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TOWARD A QUR'ANIC PEDAGOGY OF TAFAKKUR: REFLECTIVE THINKING AND CRITICAL THINKING IN QUR'AN-HADITH LEARNING

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Abstract

Qur'an-Hadith learning frequently remains teacher-centered and predominantly informative because Qur'anic concepts have not been sufficiently developed as methodological foundations for instruction, thereby limiting students' reflective and critical engagement with religious texts. This study aims to construct *tafakkur* as a Qur'anic pedagogy and explain its relevance to fostering critical thinking in Qur'an-Hadith learning. A qualitative descriptive approach with a textual-empirical orientation was employed. Textual analysis examined the concept of *tafakkur* in the Qur'an and its interpretations in exegetical sources, while empirical data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation of Qur'an-Hadith learning at MA Darussalam Ngesong Jombang. The data were analyzed through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, with credibility established through source and technique triangulation. The findings indicate that *tafakkur* can be conceptualized as Qur'anic reflective reasoning that progresses from observing Allah's signs to constructing ethical meaning. This pedagogical concept was formulated into five interconnected learning stages: observing, questioning, reflecting, reasoning, and ethical meaning-making. Its application facilitates students' more reflective,

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analytical, and meaningful engagement with Qur'an-Hadith texts. The study concludes that *tafakkur* provides a Qur'an-based pedagogical framework capable of integrating reflective reasoning, critical inquiry, and ethical formation. These findings contribute to the development of Qur'anic pedagogy and offer practical implications for designing Qur'an-Hadith instruction that moves beyond information transmission toward reflective-critical and ethically oriented learning.

Keywords: Critical Thinking; Qur'an-Hadith Learning; Qur'anic Pedagogy; Reflective Reasoning; *Tafakkur*

INTRODUCTION

Tafakkur is one of the Qur'anic concepts that reflects the intellectual, spiritual, and ethical dimensions of human thinking. In the Qur'anic discourse, *tafakkur* refers to deep reflection, contemplation, and serious engagement with the signs of Allah in creation, history, human experience, and revelation. It is not merely an act of passive meditation, but a directed process of thinking that moves from observation to meaning, from perception to awareness, and from knowledge to moral responsibility. Enghariano (2019) explains that *tafakkur* in the Qur'an involves serious, purposeful contemplation through which human beings are invited to understand divine signs. Similarly, Zaini & Fauziah (2024) argue that Qur'anic verses on *tafakkur* encourage humans to explore meanings beyond surface-level perception. Badri (2018) also describes contemplation as a process that begins with sensory or intellectual perception and culminates in the recognition of the Creator. This shows that *tafakkur* has an epistemic function, guiding human beings to seek knowledge, and a spiritual function, directing knowledge toward ethical and theological awareness (Suhartawan, 2022).

As a Qur'anic mode of thinking, *tafakkur* is closely related to reflective thinking. Reflective thinking requires learners to examine experience, question assumptions, evaluate meaning, and connect knowledge with responsible action. Brookfield (2017) emphasizes that critical reflection enables individuals to examine the foundations of their beliefs, while Pollard et al. (2019) view reflection as a process that connects evidence, judgment, and ethical practice. Mohamed et al. (2022) further explain that reflective practice involves cognitive, emotional, contextual, and moral dimensions. These ideas are relevant to *tafakkur* because Qur'anic reflection does not separate reasoning from spiritual and ethical consciousness. In this sense, *tafakkur* may be understood as a Qur'anic form of reflective reasoning. It

encourages human beings not only to think about objects, events, or texts, but also to draw moral lessons from them (Maisyanah et al., 2024). This understanding is also consistent with studies showing that reflective thinking can strengthen critical thinking by training learners to analyze, evaluate, and draw conclusions more carefully (Firdaus et al., 2024; Holdo, 2023).

The pedagogical relevance of *tafakkur* becomes important when it is connected to Qur'an-Hadith learning. Qur'an-Hadith learning should not be limited to recitation, memorization, and textual explanation. It should also help students understand meanings, reflect on values, interpret moral messages, and relate Qur'anic and Prophetic teachings to real-life situations. Studies on Qur'an-based learning show that Islamic learning can support students' critical thinking when it is designed through contextual, dialogical, and reflective learning processes (Aulia et al., 2025; Maisyanah et al., 2024; Rahmat et al., 2019).

Previous studies have demonstrated that efforts to improve students' critical thinking skills have been widely conducted through various instructional models and learning approaches, including blended learning, the AIR (Auditory, Intellectually, Repetition) model, Deep Dialogue Critical Thinking (DDCT), RADEC, and Problem-Based Learning (PBL). These studies generally focus on examining the effectiveness of innovative teaching models in enhancing students' critical thinking skills through learner-centered instructional strategies. Their findings consistently indicate that these approaches improve students' critical thinking abilities, classroom participation, and learning outcomes. However, most of these studies primarily emphasize pedagogical aspects and do not integrate Islamic values, particularly the concept of tafakkur from the perspective of the Qur'an.

On the other hand, previous studies on tafakkur have predominantly focused on psychological and spiritual dimensions, such as promoting psychological well-being, reducing anxiety, overcoming overthinking, and fostering inner peace through reflection on Qur'anic verses. Although these studies demonstrate the significant benefits of tafakkur for mental health and spiritual development, they have not explored its application as an instructional strategy to enhance students' critical thinking skills, particularly in Islamic Religious Education (PAI).

Based on a comparison of the focus, approaches, findings, and limitations of previous studies, a clear research gap can be identified. To date, no study has specifically examined the implementation of the Qur'anic tafakkur method as a learning strategy to improve students' critical thinking skills in Islamic Religious Education. Furthermore,

existing research has not adequately investigated the relationship between spiritual reflection through tafakkur and the development of critical thinking as an essential twenty-first-century competency. Therefore, this study aims to address this gap by developing and implementing the Qur'anic tafakkur method as an instructional approach to enhance students' critical thinking skills in Islamic Religious Education, while contributing both theoretically and practically to the development of Islamic values-based learning. In this context, *tafakkur* provides a Qur'anic foundation for developing reflective and critical engagement with religious texts. It enables students to move beyond passive knowledge reception and encourages them to observe, question, reason, and formulate ethical conclusions. Therefore, *tafakkur* can be positioned not only as a spiritual practice but also as a Qur'anic pedagogical framework.

This article is situated in the context of Qur'an-Hadith learning at Islamic High School Darussalam Ngesong, Jombang, East Java. Preliminary findings indicate that classroom learning has used several methods, but it still tends to depend on teacher explanation, memorization, and teacher-led questioning. Students' active participation in asking questions, expressing opinions, and analyzing learning materials often requires strong teacher stimulation. This condition shows the need for a more reflective and student-engaging approach. Contextual Islamic education is important because it helps students transform religious knowledge into applicable knowledge and moral virtues (Parhan et al., 2024). Islamic pedagogy also has the potential to foster meaningful learning when rooted in Islamic values and responsive to students' needs (Sabani et al., 2016). Therefore, *tafakkur* should be developed as a Qur'anic pedagogy that connects textual understanding, reflective thinking, and critical thinking in Qur'an-Hadith learning.

This article positions tafakkur as Qur'anic reflective reasoning. The term refers to a mode of thinking that is rooted in the Qur'an's invitation to reflect on divine signs, creation, human life, revelation, and moral consequences. In this framework, tafakkur is not understood merely as spiritual meditation or emotional contemplation. It is a disciplined process of reflection that connects observation, contemplation, reasoning, ethical awareness, and theological consciousness. Al-Iṣfahānī explains that al-fikr refers to the movement of intellectual power toward knowledge, which indicates that tafakkur involves an active search for meaning guided by reason (Isfahani, n.d.). This view provides an important conceptual

basis for reading tafakkur as a Qur'anic mode of thought rather than merely an inner devotional practice.

Classical exegetical works also support this understanding. Al-Ṭabarī situates reflection within the reception of divine guidance, in which human beings are invited to understand Allah's signs and learn from them (Tabari, n.d.). Al-Rāzī expands this idea through a rational-theological interpretation, in which reflection on creation leads to recognition of divine power and wisdom (Rāzī, n.d.). Al-Qurṭubī highlights the ethical dimension of Qur'anic reflection by relating thinking to guidance, obedience, and responsible conduct (Qurṭubī, n.d.). Modern exegetes such as Sayyid Quṭb and Quraish Shihab further emphasize that Qur'anic reflection should connect revelation with life, accountability, moral awareness, and practical action (Quṭb, 2000; Shihab, 2005). These perspectives show that tafakkur is not a purely cognitive activity. It is a Qur'anic process that transforms perception into meaning and meaning into moral responsibility.

As a pedagogical concept, tafakkur offers a basis for learning that moves beyond memorization, repetition, and teacher-centered explanation. Qur'an-Hadith learning requires students not only to know what a verse or Hadith says, but also to understand its meaning, reflect on its relevance, and draw ethical lessons from it. A tafakkur-based approach makes religious learning a reflective process. Students are guided to observe textual and contextual signs, ask meaningful questions, reflect on meanings, reason through interpretation, and formulate ethical conclusions.

This theoretical position is important because religious learning may become limited when it only transmits information. In such a model, students may memorize texts but fail to engage with their moral and intellectual meanings. Tafakkur provides an alternative orientation. It frames learning as a process of meaning-making. Students are not treated as passive recipients of religious knowledge, but as reflective learners who are invited to think, question, connect, and conclude. This makes tafakkur relevant to Qur'an-Hadith learning, especially because Qur'anic materials contain broad meanings and require careful reflection.

In this article, the formation of a tafakkur-based method is not treated as a detached instructional technique. It is derived from the logic of Qur'anic reflection. The method should therefore retain the essential features of tafakkur: attention to signs, contemplation of meaning, intellectual reasoning, and ethical orientation. This position prevents the method from becoming a simple classroom activity without Qur'anic grounding. It also prevents

tafakkur from remaining only a spiritual concept without a pedagogical form. Thus, tafakkur functions as a bridge between Qur'anic discourse and classroom practice.

Reflective thinking is used in this article as a supporting theoretical lens to explain the learning process involved in tafakkur. Reflective thinking refers to the ability to examine experience, question assumptions, interpret meaning, and connect knowledge with responsible action. Brookfield (2017) argues that critical reflection enables individuals to identify and evaluate the assumptions underlying their beliefs and practices. Pollard et al. (2019) also describe reflection as a process that connects evidence, judgment, experience, and ethical action. These views are relevant to tafakkur because Qur'anic reflection also links observation, contemplation, meaning, and responsibility.

Reflective thinking helps explain how students move from listening to understanding, from understanding to questioning, and from questioning to moral meaning-making. In Qur'an-Hadith learning, students are not only processing information. They may also relate Qur'anic and Hadith materials to personal experience, social problems, moral dilemmas, and spiritual awareness. Mohamed et al. (2022) note that reflective practice involves cognitive, emotional, contextual, and moral dimensions. This view supports the idea that tafakkur is not merely cognitive reasoning, but a reflective process that includes moral and spiritual awareness.

Critical thinking is used as the second supporting lens. It refers to the ability to ask questions, analyze information, evaluate arguments, draw conclusions, and make reasoned judgments. Bezanilla et al. (2019) state that critical thinking develops through active learning methods that provide space for questioning, discussion, analysis, and evaluation. Halpern and Dunn (2021) also describe critical thinking as reasoning that helps individuals solve real-world problems and make better judgments. In Qur'an-Hadith learning, critical thinking does not mean doubting revelation. Rather, it means engaging with revelation carefully, responsibly, and thoughtfully.

The relationship between reflective thinking and critical thinking is central to this article. Reflective thinking supports critical thinking because students who reflect deeply are more likely to analyze, evaluate, and draw conclusions carefully. Firdaus et al (2024) show that reflective thinking has a significant role in supporting critical thinking skills. This supports the argument that tafakkur can facilitate critical engagement because it is inherently

reflective. Through tafakkur, students are guided to observe, think, question, connect, interpret, and conclude. These processes are also central to critical thinking.

Based on this background, this article addresses three main questions. First, how can *tafakkur* be conceptualized as a Qur'anic mode of reflective thinking? Second, how can *tafakkur* be constructed as a Qur'anic pedagogical framework in Qur'an-Hadith learning? Third, how does *tafakkur*-based learning facilitate students' reflective and critical engagement in a madrasah context? Accordingly, this article aims to construct *tafakkur* as a Qur'anic pedagogy and examine its implications for reflective thinking and critical thinking in Qur'an-Hadith learning. This article argues that *tafakkur* can be developed through five pedagogical movements: observing, questioning, reflecting, reasoning, and ethical meaning-making. Through this framework, *tafakkur* is positioned not merely as devotional contemplation, but as a Qur'anic mode of learning that enables students to understand revelation more reflectively, analytically, and ethically.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative descriptive design with a textual-empirical orientation. The textual orientation was used to examine the Qur'anic term tafakkur and to construct its pedagogical implications, while the empirical orientation was used to analyze how the tafakkur-based learning method appeared in Qur'an-Hadith learning at MA Darussalam Ngesong Jombang. This design was selected because the study did not aim to measure statistical improvement, but to explain how tafakkur could be conceptualized as Qur'anic reflective reasoning and transformed into a learning method that facilitates students' critical thinking.

The textual data consisted of Qur'anic verses containing the forms of tafakkur, such as tatafakkarūn, tatafakkarū, fakkara, yatafakkarū, and yatafakkarūn. These verses were read to identify the reflective logic of tafakkur, including its objects of reflection, moral orientation, and theological meaning. Classical and modern exegetical sources were used to support the interpretation of tafakkur as Qur'anic reflective reasoning. The textual analysis focused on how tafakkur moves from observation to contemplation, from contemplation to reasoning, and from reasoning to ethical awareness.

The empirical data were collected in the context of Qur'an-Hadith learning at MA Darussalam Ngesong Jombang. The research participants included a Qur'an-Hadith teacher,

a substitute teacher or teaching practitioner, and grade XI students. Data were collected through classroom observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Observation was used to identify classroom learning patterns, students' participation, and the emergence of reflective-critical engagement. Interviews were used to explore teachers' and students' perceptions of tafakkur-based learning. Documentation was used to support the analysis of learning activities, classroom practices, and relevant school-based materials.

The data were analyzed through three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. In the reduction stage, the data were selected and grouped according to the article's focus: the Qur'anic term tafakkur, the construction of the tafakkur learning method, students' reflective engagement, students' critical thinking, and implementation challenges. In the display stage, the data were organized into thematic categories to show the relationship between Qur'anic reflection and classroom practice. In the conclusion-drawing stage, the data were interpreted to formulate how tafakkur functions as a Qur'anic pedagogical framework in Qur'an-Hadith learning.

The analysis used tafakkur as the main conceptual lens, supported by reflective thinking and critical thinking. Five analytical categories were used to read the data: observing, questioning, reflecting, reasoning, and ethical meaning-making. Observing referred to students' attention to Qur'anic-Hadith texts or related life phenomena. Questioning referred to students' ability to ask meaningful questions about the textual meanings and implications. Reflecting refers to students' ability to connect religious messages with personal or social experience. Reasoning referred to students' ability to provide arguments or interpretations. Ethical meaning-making referred to students' ability to draw moral lessons from Qur'an and Hadith materials.

Data validity was strengthened through source triangulation and technique triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information from teachers, students, and documentation. Triangulation was conducted by comparing the results of observations, interviews, and documentation. This procedure was used to ensure that the findings did not rely on a single source of information and that the interpretation of tafakkur-based learning reflected the actual classroom context. The study, therefore, positioned tafakkur not only as a Qur'anic concept but also as an analytical framework for examining reflective and critical engagement in Qur'an-Hadith learning.

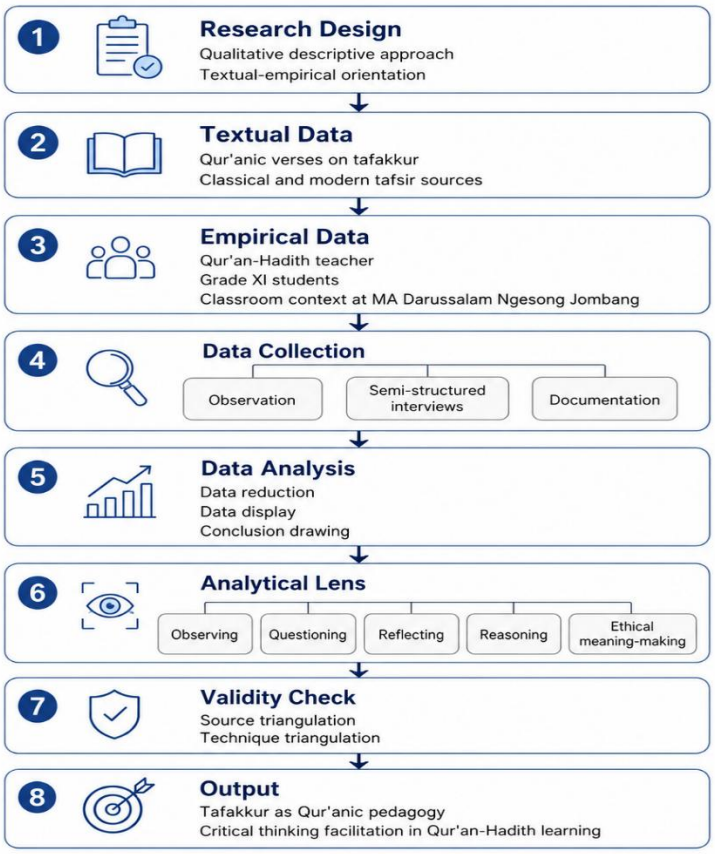


Figure 1. *Research Method*

Figure 1 illustrates the overall research method used in this study. The research began with determining the research design, followed by textual data analysis of Qur'anic verses related to tafakkur and empirical data collection through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and documentation at MA Darussalam Ngesong Jombang. The collected data were then analyzed through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Furthermore, the analysis was conducted using the conceptual framework of tafakkur and critical thinking, while the validity of the findings was ensured through source and technique triangulation. The research ultimately produced a Qur'anic-based learning framework that explains how the tafakkur method supports students' critical thinking in Qur'an-Hadith learning.

RESULTS

Qur'anic Term of *Tafakkur* as the Basis of Reflective Reasoning

The textual analysis shows that tafakkur is a recurring Qur'anic concept that appears in several linguistic forms. The identified forms include tatafakkarūn, tatafakkarū, fakkara,

yatafakkarū, and yatafakkarūn. These forms appear in Q.S. al-Baqarah: 219 and 266, Q.S. al-An'ām: 50, Q.S. Saba': 46, Q.S. al-Muddaththir: 18, Q.S. al-A'rāf: 176 and 184, Q.S. Yūnus: 24, Q.S. al-Ra'd: 3, Q.S. al-Naḥl: 11, 44, and 69, Q.S. al-Rūm: 8 and 21, Q.S. al-Zumar: 42, Q.S. al-Jāthiyah: 13, and Q.S. al-Ḥashr: 21. The distribution of these terms indicates that tafakkur is not limited to abstract contemplation. It is directed toward diverse objects of reflection, including natural phenomena, human life, revelation, history, worldly affairs, otherworldly accountability, and moral consequences.

The semantic meaning of tafakkur supports this finding. Al-Iṣfahānī explains that al-fikr refers to the movement of intellectual power toward knowledge, while tafakkur represents the active operation of that intellectual power through reasoned reflection (Isfahani, n.d.). This meaning shows that tafakkur is not random thinking, but a disciplined search for meaning. It begins with attention to signs, continues through contemplation and reasoning, and leads to understanding. Therefore, tafakkur can be read as a Qur'anic form of reflective reasoning.

Classical exegetes also strengthen this interpretation. Al-Ṭabarī places Qur'anic reflection within the reception of divine guidance. In his exegetical approach, the signs of Allah are clarified so that human beings may understand, remember, and take lessons from them (Ṭabarī, n.d.). Al-Rāzī expands this meaning through a rational-theological reading. For him, reflection on creation leads human beings to recognize divine power, wisdom, and order (Rāzī, n.d.). Al-Qurṭubī adds an ethical dimension by showing that Qur'anic reflection should lead to moral awareness and responsible conduct (Qurṭubī, n.d.). These interpretations indicate that tafakkur contains intellectual, theological, and ethical dimensions.

Modern exegetes also emphasize the practical relevance of tafakkur. Sayyid Quṭb interprets Qur'anic reflection as a process that helps human beings understand the concepts of benefit, harm, life, accountability, and divine guidance (Qutb, 2000). In the context of Q.S. al-Baqarah: 219, reflection is not only directed toward worldly matters, but also toward the balance between worldly life and the hereafter. Quraish Shihab similarly explains that reflection on Qur'anic signs should guide human beings to connect revelation with lived reality and moral action (Shihab, 2005). These views show that tafakkur is not only a spiritual act, but also a mode of practical reasoning.

Table 1. *Qur'anic Terms of Tafakkur*

No.	Qur'anic Form	Verse(s)	Object/Context of Reflection	Reflective Orientation
1	Tatafakkarūn	Q.S. al-Baqarah: 219; Q.S. al-Baqarah: 266; Q.S. al-Anʿām: 50	Worldly and otherworldly affairs, moral choices, and human awareness	Encourages humans to evaluate benefit, harm, responsibility, and moral consequences
2	Tatafakkarū	Q.S. Saba': 46	Prophetic message and human response to revelation	Invites serious reflection on truth, revelation, and the mission of prophethood
3	Fakkara	Q.S. al-Muddaththir: 18	Human reasoning and judgment	Shows the act of thinking as a process of forming judgment, either rightly or wrongly
4	Yatafakkarū	Q.S. al-Aʿrāf: 184; Q.S. al-Rūm: 8	Prophethood, human existence, creation, and accountability	Directs humans to reflect on existence, divine signs, and final responsibility
5	Yatafakkarūn	Q.S. Āli ʿImrān: 191; Q.S. al-Aʿrāf: 176; Q.S. Yūnus: 24; Q.S. al-Raʿd: 3; Q.S. al-Naḥl: 11, 44, 69; Q.S. al-Rūm: 21; Q.S. al-Zumar: 42; Q.S. al-Jāthiyah: 13; Q.S. al-Ḥashr: 21	Creation, nature, revelation, parables, human life, sleep and death, and moral lessons	Positions reflection as a way to observe signs, understand meaning, and arrive at ethical-theological awareness

Table 1 presents the Qur'anic forms of the term tafakkur along with the related verses, contexts of reflection, and reflective orientations. The table shows that each linguistic form of tafakkur appears in different contexts, including reflection on worldly and hereafter affairs, revelation, creation, prophethood, moral responsibility, and divine signs. These findings indicate that tafakkur in the Qur'an represents a comprehensive process of observation, contemplation, reasoning, and ethical awareness, which provides the conceptual foundation for developing a tafakkur-based learning method.

Based on this textual result, tafakkur can be formulated as Qur'anic reflective reasoning. It is Qur'anic because it is rooted in the Qur'an's invitation to reflect on divine signs. It is reflective because it requires contemplation and meaning-making. It is reasoning because it involves intellectual activity, interpretation, and judgment. It is ethical because it leads human beings to draw lessons and formulate responsible attitudes. Therefore, the term tafakkur provides the conceptual basis for constructing a learning method that guides

students to observe, question, reflect, reason, and draw ethical meaning from Qur'an-Hadith materials.

Existing Learning Pattern in Qur'an-Hadith Classroom

The empirical findings indicate that Qur'an-Hadith learning at MA Darussalam Ngesong Jombang still tends to follow a teacher-centered pattern. Although several learning methods are used in the classroom, the dominant practice remains lecture, teacher explanation, memorization, and teacher-led questioning. This pattern appears in the interview with NZ, a grade XI MIA 2 student, who stated that the teacher usually explains the material, asks students to memorize, writes on the board, and sometimes uses group discussion. JP, another student from the same class, also explained that the method varies, but the teacher more often explains while students listen and answer only when they are asked. These responses show that students' classroom participation is still largely reactive rather than self-initiated.

The same tendency was confirmed by SR, the Qur'an-Hadith teacher, who stated that teaching methods differ from class to class, but that lectures remain common, and that students often wait until the teacher asks them a question. According to SR, students need to be stimulated first before they respond. This interview finding shows that classroom interaction has not fully developed independent student engagement. Students may participate in learning, but their participation still depends on teacher prompts. Therefore, the existing pattern does not yet provide strong space for students to think, respond, and express opinions independently.

A similar pattern was also found in grade XI IIS 2. The substitute Qur'an-Hadith teacher stated that, during her observation, the learning process was mostly conducted through lecture, with question-and-answer activities used only as a complement. This indicates that the lecture remains the most frequently used method in delivering Qur'an-Hadith materials. Students also felt the effect of this pattern. One student stated that long teacher explanations often made students sleepy and bored, and that their understanding of the material was inconsistent. Another student also confirmed that the usual method was lecture, although other methods were sometimes used.

These interview data suggest that Qur'an-Hadith learning at MA Darussalam Ngesong has employed varied methods, but the overall learning pattern remains centered on the teacher. The teacher serves as the main source of explanation, while students mostly

listen, memorize, and respond when asked. This condition limits students' opportunities to ask questions, analyze meanings, interpret Qur'an-Hadith messages, and connect the material with real-life situations. As a result, students' critical thinking has not emerged independently and still requires strong teacher stimulation.

Therefore, the existing learning pattern provides a strong rationale for developing a tafakkur-based learning method. The interview data show that students need a learning process that not only delivers religious knowledge but also invites them to observe, reflect, question, reason, and draw ethical meaning from Qur'an-Hadith materials. In this context, tafakkur-based learning can function as an alternative pedagogical approach to move students from passive reception toward reflective and critical engagement.

Constructing *Tafakkur* as a Learning Method

The findings indicate that tafakkur can be understood as a learning method, as its reflective logic is relevant to the nature of Qur'an-Hadith learning. The Qur'an-Hadith teacher, SR, stated that tafakkur is highly suitable for the study of the Qur'an-Hadith because the Qur'an contains broad, complex, and varied meanings that require critical engagement, tadabbur, and deep reflection. SR emphasized that tafakkur can help students become more critical in understanding Qur'anic materials. This statement shows that tafakkur is not only understood as a general spiritual activity, but also as a potential pedagogical approach for guiding students to think more deeply about Qur'anic-Hadith texts.

However, the interview data also reveal that tafakkur had not yet been systematically implemented in classroom instruction. The informants were familiar with the term tafakkur, but they had not fully understood it as a structured learning method. This indicates a gap between tafakkur as a recognized Islamic concept and tafakkur as an operational pedagogical model. Therefore, the construction of tafakkur as a learning method requires a clearer procedural design so that teachers and students can apply it in Qur'an-Hadith learning.

Based on the Qur'anic logic of tafakkur and the empirical classroom context, the tafakkur learning method can be formulated into five stages. First, observing, in which students identify Qur'anic-Hadith texts, key terms, or related life phenomena. Second, questioning, in which students ask questions about meaning, relevance, and moral implications. Third, reflecting, in which students connect the text with personal experience, social reality, or everyday problems. Fourth, reasoning, in which students provide arguments,

explanations, or interpretations. Fifth, ethical meaning-making, in which students draw moral lessons and formulate responsible attitudes from the learning material.

This construction transforms tafakkur from a general call to reflect into a classroom-based learning procedure. The method does not position students as passive receivers of religious knowledge. Instead, it guides them to engage with Qur'an-Hadith materials through reflection and reasoning. Students are encouraged not only to know what a verse or Hadith says, but also to ask what it means, why it matters, how it relates to life, and what ethical response it requires. The construction of the tafakkur method is also supported by the interview summary, which notes that the method is considered suitable for Qur'an-Hadith and Islamic history because both require critical thinking and reflection. The data further show that students' understanding improved after tafakkur, as they became more accustomed to contemplating and analyzing the learning materials. This finding strengthens the view that the tafakkur method can serve as a bridge between Qur'anic reflection and classroom learning practice.

Thus, the outcome is a tafakkur-based learning method comprising five reflective movements: observing, questioning, reflecting, reasoning, and ethical meaning-making. This method provides a structured way to translate the Qur'anic concept of tafakkur into Qur'an-Hadith learning and serves as a basis for facilitating students' reflective and critical engagement.

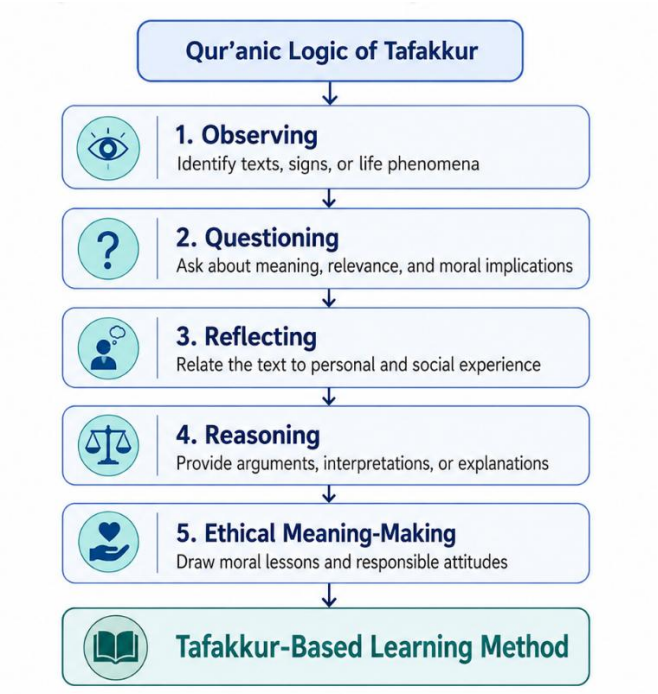


Figure 2. *Tafakkur-Based Method in Learning*

Figure 2 illustrates the tafakkur-based learning method developed in this study. The method consists of five sequential stages: observing, questioning, reflecting, reasoning, and ethical meaning-making. The process begins by encouraging students to observe Qur'anic texts, signs, or life phenomena, followed by asking meaningful questions, connecting the learning material with personal and social experiences, developing arguments or interpretations, and finally drawing ethical lessons and responsible attitudes. These stages demonstrate how the Qur'anic concept of tafakkur is translated into a structured learning method that promotes students' reflective and critical thinking.

Tafakkur-Based Learning and Students' Critical Thinking

The findings indicate that tafakkur-based learning facilitates students' critical thinking in Qur'an-Hadith learning. The interview data show that after students were guided through the tafakkur process, they became more accustomed to contemplating and analyzing the learning material. The interview summary notes that students' understanding improved after tafakkur because they were trained to reflect on and analyze the material more deeply. This suggests that tafakkur does not only support textual comprehension, but also encourages students to process meaning, relate the material to life, and think more independently.

The contribution of tafakkur to critical thinking is also reflected in students' ability to ask deeper questions and express opinions more independently. The interview data state that students were able to think more critically, raise more meaningful questions, and present their views without relying entirely on teacher prompts. This is important because the previous learning pattern showed that students tended to be passive and needed teacher stimulation before asking or responding. Through tafakkur, students were gradually encouraged to move from passive reception toward reflective participation.

The Qur'an-Hadith teacher also emphasized that tafakkur helps students become more critical because Qur'anic materials are broad and complex, requiring deep reflection. According to SR, studying the Qur'an involves various ways of thinking, including tadabbur and tafakkur, and this reflective process helps students develop a more critical understanding of the material. This interview finding shows that tafakkur is relevant not only as a spiritual practice but also as a learning approach that trains students to examine meanings, ask questions, and connect Qur'anic messages with real situations.

Students' critical thinking in this study is evident through several indicators. The manuscript refers to the Watson-Glaser components of critical thinking: inference,

recognition of assumptions, deduction, interpretation, and evaluation of arguments. These components are reflected in tafakkur-based learning when students draw conclusions from Qur'an and Hadith materials, identify implied meanings, connect textual messages with real-life situations, interpret moral values, and evaluate the relevance of religious teachings to their daily lives.

Although tafakkur-based learning shows strong potential, its implementation also faces several challenges. The first challenge is limited instructional time. The process of reflection, questioning, reasoning, and discussion requires more time than conventional explanation. When students are asked to think deeply and connect materials to their life experiences, the learning process becomes more open and requires careful classroom management. The second challenge is teacher readiness. When students begin to ask deeper and more critical questions, teachers need a stronger mastery of Qur'an-Hadith materials and a better ability to facilitate discussion. The teacher is no longer only a transmitter of information, but also a facilitator who guides students' reflection and deepens their understanding. The third challenge is student readiness. At the early stage of implementation, students may feel confused because they are accustomed to receiving direct explanations from the teacher. The shift from passive learning to independent reflection requires gradual adaptation. Students need initial guidance, a clear focus, and examples of reflective questions to ensure the tafakkur process does not become too broad or unfocused.

However, the findings should be interpreted carefully. Since this study uses a qualitative approach, the results do not statistically demonstrate a significant increase in students' critical thinking. Rather, it shows that tafakkur-based learning facilitates and supports the emergence of critical thinking. The evidence appears in students' increased willingness to reflect, analyze, ask questions, express opinions, and draw moral conclusions from Qur'an and Hadith materials. Therefore, tafakkur-based learning can be understood as a pedagogical approach that cultivates reflective-critical engagement in Qur'an-Hadith learning.

DISCUSSION

From Qur'anic Term to Qur'anic Pedagogy

The findings indicate that tafakkur can be developed from a Qur'anic term into a pedagogical framework for Qur'an-Hadith learning. In the Qur'anic discourse, tafakkur is

not merely a concept of contemplation, but a reflective process that directs human beings to observe signs, examine meanings, and draw ethical conclusions. This finding supports the idea that Qur'anic concepts can function as operational foundations for Islamic education. Rachma et al. (2025) argue that Qur'anic pedagogy offers an integrated educational framework grounded in theocentric epistemology, ethical dialogue, and character formation. Therefore, the transformation of tafakkur into pedagogy should be understood as an effort to operationalize Qur'anic reflective reasoning in classroom practice.

This transformation is important because Islamic education needs a learning framework that does not separate religious knowledge from moral consciousness. Qur'an-Hadith learning should not only transmit textual information, but should also guide students to reflect on meaning and internalize values. Zein and Ramadhona (2026) emphasize that Qur'anic pedagogy requires the internalization of Qur'anic values through value-oriented learning design, dialogical-reflective teaching methods, and teacher modeling. This supports the argument that tafakkur-based learning should be structured not only as a thinking activity, but as a pedagogical process that links text, reflection, and ethical formation.

The construction of tafakkur as a pedagogical method is also consistent with studies on Qur'an-Hadith-based pedagogical innovation. Sugiarto (2025) shows that integrating Qur'anic and Hadith values into learning methodologies can strengthen participatory learning, dialogue, critical thinking, and experiential learning. This is relevant to the present study because the tafakkur method also transforms religious learning from teacher-centered explanation into reflective engagement. Through stages such as observing, questioning, reflecting, reasoning, and ethical meaning-making, students are guided to move from receiving knowledge to constructing meaning.

Furthermore, tafakkur-based pedagogy is closely related to contextual learning. Nisa and Mubtadi (2025) found that a contextual Qur'an-Hadith module can improve students' ability to analyze, evaluate, and draw logical conclusions by connecting religious materials with daily life. This supports the position that tafakkur should not remain an abstract spiritual concept. It needs to be translated into classroom activities that help students relate Qur'anic and Hadith messages to real situations. In this way, tafakkur becomes a bridge between textual understanding and contextual moral reasoning.

Thus, the main contribution of this finding lies in positioning tafakkur as a Qur'anic pedagogy rather than merely a learning technique. This position aligns with Sodikin's (2025)

argument that Islamic pedagogical transformation requires strengthening critical thinking, applying innovative learning models, and implementing Islamic values to address contemporary challenges. Therefore, the pedagogical construction of tafakkur can be seen as part of a broader effort to revitalize Islamic learning. It enables Qur'an-Hadith learning to move beyond memorization and toward reflective, critical, and ethically grounded engagement with revelation.

Tafakkur as a Bridge between Textual Understanding and Critical Thinking

The findings indicate that tafakkur functions as a bridge between textual understanding and students' critical thinking in Qur'an-Hadith learning. In the classroom context, Qur'an-Hadith materials are not only treated as texts to be memorized or repeated, but as sources of meaning that require reflection, interpretation, and ethical response. Through tafakkur, students are guided to move from reading or listening to understanding, from understanding to questioning, and from questioning to formulating meaning. This process is important because the initial learning pattern still showed a tendency toward teacher-centered explanation, in which students were often passive and needed stimulation before asking questions or expressing opinions.

The role of tafakkur becomes clearer when connected to the components of critical thinking. This study uses the Watson-Glaser framework, which includes inference, recognition of assumptions, deduction, interpretation, and evaluation of argument. These components help explain why tafakkur can support critical thinking. When students reflect on Qur'an-Hadith materials, they are not only identifying textual meanings, but also drawing conclusions, recognizing implied assumptions, interpreting moral messages, and evaluating the relevance of religious teachings to real-life situations. In this sense, tafakkur does not replace critical thinking; rather, it gives critical thinking a Qur'anic and ethical orientation.

This interpretation is also supported by classroom data. The teaching practitioner explained that tafakkur encourages students to read, analyze, and explain the material to the class. The stages of reading, analyzing, and concluding are considered effective in training students' thinking ability. This shows that tafakkur creates a learning process in which students are required to actively process information, rather than merely receive the teacher's explanation. Students who were initially shy or quiet could gradually adapt and become more active through repeated reflective practice.

Therefore, critical thinking in this article should not be understood as skepticism toward revelation. Rather, it refers to responsible engagement with revelation. Students think critically when they try to understand what a verse or Hadith means, why it matters, how it relates to life, and what moral attitude it requires. This position is consistent with Rohman and Kusaeri's (2021) argument that critical thinking in Islamic learning can be assessed through inference, assumption recognition, deduction, interpretation, and argument evaluation. Thus, critical thinking can be integrated into religious learning without detaching it from ethical and theological awareness.

Thus, tafakkur bridges textual understanding and critical thinking by connecting three movements: understanding the text, reflecting on its meaning, and formulating ethical judgment. It enables Qur'an-Hadith learning to move beyond memorization toward reflective and analytical engagement. In this framework, students' critical thinking is cultivated through Qur'anic reflective reasoning: they observe the text, question its meaning, reason through its message, and draw responsible conclusions for life. This makes tafakkur not only a spiritual practice, but also a pedagogical mechanism for forming reflective-critical learners in Qur'an-Hadith learning.

Pedagogical Follow-Up and Teacher Scaffolding in *Tafakkur*-Based Learning

The findings indicate that tafakkur-based learning requires a clear pedagogical structure and strong teacher readiness. Since tafakkur involves observation, questioning, reflection, reasoning, and ethical meaning-making, it cannot be implemented only as a general instruction to "think deeply." It needs to be translated into a structured classroom procedure. In Qur'an-Hadith learning, this means that teachers need to design learning activities that gradually guide students from reading the text to understanding its meaning, connecting it to lived reality, and formulating moral conclusions. Without such a structure, tafakkur may remain an abstract religious concept rather than an operational learning method.

The first pedagogical follow-up is lesson planning. Teachers should select Qur'an-Hadith materials suitable for reflection, prepare guiding questions, and determine the reflective focus for each lesson. For example, in the observing stage, students may be asked to identify key words, main messages, or related phenomena. In the questioning stage, students are guided to ask about meaning, relevance, and moral implications. In the reflecting stage, students connect the text with personal or social experience. In the reasoning stage, they provide arguments or interpretations. Finally, in the ethical meaning-making stage, they

formulate moral lessons and responsible attitudes. This sequence helps transform tafakkur into a practical learning method.

Teacher readiness is essential because tafakkur-based learning changes the teacher's role. The teacher is no longer only a transmitter of religious knowledge, but also a facilitator of reflection and reasoning. This requires mastery of Qur'an-Hadith materials, the ability to manage students' questions, and sensitivity in guiding discussion so that reflection remains connected to Qur'anic-Hadith values. When students begin to ask deeper questions, teachers need to respond not by closing the discussion too quickly, but by helping students clarify assumptions, examine meanings, and formulate ethical conclusions. This role is consistent with the idea of scaffolding, in which teachers provide temporary support so that students can gradually perform more complex thinking tasks independently (van de Pol et al., 2010; Wood et al., 1976).

Classroom scaffolding is also important because students who are accustomed to teacher-centered learning may initially struggle with independent reflection. Teachers can support them through reflective prompts, short guiding worksheets, examples of analytical questions, and focused discussion tasks. For instance, students may be given prompts such as: "What is the main message of this verse or Hadith?", "What problem in daily life is related to this message?", "What reason supports your interpretation?", and "What moral attitude should be taken?" Such scaffolding helps students move from passive listening to active meaning-making. It also prevents reflection from becoming too broad or unfocused.

Therefore, the follow-up of tafakkur-based learning should include three practical elements: structured lesson design, teacher facilitation, and gradual student scaffolding. These elements are necessary to ensure that tafakkur does not remain only a spiritual ideal, but becomes a workable Qur'anic pedagogy. Through this structure, Qur'an-Hadith learning can become more reflective, dialogical, and critical. Students are guided not only to know religious texts, but also to understand, analyze, interpret, and draw ethical meaning from them.

Assessment Follow-Up, Limitations, and Future Development

The findings imply that tafakkur-based learning requires an assessment model consistent with its reflective and critical orientation. If the method guides students through observation, questioning, reflection, reasoning, and ethical meaning-making, then assessment should not be limited to memorization or factual recall. Teachers need to assess how students

interpret Qur'an-Hadith materials, formulate questions, provide reasons, connect textual messages with lived realities, and draw ethical conclusions. This aligns with Calma and Davies' argument that students' critical thinking can be assessed through observable components in student work, including reasoning, interpretation, evaluation, and conclusion-making (Calma & Davies, 2026).

A practical follow-up is the use of reflective worksheets, discussion rubrics, oral presentation rubrics, and short reflective writing tasks. These instruments can help teachers observe whether students can identify the main message of a verse or Hadith, explain its relevance, evaluate possible meanings, and formulate moral attitudes. Rubric-based assessment is relevant because it clarifies expectations, provides criteria for evaluating thinking processes, and helps make critical thinking more visible in classroom practice. Okafor's study on rubric-based assessment shows that rubrics can support analytical reasoning and problem-solving, though the effectiveness of feedback should still be interpreted carefully (Okafor, 2024).

However, the findings of this study should be interpreted in light of several limitations. First, the study is situated in one madrasah context, namely Qur'an-Hadith learning at MA Darussalam Ngesong Jombang. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to all madrasah contexts without further investigation. Second, the study uses a qualitative approach, so the claim about students' critical thinking should be understood as an indication of reflective-critical engagement rather than a statistically measured improvement. Third, the implementation of tafakkur-based learning still depends on teacher readiness, classroom time, and students' familiarity with reflective learning activities.

Future research can develop this study in two directions. The first direction is pedagogical development, including the design of a comprehensive tafakkur-based Qur'an-Hadith module, reflective worksheets, teacher guides, and assessment rubrics. The second direction is methodological development, such as using mixed-methods or quasi-experimental designs to measure students' critical thinking more systematically. Mixed-methods research is relevant because it enables researchers to combine qualitative classroom interpretation with quantitative measurement, producing a more comprehensive understanding of learning processes. Gläser-Zikuda et al. (2024) show that mixed-methods approaches are useful for analyzing reflective writing because they combine qualitative content analysis with other methodological tools, while Selznick (2024) emphasizes that

mixed-methods research can enrich educational inquiry through the integration of different forms of evidence (Gläser-Zikuda et al., 2024; Selznick, 2024).

Thus, the follow-up of tafakkur-based learning should include both instructional and assessment development. Instructionally, teachers need to structure learning around observation, questioning, reflection, reasoning, and ethical meaning-making. Assessingly, teachers need instruments that evaluate students' interpretation, reasoning, argumentation, and moral conclusion. In future studies, the tafakkur method can be tested across different Qur'an-Hadith topics, grade levels, and madrasah contexts. This will help determine whether tafakkur can function not only as a Qur'anic concept, but also as a sustainable pedagogical model for cultivating reflective and critical engagement with revelation.

CONCLUSION

This article concludes that tafakkur can be constructed as a Qur'anic pedagogical framework for Qur'an-Hadith learning. The textual analysis of the Qur'anic term tafakkur shows that it is not merely a spiritual act of contemplation, but a form of Qur'anic reflective reasoning that connects observation, contemplation, reasoning, ethical awareness, and theological consciousness. Through this understanding, tafakkur provides a conceptual basis for structuring Qur'anic reflection as a learning method.

The study formulates tafakkur-based learning into five pedagogical movements: observing, questioning, reflecting, reasoning, and ethical meaning-making. These stages allow Qur'an-Hadith learning to move beyond memorization and teacher-centered explanation. Students are guided not only to receive religious knowledge, but also to examine textual meanings, relate Qur'anic-Hadith messages to lived realities, provide reasons, and draw moral conclusions. The findings also indicate that tafakkur-based learning facilitates students' critical thinking. This can be seen in students' increasing ability to ask meaningful questions, analyze learning materials, express reasoned opinions, interpret moral messages, and connect religious teachings with everyday life. However, because this study uses a qualitative approach, the contribution of tafakkur should be understood as facilitating and cultivating reflective-critical engagement, not as statistically proving an improvement in critical thinking.

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