

Issues in TESL

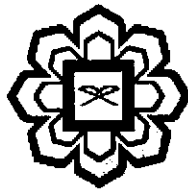
Ratnawati Mohd Asraf

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Ratnawati Mohd Asraf



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THE NEED TO DEVELOP ELT MATERIALS FOR MUSLIM LEARNERS

Abdul Shakour Preece

Hadley (2004) states that English is now considered an International Language (EIL) or 'lingua franca' of the modern era because it is used by millions of people all around the world to communicate, educate and conduct business. Consequently, developing nations, including Muslim countries, are eager to acquire English. There have been several attempts to cater for Muslim audiences by producing ELT materials with Islamic content; however, to date these attempts have fallen short of the mark for a number of reasons - either they lacked clear criteria for including Islamic content or their layout and language learning methodology were ineffective. Thus, with so many Muslim learners eager to study English, it is time that a concerted effort was made to develop ELT materials that are appropriate for Muslim learners.

A look into the literature on ELT and Islam reveals different viewpoints about the effects of learning English on Muslims. Some argue that conventional ELT materials have a negative effect on Muslim learners due to their Euro-centricity and secular worldview. Hamad (1999) maintains that English language has the potential to affect the thinking and behaviour of Muslim learners, while Daud (1997) sees it as a powerful tool for the transmission of culture and values. This being so, there is a pressing need to develop ELT materials that reflect the values, beliefs and culture of Muslim learners in order to make them relevant and engaging for them i.e. providing for their cognitive, affective and spiritual needs.