

English for Islamic Studies in Higher Education: A Framework for Academic Literacy and Disciplinary Communication

Asna Usman Dilo¹ (✉) IAIN Sultan Amai Gorontalo, Indonesia¹
asnadilo77@iaingorontalo.ac.id¹

Nur Zaimah binti Ubaidillah² Universitas Malaysia Sarawak, Malaysia²
unzaimah@unimas.my²

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Corresponding Author: ✉ Asna Usman Dilo

Article History	ABSTRACT
Received: 17-06-2026 Accepted: 01-07-2026 Published: 31-08-2026	Background: The internationalisation of higher education has increased the need for Islamic Studies students to communicate disciplinary knowledge across multilingual academic contexts. However, English courses in many Islamic higher education institutions are still positioned as general language subjects and may not sufficiently address students' academic literacy and disciplinary communication needs. Purpose: This article proposes an <i>English for Islamic Studies</i> (EIS) curriculum framework that fits English learning with the academic, disciplinary, and scholarly communication needs of Islamic Studies students in higher education. Method: This article employs a design-oriented conceptual synthesis that integrates perspectives from <i>English for Specific Purposes</i> (ESP), <i>English for Academic Purposes</i> (EAP), <i>Content and Language Integrated Learning</i> (CLIL), and <i>English Medium Instruction</i> (EMI). The literature synthesis was conducted by considering conceptual relevance, disciplinary alignment, theoretical contribution, and implementation value for English curriculum development in Islamic higher education contexts. Results and Discussion: The conceptual synthesis proposes an EIS curriculum framework consisting of six interconnected components: needs analysis, Islamic disciplinary content mapping, genre-based academic literacy instruction, contextualised materials development, lecturer collaboration, and authentic assessment. The framework positions EIS as a discipline-sensitive academic literacy curriculum rather than a supplementary general English course. The integration of ESP, EAP, CLIL, and EMI perspectives demonstrates that English learning can support students' ability to engage with international literature, explain Islamic concepts in English, produce academic texts, and participate in global scholarly communication while maintaining the roles of Arabic, Indonesian, and local intellectual traditions. Conclusions and Implications: The proposed EIS framework provides a conceptual foundation for Islamic higher education institutions to design English curricula that are more relevant to students' academic and professional needs. It supports the internationalisation of Islamic higher education without replacing Arabic, Indonesian, or local scholarly traditions. As a conceptual model, the framework requires further empirical testing through classroom implementation, evaluation of materials, studies of lecturer collaboration, and assessment of students' academic literacy development.
Keywords:	<i>English for Islamic Studies; Academic Literacy; Curriculum Framework; Islamic Higher Education; Disciplinary Communication.</i>
	ABSTRAK

Latar Belakang: Internasionalisasi pendidikan tinggi telah meningkatkan kebutuhan mahasiswa Studi Islam untuk mampu mengomunikasikan pengetahuan keilmuan mereka dalam berbagai konteks akademik yang multikultural dan multibahasa. Namun, mata kuliah Bahasa Inggris di banyak perguruan tinggi Islam masih sering diposisikan sebagai mata kuliah bahasa umum sehingga belum sepenuhnya memenuhi kebutuhan literasi akademik dan komunikasi disipliner mahasiswa Studi Islam.

Tujuan: Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengusulkan kerangka kurikulum *English for Islamic Studies* (EIS) yang menyelaraskan pembelajaran bahasa Inggris dengan kebutuhan akademik, disipliner, dan komunikasi ilmiah mahasiswa Studi Islam di pendidikan tinggi Islam.

Metode: Artikel ini menggunakan pendekatan sintesis konseptual berorientasi desain (*design-oriented conceptual synthesis approach*) dengan mengintegrasikan kajian tentang *English for Specific Purposes* (ESP), *English for Academic Purposes* (EAP), *Content and Language Integrated Learning* (CLIL), dan *English Medium Instruction* (EMI). Sintesis literatur dilakukan dengan mempertimbangkan relevansi konseptual, kesesuaian disiplin, kontribusi teoritis, serta nilai implementasi dalam pengembangan kurikulum bahasa Inggris dalam konteks pendidikan tinggi Islam.

Hasil dan Pembahasan: Sintesis konseptual menghasilkan kerangka kurikulum EIS yang terdiri atas enam komponen yang saling berkaitan, yaitu analisis kebutuhan, pemetaan konten disiplin keislaman, pembelajaran literasi akademik berbasis genre, pengembangan bahan ajar kontekstual, kolaborasi dosen, dan asesmen autentik. Kerangka ini memposisikan EIS sebagai kurikulum literasi akademik yang sensitif terhadap disiplin ilmu, bukan sekadar mata kuliah bahasa Inggris umum. Integrasi perspektif ESP, EAP, CLIL, dan EMI menunjukkan bahwa pembelajaran bahasa Inggris dapat mendukung kemampuan mahasiswa dalam membaca literatur internasional, menjelaskan konsep-konsep Islam dalam bahasa Inggris, menghasilkan karya akademik, serta berpartisipasi dalam komunikasi ilmiah global.

Kesimpulan dan Implikasi: Kerangka EIS yang diusulkan memberikan landasan konseptual bagi perguruan tinggi Islam dalam merancang kurikulum bahasa Inggris yang lebih relevan dengan kebutuhan akademik dan profesional mahasiswa Studi Islam. Kerangka ini mendukung internasionalisasi pendidikan tinggi Islam tanpa menggantikan peran bahasa Arab, bahasa Indonesia, maupun tradisi keilmuan lokal. Karena bersifat konseptual, penelitian lanjutan diperlukan untuk memvalidasi kerangka ini melalui implementasi kelas, evaluasi bahan ajar, kolaborasi dosen, serta pengukuran perkembangan literasi akademik mahasiswa.

Kata Kunci

English for Islamic Studies; Literasi Akademik; Kerangka Kurikulum; Pendidikan Tinggi Islam; Komunikasi Disipliner.



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INTRODUCTION

Islamic higher education in Indonesia operates within multilingual academic environments in which students engage with Arabic as a major language of Islamic scholarship, Indonesian as the principal language of national academic communication, and English as an increasingly important medium for accessing international scholarship and participating in global academic exchange.[1], [2] This multilingual demand has become more explicit within the current internationalisation agenda of Indonesian Islamic higher education. In 2026, the Directorate of Islamic Higher Education of the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs announced internationalisation programmes that include strengthening academic skills and foreign-language proficiency in English and Arabic, including an English-language development programme conducted in collaboration with the British Council with a targeted IELTS score of 6.5.[3], [4] Such initiatives indicate that

English proficiency is increasingly connected to postgraduate study, academic mobility, international collaboration, and the global visibility of Islamic higher education.[5] For students of Islamic studies, however, English should function not as a replacement for Arabic, Indonesian, or local scholarly traditions, but as an additional academic resource through which Islamic knowledge can be accessed, interpreted, and communicated across linguistic and disciplinary boundaries.[6]

Despite this institutional orientation towards internationalisation, a persistent mismatch remains between the purposes for which Islamic studies students need English and the English instruction commonly provided in Islamic higher education. English courses are often positioned as compulsory general university subjects, with limited connection to students' disciplinary identities, Islamic scholarship, academic communication, and future professional roles.[7] Recent needs-based evidence from Indonesian Islamic higher education similarly indicates that language barriers, insufficient academic scaffolding, and a lack of contextually relevant materials continue to constrain students' engagement with English, while lecturers identify the need for materials that connect language learning with disciplinary and higher-order academic tasks.[8] General English instruction may therefore develop basic grammatical knowledge and everyday communicative competence, but it does not necessarily prepare Islamic studies students to read international scholarship, interpret discipline-specific terminology, formulate academic arguments, write research-related genres, present disciplinary knowledge, or explain Islamic concepts to audiences unfamiliar with their original Arabic and intellectual contexts. The central issue is thus not simply whether English is taught, but whether its curriculum is aligned with the academic literacy and disciplinary communication practices that students are expected to perform.[9]

English for Islamic Studies (EIS) offers a possible curricular response to this mismatch. EIS may be conceptualised as a specialised form of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), in which language instruction is designed around learners' target needs, communicative purposes, and disciplinary contexts.[10] From this perspective, EIS should extend beyond merely including Islamic vocabulary or religious topics in otherwise general English lessons. It should connect English learning with authentic practices of Islamic scholarship, such as reading and evaluating scholarly texts, explaining theological and jurisprudential concepts, discussing issues in Islamic education and society, interpreting arguments across linguistic traditions, producing discipline-relevant academic genres, and communicating Islamic knowledge to diverse audiences. Such an orientation also brings EIS into dialogue with English for Academic Purposes (EAP), particularly its concern with disciplinary literacy and the forms of communication through which knowledge is constructed and circulated in higher education.[11]

Recent empirical studies have strengthened the case for discipline-sensitive English instruction in Islamic higher education. Research on English-language materials development has demonstrated the importance of aligning instructional content with students' Islamic disciplinary backgrounds and learning needs, rather than relying exclusively on generic language materials.[12] More recent curriculum-material development has likewise shown the pedagogical potential of combining ESP principles, Islamic disciplinary content, multimodal resources, and digital literacy for students in Islamic Education programmes.[13] These studies are important because they demonstrate that contextualised English instruction can increase the relevance of language learning to students' disciplinary identities and academic purposes.[14] Nevertheless, much of this work remains concentrated at the level of textbooks, modules, teaching materials, or individual classroom interventions.[15] Consequently, material contextualisation alone does not resolve broader questions concerning how needs analysis, academic literacy, disciplinary content, teaching collaboration, curriculum sequencing, and assessment should operate as interconnected components of an EIS curriculum.[1]

This limitation becomes particularly important when English-related innovation is considered at the institutional level. A curriculum cannot be sustained through relevant materials

alone; its implementation also depends on lecturer expertise, pedagogical readiness, institutional support, policy coherence, and appropriate assessment practices.[13] A 2025 study involving 165 lecturers from 33 Islamic universities in Indonesia found a substantial gap between lecturers' conceptual awareness of English Medium Instruction (EMI) and their practical readiness to implement it, particularly regarding pedagogical skills, institutional support, and the communication of specialised religious content.[16] Evidence from the implementation of ESP through Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) in Indonesian Islamic higher education points to a comparable problem. Although Islamic Studies-based English materials were available, discrepancies remained between the theoretical principles of ESP and CLIL and their classroom implementation, with lecturer preparedness, institutional support, and the availability of appropriate instructional materials identified as ongoing challenges.[17] Taken together, these findings suggest that the development of EIS requires a curriculum-level approach in which materials, disciplinary literacy, lecturer collaboration, institutional conditions, and assessment are designed as interdependent rather than isolated elements.[18]

Although previous studies have examined needs analysis, ESP materials, Islamic-content integration, CLIL implementation, and EMI readiness, these strands of scholarship remain largely fragmented.[19] Existing research commonly addresses particular materials, courses, instructional strategies, or implementation challenges, while offering less explanation of how these elements can be organised into a coherent curriculum architecture for English in Islamic studies.[20] This article fills this gap by proposing a conceptually grounded EIS curriculum framework that connects needs analysis, Islamic disciplinary content mapping, academic literacy, contextualised materials development, lecturer collaboration, and authentic assessment. Using a design-oriented conceptual synthesis of scholarship on ESP, EAP, CLIL, EMI, and academic literacies, the article aims (1) to identify the core curriculum components required to align English instruction with the academic literacy and disciplinary communication needs of Islamic studies students, and (2) to explain how these theoretical and pedagogical perspectives can be synthesised into a practicable framework for Islamic higher education. Rather than evaluating the effectiveness of an already implemented programme, the article develops a curriculum model for subsequent institutional adaptation and data-driven validation. Its novelty lies in positioning EIS not merely as a supplementary language course or a collection of Islamic-themed materials, but as a discipline-sensitive academic literacy framework that connects Islamic conceptual communication with multilingual scholarly participation. In this way, the proposed framework clarifies how English can expand students' participation in international academic communication without displacing the epistemic functions of Arabic, Indonesian, or local intellectual traditions.[21], [22]

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. English for Specific Purposes and Disciplinary Needs

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) provides the principal curriculum-design foundation for English for Islamic Studies (EIS) because it organises language instruction around learners' target needs, communicative purposes, and disciplinary contexts rather than around general language proficiency alone.[23] From an ESP perspective, the central question is not simply what linguistic structures students should learn, but what they need to accomplish through English within their academic and future professional environments. For Islamic studies students, these target practices may include reading international journal articles, interpreting specialised terminology, discussing theological and jurisprudential issues, presenting research, writing academic texts, and communicating Islamic concepts to audiences with different linguistic and disciplinary backgrounds.

This needs-oriented perspective has two important implications for EIS. First, curriculum content should emerge from systematic analysis of students' present and target academic practices

rather than from a generic English syllabus.[24] Second, Islamic disciplinary knowledge should function as an organising context for language learning rather than merely as thematic decoration.[25] Recent studies on contextualised English materials in Islamic higher education support this orientation by demonstrating the value of connecting language instruction with students' disciplinary backgrounds, Islamic content, and academic purposes. Nevertheless, contextualised materials alone do not constitute an EIS curriculum. A collection of texts about *tafsir*, *fiqh*, *aqidah*, or Islamic education may increase topical relevance without necessarily developing the communicative practices through which students interpret, evaluate, and produce disciplinary knowledge.[26] ESP therefore provides EIS with a needs-analysis logic, but it must be complemented by a stronger account of academic literacy.

2.2. English for Academic Purposes and Academic Literacy

English for Academic Purposes (EAP) extends the ESP orientation by focusing more explicitly on the genres, discourse practices, argumentation patterns, citation conventions, and forms of knowledge communication associated with higher education.[27] Academic literacy in EIS should therefore be understood as more than grammatical accuracy or mastery of academic vocabulary.[28] It involves learning how disciplinary knowledge is organised, how claims are supported, how sources are positioned in relation to one another, and how writers or speakers establish appropriate academic relationships with their audiences.

This perspective is particularly relevant to Islamic studies because students frequently work across Arabic, Indonesian, and English scholarly traditions.[29] An EIS curriculum should, consequently, prepare students not only to comprehend English-language scholarship but also to participate in the academic practices through which Islamic knowledge is represented internationally.[4] For example, students may be required to write an English abstract explaining a study on *fiqh* education, synthesise competing interpretations in a literature review, present the concept of *tawhid* to an interdisciplinary audience, or explain the relevance of *maqasid al-sharia* to a contemporary social issue.[30] Such tasks require control of academic genres and argumentation while simultaneously demanding conceptual precision in representing Islamic disciplinary knowledge.

Terminological competence is particularly significant in this process. Islamic concepts derived from Arabic do not always have English equivalents that fully capture their theological, juridical, historical, or cultural meanings.[31] Research on Islamic terminology has documented problems of equivalence and inconsistency when Arabic- or Islamic-origin terms are rendered in English, including decisions concerning translation, transliteration, explanatory glossing, and retention of source-language terminology.[32] Recent comparative research on key Qur'anic terms likewise demonstrates that different translation strategies can yield variations in semantic precision and theological interpretation.[33] Accordingly, EIS should not train students to replace terms such as *tawhid*, *fiqh*, *sharia*, *ijtihad*, *adab*, *maslahah*, *maqasid al-sharia*, or *ummah* automatically with single-word English equivalents. Instead, students need strategies for deciding when a term should be retained, transliterated, translated, or accompanied by an explanatory gloss, depending on genre, audience, and communicative purpose.

This competence can be developed through concrete academic tasks. In an abstract, for example, students may introduce *maqasid al-sharia* by transliterating the term and then providing a concise contextual explanation at its first mention.[34] In an oral presentation, they may explain *tawhid* to an international audience by connecting the Arabic term with its theological meaning rather than reducing it to an isolated lexical equivalent.[35] In a literature review, students may compare how scholars define *fiqh* or *adab*, preserve terminological consistency across sources, and distinguish between the original Islamic concept and approximate English expressions.[36] EAP thus contributes to EIS by identifying the literacy practices through which disciplinary knowledge

must be communicated, while the specific multilingual and conceptual characteristics of Islamic studies determine how those practices should be adapted.[37]

2.3. Content and Language Integration in Islamic Higher Education

While ESP identifies target needs and EAP clarifies academic literacy practices, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) offers a pedagogical mechanism through which language development and disciplinary content can interact.[38] CLIL conceptualises learning through the relationship among content, communication, cognition, and culture.[39] Applied selectively to EIS, this perspective enables language learning through meaningful engagement with Islamic disciplinary content rather than decontextualised linguistic exercises.[40]

A CLIL-informed EIS lesson, for example, could ask students to read a short English discussion of Islamic education, identify its central argument, compare key Arabic and English terminology, discuss the conceptual implications in small groups, and produce a short academic response.[41] Similarly, students could analyse contrasting definitions of *ijtihad*, evaluate how the concept is communicated to specialist and non-specialist audiences, and subsequently deliver a brief presentation using appropriate academic language.[40] In these activities, disciplinary content supplies the intellectual problem, while English functions as the medium through which students read, reason, discuss, and produce an academic response.[42]

However, the relationship between content and language also creates pedagogical tensions.[43] Increased disciplinary complexity may exceed students' English proficiency, while excessive attention to linguistic form may oversimplify disciplinary content.[41] Evidence from the implementation of ESP through CLIL in Indonesian Islamic higher education indicates that the theoretical benefits of content–language integration do not automatically translate into effective classroom practice; lecturer preparedness, instructional resources, student proficiency, and institutional support remain important conditions for success.[44] EIS should therefore adopt CLIL selectively rather than assume that Islamic disciplinary content can simply be transferred into English.[45] Effective integration requires staged tasks, linguistic and conceptual scaffolding, collaboration between English lecturers and Islamic studies specialists, and assessment criteria that, where appropriate, distinguish language development from disciplinary understanding.

2.4. English Medium Instruction, Internationalisation, and Islamic Academic Identity

English Medium Instruction (EMI) offers a distinct perspective on the EIS framework. Whereas ESP, EAP, and CLIL are directly concerned with aspects of curriculum or pedagogy, EMI primarily concerns the use of English to teach academic subject content and is closely associated with internationalisation in higher education. The rapid expansion of EMI has generated important debates concerning language policy, lecturer competence, student access, pedagogical quality, equity, and learning outcomes. These debates are relevant to Islamic higher education because institutional ambitions for internationalisation may increase pressure to expand English-medium academic activities.[46], [47]

EIS should nevertheless remain conceptually distinct from EMI. EIS is not a proposal to replace Arabic or Indonesian as languages of Islamic scholarship, nor does it require Islamic studies subjects to be taught entirely in English. Rather, EIS is a language curriculum intended to develop students' capacity to use English strategically for particular academic purposes, including reading international scholarship, producing research-related genres, presenting disciplinary knowledge, participating in academic mobility, and engaging in intercultural scholarly communication. This distinction is especially important because evidence from Indonesian Islamic universities indicates that lecturers' readiness for EMI is shaped not only by English proficiency but also by pedagogical confidence, institutional support, and the challenge of communicating specialised religious content.[2], [48]

The distinction also protects the multilingual academic identity of Islamic higher education. Arabic retains distinctive epistemic and textual functions in the study of Islamic sources, Indonesian remains central to national scholarship and public communication, and local languages may mediate community-based religious knowledge. English should therefore be positioned as an additional academic resource rather than as a substitute for these languages. From this perspective, EMI scholarship is valuable to EIS less as a model for English-only instruction than as a source of insight into the institutional, policy, equity, and lecturer-readiness conditions that influence the broader use of English in higher education.[49], [50], [51], [52]

2.4. Conceptual Synthesis for an EIS Curriculum Framework

ESP, EAP, CLIL, and EMI should not be treated as interchangeable approaches or combined without distinction. They address different but complementary dimensions of EIS. ESP provides the curriculum-design logic by identifying learners' target needs and disciplinary communication practices. EAP specifies the academic literacy outcomes by foregrounding genre, argumentation, disciplinary discourse, source use, and scholarly communication.[23], [35], [47] CLIL provides a pedagogical mechanism for embedding language development within meaningful engagement with Islamic disciplinary content. EMI provides an institutional and policy perspective, drawing attention to lecturer readiness, internationalisation, language policy, accessibility, and the conditions under which English is used within higher education.[38], [53]

The complementarity among these perspectives is accompanied by productive tensions. ESP may identify highly specialised learner needs, whereas EAP must also prepare students for academic conventions that extend across disciplinary boundaries. CLIL encourages deeper integration of disciplinary content and language, but such integration may create cognitive and linguistic overload when proficiency and scaffolding are insufficient. EMI can expand opportunities for international academic participation, yet an uncritical English-only orientation may marginalise the epistemic roles of Arabic, Indonesian, and local languages in Islamic scholarship. These tensions indicate that EIS cannot simply import any one of the four approaches in its original form.[54], [55], [56], [57]

Accordingly, the theoretical basis of EIS can be conceptualised as a layered rather than additive framework: needs analysis from ESP defines what students need to do; academic literacy from EAP defines how disciplinary knowledge is communicated; CLIL-informed pedagogy provides ways to practise language through disciplinary content; and EMI scholarship identifies the institutional conditions and limitations surrounding wider English use. Islamic disciplinary knowledge and multilingual academic identity operate across all four layers as organising principles rather than as supplementary content. This synthesis provides the conceptual basis for an EIS curriculum that connects disciplinary needs, academic literacy, Islamic conceptual communication, pedagogical integration, and institutional feasibility while preserving the multilingual character of Islamic higher education.[58], [59]

METHOD

3.1. Research Design

This article employs a design-oriented conceptual synthesis approach to develop an English for Islamic Studies (EIS) curriculum framework for Islamic higher education. Unlike empirical studies that examine classroom interventions or measure learning outcomes, this article aims to integrate relevant theoretical perspectives and empirical findings to construct a conceptually grounded curriculum model. The analytical foundation is derived from four interconnected areas of language education scholarship: English for Specific Purposes (ESP), English for Academic Purposes (EAP), Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), and English Medium Instruction (EMI), complemented by recent studies on English learning, Islamic-content

integration, academic literacy, and lecturer readiness in Indonesian Islamic higher education. [60], [61], [62]

3.2. Literature Selection and Analytical Criteria

The literature used in this conceptual synthesis was selected based on three main criteria: relevance, recency, and conceptual contribution. [63] Relevance was determined by the extent to which a source addressed at least one of the following areas: (1) English curriculum design for specific academic disciplines, (2) academic literacy development in higher education, (3) integration of language learning and disciplinary content, (4) English use in internationalisation contexts, or (5) English education within Islamic higher education settings. [64]

In terms of recency, empirical studies published primarily within the last five years (2021–2026) were prioritised to capture current developments, institutional challenges, and emerging practices in higher education language education. [65] However, foundational theoretical works were retained when they represented influential frameworks that continue to shape the field, particularly in ESP, EAP, CLIL, and EMI scholarship.

Studies were excluded if they focused exclusively on general English proficiency without disciplinary relevance, examined language-learning contexts unrelated to higher education, or did not provide theoretical or practical implications for curriculum development. This selection strategy enabled the article to balance recognised theoretical foundations with contemporary evidence from Islamic higher education contexts.

3.3. Analytical Procedures

The synthesis process was conducted through three analytical stages. First, the article identified the academic literacy and disciplinary communication demands of Islamic studies students. This stage examined the types of English-mediated practices required in Islamic academic contexts, including scholarly reading, explanation of terminology, academic writing, oral presentation, research communication, and the dissemination of intercultural knowledge. [66], [67], [68]

Second, the article analysed how major theoretical perspectives contribute to EIS curriculum development. ESP was examined as a framework for identifying disciplinary needs and target communication practices; EAP was analysed in relation to academic literacy, genre awareness, and scholarly discourse; CLIL was considered as a pedagogical approach for integrating language learning with Islamic disciplinary content; and EMI literature was reviewed to understand institutional conditions, internationalisation demands, and lecturer readiness. [69], [70], [71]

Third, the identified principles were synthesised into an integrated EIS curriculum framework. The synthesis focused on the relationship among curriculum components, intended learning outcomes, learning activities, assessment strategies, and implementation considerations. Rather than proposing a universally applicable model, the framework is designed as an adaptable conceptual structure to guide curriculum development and future empirical investigation across different Islamic higher education contexts. [72]

The resulting framework represents a theoretically informed curriculum proposal derived from integrating existing scholarship and contextual evidence. Future research is required to validate the framework through classroom implementation, institutional pilots, and systematic evaluation of student learning outcomes. [73]

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Curriculum Alignment through Needs Analysis

The proposed EIS curriculum framework begins with curriculum alignment, informed by a

systematic needs analysis. The synthesis indicates that English instruction in Islamic higher education should move beyond the conventional model of general university English courses and become more closely connected with students' disciplinary communication needs. An integrated EIS curriculum should therefore be sequenced according to students' academic development, beginning with foundational academic vocabulary and reading skills and progressing towards disciplinary reading, genre-based writing, oral presentation, and research communication.[7], [74], [75]

Needs analysis functions as the initial mechanism for determining curriculum direction. It should examine several dimensions, including students' English proficiency profiles, academic literacy needs, disciplinary communication tasks, lecturers' expectations, and institutional internationalisation goals. The information obtained from needs analysis provides the basis for selecting learning materials, defining learning outcomes, designing assessment tasks, and determining the level of collaboration required between English lecturers and Islamic studies lecturers.[76], [77]

For practical implementation, needs analysis in EIS may involve multiple stakeholders and instruments. Student questionnaires and placement tests can identify learners' proficiency levels and previous English-learning experiences. Interviews or focus group discussions with students can reveal target academic tasks, such as reading international Islamic studies articles, preparing conference presentations, or writing research abstracts. Analysis of the curriculum document and consultation with Islamic studies lecturers can identify the essential disciplinary concepts, terminology, and academic genres required for specific programs.[78], [79], [80], [81]

Table 1. Needs Analysis Components for EIS Curriculum Development

Dimension	Indicator	Possible Instrument	Stakeholder	Expected Output
Student profile	English proficiency, academic background, learning experience	Placement test and questionnaire	Students	Learner profile
Target communication tasks	Reading journals, writing abstracts, presentations, and research communication	Task analysis and interviews	Students and lecturers	Target academic needs
Disciplinary requirements	Islamic concepts, terminology, texts, and genres	Curriculum analysis and lecturer consultation	Islamic studies lecturers	Content priorities
Institutional goals	Internationalisation objectives and language policy	Document analysis and institutional interviews	Institution	Curriculum direction

4.2 Islamic Disciplinary Content Mapping

The second proposed component is Islamic disciplinary content mapping, which functions as the conceptual foundation of EIS curriculum development. Content mapping identifies key Islamic concepts, terminology, academic texts, genres, and communicative practices that can serve as the basis for English learning activities.[82]

The purpose of disciplinary content mapping is not to transform English courses into Islamic studies courses. Instead, it ensures that English learning occurs within meaningful disciplinary

contexts. Through content mapping, lecturers can determine which Islamic concepts to introduce, which academic genres are relevant, and how linguistic activities can support students' engagement with Islamic scholarship.[83]

Content mapping is also essential because Islamic concepts often contain theological, juridical, historical, and cultural meanings that cannot always be represented through direct translation. Therefore, EIS materials should develop students' ability to define concepts, explain contexts, compare meanings across languages, and communicate Islamic ideas accurately to diverse academic audiences.[84]

For example, students may be required to explain concepts such as *tawhid*, *fiqh*, *maqasid al-sharia*, or *adab* in English academic contexts. Rather than replacing these terms with simplified equivalents, students should learn strategies of transliteration, contextual explanation, and conceptual comparison.[85]

Table 2. Islamic Disciplinary Content and Academic Communication Mapping

Islamic Discipline	Academic Task	Target Genre	Expected Learning Outcome
Qur'anic Studies	Explaining concepts	Qur'anic Abstract and review essay	Students explain concepts using accurate terminology
Hadith Studies	Comparing interpretations	scholarly Annotated bibliography	Students synthesise academic sources
Islamic Law	Discussing reasoning	legal Position paper	Students present evidence-based arguments
Islamic Education	Reviewing theories	educational Literature review	Students evaluate scholarly literature
Islamic Civilisation	Presenting analysis	historical Conference presentation	Students communicate research findings

4.3 Genre-Based Academic Literacy Instruction

The third proposed component is genre-based academic literacy instruction. The framework indicates that EIS should develop students' ability to understand how Islamic knowledge is constructed, organised, evaluated, and communicated through academic genres.[86]

Academic literacy development in EIS should therefore involve discipline-specific genres rather than general writing activities. Relevant genres may include abstracts of Islamic studies articles, literature reviews, annotated bibliographies, tafsir reviews, fiqh reviews, research proposals, reflective essays, and conference presentations.[87]

Genre-based instruction can be implemented through three progressive stages. First, students analyse model texts to identify rhetorical structures, disciplinary terminology, argument patterns, and citation practices. Second, students collaboratively construct academic texts with the lecturer's guidance. Third, students independently produce discipline-related academic outputs.[88]

Through this process, students develop not only linguistic competence but also disciplinary communication skills, including identifying arguments, synthesising sources, paraphrasing scholarly ideas, and presenting Islamic perspectives in line with international academic conventions.[89]

4.4 Contextualised Materials Development

The fourth proposed component concerns the development of contextualised materials. The framework suggests that EIS materials should be authentic, academically relevant, and progressively scaffolded according to students' proficiency levels and disciplinary needs.[90]

Relevant materials may include abstracts from international Islamic studies journals, selected academic articles, bilingual terminology glossaries, edited excerpts from Islamic scholarship, contemporary Islamic case discussions, examples of conference presentations, and student research topics.[91]

Materials selection should consider two dimensions simultaneously: linguistic accessibility and disciplinary authenticity. Materials that are linguistically appropriate but disconnected from Islamic studies may reduce student engagement, while materials that are conceptually advanced without adequate linguistic support may create unnecessary learning barriers.[92]

Therefore, EIS materials should incorporate scaffolding strategies, including vocabulary support, conceptual explanation, bilingual comparison, guided reading activities, and structured academic writing exercises.

4.5 Lecturer Collaboration and Institutional Support

The fifth proposed component is lecturer collaboration. EIS requires cooperation between English lecturers and Islamic studies lecturers because disciplinary accuracy and language pedagogy represent complementary areas of expertise.[93]

English lecturers contribute knowledge of language teaching, academic genres, communication strategies, and assessment design. Islamic studies lecturers contribute disciplinary knowledge, conceptual accuracy, and understanding of Islamic scholarly traditions.[94]

Collaboration may occur through joint syllabus development, materials evaluation, co-teaching sessions, assessment moderation, and professional development activities. Such collaboration prevents two possible weaknesses: English instruction that is linguistically effective but conceptually superficial, and disciplinary content that is academically rich but inaccessible from a language-learning perspective.[95]

Institutional support is also required to sustain implementation. Policy development, lecturer training, resource provision, and quality assurance mechanisms influence whether EIS can become an established curriculum practice.

4.6 Authentic Assessment for Disciplinary Communication

The sixth proposed component is authentic assessment. The framework indicates that assessment should measure students' ability to engage in meaningful academic and disciplinary communication rather than focus primarily on grammar exercises or isolated vocabulary tests.[96]

Authentic assessment tasks may include explaining Islamic concepts in English, summarising scholarly articles, producing annotated bibliographies, writing abstracts, preparing literature reviews, presenting research proposals, and participating in academic discussions.[97]

Such an assessment should evaluate multiple dimensions, including conceptual accuracy, terminology management, academic organisation, use of sources, and communicative effectiveness.[98]

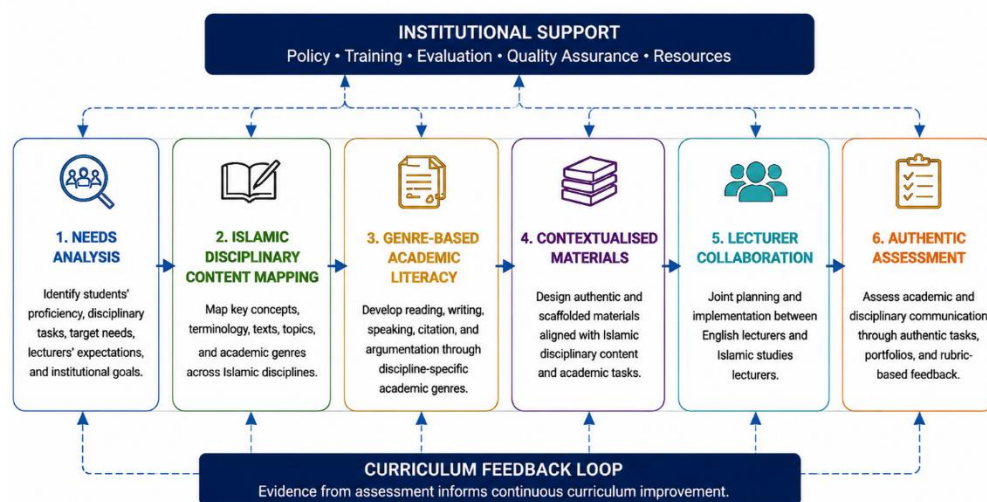
For example, when students explain the concept of tawhid in English, assessment criteria may include: First, conceptual accuracy, which assesses whether the explanation accurately reflects the theological meaning of tawhid. Second, terminology management, which involves evaluating whether Arabic terms are retained, translated, or effectively explained. Third, academic organisation, to determine whether ideas are presented logically and supported by evidence. Fourth, audience awareness, assessing whether explanations are understandable to international academic audiences.[99]

4.7 Proposed EIS Curriculum Framework

The proposed EIS framework integrates four theoretical foundations: ESP as the needs-based foundation, EAP as the academic literacy orientation, CLIL as the mechanism for integrating language and disciplinary content, and EMI as a source of insights into institutional implementation.[10], [100], [101], [102]

The framework consists of six interconnected components: needs analysis, Islamic disciplinary content mapping, genre-based academic literacy instruction, contextualised materials development, lecturer collaboration and institutional support, and authentic assessment. Together, these components form an integrated curriculum structure that aligns English instruction with students' disciplinary knowledge, academic literacy needs, and communication demands in Islamic higher education.[103]

These components should not be interpreted as independent elements but as an integrated curriculum system. Needs analysis informs content mapping; content mapping determines genre selection and material development; lecturer collaboration ensures conceptual and pedagogical integration; and authentic assessment provides evidence for continuous curriculum improvement.[104]



Note. Institutional support functions as an enabling condition influencing all components, while feedback from assessment continuously informs curriculum refinement.

Figure 1. Integrated Framework of English for Islamic Studies (EIS)

The framework illustrates that institutional support functions as an enabling condition across all components. Policy development, lecturer training, evaluation, and quality assurance create the conditions necessary for sustainable implementation, while curriculum feedback from assessment contributes to continuous improvement.[105]

	STAGE 1 Academic Vocabulary & Reading	STAGE 2 Concept Explanation & Paraphrase	STAGE 3 Genre Awareness & Citation	STAGE 4 Research Communication & Presentation
Semester	Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 3	Semester 4
Student Level	Beginner – Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate – Upper Intermediate	Upper Intermediate
Focus	Academic vocabulary and reading strategies	Explaining concepts and paraphrasing ideas	Academic genres and citation practices	Research communication and academic presentation
Key Learning Outcomes	- Understand academic vocabulary - Identify main ideas and details - Read short Islamic studies texts	- Explain Islamic concepts in English - Paraphrase ideas accurately - Use appropriate terminology	- Identify genre structure - Summarise and synthesise sources - Apply citation conventions	- Write abstracts and proposals - Deliver academic presentations - Engage in scholarly discussions
Portfolio Evidence	Reading log and vocabulary notebook	Concept explanation video and paraphrase exercises	Annotated bibliography and literature review draft	Abstract and conference-style presentation with slides

Note: The stages are flexible and can be adapted to institutional context, student proficiency, and curriculum structure.

Figure 2. Suggested Staged Implementation Pathway for EIS Courses

The staged pathway illustrates a gradual progression from academic vocabulary and reading towards concept explanation, genre awareness, citation practices, and research communication. Each stage can be adapted according to institutional capacity and student proficiency levels. [106]

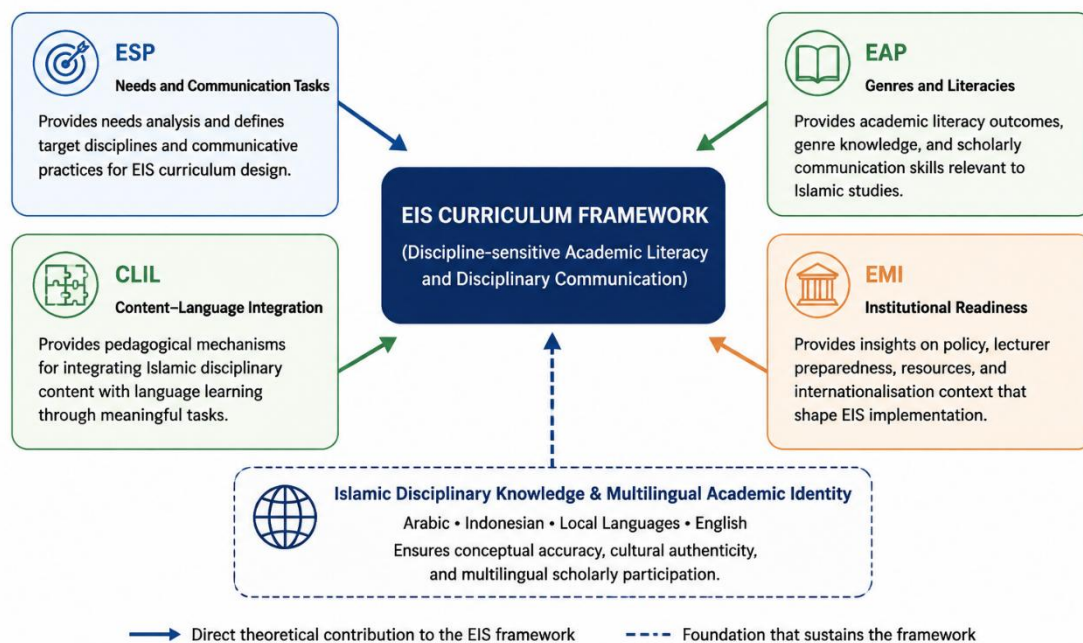


Figure 3. Theoretical Alignment Underlying the EIS Curriculum Framework

Figure 3 illustrates how ESP, EAP, CLIL, and EMI contribute different but complementary functions within the EIS curriculum framework.

The proposed framework positions English for Islamic Studies (EIS) as a curriculum for disciplinary academic literacy rather than as a conventional English course centred on vocabulary

acquisition or general communication skills. Its main contribution lies in integrating four complementary perspectives: ESP as a basis for identifying disciplinary communication needs; EAP as an orientation towards academic literacy and genre competence; CLIL as a mechanism for connecting language learning with Islamic disciplinary content; and EMI scholarship as a source of considerations for institutional implementation. Unlike previous studies that often examine materials development, Islamic-content integration, classroom strategies, or lecturer readiness in isolation, the proposed framework integrates these dimensions into a coherent curriculum architecture.[107], [108]

A significant contribution of this framework is clarifying the relationship between EIS and EMI. Although both involve the use of English in higher education, they serve different educational purposes. EMI refers primarily to the delivery of subject content through English, where English functions as the medium of instruction for disciplinary courses. In contrast, EIS is a language curriculum designed to prepare students to access, interpret, discuss, and communicate Islamic disciplinary knowledge through English. Therefore, implementing EIS does not mean that all Islamic studies courses should be converted to English-medium courses. Qur'anic studies, Hadith studies, Islamic law, and other Islamic disciplines may continue to use Arabic and Indonesian as important languages of scholarship. EIS instead provides students with additional communicative resources for engaging with international literature, academic publications, conferences, and intercultural scholarly exchange.[109], [110]

This distinction is particularly important in Islamic higher education because language is closely connected with epistemic identity. The use of English should not be understood as a replacement for Arabic, Indonesian, or local intellectual traditions. Rather, EIS supports multilingual academic participation by enabling students to explain Islamic concepts accurately to audiences who may not share the same linguistic background. This requires pedagogical attention to translation strategies, transliteration practices, contextual explanation, and comparative academic discourse. For example, when introducing the concept of *maqasid al-sharia* in an English academic presentation, students should not simply replace the term with an approximate English expression such as “objectives of Islamic law”. Instead, they should explain the term’s theoretical background, identify its relationship with Islamic legal thought, and clarify its relevance within the specific academic discussion.[111], [112]

The framework also highlights that successful EIS implementation depends on institutional and pedagogical conditions. Several challenges may influence implementation, including differences in students’ English proficiency, limited experience of interdisciplinary curriculum design among lecturers, insufficient specialised materials, and the absence of coordinated assessment systems. Therefore, EIS should not be implemented as a sudden shift in institutional language. A gradual approach is more appropriate, beginning with pilot courses, collaborative syllabus development, materials repositories, lecturer training, and continuous curriculum evaluation. Such an approach allows institutions to adapt the framework according to their disciplinary characteristics, student profiles, and available resources.[113]

Assessment is a different crucial dimension of EIS implementation because it determines which forms of learning are valued. When assessment focuses only on grammar accuracy or vocabulary memorisation, students are unlikely to develop the ability to communicate Islamic knowledge academically. Authentic assessment should therefore evaluate students’ capacity to perform discipline-related communication tasks. For example, in a task requiring students to explain the concept of *tawhid* in English, rubric-based feedback should assess several dimensions: (1) conceptual accuracy whether the student explains the theological meaning correctly; (2) terminology management whether Arabic terms are retained, translated, or explained appropriately; (3) academic organisation whether ideas are presented logically with supporting evidence; and (4) audience awareness whether the explanation is understandable for an international academic

audience. Such assessment provides more meaningful evidence of academic literacy development than isolated language tests.

The framework has both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, it extends discussions of ESP and EAP by applying them to the specific context of Islamic higher education, where academic communication involves negotiation among Arabic, Indonesian, local languages, and English. It also contributes to CLIL discussions by demonstrating how disciplinary content can function not merely as classroom themes but as a foundation for academic literacy development. Practically, the framework provides an adaptable curriculum architecture for Islamic higher education institutions, language centres, and academic programmes seeking to strengthen international engagement without weakening local scholarly identities.[114], [115]

Nevertheless, the framework remains a conceptual proposition that requires empirical validation. Future studies should investigate how EIS frameworks operate in different institutional contexts through classroom implementation, student needs analysis, lecturer collaboration models, and assessment of academic literacy outcomes. Empirical validation will be necessary to determine how the framework can be adapted across different Islamic disciplines, student proficiency levels, and institutional internationalisation strategies.[116]

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This article proposes a conceptual curriculum framework for English for Islamic Studies (EIS) in higher education, consisting of six interconnected components: needs analysis, Islamic disciplinary content mapping, genre-based academic literacy instruction, contextualised materials development, lecturer collaboration, and authentic assessment. The framework contributes theoretically by extending ESP, EAP, CLIL, and EMI perspectives into the context of Islamic higher education, positioning EIS as a discipline-sensitive academic literacy curriculum rather than a general English course. Practically, the framework provides guidance for Islamic higher education institutions in designing contextually relevant English programmes that strengthen disciplinary communication and international academic participation while maintaining the complementary roles of Arabic, Indonesian, and local scholarly traditions. However, as a conceptual model, this framework requires empirical confirmation. Future research needs to examine its implementation through institutional pilots, classroom studies, materials evaluation, collaboration with lecturers, and assessment of students' academic literacy development.

DECLARATION OF USING AI IN THE WRITING PROCESS

The authors declare that artificial intelligence (AI) and AI-assisted technologies were employed during the writing process to facilitate language refinement, organisation of ideas, and enhancement of manuscript clarity. AI tools were utilised to assist with drafting suggestions, reviewing academic expression, and structuring the conceptual framework. Nonetheless, the authors retain full responsibility for the intellectual content, theoretical arguments, interpretation of literature, accuracy of references, and final decisions concerning the manuscript. AI tools were not used to generate research data, conduct analysis, or supplant the authors' scholarly judgment.

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