

## INVESTIGATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT FOR DA'WAH AMONG ISLAMIC STUDIES STUDENTS

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**Abstract:** *This study represents the third phase of a Design and Development Research project, focusing on the assessment phase. The primary research objective is to investigate the effectiveness of an English for Specific Purposes Da'wah Instructional Content (EPIC) designed and developed for Islamic Studies students. To achieve this objective, the study addresses the following research question: To what extent is EPIC effective in enhancing English language skills for specific Da'wah purposes among Islamic Studies students? There is scarce information concerning the effectiveness of these modules, especially in Da'wah-oriented English instruction for students of Islamic studies. If left to rule unchecked, the occurrence of unsystematically verified ESP instructional materials for Islamic Studies (or da'wah per se) will continue to flood the market, and untested content in terms of its practicality, usefulness, and effectiveness in providing the right ESP for the da'wah learning experience to the targeted audiences will prolong. The study integrates Cunningsworth's Textbook Evaluation Checklist, and Brian Tomlinson's Teaching Material Development Principles to guide the evaluation of EPIC's practicality and effectiveness. Mixed methods were used to gather data. The participants in this study were students in Islamic Studies programs at a private Malaysian Islamic university. 12 students volunteered to participate in the study to*

*assess the effectiveness of EPIC using a comprehensive questionnaire. The results show a notable improvement in public speaking skills and a generally positive perception of EPIC materials among Islamic Studies students effectively improved their language skills, enhanced their understanding of Islamic concepts, and provided relevant, engaging content for their studies. Recommendations are made to improve its usability and alignment with ESP practitioners' for da'wah real-world needs.*

**Keywords:** *English for Specific Purposes (ESP), Da'wah, Cunningsworth's Textbook Evaluation, Tomlinson's Development Principles*

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### **Introduction**

Malaysia's multilingual nature requires Da'wah (Islamic outreach) practitioners to communicate effectively across language barriers. As Malaysia increasingly embraces English as a medium for public discourse and education, the ability to engage English-speaking audiences becomes more critical for Islamic studies practitioners. English-language Da'wah resources are essential for these practitioners to reach a broader audience and convey Islamic teachings effectively.

In this study, the English language needs of Islamic Studies practitioners must be identified before an effective ESP Da'wah Pedagogical Content (EPIC) for Islamic studies practitioners doing da'wah for English-spoken audiences can be developed. If permitted to increase, the widespread use of unsystematically validated ESP instructional materials for da'wah will persist, overflowing the market with untested content regarding its practicality, usefulness, and effectiveness in providing appropriate ESP for the da'wah educational experience to the intended audiences.

This study aims to develop a targeted English for Specific Purposes (ESP) instructional content, known as EPIC, specifically designed to support Islamic studies practitioners. By addressing the unique needs of these practitioners, EPIC seeks to enhance their ability to communicate with English-speaking audiences. The development and assessment of EPIC follow a Design and Developmental Research (DDR) framework, which is instrumental in ensuring the material's relevance, practicality, and effectiveness.

The DDR framework integrates Cunningsworth's Textbook Evaluation Checklist and Brian Tomlinson's Teaching Material Development Principles. Cunningsworth's Checklist provides a comprehensive approach to evaluating the quality and suitability of instructional materials, focusing on aspects such as content relevance, language appropriateness, and pedagogical effectiveness (Cunningsworth, 2019). Meanwhile, Tomlinson's Principles emphasise the importance of engaging, meaningful, and learner-centred materials that cater to the target audience's specific needs (Tomlinson, 2020).

### **Research Objectives**

Under the phases, this study has adapted the design and developmental research (DDR) approach founded by Richey and Klein (2014). The objectives of this study are constructed based on the problem statement consisting of three main objectives in each phase based on the DDR approach. The following are the objectives of the study and sub-objectives of the study for each phase.

*Needs Analysis Phase*

1. To find out the required English language contents and skills for Islamic studies practitioners to effectively deliver da'wah to English-spoken audiences.

*Design and Development Phase*

2. To examine the practicality of English for Specific Purpose Da'wah Instructional Content (EPIC) Islamic Studies practitioners from the experts' viewpoints
3. To explore the perceived usefulness of English for Specific Purposes Da'wah Instructional Content (EPIC) by Islamic Studies practitioners.

*Assessment Phase*

4. To investigate the effectiveness of English for Specific Purposes Da'wah Instructional Content (EPIC) for Islamic Studies students.

**Research Questions**

As such, this study has addressed the following research questions following the phases. The questions are:

*Needs Analysis Phase*

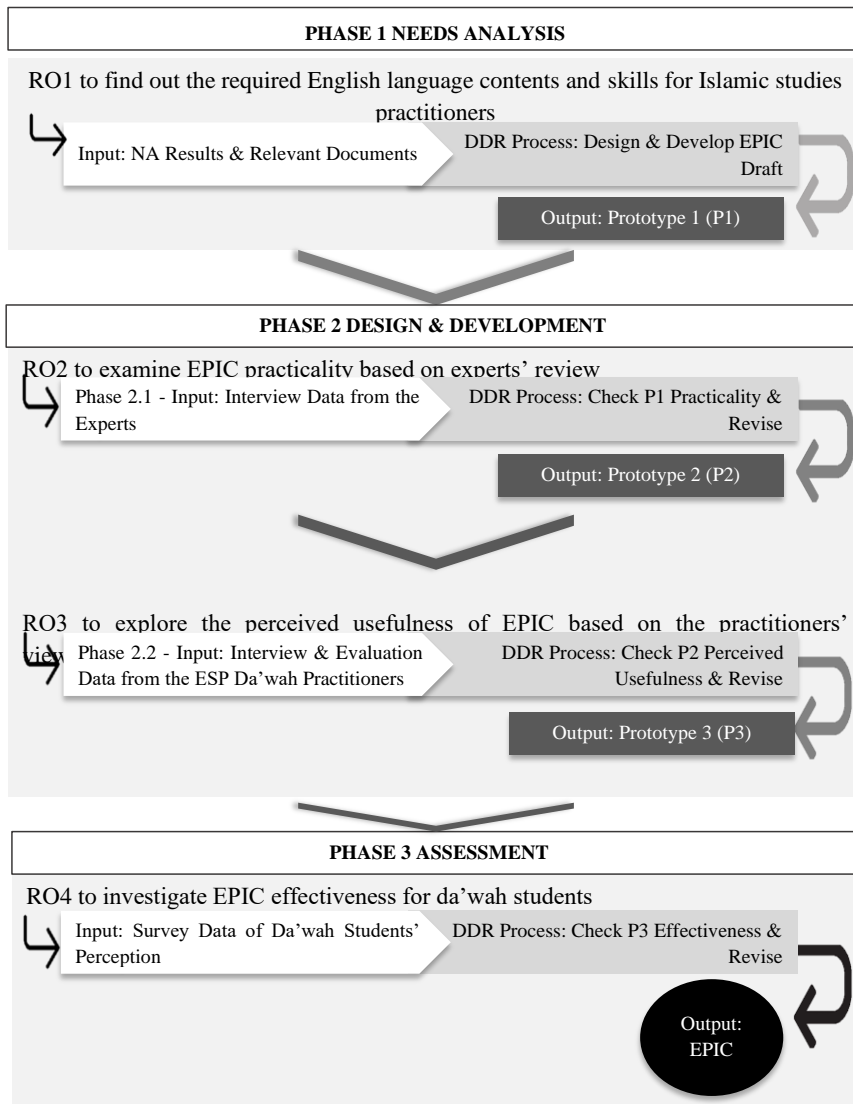
1. What are the contents and skills needed by Islamic Studies practitioners to do da'wah for English-spoken audiences effectively?

*Design and Development Phase*

2. How practical is EPIC to the English for Specific Da'wah Purposes practitioners according to the experts' view?
3. How is EPIC useful for the English for Specific Da'wah Purposes practitioners?

*Assessment Phase*

4. To what extent is the effectiveness of EPIC for English for Specific Da'wah Purposes for Islamic studies students?



**Figure 1: The Study Research Design using Design and Developmental Research for EPIC**

Source: Adapted from Richey & Klein (2005)

## Literature Review

There are 3 points to be discussed in this review, namely the importance of the English language for Islamic studies, Cunningsworth's Checklist, Tomlinson's Principles for Da'wah-focused English Instruction Materials, and Key Principles of Aligning ESP Courses with CEFR Levels.

### The Importance of the English Language for Islamic Studies Practitioners

The significance of the English language in Islamic studies is increasingly acknowledged, especially in global communication, academic endeavours, and the spread of Islamic teachings. Based on various findings, the importance of English for professionals in Islamic studies is viewed from several angles.

Firstly, it is important to incorporate Islamic education into English language instruction. Djamdjuri (2023) notes that English language training in Islamic countries often integrates aspects of Islamic literature, history, and cultural traditions to improve the learning experience and reinforce Islamic principles. Educators with a comprehensive understanding of Islamic traditions can effectively integrate these elements into English classes, fostering a holistic education that enhances critical thinking and broadens knowledge of global issues.

Furthermore, English serves as the principal language for students at Islamic universities, facilitating the dissemination of Islamic teachings globally and enhancing their understanding of Islamic knowledge through English-language resources (Paid, 2023). English is regarded as one of the most useful languages for global communication, intellectual endeavours, and 'da'wah' (Islamic outreach work).

Moreover, the effectiveness of English Reading Materials to Islamic studies learners is crucial. Supplying learners with English reading materials grounded in Islamic principles effectively aids their understanding of Islamic teachings and contributes to their development as Muslim individuals. Nagauleng (2019) asserts that these materials facilitate learners' comprehension and integration of Islamic principles via the utilisation of English texts in their lives.

In terms of attitudes and motivation, Soh (2021) indicates that students in Islamic studies frequently exhibit positive attitudes and a natural inclination to learn English, even though English is regarded as a foreign language in numerous contexts they face. The acknowledgement of English's significance for academic and professional success is frequently identified as a key factor in the enhancement of English language proficiency.

In the context of this study, the demand for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) resources designed for the academic and professional requirements of Islamic studies students is substantial, equipping them with essential language skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing necessary for success in their field (Warda, 2022). Active learning strategies and diverse pedagogical methods in English instruction within Islamic institutions are recommended to improve student engagement and language proficiency (Rachman, 2021). Students specialising in Islamic Economics necessitate tailored ESP courses that emphasise reading and writing skills for effective academic and professional communication (Ridwan, 2021). Proficiency in English is crucial for Islamic studies practitioners, as it enables the integration of Islamic values into education, the global sharing of teachings, and the enhancement of academic and professional competencies. This underscores the importance of structured English instruction and resources within this field.

### **Cunningsworth's Checklist and Tomlinson's Principles for Da'wah-focused English Instruction Materials**

The integration of Cunningsworth's Textbook Evaluation Checklist and Brian Tomlinson's Teaching Material Development Principles offers a robust framework for developing English for Specific Purposes (ESP) instructional content, particularly for Da'wah-focused contexts. These frameworks are well-suited for this purpose due to their comprehensive and adaptable nature, which ensures that instructional materials meet the specific needs of Islamic studies practitioners engaging with English-speaking audiences.

Cunningsworth's Checklist provides a detailed and systematic approach to evaluating educational materials, focusing on key aspects such as content relevance, language appropriateness, pedagogical effectiveness, and cultural sensitivity (Cunningsworth, 2019). This is crucial for Da'wah-focused English instruction, as it ensures that the content not only aligns with the learners' linguistic capabilities but also respects and incorporates Islamic values and teachings. By systematically assessing these aspects, educators can ensure that the materials are both linguistically appropriate and culturally resonant, which is vital for effective communication in religious contexts (Rahim, 2022).

On the other hand, Tomlinson's principles emphasize the creation of engaging, meaningful, and learner-centered materials that cater to the diverse needs of learners (Tomlinson, 2020). These principles advocate for the inclusion of authentic materials, varied activities, and opportunities for meaningful interaction, which are essential for maintaining learners' motivation and engagement. For Da'wah practitioners, this means developing materials that are not only educational but also relevant to their real-world interactions with English-speaking audiences. Tomlinson's emphasis on learner engagement and meaningful use of language supports the practical application of English in Da'wah activities, enhancing both language proficiency and effectiveness in religious outreach (Ahmad & Saleh, 2021).

The synergy between Cunningsworth's structured evaluation criteria and Tomlinson's learner-centered development approach ensures that the instructional content is both high-quality and highly relevant. This combination allows educators to create materials that are not only pedagogically sound but also tailored to the specific communicative and cultural needs of Islamic studies practitioners. As a result, these frameworks provide a solid foundation for developing effective Da'wah-focused English instructional content that can facilitate successful intercultural and interfaith communication (Hassan, 2023).

### **Key Principles of Aligning ESP Courses with CEFR Levels**

Aligning English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) requires adherence to key principles that ensure instructional content addresses learners' specific needs while conforming to established international standards. The CEFR offers a clear and systematic framework for developing language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, teaching materials, and assessing foreign language proficiency (Council of Europe, 2001). In this case, EPIC was developed using CEFR level A2 to B1 only, to suit the Islamic studies learners.

A fundamental principle is needs analysis, which entails identifying the specific linguistic and communicative requirements of the target learners. This guarantees the relevance and customisation of the ESP course content to the professional or academic contexts of the learners (Athanasίου et al., 2016). Through a comprehensive needs analysis, educators can develop

materials that target the precise language skills necessary for effective performance in learners' respective fields.

A key principle is materials development, which emphasises the creation of instructional content that is pedagogically sound and contextually appropriate. This entails the selection or design of materials that are engaging, authentic, and consistent with the CEFR descriptors of language competence (Council of Europe, 2001). The materials must enable learners to practise language skills in real-life contexts pertinent to their specific objectives.

Task design is crucial for aligning ESP courses with CEFR levels. Tasks must be constructed to mirror authentic language use and align with the CEFR's action-oriented framework. Tasks should prioritise meaningful communication and interaction, enabling learners to enhance their language skills within context (Council of Europe, 2001).

Assessment represents a fundamental principle, utilising CEFR-aligned tools to evaluate learners' progress and proficiency. Assessments must be criterion-referenced and must offer explicit descriptors of language competence across various levels (Council of Europe, 2001). This ensures that learners obtain precise feedback on their performance and can recognise areas needing improvement.

In the context of developing EPIC, evaluation and feedback are crucial for ensuring that ESP courses remain aligned with CEFR levels. Educators must regularly assess the efficacy of instructional content and implement adjustments informed by feedback from learners and relevant stakeholders. This iterative process ensures the ESP course remains relevant and effective in addressing learners' needs.

## Methodology

### *Research Design*

This study adopts a Design and Development Research (DDR) framework, focusing on the assessment phase of the project. The primary objective is to investigate the effectiveness of English for Specific Purposes Da'wah Instructional Content (EPIC) for Islamic Studies students. The research question guiding this phase is: To what extent is the effectiveness of EPIC for English for Specific Da'wah Purposes for Islamic Studies students?

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### *Participants*

The participants in this study were students in Islamic Studies programs at a private Malaysian Islamic university. A total of 12 students were selected to participate in the study. Demographic information such as gender, age, and current year of study was collected to ensure a diverse and representative sample.

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### *Instrumentation*

To assess the effectiveness of EPIC, a comprehensive questionnaire titled "Effectiveness of Using English Pedagogical Islamic Content (EPIC) for Da'wah Purposes" was developed ([appendix](#)). The questionnaire consists of four parts:

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1. Demographic Information: This section collects participants' basic demographic information including gender, age, and current year of study.

2. Effectiveness of EPIC: This section contains 10 Likert-scale items, where participants rate statements related to the effectiveness of EPIC materials using a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Statements assess improvements in English language skills, understanding of Islamic concepts related to Da'wah, communication effectiveness in English, relevance to Da'wah studies, engagement, practical application, complementarity with other courses, meeting linguistic needs, confidence in using English, and overall academic performance.
3. Open-Ended Questions: This section includes two open-ended questions where participants can provide detailed feedback on ways to improve EPIC materials and share specific experiences of EPIC's effectiveness or ineffectiveness in their studies.

The data gathers overall satisfaction with EPIC materials and additional comments or suggestions regarding the effectiveness and their use of the Islamic Da'wah content in the study. [Include measures taken to ensure validity and reliability of the instrument](#)

#### *Data Collection*

The questionnaire was administered to the participants in a class simulation, allowing sufficient time for thoughtful responses, measurement of the number of vocabulary differences, and group public speaking presentations pre and post-EPIC. Participants were briefed on the purpose of the study and assured of the confidentiality of their responses. [Mention gathering consent from the institution and respondents](#)

#### *Data Analysis*

Quantitative data from the Likert-scale items were analyzed using descriptive statistics to determine the overall effectiveness of EPIC materials. Mean scores and standard deviations were calculated for each item to assess central tendencies and variability in responses. Qualitative data from the open-ended questions were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring themes, insights, and suggestions for improvement. This mixed-method approach provides a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of EPIC materials from both quantitative and qualitative perspectives.

#### **Analysis Findings and Discussion**

The findings indicate that EPIC meets essential language and content requirements, providing an effective tool for Islamic studies practitioners to engage with English-speaking audiences. The study highlights the importance of tailored instructional content in overcoming language barriers and enhancing communication in multicultural and multilingual contexts. Recommendations are made to further enhance the usability and alignment of EPIC with practitioners' real-world needs, ensuring its continued relevance and effectiveness.

#### **Phase 3 of DDR: The Assessment Phase**

EPIC's effectiveness was rigorously tested with a group of 12 Islamic studies students to evaluate its impact on their language skills and Da'wah's effectiveness. The assessment phase employed a comprehensive approach, utilizing survey questions derived from well-established educational frameworks to gather detailed feedback (Djamdjuri, 2023). These frameworks were chosen for their robust criteria in evaluating educational materials, ensuring that the assessment covered various aspects of the instructional content's quality and relevance.

The focus of the questionnaire titled "Effectiveness of Using English Pedagogical Islamic Content (EPIC) for Da'wah Purposes" is to evaluate the impact of EPIC on the English language

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skills and Da'wah effectiveness of Islamic Studies students. The questionnaire aims to gather comprehensive feedback from participants regarding their experiences with EPIC materials, assessing various dimensions such as:

1. Improvement in English Language Skills: Evaluating how effectively EPIC materials enhance students' proficiency in English.
2. Understanding of Islamic Concepts: Assessing whether EPIC materials improve students' comprehension of Islamic concepts related to Da'wah.
3. Communication Effectiveness: Measuring the ability of students to communicate effectively in English about Da'wah topics.
4. Relevance to Da'wah Studies: Determining the relevance of EPIC materials to the students' studies in Islamic Da'wah.
5. Engagement and Interest: Gauging the extent to which EPIC materials make learning Da'wah-related topics more interesting and engaging.
6. Practical Application: Identifying the practicality of knowledge and skills provided by EPIC materials in real-life Da'wah situations.
7. Complementarity with Other Courses: Evaluating how well EPIC materials complement other Islamic Studies courses.
8. Meeting Linguistic Needs: Assessing whether EPIC materials meet the specific English linguistic needs of Da'wah practitioners.
9. Confidence in Using English: Measuring the increase in students' confidence in using English for Da'wah purposes.
10. Overall Academic Performance: Assessing the impact of EPIC materials on students' overall academic performance in Islamic Studies.

**Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

	Items	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	10	83.3
	Female	2	16.7
	Total	12	100.0
Age	19	2	16.7
	20	4	33.3
	21	4	33.3
	22	1	8.3
	23	1	8.3
	<u>Total</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>100</u>

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents participating in the study. The gender distribution indicates that a significant majority, 83.3%, are male, while females account for 16.7% of the total respondents. This totals 12 participants. In terms of age, the data reveals a diverse representation among respondents. The age group of 20 years comprises the largest segment at 33.3%, followed by respondents aged 21, which also accounts for 33.3%. Additionally, 16.7% of respondents are 19 years old, while those aged 22 and 23 represent 8.3% each.

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Research Objective 4**

<u>Particulars</u> <u>Item No.</u> <u>Statement</u>	<u>Measurements</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
EPIC materials effectively improve my English language Skills	Neutral	4	33.3
	Agree	2	16.7
	Strongly Agree	6	50.0
EPIC materials enhance my understanding of Islamic concepts related to Da'wah.	Neutral	2	16.7
	Agree	4	33.3
	Strongly Agree	6	50.0
EPIC materials help me communicate about Da'wah topics in English	Neutral	2	16.7
	Agree	4	33.3
	Strongly Agree	6	50.0
EPIC materials are relevant to my studies in Islamic Da'wah.	Neutral	3	25.0
	Agree	3	25.0
	Strongly Agree	6	50.0
EPIC materials make learning Da'wah-related topics more interesting and engaging	Agree	7	58.3
	Strongly Agree	5	41.7
EPIC materials provide practical knowledge that I can apply in real-life Da'wah situations	Neutral	2	16.7
	Agree	2	16.7
	Strongly Agree	8	66.7
EPIC materials complement my other Islamic Studies courses effectively	Neutral	2	16.7
	Agree	5	41.7
	Strongly Agree	5	41.7
EPIC materials meet the specific English linguistic needs of Da'wah practitioners	Neutral	3	25.0
	Agree	2	16.7
	Strongly Agree	7	58.3
EPIC materials have increased my confidence in using English for Da'wah purposes	Disagree	2	16.7
	Neutral	1	8.3
	Agree	4	33.3
	Strongly Agree	5	41.7
EPIC materials have improved my overall academic performance in Islamic Studies.	Strongly Disagree	1	8.3
	Neutral	3	25.0
	Agree	4	33.3
	Strongly Agree	4	33.3

The findings related to the fourth research objective, which investigates the effectiveness of English for Specific Purposes Da'wah Instructional Content (EPIC) for Islamic Studies students, are presented in Table 2, the responses reveal significant insights into the perceptions of the respondents regarding the effectiveness of EPIC materials in enhancing various aspects of their learning experience. Firstly, a notable 50% of the respondents strongly agree that EPIC materials effectively improve their English language skills, with an additional 16.7% agreeing

with the statement. This indicates a positive reception towards the materials' impact on language proficiency. Similarly, 50% also strongly agree that these materials enhance their understanding of Islamic concepts related to Da'wah, reinforcing the content's relevance and educational value.

Again, in terms of communication skills about Da'wah topics in English, 50% of the respondents strongly agree that the EPIC materials aid them, while 33.3% agree, suggesting that the materials are effective in facilitating communication on relevant topics. Furthermore, 50% of respondents find the EPIC materials relevant to their studies in Islamic Da'wah, with an equal number (25%) being neutral on the issue, indicating general acceptance of the materials within their curriculum.

The findings also highlight that 58.3% of respondents agree that EPIC materials make learning Da'wah-related topics more engaging and interesting. This positive feedback suggests that the materials enhance student motivation and engagement in the subject matter. When considering the practical applicability of the EPIC materials, a significant 66.7% strongly agree that they provide knowledge that can be applied in real-life Da'wah situations. This emphasizes the materials' relevance to practical scenarios faced by Da'wah practitioners.

Moreover, the effectiveness of EPIC materials in complementing other Islamic Studies courses is also evident, with 41.7% agreeing and another 41.7% strongly agreeing with this statement. This suggests that EPIC materials serve as a valuable addition to the broader curriculum. Addressing the specific linguistic needs of Da'wah practitioners, 58.3% of respondents strongly agree that EPIC materials meet these needs, highlighting the targeted approach of the content. Additionally, while 41.7% of respondents strongly agree that EPIC materials have increased their confidence in using English for Da'wah purposes, 16.7% disagree, indicating that some students may still feel challenged in this area.

Lastly, regarding overall academic performance in Islamic Studies, the responses are mixed, with 33.3% agreeing and another 33.3% strongly agreeing that EPIC materials have improved their performance, although 25% remain neutral. This variability suggests that while many students perceive benefits, the impact on academic performance may vary among individuals. Therefore, the findings indicate a generally positive perception of EPIC materials among Islamic Studies students, suggesting that these resources effectively improve language skills, enhance understanding of Islamic concepts, and provide relevant, engaging content for their studies. However, there remain areas for improvement, particularly in fostering confidence and ensuring a more consistent positive impact on academic performance.

**Table 3: Public Speaking Skill before and after using EPIC**

Respondent No.	Score Before After		Difference
	Before	After	
1	19	23	4
2	13	18	5
3	13	18	5
4	18	23	5
5	18	23	5
6	19	23	4
7	19	23	4
8	18	23	5
9	19	23	4
10	18	23	5
11	18	23	5
12	18	23	5

The findings related to the effectiveness of English for Specific Purposes Da'wah Instructional Content (EPIC) for Islamic Studies students are further substantiated by the data presented in Table 3, which illustrates the public speaking skills of respondents before and after utilizing EPIC materials. The table shows a notable improvement in public speaking skills among all twelve respondents after the implementation of EPIC. Before using the materials, the scores varied, with respondents averaging between 13 and 19 points. After engaging with EPIC, every respondent experienced an increase in their scores, with the new scores ranging from 18 to 23. The difference in scores illustrates significant enhancements, with most respondents showing improvements of 4 to 5 points. Specifically, Respondents 1, 6, 7, and 11 increased their scores by 4 points, while the rest showed a 5-point increase. These improvements highlight the effectiveness of the EPIC materials in enhancing public speaking abilities, an essential skill for Da'wah practitioners. Corresponding to the descriptive statistics, the data clearly indicates a positive correlation between the use of EPIC and the enhancement of public speaking skills. This further reinforces the findings that EPIC materials not only improve English language proficiency and understanding of Islamic concepts but also contribute significantly to developing essential communication skills necessary for effective Da'wah practices.

#### **Limitation in Sample Size**

In emphasising the investigative aspects of this research on the development of EPIC, it is crucial to note that it is primarily exploratory. The main objective is to create instructional content that is innovative and tailored to the requirements of Islamic Studies practitioners. The emphasis is on generating preliminary insights instead of yielding widely applicable findings. Creswell (2014) indicates that exploratory research typically utilises smaller sample sizes, as its main objective is to investigate a concept or phenomenon in detail, rather than to test a hypothesis on a broad population. Creswell asserts that in qualitative and mixed-methods research, the depth of data takes precedence over the number of participants. This is especially pertinent when the research seeks to establish new theories, frameworks, or content, as exemplified by the EPIC project (Creswell, 2014).

Previous studies indicate that smaller samples can provide significant insights in exploratory research. Alzahrani (2019) conducted a mixed-methods study involving seven participants to investigate translanguaging practices in higher education, highlighting the potential of small samples to yield significant insights. Besekar et al. (2023) observed that smaller samples frequently occur in early-stage educational research, particularly when evaluating innovative methods or content creation.

This study may face limitations due to practical factors including participant access, time constraints, and resource availability. Such constraints are prevalent in educational research, especially within specialised domains such as Islamic Studies, where the availability of potential participants may be restricted. Creswell (2018) notes that practical limitations, such as restricted access to participants and resources, frequently require smaller sample sizes. The author contends that transparency regarding these limitations is essential for justifying them and for discussing their potential impact on the study's findings. This transparency enhances the defense of the research and offers a framework for future studies to expand upon.

Research in this domain frequently encounters analogous limitations. Darabi et al. (2021) conducted a study on sustainable teaching practices using a sample of 17 experts, illustrating that research in specialised educational fields frequently entails smaller, intentionally selected samples. This indicates that smaller samples are prevalent in this field and may be essential depending on the specific context or focus of the research.

### **Future Directions**

The findings in the third phase of this study, illustrate the importance of developing contextually relevant materials that not only enhance linguistic competence but also meet the practical demands of da'wah. The evaluation of existing instructional materials reveals a notable lack of resources tailored to the unique linguistic and cultural contexts of these practitioners. This gap emphasizes the urgent need for the creation of specialized teaching materials that address the specific challenges faced in da'wah efforts.

Furthermore, the assessment of current language training programs indicates varying levels of satisfaction among participants. Many expressed a desire for more interactive and practical learning approaches, suggesting that innovative teaching methodologies are necessary to enhance engagement and effectiveness in learning. The EPIC project, although demonstrating encouraging outcomes, has limits that provide opportunities for further enhancement.

A significant constraint is a disparity in learners' confidence levels when utilising English for Da'wah aims. While numerous participants indicated improved skills and comprehension, some experienced difficulties, suggesting that EPIC could benefit from supplementary support systems customised for varying proficiency levels. A further constraint is the resource requirements for adapting materials to various cultural contexts, which complicates widespread implementation in the absence of strong, customisable frameworks.

Moreover, while EPIC successfully integrates fundamental language and Da'wah content, its impact on sustained academic performance varies. Certain learners exhibited significant advancements, but others indicated neutral results, implying that additional customisation or supplementary resources might augment its efficacy for a wider array of students.

Future enhancements to EPIC could involve the integration of adaptive, technology-driven elements to provide personalised learning trajectories tailored to individual needs. The incorporation of AI-driven language assistance and interactive modules may enable students to freely practise and enhance their language abilities, accommodating diverse levels of comfort and confidence. A further possible advancement involves enhancing the cultural significance of EPIC through collaboration with practitioners from various locations, so enriching the materials and rendering them applicable to multiple Da'wah contexts.

Moreover, subsequent iterations of EPIC could gain from longitudinal studies that monitor students' development over extended durations, facilitating a more thorough comprehension of its influence on academic performance. These guidelines offer potential for enhancing EPIC as a more inclusive, adaptive, and effective resource for practitioners of Islamic studies in multilingual contexts.

### Conclusion

All in all, the assessment phase (Phase 3) demonstrated that EPIC is a practical and effective tool for enhancing the language skills and Da'wah capabilities of Islamic studies students. The findings support the continued use and further development of EPIC to better serve the needs of practitioners in multilingual settings. This study demonstrates that EPIC, developed using Cunningsworth's textbook evaluation list, Tomlinson's principles of teaching material development, and made CEFR aligned is a viable instructional tool for Islamic studies practitioners. EPIC meets core criteria for effectiveness, relevance, clarity, and cultural adaptability, essential for English-medium Da'wah.

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