



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**NEEDS ANALYSIS AND SYLLABUS CONSTRUCTION OF ENGLISH
FOR ISLAMIC STUDIES IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES IN
MALAYSIA**

RABIATHUL ADHABIYYAH BT. SAYED ABUDHAHIR

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By

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**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra
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Doctor of Philosophy**

June 2021

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DEDICATION

Amma, Atta, Wan, Safiya & Amira



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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Chairman : Associate Professor Afida binti Mohamad Ali, PhD
Faculty : Modern Languages and Communication

The lack of motivation among the Islamic Studies students in learning the English Language is seen as a stumbling block for them to be competent in the language. For students of the Islamic Studies Program, the use of English in their career path is vague or insignificant which caused them to appear apathetic towards learning the language. These graduates are also known as Da'ees who are referred to as a person who goes out into the field to talk about religious matters. To date, there is still no specific English course for students enrolled in an Islamic Studies undergraduate degree programme. Hence, this study aims to identify the needs of the Islamic Studies students which is then triangulated with the needs of the lecturers and experts from the field to design a syllabus specially for the Islamic Studies students.

The Mixed Method Research design was employed to collect data to be used as a guideline to design the syllabus. The needs analysis questionnaires were completed by 782 students who were randomly selected from 13 public and private higher learning institutions in Malaysia. Furthermore, an in-depth ethnography study was conducted to identify the needs of the lecturers and experts from the field of Islamic Studies. The results indicated that the most significant quantitative findings of this study is the high preference on speaking skills which includes variety of speaking activities in the classroom. Acquiring speaking skills will help the students preach about Islam to the public effectively as well as to rectify and prevent any misinformation about Islam. Even though speaking was chosen as the most important skill, the students agreed that reading skills are also necessary to be acquired. Without acquiring the skill to read English Islamic scholarly articles, journals, and other academic reading materials, the students would not be able to convey essential teachings of Islam to their target audience. The ability to read and critically analyse English academic materials will increase their knowledge about Islam

and thus make them better informers to the public. The findings from the ethnographic study revealed the need for Da'ees in using English to preach about Islam to the tourists or the local non-Muslim communities. Furthermore, the use of English is also important when conducting conversion sessions, where in most situations, they are more comfortable in using English as a medium of communication.

To conclude, this study has made several contributions. Firstly, it has given a new body of knowledge to the field of English for Specific Purposes which is the introduction of English for Islamic Studies. Secondly, the development of the needs analysis questionnaire in the field of English for Islamic Studies that can be used by other researchers interested in similar goals. In addition, the development of a framework in helping and guiding ESP to design a course. Finally, a syllabus was designed based on the needs of the Islamic Studies students.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**ANALISIS KEPERLUAN DAN PENGUBALAN SILIBUS BAHASA
INGGERIS UNTUK PENGAJIAN ISLAM DI UNIVERSITI AWAM DAN
SWASTA DI MALAYSIA**

Oleh

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Kurangnya motivasi di kalangan pelajar Pengajian Islam dalam mempelajari Bahasa Inggeris dilihat sebagai satu batu penghalang untuk mereka menguasai bahasa tersebut. Pelajar Program Pengajian Islam berpendapat penggunaan Bahasa Inggeris adalah kurang jelas atau tidak penting dalam kerjaya mereka dan ini menyebabkan mereka bersikap tidak peduli dalam mempelajari Bahasa tersebut. Siswazah-siswazah ini juga digelar sebagai dai iaitu golongan yang keluar ke lapangan untuk berdakwah. Sehingga kini, masih belum ada kursus Bahasa Inggeris khusus untuk pelajar yang mendaftarkan diri dalam program Ijazah Sarjana Muda Pengajian Islam. Maka, kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengenal pasti keperluan pelajar Pengajian Islam dan kemudiannya dipadankan dengan keperluan pensyarah dan pakar daripada lapangan untuk mereka bentuk satu sukatan pelajaran khusus untuk pelajar Pengajian Islam.

Reka bentuk Kajian Kaedah Campuran digunakan untuk mengumpul data untuk digunakan sebagai panduan untuk mereka bentuk sukatan pelajaran. Borang soal selidik analisis keperluan diisi oleh 782 pelajar yang dipilih secara rambang daripada 13 pengajian tinggi awam dan swasta di Malaysia. Selain itu, satu kajian etnografi mendalam dijalankan untuk mengenal pasti keperluan pensyarah dan pakar dalam bidang Pengajian Islam. Hasil kajian tersebut menunjukkan dapatan kuantitatif paling penting ialah keutamaan terhadap kemahiran bertutur yang melibatkan pelbagai aktiviti bertutur di dalam kelas. Penguasaan kemahiran bertutur dapat membantu pelajar berdakwah, membetulkan, dan mengatasi sebarang maklumat salah tentang Islam dengan lebih efektif. Walaupun bertutur dipilih sebagai kemahiran paling penting, pelajar bersetuju bahawa kemahiran membaca juga mesti dikuasai. Tanpa menguasai kemahiran untuk membaca artikel ilmiah, jurnal, dan bahan bacaan akademik lain dalam Bahasa Inggeris, pelajar tidak akan dapat menyampaikan ajaran asas

Islam kepada golongan sasaran. Kemampuan membaca dan menganalisis secara kritis bahan akademik dalam Bahasa Inggeris dapat meningkatkan pengetahuan mereka tentang Islam dan menjadikan mereka pendakwah lebih efektif kepada orang ramai. Dapatan daripada kajian etnografi mendedahkan adanya keperluan untuk dai menggunakan Bahasa Inggeris untuk berdakwah tentang Islam kepada pelancong dan masyarakat bukan Islam tempatan. Di samping itu, penggunaan Bahasa Inggeris adalah penting ketika sesi memeluk agama Islam di mana selalunya mereka lebih selesa menggunakan Bahasa Inggeris sebagai medium komunikasi.

Kesimpulannya, kajian ini memberikan beberapa sumbangan. Pertama, ia telah memberikan satu bidang ilmu baru dalam bidang Bahasa Inggeris Untuk Tujuan Khusus iaitu Bahasa Inggeris untuk Pengajian Islam. Kedua, pembentukan soal selidik analisis keperluan dalam bidang Bahasa Inggeris Untuk Pengajian Islam yang boleh digunakan oleh penyelidik lain yang mempunyai matlamat sama, dan adanya satu rangka untuk membantu dan membimbing ESP untuk mereka bentuk kursus. Akhir sekali, satu sukatan pelajaran berjaya direka bentuk berdasarkan keperluan pelajar Pengajian Islam.

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This thesis was submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of this study. It also discusses the statement of problem, purpose, research questions framework that will be used in this research to answer all seven research questions listed in the later sections.

1.1 Background of the Study

ESP has given the language world a new view on how people should communicate. Different fields require different approaches of speaking and writing; hence, the usage of varying vocabulary and discourse differs from one domain to another. Recognising the need to have different purposes in every area makes ESP the most relevant course in every field of study. The teaching of ESP requires proposing ESP courses that familiarise students with the terminology used in their respective areas (Choi, 2021; Alibakhshi, 2021; Terauchi et al., 2020; Al-Tarawneh & Osam, 2019; Al-Bakrawi, 2013; Al-Dohon, 2014; Al-Jaafreh, 2008; Freihat & Al-Makhzoomi, 2012). Speakers need to know how to use the language correctly or at least to be knowledgeable in the English language. Knowing the rules of grammar per se, however, is not the only element needed by users. Instead, students should also master the terms and jargon they need in their specialised fields. In almost all areas of life, including industry, technology, health care, national and international tourism, and even personal contact between individuals from all over the world, English has become the driving force behind significant developments (G. Alibakshi, 2021; Rafika, 2019; Muzammil, 2019; Crystal 2003; Brutt-Griffler 2002; Warschauer, 2000).

Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) pointed out that “ESP should reflect the fact that many ESP teachings, especially if it is linked to a particular profession or discipline, make use of a methodology that is different from the methodology used in the teaching of General English” (p.4). For example, an ESP class may involve a different type of interaction between the teacher and the learner, with the teacher acting more like a consultant, thus being on an equal footing with the learners who have the expertise in the field of the ESP course (Marcu, 2020, p.310). ESP is classified into two sections (Anthony, 2018; Hyland, 2002; Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). The first section is English for Academic Purposes (EAP) which includes English for Academic Medical Purposes, English for Academic Science and Technology Purposes, and others. Next is English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) which includes English for Business Purposes, English for Medical Purposes, and many others.

This study focuses on Islamic Studies undergraduate students pursuing tertiary education at public and private universities in Malaysia. These students spend several years learning the English language during their school years. They will be part of the workforce once they graduate. The input from them is considered vital as it makes the data more meaningful and the syllabus is designed from authentic needs analysis data. These students are not being exposed enough to the English language due to many reasons. Firstly, students use the Arabic language, in at least 90% of their studies, including in the books and materials they use which are all in the Arabic language. Secondly, these students, too, are not motivated to learn English because they cannot see the importance of learning this language. Therefore, they have a low interest in learning the English language. This happens because students from Islamic Studies backgrounds are always associated with low performance in the English language though they have been exposed to the English language for 11 years. This can be seen from their Malaysian University English Test (MUET) results as many of them manage to score only Band 1 and 2 for their test (Ismail Sheikh Ahmad et al, 2014). This is also supported by a study by Hazleena Baharun where she too agrees that their English language result is unsatisfactory though enough exposure to the language has been given to school students (Baharun et al., 2003).

One of the pushing factors in students learning a second language is motivation. Motivation is an essential part of learning a new language, especially among second language (L2) learners (Tahir, 2011). By motivating these L2 learners, they will find a purpose and a goal to learn a language that will benefit them. That is the reason why needs analysis is crucial as it involves the use of a needs survey on the L2 learners about their needs and demand in learning the new language. This information enables the course designer to customise the syllabus, construct the methodology, and design materials that suit the learners. It will satisfy their goals and needs in learning the English language. A needs analysis survey provides the designer with the learners' learning needs and target needs. Information collected from learning needs, as well as target needs, is used to identify motivational issues among learners. ESP courses require a variety of skills, language levels, and methods used in classrooms, making courses exciting and unique. A needs analysis survey would be able to identify the skills to be studied and the language level needed (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998; Paltridge & Starfield, 2013; Strevens, 1988). The aforementioned researchers agree that ESP pedagogy tends to focus on identifying, often through needs analysis, the sets of transferable generic language and literacy skills that are seen to be applicable in most academic and workplace settings. Strevens (1988) defines ESP into absolute and variable characteristics, which are further elaborated by Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998).

In ESP, learners should feel motivated, their interest gained, and their attention focused on the activities that they want to participate (Rose, 1999). The primary concern for the undergraduates of Islamic Studies to learn English is

their motivation to learn English. Many people fail to realise that many Islamic Studies books and scholarly articles are in English, for example, an acknowledged translation of the Quran is in the English language (Yusof Ali, 1938). The benefits of having the ability to converse in the English language will lead them to understand articles and books written by scholars. This will help them to share their knowledge of Islam as well as the beauty of Islam to the community and the people around the world (Alfian, 2018; Abrar, 2018).

In addition, learning the English language enables these Islamic Studies students to read about other religions and to carry out a comparative study that can broaden their knowledge of religious studies, thus enabling them to discuss Islam with Muslims and non-Muslims (Hashim, 2004). Students are often disinterested and less motivated in learning English because they do not feel the connection between the courses that they are undertaking with the importance of the English language (Tahir, 2011).

Studies show that as the starting point of any English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course, needs analysis provides input for syllabus and material designing, and the kind of teaching and learning that takes place in a classroom (Tahir, 2011; Gabreila, 2015; Nawamin, 2012; Omer & AbdulGadir, 2015; Paltridge & Starfield, 2013; Parvin, 2014; Salemah, 2014). This claim is also supported by scholars like Coffey (1984), Higgins (1966) Strevens (1977), and Richterich (1973). This is because many ESP courses are mainly for second language or foreign language users, where most of them need to be motivated to learn the English language. To inspire ESP learners to learn the English language, they must be equipped with syllabi and materials that represent their real-world or their working life after they have graduated. Failure to do so would make them feel discouraged to learn the English language (Basturkmen, 2010).

Needs analysis includes different needs such as explaining what learners want to learn, describing what learners do not know or lack in the English language, and the need to look at what learners or students should know to be able to function well and communicate effectively in the target situation (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Target situation analysis explains what the goal is or what the learners want to achieve at the end of the course. Present situation analysis provides information about what the current level of proficiency of the learners is, and what the learners are learning in the present situation (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998). Deficiency analysis looks at the gap that is discovered and can be the basis of the language syllabus (Jordan, 2011). Meanwhile, strategy analysis focuses on the methodology applied to implement a language programme effectively. The function of mean analysis is to adjust language courses to local situations. Anthony (2018), Brown (2016), Flowerdew (2013) and Nunan (1988) stated that the result of needs analysis could be used for syllabus designing and other processes ending with assessing the students. Syllabus designing or course designing should take into account the needs of

the students, sponsors, and teachers of any ESP course (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998). Needs analysis aims at producing a course that, fulfils the needs of these three parties, especially the students and the sponsors (Brown, 2016; Anthony 2018).

The needs of learners can be academic needs or professional needs that have to be fulfilled by each of the learners (Anthony, 2018; Ibrahim, 2010). It is essential to ensure that students are always motivated to learn a new language. Tahir (2011) states that “motivation is a learning need for ESP learners”. He then argues that learning needs are connected towards the goal aimed by the target situation. However, it is also immature to construct an ESP programme purely on target needs. To motivate learners to learn the English language, especially second language users, the entire ESP programme has to be a pleasant, enjoyable, manageable, generative, creative, and productive activity (Tahir, 2011). It is only possible if it is based on the full potential and constraints of both the target needs and the learning process.

Some efforts have been made in several higher education institutions, such as Kolej Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Selangor (henceforth will be referred to as KUIS) to promote English for Islamic Studies (EIS) to Islamic Studies (IS) students, for example, by incorporating Islamic-based reading comprehension into their tests, but unfortunately, they have not worked. The key issue is that a comprehensive needs analysis was not performed on the learners, and there was no overseeing of the administration for the ESP courses. A partnership between the content lecturers and the language lecturers is necessary for a course to be effective in achieving the objectives as well as the learning outcomes of the courses. Challenges arise not only in terms of language versus content knowledge. Anthony (2018) acknowledges that ESP instructors might feel inadequate due to their lack of knowledge in regards to the specialised subjects. He says that subject specialists are most of the time too confident about the truth of their assertions about what and how language should be taught. This also leads to power management issues between two parties since the language lecturers do not know the content, and the content lecturers do not know the language. Anthony (2018) states that “one of the great challenges of team-teaching with a subject specialist is knowing (and respecting) the role of the other member of the team” (p.174).

To get the L2 learners' attention, ESP practitioners have to teach what they want to learn rather than what the teachers want them to learn. That is the biggest mistake that all General English (henceforth will be referred to as GE) courses have made and are still making (Anthony, 2018). According to one of the earliest ESP studies linked to Islamic Studies students entitled “ESP for Islamic School-Leavers” (Narayanaswamy, 1978), the course that Nigerian learners learned has an ‘ESP name’ but in reality, it was just another GE course. The reason given was they did not do a needs analysis on their learners, hence the course failed to achieve its objectives. There should be an

objective in learning, and needs analysis provides that objective. The objective is something that is achieved at the end of a course and can be met by adhering to the needs and wants of each party (Flowerdew, 2013; Nunan, 1988)

However, motivation is not a directly observable and tangible phenomenon. It is instead inferred from an analysis of a stream of behaviours that is determined by both environmental and hereditary factors and is observed through their effects on personality, beliefs, knowledge, ability, and skills (Alfian, 2018; Wu & Lou, 2018; Muchinsky, 2000). Motivation is something that students lack, especially when they see no importance for them to use the English language. This may be due to the unfamiliarity that they face in their classrooms. Learners may not be comfortable with what they learn, which prevents them from concentrating and learning a new language at the same time. This means that the course designer must construct a syllabus that caters to the needs of the students. This also includes the teaching methods used in the classrooms. Methods used a decade ago may not fit current situations. Teachers can no longer depend on the chalk and talk technique because teaching and learning are now more creative and interactive as we move towards Industrial Revolution 4.0, when students, learners as well as lecturers and course instructors are expected to use virtual applications in the teaching and learning process. Lesiak-Bielawska (2015) states that in ESP, using technology is useful and it defines the focus on needs assessment, materials creation/adaptation, ongoing course and/or materials evaluation, and methodology that draws on target situations and disciplines. Having the situation that the world is in now with the pandemic affecting people everywhere, the education field is badly affected too. This has led to students and teachers around the world turning to online learning to ensure the process of teaching and learning continues even though almost everyone is in a lockdown in their homes. This can be taken as proof that learning to use virtual applications is very important for both teachers and learners. While it brings new challenges to the teachers as well as the students, online learning should be an option in the higher education system (Daniel, 2020).

Hyland (1997) in his paper entitled "Is EAP Necessary? A Survey of Hong Kong Undergraduates" reports that teachers whose English is not that good demoralise students' interest in learning English because they lack confidence in learning that language. Language lecturers should, therefore, be competent in the English Language as this can affect students' confidence towards the lecturers. Nonetheless, this problem can be solved if the syllabus for an EIS syllabus is correctly designed. It is important to note that ESP practitioners who do not teach core subjects in English but have an interest to teach them in English, need to master the English Language so that the practitioners will be able to deliver their knowledge. This problem can be solved by having a team-teaching effort between the content experts and the ESP practitioners (Anthony, 2018).

In relation to this study, the current syllabus used by the Islamic Studies students in KUIS is the same with other students of different courses whereby they learn only basic grammar as well as all the four skills in the English language or General English (GE). The syllabus that is currently used is not specifically designed for them because needs analysis was not performed on them to know their preferences in learning the English language. The English course that the IS students are taking currently, focuses only on GE where the discourse used in the syllabus does not reflect the real world or the working environment that they will enter after graduation. Thus, this research is carried out with the hope that students' needs can be determined and based on the needs identified, a syllabus that matches their needs, as well as their field of study, can be designed. This course will later be called English for Islamic Studies, where students learn the English language according to their needs that are required in their future professional context. With this in mind, the study presents the problem statement in the next section.

1.2 Problem Statement

In Malaysia, researchers and academics have been trying to link language and Islamic Studies since 2003. Lecturers in Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM) published a book entitled "Language and Islamic Studies" in the year 2003. They were among the first in Malaysia to see the problems or the lack of knowledge in the English language among students of Islamic Studies and these lecturers intended to overcome this problem by aiming for them to be at least able to read English materials on their own and at their speed (Baharun et al., 2003).

The ability to acquire a second language is challenging for second language and foreign language users around the world (G. Alibakhshi et al., 2021; L.J. Choi, 2021; Sa'dullah Muzammil, 2019; Rafika Farah & Puji Sumarsono, 2019; Alfian, 2019; Hilmansyah, 2016). This is a similar situation with the students in Malaysia. Though the English language was taught from primary to secondary locally, students still face problems in comprehending texts as well as low efficiency in expressing thoughts and ideas in the English Language.

One of the reasons behind the declining factor amongst students to learn the English Language is because of the lack of interest which led to them having a negative attitude towards acquiring the particular language (Alfian, 2019; Wu & Lou, 2018). Studies have shown that learners are more interested to learn the English Language when they see a connection between them and the target language (Akliu, 2015; Aeni et al., 2018; Alfian, 2018) Many East Asian countries have considered English as an important tool for development and globalization (Choi, 2021; Rafika Farah & Puji Sumarsono, 2019) and this has resulted in the increased of demand for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) based courses to be taught in these countries (Terauchi et. al. 2020; Rafika

Farah & Puji Sumarsono, 2019). This scenario can also be seen in Malaysia (Baharun et al., 2003).

In ESP, the connection can be achieved through the process of needs analysis (Arno-Macra et al., 2020; Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998; Hutchinson and Waters, 1987; Jordan, 1997). Studies on the importance of needs analysis and how it has a positive impact on learners have been done by many scholars and researchers (Anthony, 2018; Brown, 2016; Hyland, 2007). In the field of ESP, various research has been done in many fields of study such as the business field of study, aviation, legal, medic and many others. These studies have looked at needs analysis and syllabus design as a starting point in designing an ESP course.

Based on various studies such as, Narayanaswamy (1982); Reima Al-Jarf (2005); Puji Sumaroni (2019); Abrar (2018); Ahmed Alsamadana, (2017); Aklilu (2015); and many others, identified main issues such as, needs analysis was not executed, materials and syllabus design and the methodology used are not followed, and lastly. The lack of awareness on the importance of English for the students in the Islamic Studies programme was also identified. This is due to the gaps or lacks the current syllabus have (Brown, 2016; Paltridge & Brian, 2013; Hyland, 2002).

Furthermore, students' perception towards learning the English language is very important (Alfian, 2019; Kartika, & Emaliana, 2016). The acts of learning, speaking, or even reading English language materials have been considered a taboo among Islamic Studies students and lecturers (Ahmad et al. 2014; Solikhah, 2016). They do not feel the importance of knowing or learning the English language, because they feel that being fluent in their mother tongue and the Arabic language is sufficient (Hilmansyah Saefullah, 2016). Undeniably, it is crucial for learners to know these two languages, however being competent in the lingua franca is also vital. A study by Ahmad et al. (2014) has identified that, due to nationalistic and religious motives, the Islamic Studies students have negative views on the English language, as well as being instilled with negative ideas by non-English teachers. Hashim (2004) states that "Islamic pedagogy is perceived as compartmentalised, isolated, and taught from a narrow perspective, as though it has no relation to contemporary life" and other subjects are taught "as if they have no connection to the Islamic worldview" (p. 9). These perceptions hinder students or learners to be motivated in learning the English language (Hashim, 2004; Solikhah, 2016).

Most of these students are also not aware of the current situation, and this often happens because they choose not to read English language materials (Terauchi, 2021; Hashim, 2004). Hence, they are unable to express their opinions on specific issues, such as how Islam is wrongly labelled as the religion of terrorism. This shows that Islamic Studies students have stopped

concentrating on English language for quite some time especially in reading, which leads them to be closed minds and possess negative attitudes towards the language (Alfian 2018; Ahmad et al. 2014) Moreover, there is no attempt or initiative from the students to master the English language. This could be due to lack of confidence, as they cannot communicate well in the English language as well as the lack of knowledge they have on certain issues. (Mohd-Ahraf, 2005).

This is a very challenging situation since Islamic Studies students or Islamic Studies graduates are supposed to be able to address and describe Islam from any angle so that Islam is seen as a universal religion (Aeni et. al. 2018; Kartika & Emaliana, 2016). They also need to reflect on the groups that acclaim teachings that are not in line with the teachings of the *Ahlil Sunnah Waljamaah*. *Ahlil Sunnah Waljamaah* refers to the followers of the largest community of Islam. Its name comes from the word Sunnah, referring to the behaviour of Prophet Muhammad, Peace Be Upon Him.

The emergence of international Muslim religious speakers or preachers on the internet is also increasing tremendously (Hoesterey, 2016, 2008; Watson, 2005), which is worrying as they tend to deliver sermons or speeches that are not only contrary but usually mislead Muslims from the real teachings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) (Mohd-Ahraf, 2005). It is necessary to have scholars who are proficient in the English language so that they can not only check the credibility of these overnight preachers, but also have a debate with them to discuss issues posed by these online preachers during their online da'wah (refers to preaching in Islam) sessions.

Islamic Studies students should also be aware that they need to be literate in the English language because the religion never stops people from learning more than one language. This is in accordance with Mohd-Ahraf's (2005), statement that "it is considered ideal, in the Islamic worldview, to learn other languages and to know and value the differences between different communities", despite the conflict or discord, as perceived by some Muslims, between Islamic values and some of the Western values as transmitted through English (Nurie, 2019).

As mentioned above, we can see that there is a void where the lack of knowledge of the English language can prevent these students who may one day be speakers or preachers from performing their roles. So, how would the administration of needs analysis help in motivating students of Islamic Studies to learn the English language? To be able to bridge the gap, first, ESP practitioners need to be able to attract the interest of these students, and the only way that they can do that is by fulfilling, if not, all of their needs, wants and lacks in the effort to gain their interest (Anthony, 2018; Basturkmen, 2010; Hyland, 2002; Dudley Evans & St. Jo 1998; Hutchinson & Waters 1978). This

includes not only gathering information from students but also observing daily activities of Daees (a group of people who call or invite other people to belief in Allah) at work. Teachers need to know what can motivate them to learn the English language. Hence the notion of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is appropriate to address this matter.

What can be deduced from the stated studies is that there is a significant problem, and almost all share the same problem, which is the importance of needs analysis in any ESP course. The needs, wants and lacks of the students must be seriously addressed (Hutchinson & Waters, 1978). The need to find out what the students of Islamic Studies need to learn, and how they are going to use English in their working life as well as the of the graduates from the Islamic Studies programmes in terms of their English language ability to meet their current needs should be investigated.

Abdullah (2009) states that some studies in ESP only concentrate on Target Situation Analysis (TSA) and Present Situation Analysis (PSA), which are inadequate because the Language Needs of the learners are not taken into consideration. To address such limitations, this study will be based not only on TSA and PSA but also on another element, which is the Learning Situation Analysis or LSA as suggested by (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998). Learning Situation Analysis is fundamental because this is how syllabus designers gain the interest of learners. Brown (2016) stated that needs analysis is the most important tool before any syllabus can be designed. The knowledge of transforming data from needs analysis into a syllabus is crucial as it is the basis of a syllabus design (Brown, 2016). Thus, this study will look at suggested ways to transform needs analysis data into a syllabus.

Although many studies have been done in the field of EIS in other countries such as in Indonesia, Saefullah (2016), Alfian (2019), Sa'dullah Muzammil (2019) and many others. However, to date, no research has been done on EIS especially in terms of needs analysis and syllabus design in Malaysia. Therefore, this study is crucial as it gives a new breath in the field of ESP in Malaysia and to highlight the importance of designing an ESP course by using the correct procedure as suggested by Brown, (2016) and to design a syllabus for Islamic Studies undergraduates.

In the field of ESP, many courses have emerged and have their own specific discourse based on the specific field. English for Science and Technology (EST) is the first area in ESP to evolve. EST focuses on teaching the learners a new set of vocabulary that is related to the target disciplinary community. On the other hand, business English has been developed to foster intercultural communication between non-native English speakers (Nickerson & Planken, 2016). English for Medical Purposes is designed to look at two major outputs in this field. The first is to look at the documentation used in writing medical-

journal articles, in other words, the generic structure of the document as well as presenting research in a conference (Ferguson, 2013). The second output is looking at doctor-patient interactions as well as medical procedures and treatment (Woodrow, 2018). English for legal Purposes too is worthy of its own ESP course. This is due to the fact that Legal English can subdivide itself into the EOP branch that focuses on the needs of practitioners while the EAP branch focuses on the communicative needs of legal students (Northcott, 2013). After analysing all these courses, it is just fair that the field of Islamic Studies to be given a subdivision of its own in the ESP tree. Furthermore, Islamic Studies has its own target disciplinary community that requires its own discourse. As in Legal English, Islamic Studies too can focus on both branches of ESP, the occupation branch as well as the academic branch.

As of 22nd January 2021, there are 866 public and private higher learning institutions in Malaysia listed in the Malaysian Qualifications Register (MQR), under the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA). From that total number, 13 institutions offer Islamic Studies programmes for undergraduates: six public universities and seven private higher learning institutions. One of the institutions that will be the focus of this study is Kolej Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Selangor (KUIS). This study will mainly look at KUIS as the focus group in gathering the data and input in developing the syllabus for English for Islamic Studies.

It is very important to have a specific course for the Islamic Studies students because in the current world, English has become the language of choice (Woodrow, 2018). Currently, there is no higher learning institution in Malaysia that offers a course in English for Islamic Studies. Most of these institutions offer General English courses rather than focusing on the students' specialised field of interest. EIS is chosen to be one of the subdivisions of English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP) because, the aim of many Islamic Studies students is to go out and preach once they have graduated. The ability to speak English and to have a sound knowledge of Islam is a benefit for all graduates of Islamic Studies.

The concern of the present study stems from the researcher's experience as an English lecturer at an Islamic private university in Malaysia, where a number of the students come from Islamic Studies background and are also enrolled in Islamic Studies course in the university. Reflecting on the 17 years of experience of the researcher in dealing with students of Islamic studies, she finds many issues among the students regarding their lack of interest towards learning the English language besides the Malay Language or the Arabic language. This is supported by the gap identified from the literature related to the field of ESP.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

As mentioned earlier, this study aims to investigate the English language needs of students who are enrolled in the Islamic Studies Degree programme in public and private higher learning institutions in Malaysia as well as designing a syllabus for them. These following steps guide the current study:

- 1) A framework by Basturkmen (2010) is used to construct a set of needs analysis questionnaire, interview questions as well as an observation checklist to be used in the ethnography study that later provide the input for the syllabus designing process.
- 2) The needs analysis is used to find out how students perceive the English language and the types of content that these students deem as important to be included in their syllabus on English language learning.
- 3) The construction of a syllabus for one of the courses for an undergraduate programme called English for Islamic Studies (henceforth will be referred to as EIS) will be based on the student learning outcomes that are gathered from the needs analysis data as suggested by Brown (2016) and Woodrow (2018).

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To identify factors that motivate Islamic Studies students in learning the English language.
2. To determine the problems faced by the students of Islamic Studies in learning the English language in terms of three factors, namely, language, teachers, and the environment.
3. To investigate the target, present, and learning needs of Islamic Studies students.
4. To find out the preparedness of the graduates from the Islamic Studies programmes in terms of their English language ability to meet their current needs.
5. To determine work-related tasks or activities performed by a *Daee* that involve the use of English and its contribution in the syllabus design.
6. To identify the techniques used in translating the needs analysis data into a syllabus.

7. To gather feedback from students, lecturers and experts about the newly-designed English for Islamic Studies (EIS) syllabus.

1.5 Research Questions

To achieve the purpose of this study (see section 1.4), the following are the research questions for this study:

1. What are the factors that motivate students from the Islamic Studies programme to learn English?
2. From the perspectives of students and lecturers, what are the problems faced by the students of Islamic Studies in learning the English language in terms of three factors namely language, teachers and the environment?
3. What are the specific needs of the Islamic Studies students?
 - a. What are the target situation needs of the Islamic Studies students?
 - b. What are the present situation needs of the Islamic Studies students?
 - c. What are the learning situation needs of the Islamic Studies students?
4. Are graduates from Islamic Studies programmes well-prepared in terms of their English language ability to meet their current needs based on the current syllabus?
5. What are the work-related activities in the career of a 'Dae'e' that are conducted in English and how it could be used in designing the new syllabus?
6. How are the needs analysis data translated into a syllabus?
7. What are the students', lecturers', and experts' feedback on the newly designed English for Islamic Studies (EIS) syllabus?

These research questions were designed to first identify the importance of English language to the students of Islamic Studies and the students' preference in the syllabus that will be used in the classroom. This is important because it will determine their perseverance in learning a language that is commonly perceived as a foreign language to the students of IS.

Next, the research questions focus on the three most essential elements in needs analysis as suggested by many scholars, particularly (Dudley-Evans & St. John 1998; Hutchinson & Waters, 1978). Their theories are also used as

the underlying framework in this study. Target Situation Analysis (TSA), Present Situation Analysis (PSA) and Learning Situation Analysis (LSA) are the three most important factors that need to be considered in doing a needs analysis of the learners and teachers as they provide accurate data for the instructor to design a syllabus based on their needs.

Target Situation Analysis refers to the elements that learners need to be able to function well at their workplace. On the other hand, Present Situation Analysis looks at learners' abilities at the beginning of the course. Finally, Learning Situation Analysis focuses on learners' individual preferences in the learning process (Brown, 2016).

All these research questions will be answered by providing a set of questionnaire to the students and graduates of Islamic Studies. Several interviews will be conducted on the students, experts from both fields, representatives from the organisations. Class observations and workplace observation will also be conducted to gain more authentic data to answer the research questions and at the same time, constructing the syllabus of English for Islamic Studies.

1.6 Significance of the study

The significance of this study lies in the introduction of a new branch in the ESP world, which is EIS. Due to the fact that there is currently no syllabus for EIS, the findings of this study may be used by other researchers to develop many other syllabuses and materials for EIS suited to the needs of their institutions which offer courses in Islamic Studies.

These are the reasons that lead to this study. The findings should make an important contribution to the field of ESP as the world of ESP is expanding due to the increasing awareness of the usage of English in particular contexts. Thus, ESP practitioners must accommodate different needs and demands of the various fields of studies.

It is important for the ESP course designer to be able to create a syllabus or a course that is authentic and meets the needs of the learners, but it is not always a simple task to complete. This view is supported by Flowerdew (2011) who writes that 'the focus of researchers is on real settings with real participants which are impossible to recreate in a classroom. However, the emphasis that is useful to the course designer is the community'. This study too contributes significantly to familiarising students of Islamic Studies to the terms and jargon as well as different genres from their Islamic studies courses

in the English language. They will be able to identify their own members of community and develop their own discourse community.

In short, the design of a syllabus for Islamic Studies students will introduce these students to, as well as provide awareness that their work will require the use of the English language. As a result, it is hoped that using this syllabus will enable them to secure jobs and ultimately to function well in the job market.

1.7 Scope of the Study

This study investigates the needs of the Islamic Studies undergraduates in having their own syllabus based on the needs analysis done on them. This study too looks at how motivation plays an important role in determining their interest in learning the English Language. This study involves 782 undergraduates randomly selected from public and private universities in Malaysia, 20 undergraduates and 20 respondents from the field. The scope of this study is constrained to the study of the needs among undergraduates in the field of Islamic Studies in Malaysia as well as designing a syllabus that cater to their needs.

In past studies, class observations were among the activities often adopted by researchers as one of the techniques used to collect needs analysis data. However this study excluded class observation as conducting a proper and in-depth interview as well as utilizing questionnaires along with a thorough ethnographic study on Daees are deemed sufficient to collect extensive Needs analysis data.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

Within the scope of this study, the important key terms used are defined as follows:

a) English for Specific Purposes (ESP)

ESP is defined to meet the specific needs of the learners that make use of underlying methodology and activities of the discipline it serves, and it is centred on the language appropriate to these activities in terms of grammar, lexis, register, study skills, discourse, and genre (Dudley-Evans, 1998).

b) English for Academic Purposes

English for Academic Purposes (EAP) courses are aimed at training students, usually in a higher education setting, to use language appropriately for study. It

is one of the most common forms of English for specific purposes (ESP). EAP is described as a student's need for quick and economical use of the English language to pursue a course of academic study (Coffey, 1984).

c) English for Occupational Purposes

English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) examines the field of teaching English in occupational settings as a particular instance of general workplace training and development (Dudley-Evans, 1998).

d) Islamic Studies

Islamic Studies (IS) provides students with advanced knowledge of Islam, which includes a highly developed comprehension of the theological, jurisprudential, historical, contemporary, and spiritual aspects of Islam.

e) English for Islamic Studies

English for Islamic Studies (EIS) is a tailor-made English Course for the students of Islamic Studies.

1.9 Summary

This chapter has delineated various aspects of the research issue as well as briefly discussed ESP as a whole, including its branches, and the key stages. The researcher also explains the problem statement that initiated this study and the importance of English language for Islamic Studies students. A conceptual and theoretical framework is presented as the backbone of this study.

Chapter 2 discusses an in-depth explanation of Needs Analysis, Syllabus Design, and motivation as well as the views from scholars in the subject areas.

Chapter 3 introduces the methods that will be used in this study which is the mixed methods. Needs analysis, questionnaires as well as interview sheets will be used to collect data from the students, lecturers, and experts from both fields of studies. An extensive ethnography data collection is also discussed to triangulate the quantitative data gathered.

Chapter 4 reports on the findings of the process carried out in chapter 3. The researcher reports the qualitative and quantitative data accordingly. A thorough

discussion is presented based on the findings gathered. A new English for Islamic Studies syllabus that was designed from the gathered quantitative and qualitative data is introduced.

Chapter 5 concludes the whole study and provides the summary and recommendation to other researchers on the areas that they might be interested to study further.



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