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Al-Amtsāl as a Cognitive Bridge for Understanding Faith in Angels: An Elementary School Case Study

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ABSTRACT

Purpose of the study: This study aims to analyze the use of al-amtsāl in teaching faith in angels at the elementary school level and to explain its role as a cognitive mediation mechanism that supports students' understanding of unseen concepts in Islamic creed learning.

Methodology: This study employed a qualitative approach using a case study design conducted at SDN Binakarya 1 Banyuresmi Garut, Indonesia. Participants included elementary school teachers and students. Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. The collected data were coded and analyzed using thematic analysis techniques to identify recurring patterns and categories.

Main Findings: The findings reveal that teachers employed *al-amtsāl* through existential, functional, and visual analogies to connect the concept of angels with students' concrete experiences. These analogies facilitated cognitive mediation by linking prior knowledge with unseen concepts, enabling students to construct meaning through experience-based understanding and analogical reasoning. The findings also indicate that this approach improved students' comprehension of abstract theological concepts in *aqidah* learning contexts.

Novelty/Originality of this study: This study offers an initial conceptualization of an al-amtsāl-based pedagogical model for teaching unseen concepts in Islamic education, derived from an elementary school case study. It contributes to the literature on Qur'anic pedagogy by positioning al-amtsāl as a cognitive bridge that mediates students' understanding of abstract theological concepts through experience-based analogical learning. The findings provide preliminary insights into integrating cognitive and theological dimensions in elementary Islamic education.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Teaching *aqidah* at the elementary school level presents challenges that differ from teaching empirical concepts. One of these challenges concerns the instruction of faith in angels, which is classified as an unseen concept (*al-ghayb*). Unlike learning objects that can be directly observed through sensory experience, angels are realities known through divine revelation and cannot be verified through students' empirical experiences [3]. In Islamic epistemology, knowledge is not limited to sensory observation and rational inquiry but also derives from revelation as a legitimate source of knowledge [4]. Consequently, students can memorize the names and duties of angels but often struggle to develop a deeper understanding of their existence and significance. This condition

indicates a gap between the theological abstractions embedded in *aqidah* materials and the cognitive characteristics of elementary school students, who still rely heavily on concrete experiences to construct understanding [5].

From a constructivist perspective, learning occurs through the active construction of meaning rather than passive reception of information. Learners develop conceptual understanding by integrating new information with their existing knowledge structures [6]. This process becomes particularly challenging when the concepts being taught lack direct empirical representations. Vygotsky argued that conceptual development is mediated through language, symbols, and social interaction, suggesting that abstract concepts require appropriate forms of mediation to become meaningful for learners [7].

Studies on conceptual change further indicate that students are more likely to understand new concepts when they can connect them with prior knowledge and experiences [8]. Recent studies have emphasized that conceptual change involves the reorganization of existing mental models and the construction of new conceptual frameworks when learners encounter unfamiliar ideas [9]. Understanding abstract concepts therefore requires learners to integrate new information with prior knowledge through representational and relational processes [10]. Conceptual change is further supported when learners actively construct and revise mental models through meaningful representations and learning experiences [11]. Consequently, understanding unseen concepts in *aqidah* learning requires instructional strategies that bridge the gap between theological abstractions and students' concrete experiences.

Research on abstract concept learning suggests that learners often rely on familiar human experiences and attributes when interpreting unfamiliar or unobservable phenomena. This tendency is commonly referred to as anthropomorphism, defined as the attribution of human characteristics, intentions, or experiences to nonhuman entities or abstract concepts [10], [11]. In educational contexts, anthropomorphism is not always regarded as a misconception; rather, it may function as an initial cognitive strategy that enables learners to construct meaningful representations of concepts beyond their direct experiences [11]. For elementary school students, anthropomorphic representations can provide temporary cognitive support for understanding abstract and unseen concepts before more sophisticated conceptual understandings are developed.

Recent studies on analogical learning have shown that analogies help students understand abstract concepts by enabling them to map relationships between familiar knowledge and new information [12]. Analogical reasoning supports the development of flexible conceptual representations that facilitate knowledge transfer across domains [13]. Rather than transferring superficial similarities, effective analogies enable learners to recognize underlying relational structures between source and target concepts [14]. Similarity judgments in analogical reasoning depend primarily on shared relational structures rather than surface attributes [15]. According to structure-mapping theory, analogical learning occurs when learners transfer relational structures from familiar domains to unfamiliar concepts [16]. Effective analogies support higher-order thinking by facilitating relational reasoning and knowledge transfer across contexts [17]. Recent advances in cognitive science further suggest that relational reasoning plays a central role in helping learners construct meaning from abstract concepts [18]. Furthermore, effective analogical instruction requires teachers to select source domains that are familiar to learners and conceptually aligned with target concepts [19]. Multiple forms of representation, including analogical supports and gestures, can facilitate students' understanding of abstract concepts by directing attention to relevant relational features [20]. This mechanism suggests that analogy-based instruction may provide meaningful access to concepts that cannot be directly observed.

Within the context of Islamic education, al-amtsāl has long been recognized as a pedagogical approach for communicating complex ideas through familiar examples and analogies [21]. As a Qur'anic instructional method, al-amtsāl helps learners understand abstract concepts by linking them to concrete experiences and meaningful representations [22]. Recent studies have demonstrated that al-amtsāl facilitates students' understanding of abstract concepts and supports the development of critical thinking skills [23]. Other studies have shown that al-amtsāl functions as an instructional medium for connecting moral and religious messages with students' everyday realities [24]. More recently, integrating al-amtsāl and analogical reasoning into Islamic education has been found to improve conceptual understanding and critical thinking [25]. Contemporary studies in Islamic education also emphasize the importance of instructional approaches that connect religious concepts with students' lived experiences and cognitive development [26]. Furthermore, metaphor, analogy, and allegory have been identified as effective pedagogical tools for teaching complex religious concepts in contemporary religious education [27].

These findings indicate that al-amtsāl has significant pedagogical potential for teaching religious concepts. Previous studies have primarily positioned al-amtsāl as a pedagogical method for facilitating students' understanding of abstract concepts [28], an instructional medium for communicating moral and religious values [24], or a learning model designed to improve conceptual understanding and critical thinking skills [23], [25]. While these studies demonstrate the instructional effectiveness of al-amtsāl, they largely focus on learning outcomes and pedagogical implementation rather than the cognitive processes through which learners construct understanding. Consequently, research examining how al-amtsāl functions as a cognitive mediation mechanism in helping students understand unseen concepts remains limited.

This limitation reveals an important research gap. Few studies have investigated the cognitive processes involved when students use *al-amtsāl* to understand concepts beyond their empirical experiences. This issue is particularly relevant in *aqidah* learning because many of its topics concern realities that cannot be directly observed, such as angels, the Day of Judgment, and divine decree. Consequently, a gap persists between studies on Qur'anic pedagogy and contemporary learning theories that explain how students construct understanding of abstract concepts.

Addressing this gap, the present study focuses on the use of *al-amtsāl* in teaching faith in angels to elementary school students. Unlike previous studies that position *al-amtsāl* as a method, medium, or learning model, this study conceptualizes *al-amtsāl* as a cognitive mediation mechanism that enables students to connect unseen concepts with their existing concrete experiences.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the use of al-amtsāl in teaching faith in angels and to explain its role in students' meaning-making processes. To guide the investigation, this study addresses the following research questions: (1) How is al-amtsāl implemented in teaching faith in angels? (2) How does al-amtsāl function as a cognitive mediation mechanism in helping students understand unseen concepts? and (3) How do students construct meaning about angels through al-amtsāl? This study contributes to the literature by explaining how al-amtsāl functions as a cognitive bridge linking abstract theological concepts with students' learning experiences.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

2.1. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to analyze the use of al-amtsāl in teaching faith in angels to elementary school students. A qualitative approach was selected because the study sought to understand students' meaning-making processes, experiences, and the development of conceptual understanding within a natural learning context [29]. A case study design was adopted to facilitate an in-depth exploration of the use of al-amtsāl in a specific Islamic Religious Education setting [30].

2.2. Research Site and Participants

The study was conducted at SDN Binakarya 1 Banyuresmi Garut, Indonesia. The research site was selected purposively because faith in angels is taught at the elementary school level and the teacher regularly employed analogies and parables to explain abstract concepts. In qualitative research, purposive site selection enables researchers to identify contexts that are most relevant to the research focus and allows for a deeper exploration of the phenomenon under investigation [31].

The participants consisted of one Islamic Religious Education teacher and 20 fifth-grade students who were directly involved in learning activities related to faith in angels. Participants were selected using purposive sampling, which involves identifying individuals with relevant experiences and knowledge related to the research focus [31]. The teacher served as the primary source of information regarding the use of al-amtsāl and the pedagogical considerations underlying its implementation, while the students provided insights into the processes through which they constructed their understanding of the concept of angels.

In qualitative research, the researcher functioned as the primary research instrument and was directly involved in data collection, analysis, and interpretation.

Prior to data collection, all participants received information regarding the research objectives, procedures, and their rights to provide or decline information. Participant confidentiality was maintained throughout the research and reporting processes, and all data were used exclusively for academic purposes.

2.3. Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected through classroom observations, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. Classroom observations were conducted to examine how al-amtsāl was used during instruction and to identify students' responses to the analogies employed by the teacher.

In-depth interviews were conducted with the teacher and students to explore their experiences, understandings, and meaning-making processes during classroom learning [29]. Document analysis was used to complement the data through the examination of lesson plans, instructional media, field notes, and other documents relevant to the research focus.

To enhance data credibility, the study employed method triangulation by comparing findings obtained through observations, interviews, and document analysis [32].

2.4. Research Procedure

The research procedure was conducted chronologically in five stages. First, the researcher obtained permission from the school and identified participants based on the study criteria. Second, preliminary observations were conducted to understand the learning context and identify the use of al-amtsāl during classroom instruction. Third, data were collected through classroom observations, in-depth interviews, and document

analysis. Fourth, interview recordings, observation notes, and relevant documents were transcribed and organized systematically. Finally, the collected data were analyzed and validated through triangulation and member checking procedures.

Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from the teacher and students [32]. In addition, member checking was carried out by sharing interview summaries and preliminary interpretations with the teacher and several key student participants to ensure consistency between the researcher's interpretations and participants' intended meanings. The participants confirmed that the interpretations accurately reflected their experiences without substantial revisions.

2.5. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis following the procedures proposed by Braun & Clarke [33]. The analysis began with repeated reading and examination of the entire dataset to develop familiarity with the data. Initial codes representing meaningful units of information were then generated.

Conceptually related codes were grouped into broader categories and developed into themes. The themes were subsequently reviewed, refined, and interpreted iteratively until coherent patterns of meaning supported by sufficient empirical evidence were identified [33].

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Angels as Unseen Concepts Beyond Elementary Students' Cognitive Access

Interview findings revealed that most students were able to identify the names and duties of angels but experienced difficulties when asked to explain their existence in greater depth. One student stated, *"Malaikat itu bersayap, dan seperti sayap burung. Saya hanya tahu tugasnya mencatat amal."* (Student 3). Another student explained, *"Malaikat tidak kelihatan, tapi bisa juga merasa cape seperti manusia. Yang saya tahu malaikat itu diciptakan Allah."* (Student 7).

These findings indicate that students' understanding of angels remains strongly influenced by representations derived from concrete experiences. When confronted with concepts that cannot be directly observed, students tend to use characteristics of familiar beings to construct meaning for new concepts. Statements describing angels as having "*sayap seperti burung*" or being able to "*dapat merasa lelah seperti manusia*" demonstrate that students attempt to understand angels through the empirical experiences available within their existing knowledge structures.

This phenomenon can be interpreted as a form of anthropomorphism, namely the tendency to understand unobservable realities through attributes derived from human experiences or other familiar beings. In this study, anthropomorphism is not viewed merely as a conceptual error but rather as an initial attempt by students to construct representations of unseen concepts that cannot be directly accessed through empirical experience.

Classroom observations further supported these findings. When the topic of angels was presented through conceptual explanations and normative definitions, students tended to repeat information provided by the teacher without elaborating further. In contrast, when the teacher connected the topic to experiences familiar to students' everyday lives, students became more actively engaged. They asked questions, provided examples, and restated the material using their own language. These findings suggest that understanding unseen concepts requires representations that enable learners to connect new concepts with prior experiences.

The findings are consistent with studies on abstract concept learning, which emphasize the importance of representation in helping learners understand concepts beyond their direct experiences. Understanding abstract concepts develops through interactions among experience, language, symbols, and learning environments that provide opportunities for learners to construct meaning [5]. Conceptual development is further shaped through social mediation and symbolic tools that support learners in interpreting abstract ideas [7]. Therefore, students' difficulties in understanding angels are not solely attributable to the complexity of *aqidah* content but also to the limited representations available within their learning experiences.

Based on these findings, this study identifies the existence of an epistemic gap, defined as the distance between knowledge derived from revelation and the empirical experiences available to learners in constructing understanding. This gap makes the concept of angels difficult to access directly through elementary students' cognitive structures and highlights the need for pedagogical mediation capable of bridging revealed realities and students' learning experiences.

3.2. Forms of Al-Amtsāl as Pedagogical Mediation in Teaching Faith in Angels

Classroom observations and interviews revealed that the teacher consistently employed *al-amtsāl* in teaching faith in angels to help students understand concepts that cannot be directly observed. Data analysis showed that the use of *al-amtsāl* in classroom instruction could be categorized into three main forms: existential analogies, functional analogies, and visual analogies.

Existential analogies were used to help students understand the existence of angels as unseen realities. During classroom instruction, the teacher related the existence of angels to phenomena that cannot be directly observed, such as wind, which cannot be seen but whose presence can be perceived. The teacher explained, *"Saya biasanya menjelaskan bahwa tidak semua yang ada bisa dilihat. Angin tidak terlihat, tetapi kita bisa merasakan keberadaannya. Begitu juga malaikat, kita tidak bisa melihatnya, tetapi kita meyakini keberadaannya karena Allah memberitahukannya melalui wahyu."* (Islamic Religious Education Teacher).

This analogy was not intended to equate angels with physical phenomena but rather to help students understand that the existence of something does not always depend on the human ability to observe it directly. In this sense, existential analogies functioned as an initial entry point for students to accept the possibility of realities beyond sensory experience.

The second form identified was functional analogies, which involved using familiar examples to help students understand the roles and responsibilities of angels. Through this approach, students' attention was directed toward what angels do rather than toward the abstract nature of their existence. The findings indicate that students more easily developed an understanding of angels through their functions and roles than through nonempirical ontological explanations.

The third form consisted of visual analogies, which were implemented through images, illustrations, and stories that helped students construct mental representations of the concepts being learned. The teacher employed various forms of visualization to help students imagine situations related to the duties of angels while emphasizing that these visualizations were not literal representations of angels. In this context, visual analogies served as tools for developing initial understanding without making theological claims regarding the actual nature of angels.

These three forms of *al-amtsāl* demonstrate that the teacher did not merely deliver normative information about angels but also provided multiple forms of representation that enabled students to understand concepts beyond their direct experiences. Existential analogies helped students accept the possibility of unseen realities, functional analogies facilitated understanding of the roles and responsibilities of angels, and visual analogies supported the development of initial mental representations of the concepts being taught.

The varied use of *al-amtsāl* indicates that the teacher intuitively employed different forms of mediation according to the specific aspects of the concept being explained. This finding supports the argument that analogies facilitate conceptual understanding by enabling learners to map new concepts onto prior knowledge structures. Within the context of Islamic education, this function reflects the pedagogical role of *al-amtsāl* in making abstract concepts more accessible to learners [22]. Therefore, *al-amtsāl* can be understood not merely as a teaching method but as a pedagogical tool that bridges unseen concepts and students' learning experiences.

3.3. *Al-Amtsāl* as a Cognitive Bridge in Teaching Unseen Concepts

The findings indicate that the primary function of *al-amtsāl* in teaching faith in angels extends beyond simplifying instructional content. Rather, *al-amtsāl* serves as a cognitive bridge that connects unseen concepts with students' prior knowledge and experiences. This role became evident when students began to explain the concept of angels more meaningfully after the teacher employed analogies drawn from their everyday lives. Before exposure to these analogies, many students tended to repeat normative information provided by the teacher. However, after learning through *al-amtsāl*, students started to construct explanations using their own language and cognitive frameworks.

Interview data revealed that students found it easier to understand the existence of angels when the teacher related the concept to phenomena that cannot be directly observed but whose existence is widely accepted. One student explained, *"Kalau seperti angin saya bisa mengerti. Angin tidak kelihatan tetapi ada. Jadi malaikat juga ada walaupun tidak bisa dilihat."* (Student 5).

Classroom observations further showed that after the teacher introduced analogies involving wind and other invisible phenomena, students became more actively engaged than when the teacher relied solely on normative definitions of angels. Students asked questions, provided similar examples, and restated the material using their own words. These findings suggest that *al-amtsāl* helps students establish meaningful connections between new concepts and their prior experiences.

The interview data indicate that students did not merely receive new information passively but actively used analogies to relate unfamiliar concepts to existing knowledge structures. In this context, analogies functioned as cognitive bridges that enabled students to develop initial representations of angels that were cognitively accessible.

Data analysis revealed that the learning process occurred through a bridging mechanism linking prior knowledge with new concepts. Through *al-amtsāl*, students were not directed to understand angels solely through abstract definitions but through meaningful relationships grounded in their experiences. Consequently, understanding was constructed not through rote memorization but through interpretive processes that enabled new concepts to acquire meaning within students' existing cognitive frameworks. This finding is consistent with analogical learning theory, which posits that conceptual understanding develops through mapping relationships between prior knowledge and new concepts [12].

The findings further indicate that *al-amtsāl* operates through relational reasoning, defined as the ability to recognize structural similarities between familiar experiences and unfamiliar concepts. In this study, students did not equate angels with wind; instead, they recognized the relational similarity that something can exist and exert influence despite being invisible. This process aligns with Richland & Zhao explanation of the role of relational reasoning in knowledge transfer and concept formation [34].

From the perspective of cognitive mediation, these findings demonstrate that *al-amtsāl* functions as a representational tool that bridges revealed realities and students' learning experiences. Teaching unseen concepts therefore requires forms of mediation that provide learners with initial access to concepts beyond the reach of direct experience. In this context, analogies facilitate relational mapping between students' prior experiences and newly introduced concepts, making abstract ideas more cognitively accessible [35], [36].

The findings suggest that the concept of angels became more acceptable and meaningful within students' cognitive frameworks when connected to familiar experiences. By relating angels to phenomena already understood by students, the teacher enabled learners to accept the possibility of unseen realities despite their inability to observe them directly [37]. Therefore, this study conceptualizes *al-amtsāl* as a cognitive mediation mechanism that operates through analogical processes to connect theological abstractions with students' learning experiences. Through this mechanism, *al-amtsāl* helps reduce the epistemic gap that emerges when students encounter concepts that cannot be directly observed.

3.4. Students' Construction of Understanding of Angels through *Al-Amtsāl*

A significant finding of this study is that students' understanding of angels was not formed through the direct transmission of information but through a process of meaning construction involving prior knowledge, learning experiences, and the analogies used during instruction. This finding suggests that *aqidah* learning is not merely a process of knowledge transfer but an active process of conceptual construction within students' cognitive structures.

Interview data revealed that after participating in the learning activities, most students found it easier to explain angels in terms of their roles and responsibilities rather than their ontological nature. When asked to describe angels, students tended to refer to activities performed by angels, such as recording human deeds, delivering revelation, and carrying out Allah's commands. One student explained, *"Saya tahu malaikat itu mencatat perbuatan kita dan selalu menjalankan tugas dari Allah. Malaikat tidak kelihatan, tetapi saya tahu tugasnya."* (Student 8).

This statement indicates that students' understanding developed initially through aspects that could be connected to their existing knowledge structures. For elementary school students, understanding what angels do is more accessible than understanding the metaphysical dimensions of their existence.

Based on the data analysis, this pattern can be interpreted as functional understanding, namely an understanding constructed through the roles and responsibilities of angels rather than through explanations of their essential nature. These findings suggest that initial access to unseen concepts is more readily achieved through aspects that have concrete implications and can be connected to students' everyday experiences.

In addition to functional understanding, the study identified representational construction, a process through which students developed mental representations of angels using the analogies introduced during instruction. When the teacher used wind as an analogy to explain the existence of angels, students not only accepted the idea that angels are invisible but also constructed an understanding that something can exist despite being unobservable. In this context, analogies served as representational resources that enabled students to access concepts previously beyond the scope of their direct experiences.

Interestingly, the understandings constructed by students were not uniform. Although they received the same explanations from the teacher, students developed different representations based on their prior knowledge and experiences. Some students imagined angels as winged humans, others envisioned them as luminous beings, while some associated them with creatures capable of flight. These findings suggest that *aqidah* learning does not result in identical reproductions of meaning but rather generates diverse interpretations emerging from interactions among new information, learning experiences, and students' existing knowledge structures.

The findings demonstrate that the primary outcome of using *al-amtsāl* was not merely improved factual understanding of angels but the development of personal representations that enabled the concept to acquire meaning within students' cognitive structures. Thus, the product of learning was not the uniform reproduction of information but the construction of diverse meanings shaped by students' prior experiences and knowledge.

This process became evident when students used analogies to connect their existing knowledge with the concept of angels, which had previously been difficult to understand. Therefore, the effectiveness of teaching faith in angels should not be measured solely by students' ability to recall the names and duties of angels but also by their ability to construct representations and meanings related to the concept within their own cognitive frameworks.

3.5. An *Al-Amtsāl*-Based Pedagogical Model for Teaching Unseen Concepts

The synthesis of the findings indicates that teaching faith in angels at the elementary school level involves a mediation process that enables unseen concepts to acquire meaning within students' cognitive structures. Students' difficulties in understanding angels are not solely related to the complexity of *aqidah* content but also to the limited experiential resources available for understanding realities that cannot be directly observed. In this context, *al-amtsāl* functions as a bridge connecting concepts derived from revelation with students' existing knowledge and experiences.

Based on the findings, the process through which students develop an understanding of unseen concepts consists of five stages: (1) the introduction of unseen concepts as learning objects, (2) the emergence of an epistemic gap between revealed concepts and students' empirical experiences, (3) the mediation of *al-amtsāl* through analogies, parables, and illustrations, (4) the activation of students' prior knowledge, and (5) the construction of meaning that leads to an initial understanding of unseen concepts.

This model demonstrates that the function of *al-amtsāl* extends beyond serving as a method for delivering religious content. Rather, it operates as a cognitive mediation mechanism that enables students to gain initial access to concepts beyond the scope of direct experience. Through this process, abstract concepts acquire representations that are more closely aligned with students' existing knowledge structures, thereby facilitating meaning construction.

The theoretical contribution of this study lies in extending current understandings of the role of *al-amtsāl* in Islamic education. Whereas previous studies have primarily positioned *al-amtsāl* as a teaching method or a strategy for communicating religious messages, the present study demonstrates that *al-amtsāl* can also be conceptualized as a cognitive mediation mechanism that explains how students construct understanding of abstract and nonempirical *aqidah* concepts.

Therefore, the pedagogical model proposed in this study is relevant not only to teaching faith in angels but also has the potential to serve as a conceptual framework for teaching other *aqidah* concepts with similar characteristics, including the Day of Judgment, divine decree (*qadha* and *qadar*), and other metaphysical concepts in Islamic education. Figure 1 illustrates the proposed *al-amtsāl*-based pedagogical model for teaching unseen concepts.

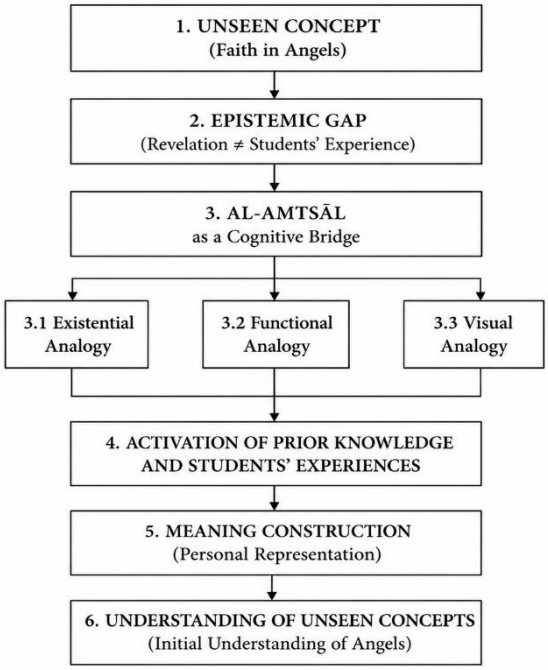


Figure 1. An *Al-Amtsāl*-Based Pedagogical Model for Teaching Unseen Concepts

4. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that al-amtsāl plays an important role in facilitating elementary school students' understanding of faith in angels by connecting unseen concepts with learners' prior knowledge and everyday experiences. The findings show that existential, functional, and visual analogies enable students to construct meaningful representations of concepts that cannot be directly accessed through empirical experience.

Theoretically, this study extends the literature on Qur'anic pedagogy by conceptualizing al-amtsāl not merely as a teaching method, instructional medium, or learning model, but as a cognitive mediation mechanism

that bridges revealed knowledge, prior knowledge, and students' meaning-making processes. The proposed al-amtsāl-based pedagogical model contributes to current discussions on abstract concept learning by highlighting five interrelated stages: epistemic gap, analogical mediation, activation of prior knowledge, meaning construction, and the development of an initial understanding of unseen concepts.

Practically, the findings suggest that teachers should employ al-amtsāl purposefully and reflectively in aqidah instruction by selecting analogies that are closely related to students' experiences while maintaining theological accuracy. This approach may support students in developing more meaningful understandings of abstract and nonempirical concepts in Islamic education.

This study was limited to the teaching of faith in angels within a single elementary school context. Therefore, future research should examine the applicability of the proposed model across different educational settings and other aqidah topics, such as the Day of Judgment, divine decree (qadha and qadar), and other metaphysical concepts. Further studies are also needed to investigate the emergence of alternative conceptions resulting from the use of specific analogies and to evaluate the effectiveness of al-amtsāl across diverse learner characteristics and instructional contexts.

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