M., Bakar, M. Y. A., & Rusydiyah, E. F. (2025). Innovations in Islamic Religious Education in Bilingual Madrasah Aliyah: A Systematic Literature Review. *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 17(2), 2115–2124. <https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v17i2.5453>
- Direktorat KSKK Madrasah. (2025). *Panduan Implementasi Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta di Madrasah*. Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Islam Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia.
- Ginanjari, M. H., Rahman, R., Hidayat, R., & Alimul Halim, A. (2025). The Implementation of Islamic Religious Education in Efforts to Shape Islamic Character and Develop Students' Talents and Interests. *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 14(01), 281–292. <https://doi.org/10.30868/ei.v14i01.7732>
- Hasan, M. S., & Aziz, A. (2023). Kontribusi Pendidikan Islam dalam Pengembangan Sosial Emosional Peserta Didik di MTs Salafiyah Syafiiyah Tebuireng Jombang. *Irsyaduna: Jurnal Studi Kemahasiswaan*, 3(2), Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.54437/irsyaduna.v3i2.1124>
- Hashim, A. A. (2025). Innovative Approaches in English Language Teaching: A Comparative Analysis of Traditional and Modern Methods. *South Asian Research Journal of Arts, Language and Literature*, 7(01), 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.36346/sarjall.2025.v07i01.001>
- Hidayah, N., Tobroni, T., & Nurhakim, N. (2023). Rahmatan lil'alami Islamic Education Curriculum Reconstruction: Healthy and Safe for Students' Spiritual and Physical Development. *Belajea: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 8(1), 35. <https://doi.org/10.29240/belajea.v8i1.7208>
- Kasim, M. Y., & Haddade, H. (2022). Understanding Text and Context for Productive Reading: An Analysis of Abu Zaid's Hermeneutics of the Qur'an. *ADDIN*, 15(2), 153. <https://doi.org/10.21043/addin.v15i2.10765>
- Lyhne, C. N., Thisted, J., & Bjerrum, M. (2025). Qualitative content analysis—framing the analytical process of inductive content analysis to develop a sound study design. *Quality & Quantity*, 59(6), 5329–5349. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-025-02220-9>
- Mardatillah, F., Gumilang, R. M., Wahyudi, M. A., Rawanita, M., & Muhammad, M. (2025). Epistemological Reconstruction of Islamic Education: Developing a Transformative Pedagogical Model to Foster Creativity. *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun*, 13(2), 1071–1094. <https://doi.org/10.26811/peuradeun.v13i2.2200>
- Masrufa, B., Kholishoh, B., & Madkan, M. (2023). Pelaksanaan Pendidikan Agama Islam Anak Dalam Keluarga Melalui Metode Islamic Parenting. *Ngaos: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran*, 1(1), Article 1. <https://doi.org/10.59373/ngaos.v1i1.1>

- Moch, M. (2022). Critique of Naṣḥ in Contemporary Qur'ānic Hermeneutics Using the Example of Naṣr Ḥāmid Abū Zayd's Works. *Religions*, 13(2), 187. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13020187>
- Mostfa, A. (2024). Redefining Qur'ānic Hermeneutics: Muḥammad 'Ābid al-Jābrī and Naṣr Ḥāmid Abū Zayd's Humanistic Interpretations. *Religions*, 15(3), 278. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel15030278>
- Mufid, A., Massoweang, Abd. K., Mujizatullah, M., Muslim, A., & Yani, Z. (2023). Rereading Naṣr Hamid Abu Zayd's method of interpreting religious texts. *HTS Theologiese Studies / Theological Studies*, 79(1). <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v79i1.8102>
- Muhammad, & Primarni, A. (2024). Pemahaman Konsep Wahyu dalam Pendidikan Islam: Tinjauan Filsafat Ilmu. *Reslaj: Religion Education Social Laa Roiba Journal*, 6(4), 1768–1772. <https://doi.org/10.47467/reslaj.v6i4.1050>
- Mujahidin, I., Sulaeman, I., Qonitah, M., & Siskawati, I. (2025). The Relationship Between Innovative Learning Management of a Love-Based Curriculum and the Improvement of English Communication Competence Among Madrasah Aliyah Students. *Al Irsyad: Jurnal Studi Islam*, 4(2), 85–94. <https://doi.org/10.54150/alirsyad.v4i2.778>
- Piri, R., & Avarsin, S. M. (2022). Educational Philosophy of Islamic Hermeneutics and Its Application in Curriculum Studies. *DAYAH: Journal of Islamic Education*, 5(2), 150. <https://doi.org/10.22373/jie.v0i0.10317>
- Saada, N. (2022). Balancing the Communitarian, Civic, and Liberal Aims of Religious Education: Islamic Reflections. *Religions*, 13(12), 1198. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13121198>
- Sedih, M. S. (2024). Unravelling Deconstruction: A Comprehensive Examination of its Qualitative Research Method and Application in Historical Texts. *Sprinj Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences*, 3(1), 5–9. <https://doi.org/10.55559/sjahss.v3i1.210>
- Sugiarto, F. (2025). Integration of Qur'an and Hadith Values as Pedagogical Innovation to Improve the Quality of Islamic Education. *QALAMUNA: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial, Dan Agama*, 17(1), 171–184. <https://doi.org/10.37680/qalamuna.v17i1.6817>
- Syamsuddin, S., Amir, A. M., Hasri, Muh. M., Aniroh, R. N., Irsad, M., Hakim, L., Hamzah, G., HS, M. A., Muzakky, A. H., Maula, H. F. D., Musfiroh, M. R., Muttaqin, A., Abidin, Z., Maula, A., Hudri, M., Firdausi, F., Al-Ayyubi, M. Z., Solahuddin, A., Nugraheni, Y. T., ... Awwaliyah, N. M. (2020). *Pendekatan Ma'nā-cum-Maghzā atas Al-Qur'an dan Hadis: Menjawab Problematika Sosial Keagamaan di Era Kontemporer* (S. Syamsuddin, Ed.). Asosiasi Ilmu Alquran & Tafsir (AIAT) se-Indonesia bekerja sama dengan Lembaga Ladang Kata.
- Yusgiantara, A., & Ibrahim, R. (2025). Decolonizing Curriculum through Love and Deep Learning: Toward an Integrative Cognitive, Affective, and Spiritual Framework. *YASIN*, 5(6), 6304–6323. <https://doi.org/10.58578/yasin.v5i6.8119>