Design, Formulation And Implementation Of An English Language Curriculum From Islamic Perspective

Rekabentuk, Perumusan Dan Pelaksanaan Kurikulum Bahasa Ingerris Dari Perspektif Islam

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Abstract
Curriculum development plays an important role in any educational enterprise. It spells out the crucial components which make up the curriculum and the detailed process in attaining the ultimate objectives of the curriculum. It is crucial that the English language curriculum reflects the aims, educational purpose and Islamic ethos of the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM). The paper will look into how to accomplish the philosophy, vision and mission of the University, offering suggestions concerning the key components or critical elements that will constitute the foundation of a language curriculum, with a focus on the role of the educator in facilitating language education as well as content factors that are necessary for the development of a language curriculum from an Islamic perspective.

Keywords: English, Language Curriculum, Design, Islamization of Knowledge, Educators, materials development.

Abstrak
Perkembangan kurikulum memainkan peranan yang penting dalam mana-mana perusahaan pendidikan. Ia menerangkan komponen penting yang membentukkan kurikulum dan proses terperinci dalam mencapai objektif utama kurikulum. Ia adalah penting bagi kurikulum bahasa Inggeris untuk menggambarkan matlamat, tujuan pendidikan dan etos Islam Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Malaysia (UIAM). Karya ini akan meneliti bagaimana untuk

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mencapai falsafah, visi dan misi Universiti, menawarkan saranan mengenai komponen utama atau elemen-elemen kritikal yang akan membentukkan asas kurikulum bahasa, dengan memberi tumpuan kepada peranan pendidik dalam memudahkan pendidikan bahasa serta kandungan yang diperlukan untuk pembangunan kurikulum bahasa dari perspektif Islam.

Kata Kunci: Inggeris, Kurikulum Bahsa, Rekabentuk, Pengislaman Pengetahuan, Pendidik, Pembangunan Bahan.

Introduction

Curriculum development plays an important role in an educational enterprise. A curriculum is the backbone of an educational institution intimately related to its raison d'etre, credibility and legitimacy. The curriculum may be considered as the total body of knowledge that students acquire in the institution concerned. It refers to all the activities that students, in the process of learning for personal and career development, engage in. It not only includes what students learn, but also how they learn it, how educators help them learn, the use of all supporting materials, styles and methods of assessment, and the facilities provided by the institution concerned. International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), for instance, has an overall curriculum for the entire university, focusing mainly on its overall vision and mission statements, on the one hand, and the curricula for specialization in its faculties (Kulliyyahs), on the other. This paper represents an attempt to focus on the development of English language curriculum from Islamic perspective and will look at the vision and mission of the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM).

Defining Curriculum

The term "curriculum" has been variously defined. We shall look at some definitions from the perspective of education in general and then move on to examine other definitions from the perspective of language teaching and learning. One of the earliest definitions was offered by Tyler[1], who argues that the answers to four specific questions form the basis of any curriculum from an educational perspective: 1) What educational purposes should the school seek to attain? 2) What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes? 3) How can these educational experiences be effectively organized? 4) How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained?

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[1] Tyler, R. W., Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949), p.1.

According to Kelly,[2] a curriculum should be understood as "the overall rationale for the educational program of an institution" and says that a definition of the term must include the intentions of the planners, the procedures adopted for the implementation of those intentions, the actual experiences of the pupils resulting from the educators' direct attempts to carry out their or the planner's intentions, and the 'hidden learning' that occurs as a byproduct of the organization of the curriculum, and indeed, of the school.

Besides the definition of a curriculum, researchers have identified five distinct curriculum models: the objectives model, the process model, Tyler's[3] model, Wheeler's model (as cited in Urevbu[4]) and Kerr's model (as cited in Urevbu[5]), all of which can be used as guide for developing a proper curriculum. Generally, all curriculum models stress the importance of considering a variety of factors that has considerable influence over a curriculum. This also applies to an English language curriculum developed from Islamic perspective.

Educational philosophy of the IIUM

A look at the educational philosophy of the IIUM shows that language curriculum goals should be based on the educational philosophy of the University as recommended in the First World Conference of Muslim Education in Mecca in 1997, which emphasized the Islamization of Knowledge (IOK[6]). The spirit of this educational philosophy, rooted in *Tawḥīd*, is based on the Holy

Qur'an, in particular the first five verses revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.):

Read! In the name of the thy Lord and Cherisher, Who Created man, out of a leech-like clot: Read! And thy Lord is Most Bountiful. He Who taught (the use of) the Pen taught man that which he knew not. (96: 1-5)

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[2] Kelly, A. V., The Curriculum: Theory and practice. (London: Paul Chapman, 1989), p. 14.
[3] Tyler, R. W., Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949), p.1.
[4] Urevbu, A. O. (1985). Curriculum studies. Ikeja: Longman, p.23.
[5] Urevbu, A. O. (1985). Curriculum studies. Ikeja: Longman, p.23.
[6] First World Conference on Muslim Education, 1977.

This philosophy affirms that knowledge shall be disseminated in the spirit of *Tawḥīd*, which means that all knowledge would invariably point to the ultimate source and be a clear indicator of the Presence of Allah as the Absolute Lord and Master of mankind. "This total and uncompromising recognition of Allah as the Lord of the World (*Rabb al-ʿālamīn*) represents the apex in the hierarchy of knowledge."[7] Thus, all disciplines of knowledge should lead towards subservience of this truth. "This is because knowledge is a form of trust (*amānah*) from Allah to man, and hence man should utilize knowledge according to Allah's will in performing his role as the servant and vicegerent (*khalīfah*) of Allah on earth"[8].

The above reference to the philosophy of IIUM is a clear declaration that the pursuit of knowledge that is incumbent on all Muslims constitutes an act of worship. Reviewing the educational philosophy of Islam will enable us to understand its contextual application in terms of the Vision, Mission and Strategic orientation of IIUM. The vision and mission of the University are as follows[9]:

•   Undertake the special and greatly needed task of reforming the contemporary Muslim mentality and integrating Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences in a positive manner.
•   Produce better quality intellectuals, professionals and scholars by integrating the qualities of faith (*īmān*), knowledge (*ʿilm*), and good character (*akhlāq*) to serve as agents of comprehensive and balanced progress as well as sustainable development in Malaysia and in the Muslim world.
•   Foster the Islamization of the ethics of Muslim academic and administrative staff of IIUM, and certain aspects of human knowledge- particularly in the social sciences and humanities- with a view to making them more useful and more relevant to the Muslim *Ummah.*
•   Nurture the quality of holistic excellence which is imbued with Islamic moral-spiritual values in the process of learning, teaching, research, consultancy, publication, administration, and student life.

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[7] "Philosophy," http://www.iium.edu.my/about-iium/philosophy
[8] Ibid.
[9] "The IIUM Mission and Vision," http://www.iium.edu.my/about-iium/mission-vision

•   To exemplify an international community of dedicated intellectuals, scholars, professionals, officers and workers who are motivated by the Islamic world-view and code of ethics as an integral part of their work culture.

•   To enhance intercultural understanding and foster civilization dialogues in Malaysia as well as across communities and nations.

•   To develop an environment which instills commitment for lifelong learning and a deep sense of social responsibility amongst staff and students.

'Vision' is defined in terms of what is envisioned in a compelling future for IIUM, and 'Mission' refers to the general guidelines about how to achieve this Vision. It is obvious that the foregoing list contains a critical blend of elements of Vision and Mission. The more specific directives and daily tasks of IIUM can be described as its Operational Strategy. The document which provides clear guidelines about educational milestones to be accomplished, the teaching and learning processes to be implemented and the strategies to achieve Islamic educational objectives of the IIUM and which embodies its spirit and philosophy in blueprint, is the curriculum. The translation of this document is the challenge that IIUM faces and its success hinges primarily on the role of the educator in making the Islamization process a reality and proving that an Islamic educational institution is relevant in dealing with contemporary concerns.

One of the main objectives of the IIUM is to reformulate, integrate, and de-secularize contemporary knowledge from non-Islamic sources with established Islamic Knowledge and Sciences, and align all these disciplines towards the Tawhidic perspective.   Islam affirms that there is unity in diversity and that the real globalization of mankind will eventually lead to the recognition of an all-encompassing reality as incontrovertible proof of the One Absolute Creator. This will be the next phase of human evolution if humanity, threatened by the forces of dissolution and extinction, is able to return to a responsible, balanced and harmonious life with nature and other inhabitants of this planet, as enjoined by Allah swt. The last focus is that an Islamic education should represent the comprehensive development of both students and educators to realize their full potential and serve humanity as Allah's servants ('abd).

We will argue that a conventional English language curriculum when 'transformed' into an English language curriculum with an Islamic perspective can serve to fulfill the broad-spectrum objectives of an Islamic education. For Islamic objectives to be realized, the inculcation of Is-

lam's spiritual values and ethics must exist as salient aspects of an English language curriculum. The English Language curriculum in this regard, serves not only to promote the learning of the language, but also functions as a vehicle for the propagation and inculcation of the values, beliefs and ethics of Islam. This is in contrast to conventional English Language programs, which may not be related to a spiritual outlook based on Divine Revelation. Apart from acquiring proficiency in English Language, an Islamic perspective would relate to the different ways in which the learning of English can support the development of moral and spiritual traits, the understanding and approach (*adab*), spiritual courtesy necessary for acquiring knowledge that leads to a greater appreciation of Allah's Mercy and bounties for mankind, thus forming the basis for strengthening and enhancing faith (*īmān*). The English language curriculum serves as a reminder to students that the purpose of education in Islam is intimately tied to worship and serving Allah swt. In order to realize the aims and objectives of an English language curriculum from Islamic perspective, it is necessary that the essentials of such a curriculum be established.

Curriculum development model
We find that Kerr's model (as cited in Urevbu[10]) of curriculum development can be adapted to explain how we can create an Islamic English language curriculum that is grounded in the Tawhidic tenets of Islam as well as ensuring that the curriculum keeps abreast with current and leading edge ESL teaching and learning strategies. We have adopted Kerr's model(as cited in Urevbu[11]) as it combines important elements identified in Wheeler's (as cited in Urevbu[12]) and Tyler's[13] models and it also provides an analytical framework for developing an Islamic English language curriculum. Kerr's model (as cited in Urevbu[14]) contains four domains: objectives, knowledge, evaluation, and school learning experiences.

[10] Urevbu, A. O. (1985). Curriculum studies. Ikeja: Longman, p.23.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Urevbu, A. O. (1985). Curriculum studies. Ikeja: Longman, p.23.
[13] Tyler, R. W., Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction, (Chicago: University of Chicago
   Press, 1949), p.1.
[14] Urevbu, A. O. (1985). Curriculum studies. Ikeja: Longman, p.23.

These 4 domains are presented in the simplified version of Kerr's (as cited in Urevbu[15]) standard model as depicted in the diagram below.
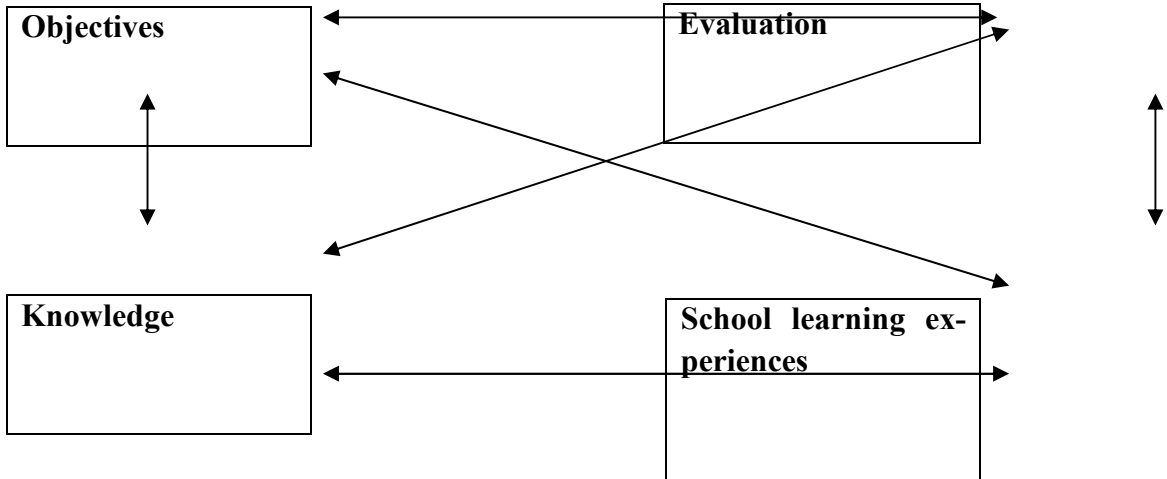
Source: Urevbu[16] (1985)

Figure 1: Kerr's curriculum model

The above is a representation of Kerr's standard model (as cited in Urevbu[17]). We have amended this model to emphasize the importance of the Tawhidic foundation which underlies an Islamic curriculum and from which any sub-curriculum is derived, that is, the English Language curriculum from Islamic Perspective. Figure 2 illustrates this and allows us to explain how such a curriculum can function and be applied within the context of an English Language teaching at the IIUM.

The English language curriculum from Islamic perspective
Figure 2 shows the modification of the original Kerr's Model (as cited in Urevbu[18]) to accommodate the Islamic purpose of teaching English within a 4-quadrant model, as well as provide a Tawhidic core for the 4 domains as contrasted with Kerr's standard model. This model is useful for explaining the holistic orientation of an Islamic English language curriculum as it provides a useful framework for understanding the interplay between the different domains. For instance, from Islamic perspective the

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[15] Ibid.

[16] Urevbu, A. O. (1985). *Curriculum studies*. Ikeja: Longman, p.23.

[17] Urevbu, A. O. (1985). *Curriculum studies*. Ikeja: Longman, p.23.

[18] Ibid.

Tawhidic creed is of paramount importance. Tawhidic means "to make things one". *Tawḥīd* is based on the Oneness of the Creator and Islamic theology recognizes that this Oneness is also mirrored in the interrelatedness of the physical universe. This implies that all knowledge and disciplines are closely connected and integrated at their core. Islam holds that all knowledge leads to recognition of the Oneness of God.
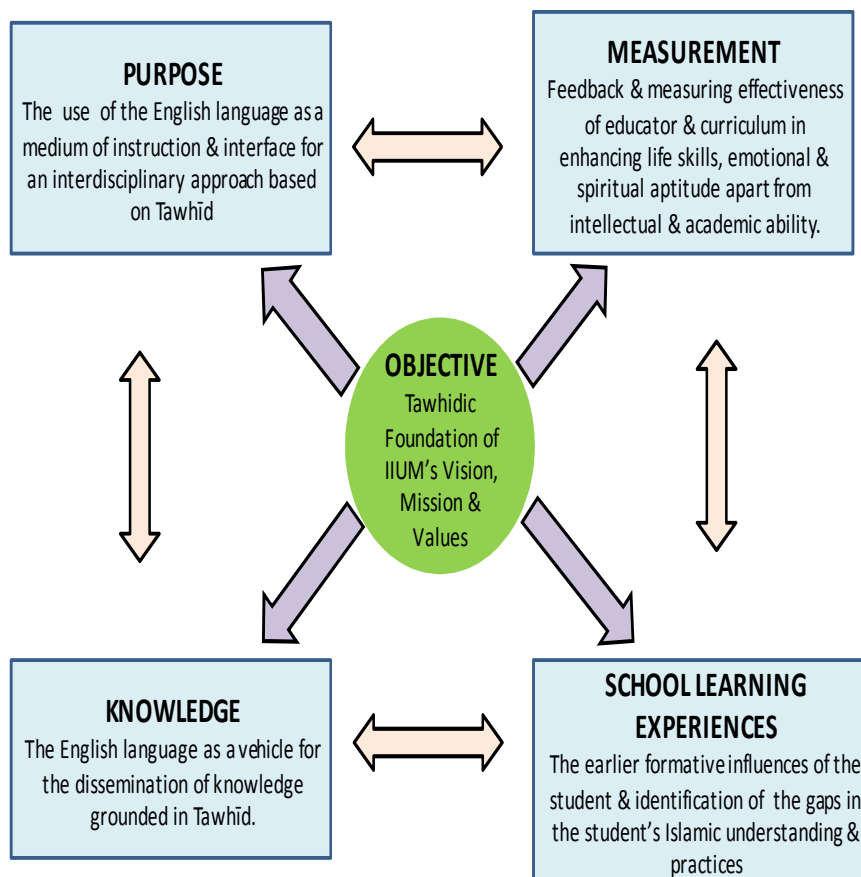
AN ADAPTATION OF KERR'S MODEL

PURPOSE
The use of the English language as a medium of instruction & interface for an interdisciplinary approach based on Tawhīd

MEASUREMENT
Feedback & measuring effectiveness of educator & curriculum in enhancing life skills, emotional & spiritual aptitude apart from intellectual & academic ability.

OBJECTIVE
Tawhidic Foundation of IIUM's Vision, Mission & Values

KNOWLEDGE
The English language as a vehicle for the dissemination of knowledge grounded in Tawhīd.

SCHOOL LEARNING EXPERIENCES
The earlier formative influences of the student & identification of the gaps in the student's Islamic understanding & practices

Figure 2: An Adaptation of Kerr's curriculum model(as cited in Urevbu[19])

We will illustrate the use of the amended Kerr's (as cited in Urevbu[20]) model as a conceptual map for an Islamic curriculum. The four domains are the typical Kerr's[21] domains, but what is different is the Tawhidic core at the heart of this diagram. This is to emphasise that Tawhidic thinking is at the heart of an Islamic curriculum. The four domains are taken from Kerr's model (as cited in Urevbu[22]) in figure 1. The meanings that are given to these 4 domains are different from those of Kerr's (as cited in Urevbu[23]) model. The domains in this amended model are (1) Purpose (referred to as Objectives in Kerr's), (2) Knowledge, (3) Measurement, and (4) School Learning Experiences.

The first domain, Purpose, refers to the use of English language as a medium of instruction, transmission of knowledge and interface for interdisciplinary approach based on *Tawhīd*. This means that English language serves as a common language of all faculties at IIUM. This would imply that within an Islamic curriculum the teaching of English language is of paramount importance because it serves as a common medium which unites all disciplines and bears the potential of integrating and interrelating different fields of knowledge. This potential use of English as an interdisciplinary tool can be the precursor of an interdisciplinary approach to knowledge which emphasizes the exploration of commonalities between disciplines in order to validate the Tawhidic basis of knowledge. Students can be exposed to articles based on interdisciplinary perspectives which underlines that genuine knowledge would reflect greater symmetry and order as against the fragmentation and micro-differentiation of knowledge which is the consequence of disciplines that are not rooted in spirituality. In recent decades new sciences like Fractal Geometry, Quantum Physics and New Biology are pointing to spiritual truths already known by Revelation. The revival of *Tawḥīd*ic interdisciplinary studies can be championed by the English Language Division,

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[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid.

IIUM through its role in enhancing and developing effective language programs for the students.

The English Language Division is usually perceived as a service department in IIUM for the purpose of developing language proficiency skills necessary for the students to pursue studies in their respective faculties. We will argue that the Division has a greater role to play within the perspective of the Islamic curriculum. The English language would be the preferred vehicle for the dissemination of Islam, its values, beliefs, and Tawhidic creed apart from standard learning of language skills needed for academic studies. This expanded role of the English language in the Islamization process would constitute a crucial part of the students' course of studies at IIUM. From a language perspective the continuum of Islamization can begin with English as a proficiency course, then as a language of specific content (as in the law faculty), and as a language for interdisciplinary research and communication between faculties. This represents an enhanced role of English language curriculum from Islamic perspective. There is need for an interdisciplinary approach using the medium of English to facilitate an Islamic outlook rooted in *Tawḥīd*.

The expanded role of English makes it a critical pivot of the Islamization process. The English Language Division can continue to support content-driven faculties with additional tools for eliciting values and identifying useful behaviours. This role calls for researching traditional Islam for discovering and replicating the process which in pre-modern times created the luminaries of Islam in Science, Literature, Divine Law, Mathematics , Medicine, Sociology and other disciplines. Language classrooms can highlight effective strategies of behaviour and thinking that can be applied to resolve contemporary challenges. English language can become the vanguard of the Islamization process. A similar logic applies to the other three domains, namely, knowledge, measurement and school learning experiences. All the four domains are not exclusive and they are intimately interrelated. For instance, the knowledge domain is linked to the function of English as a vehicle and carrier for the transmission of knowledge. The measurement domain functions to measure the effectiveness of the curriculum as well as the role of the educator. The objective of measurement is to assist in the development of a well-rounded Muslim student. Increasing students' knowledge-base in using English language to reinforce a greater sense of Islamic morality and ethics is the responsibility of the educator. This can be done by developing and en-

hancing rapport, and using content materials effectively and judiciously. In our amended Kerr conceptual diagram, this is illustrated by the use of multidirectional arrows. This implies that the diagram can start at any point and move in any direction as long as the Tawhidic core is not compromised. Every domain of this diagram is already embedded with the notion of *Tawḥīd*.

The success of this conceptual model of the Islamic language curriculum would depend largely on the role of the language educator and the judicious use of materials. The educator does not only orchestrate different teaching techniques, learning styles and pedagogical strategies to facilitate students' learning but also embeds such lessons with Islamic values, beliefs and precepts.

Teaching Materials
Since the selection of teaching materials is an integral part of developing an English language curriculum, it should also reflect the Islamization process in the context of the English Language Teaching (ELT). It is essential for a centre teaching languages to produce ELT materials from Islamic perspective in order to meet the growing need for ELT materials that are consistent with the vision, philosophy and Tawhidic perspective of IIUM. Internationally published textbooks are generally used in teaching English because of their immediate availability. However, such textbooks may have ideas that are detrimental to the Islamic worldview. The proper selection of materials for this Islamic curriculum does not imply a naïve dismissal of every topic or theme which is from a non-Islamic source or deemed to be controversial. We are also aware that there is much in Western culture that supports Islam, and where there is evidence for these, educators would highlight such aspects to their students.

Language educators (Haja Mohideen[24]; Isarji & Ainol Madziah[25]; Khairiah[26]; Mohamed Ismail[27]; Ratnawati,[28]) have expressed concern

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[24] Haja Mohideen Mohamed Ali. 1996. Towards Islamically-appropriate alternative vocabulary in
    English. In *English and Islam: Creative encounters 96*, pp 389-394, Research Centre, International
    Islamic University Malaysia, Malaysia, p.389
[25] Isarji Hj. Sarudin & Ainol Madziah Zubairi. 2007. *ESL Learners' Reaction to English Language
    Teaching (ELT) Materials*. Paper presented at the 2nd International Conference on Language,

that English should be taught in a manner that does not offend the cultural sensitivities of learners and must also be in harmony with the context in which the language is taught and used. In practice, however, some of the best global and standard ELT course books are produced by native speakers who consciously or unconsciously represent their own culture in terms of their values, beliefs, and worldview. Even though it may not be the intention of the material writers to promote their worldview, learning may be compromised when it conflicts with the Muslim learners' worldview. Before we can develop an entire range of original Islamic ELT materials, we have to rely somewhat on ELT books originating from the West as an interim measure. It is for this reason that commercial course books need to be supported by locally written supplementary materials which are designed to neutralize and defuse negative elements while upholding and promoting Islamic culture.

The inappropriateness of ELT materials for Muslim learners has been highlighted by many language researchers (Ellis[29]; Speck[30]; Ratnawati[31]).

Education and Diversity (LED 2007). University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand, 21-24

November, 2007.

[26] Khairiah Othman. 2006. *Teachers' conceptions and practice of Islamization of knowledge in the*

teaching of Englih: a case study. Gombak, Selangor: Institute of Education, International Islamic

University Malaysia, p.1.

[27] Mohamed Ismail Ahamad Shah. 2000. An approach to the Islamization of the teaching of English:

Teaching Islamic literature in the English language classroom. *Muslim Education Quarterly*, 18,

1, 22-32, p.22.

[28] Ratnawati Mohd-Ashraf (1997). The Cultural Implications of Teaching English as a Second or

Foreign Language. <u>Muslim Education Quarterly</u>, Vol.14 No.4: Cambridge , UK.

[29] Ellis, D. 1989. *Cross-cultural relevance in materials production in T.E.F.L.* with special, a paper

presented at AILA '90.

[30] Speck, Bruce W. (1997). Respect for religious differences: the case of Muslim students. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, 70, 39-46, p.41.

[31] Ratnawati Mohd-Ashraf (1997). The Cultural Implications of Teaching English as a Second or

Foreign Language. <u>Muslim Education Quarterly</u>, Vol.14 No.4: Cambridge , UK.

Speck[32] in his study in the American ESL classrooms found that teachers need to learn to work with Muslim students, in particular, with those for whom English is a second language. His interviews with Muslim students revealed four problem areas that need attention: educators' misrepresentation of Islamic practices; instructional materials misrepresenting Islam; lack of respect for some religions; and failure to accommodate religious practices. In view of the problems posed by global textbooks and the dearth of locally-produced ESL materials, it becomes imperative for non-native ESL material developers in Islamic institutions of learning to organize themselves and pool their expertise to initiate material writing projects as part of the Islamization process. This is to ensure that ESL materials produced conform to the values, beliefs and perspectives of Islam. If students do not comprehend and feel uneasy reading such texts, they may be led to believe that English is a foreign language that is not relevant to their immediate needs and realities. In the interest of meaningful language learning, educators must take into account the influence of local expectations, needs and realities in developing ESL materials (Gonzalez[33]). It should be pointed out that the purpose of doing this is not to eliminate 'foreign' elements but to achieve the educational objectives of relevance, appropriateness and balance. This translates into integrating the learner's values, beliefs and spiritual outlook to achieve the twin goals of enhancing Islamic knowledge and facilitating effective learning of English for students.

The shortcomings of the globally-used course books do not make them a lost cause. For the purposes of Islamic institutions, they serve a very useful function apart from their careful design and pedagogical purposes. Such texts can still be used even without them being reworked by local Muslim ELT educators. This means that educators produce supplementary ESL materials which are intended to act as a valid Islamic commentary on controversial texts and serve as counterbalance to expose

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[32] Speck, Bruce W. (1997). Respect for religious differences: the case of Muslim students.*New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, 70, 39-46, p.42.
[33] Gonzalez, A. 1995.The cultural content in English as an international auxiliary language
     (EIAL) : problems and issues. In: *Language and culture in multilingual societies: viewpoints
     and visions (Anthology series, 36)*, ed by Makhan Tickoo, 54-36. Singapore: Regional Language
     Centre.,1995, p.34

cultural flaws, flag misconceptions, identify generalizations, and errant views found in global original textbooks. Erroneous, misleading and simplistic opinions can be replaced with more balanced arguments which are supported by the authority in Islam, such as the *'ulamā'* or the National Religious Council of Malaysia. Ironically, the presence of such global textbooks can develop good thinking habits and the ability to sense elements which are antithetical to Islam. This provides a real context for contemporary Muslim students to understand that Islam as a faith is grossly misunderstood and often given a bad press in the West.

To assist the language educator in the selection of appropriate materials for ESL students it is imperative that some basic guidelines be established. Mohamed Ismail and Isarji (forthcoming)[34] have proposed guidelines in managing culturally inappropriate materials. These materials should:

- Act as a constant reminder to educators that their role is not just to teach English but to propagate Islamic values and principles as well.
- Make the content more purposive and Islamic.
- Be customized (global & standard texts) to suit an Islamic context.
- Act as material resources for developing a thinking culture and a critical mindset for Islamic students.
- Provide realistic printed content which learners can relate to.
- Enable the development of creativity and ingenuity of instructors, liberating them from passive dependence on ready-made materials.

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[34] Mohamed Ismail Ahamad Shah & Isarji Hj Sarudin (forthcoming). Islamic cultural considerations
    in the selection and use of ESL materials in the language classroom. In Haja Mohideen, Normala
    Othman, Mohamed Ismail Ahamad Shah, Isarji Sarudin, Khairiah Othman, Nora Nasir,
    Shameemah Mohideen (Eds.), *Language and literature in research and education: an Islamic
    perspective*. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: IIUM Press.

This process for adapting and customizing ready-made commercial materials can be achieved through the provision of educator-produced or specially selected supplementary materials intended to highlight Islamic perspective. These accompanying materials can be authoritative articles on similar themes derived from Islamic sources, a written commentary by the educator, specially formulated questions, and any kind of intervention strategy designed to neutralize controversial texts and uphold Islamic truths in the context of ELT. This process can be accelerated by further research to produce guidelines about the selection process itself.

Mohamed Ismail and Isarji[35] (forthcoming) also reiterate that the management of inappropriate ELT materials for classrooms is especially critical at initial stages of developing an Islamically English language curriculum. The use of appropriate content in teaching English devolves on the skills and ingenuity of the Islamic educator. It is essentially the educator who translates the curriculum into becoming meaningful and spiritually-driven learning experiences for students. It is the Islamic educator who determines how materials can be utilized in an efficient and judicious manner. We will examine the crucial role of the language educator in the context of a contemporary education.

The language educator
The aims and objectives of the IIUM can only be achieved, if Muslim educators teach according to specified curriculum guidelines and the manner in which they teach and what they teach is in consonance with Islamic precepts. The curriculum and educator development/ training are closely intertwined. There must be provision to train educators who are professionally qualified in teaching English to expand their role from being purely language instructors to educators responsible for facilitating the holistic growth of students together with their moral and ethical development via the medium of teaching English as a Second Language. This calls for educators and instructors of English to demonstrate not only greater versatility and efficiency in teaching English, but also greater sensitivity to students, the ability to manage learning challenges in a calm and judicious manner, real empathy and genuine passion in upholding the Tawhidic principles and tenets of Islam. Muslim educators should act as

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[35] Ibid.

an Islamic role model of temperance, morality and humility for their students. It is crucial that educators of English are aware of their responsibility and their expanded role in ensuring the proper transmission of Islamic values and knowledge. Thus educator development/training plays a crucial role in the success or failure of implementing an Islamic curriculum. The emphasis on Islam and the expanded role of the educator as an educator, together with the choice of content involved in developing an Islamic curriculum in English would enhance the learning of English because this Islamic orientation to learning English engages a holistic continuum which ranges from the cognitive to the spiritual.

An ELT teacher must obviously have a sound foundation in the English language and its pedagogical approach to teach English effectively. Yet this professional background has to be tempered through training or re-education of some Muslim teachers who may lack exposure to Tawhidic foundation of Islam, together with its code of behavior and morality. This needs to be redressed before the teacher
plays the role of an Islamic educator. There is a distinction here between teacher and educator. The educator represents the person who is not only skilled in teaching English, but a professional who is well-versed in Islam and is able to use English Language to disseminate Islamic beliefs, code of conduct while adhering to *Tawḥīd*. For this reason the educator must have a clear understanding of the concepts, teachings, beliefs and the practices of Islam. He must not merely be a Muslim but a good Muslim, whose thoughts and actions are congruent.

This type of educator can serve as a role model, who is exemplary in behavior, attitude, thought, speech, and appearance. The educator must be fully committed as a Muslim and practice Islam as a way of life, following the example of the Last Prophet of Allah (s.a.w.) himself. This adherence to the principles of Islam is essential because the educator communicates that which he knows from the Islamic worldview drawing on principles firstly, from the wisdom of the Qur'an and the Traditions of the Prophet, and next, from the Islamic legacy and then from the results of contemporary empirical studies.

To effectively teach English from an Islamic perspective, the Muslim educator must not only be grounded in current understanding and methodology of teaching English, but must also have strong faith and familiarity with the higher purpose of the Islamic curriculum and the principles un-

derlying the Islamization of Knowledge (IOK), and must be willing to dedicate his/her efforts to achieving the Islamic goals and objectives of the institution of learning. It is only after having been exposed to the principles of the IOK and after having accepted these principles as sound and applicable, that the educator can focus his attention upon instructing others in a second or foreign language from Islamic perspective.

Educators must also be well-trained in teaching strategies and learning methodologies and keep abreast with the latest developments in the field of ESL. They must always bear the initiative for self-improvement and personal development, both in professional and Islamic terms. Educators must always reflect professional competence, experience and creativity in meeting the needs of an English language classroom in an Islamic setting. ESL educators must be made aware of their roles not only as disseminators of knowledge but also as broad-spectrum educators. From Islamic perspective they can act as *mu'addibs*, those educators who inculcate *adab*, as a necessary Islamic discipline of mind, body, and soul. In Islam *adab* is often taken as a marker of a person's spiritual development. It is inextricably related to faith. Muslim educators should demonstrate exemplary conduct and character that can be emulated by their students. Within the perspective of an Islamic curriculum having superior grades in ESL is not a genuine marker of having attained self or professional development. Scholastic achievement must always be balanced with spiritual sensitivity and a passion for Islam.

The main purpose of seeking knowledge in Islam is to make oneself closer to the Creator, and thus become a good Muslim (pious). The educator in teaching students should always be cognizant of the fact that learning or knowledge acquisition is an integral part of worship. In Islamizing the teaching of English, the educator must firmly hold to the principle that an educator is not merely a language instructor in class, but must be ever-willing to serve as a *murabbī* (a holistic educator) to his students. This is because the educator's role is not only about producing excellent students academically, but as an educator who does his utmost to ensure that his/her students are aware of their conduct and of their moral, social and spiritual responsibility as Muslims.

A good educator must strive to facilitate a proper learning environment through addressing the different learning styles of students and balancing this with appropriate teaching strategies that will engage interest and mo-

tivate students to maximize their capabilities as Muslims. The Muslim educator's role in the Islamization of the teaching of English must also be that of 'guardian' of his culture and religion. It has become commonplace for some critics of Islam in the West to negatively portray and stereotype Muslims as potential terrorists, in their media propaganda and also in some popular publications. The Muslim educator has a duty to correct such false projections, and replace such erroneous impressions with objective facts about Islam as an inspired religion of peace.

The educator, who is convinced of his duty to Islamize the language curriculum, must then develop a strategy for doing so. It is in the overall language curriculum and his/her specific lesson plans that such a strategy can be mapped out. In the overall language curriculum the objectives and the learning outcomes pertaining to the incorporation of the Islamic perspective need to be explicitly spelt out. This would assist the educator in preparing effective lesson plans. In such lesson plans the educator will strategize to ensure, for example, that the Islamic moral values that he wants to inculcate in his/her students be planned and incorporated into language lessons. As an example, if the focus of an ESL lesson is about describing people's conduct, then the educator could present the Islamic perspectives about what is considered good or bad behavior and complete such a discussion by identifying examples of exemplary Muslims and their positive traits. Islamic English language educators therefore have a crucial role in contributing to a viable Islamic language curriculum in the context of an Islamic institution of learning.

The role of the ESL educator is not only to facilitate language learning but also to raise the consciousness of Muslim students about the superiority of Islam as a dynamic counter-culture in the face of a secular ideological onslaught in the form of published articles in popular magazines, international newspapers and global textbooks, some of which may carry messages or ideas detrimental to Islam.

Conclusion
Design, implementation and execution of an English language curriculum from Islamic perspective is highly probable and viable if an educational institution is willing to address specific prerequisites and resolve current challenges and assert the superiority of an Islamic model of education grounded in *Tawhīd*. The adaptation of an appropriate Western curriculum development model such as Kerr's points to the fact that sec-

ular models can be Islamized and contribute to the development of an Islamic English language curriculum. Prerequisites for success of the Islamic language curriculum model are a willingness to explore new frontiers of learning and maximizing human potential by resorting to techniques and practices which have created outstanding luminaries of Islam in the past and recent history; geniuses the likes of al-Ghazālī, Ibn Khaldūn, Ibn Sīnā, al-Birūnī, al-Farābī, Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī and 'Allāmah Iqbāl. The training of the Islamic educator is crucial in establishing a genuine Islamic framework that can be applied to language teaching. The proponents of an Islamic English language curriculum must accept the current status quo that there is a preponderance of Western ELT materials used by Muslim educators. The management of such ELT materials that are sourced from the West has to be prudently employed in the gradual process of producing an adequate corpus of authentic Islamic ELT materials.