Teaching English at Indonesian Islamic Higher Education: An Epistemological Perspective

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Abstract

English Language Teaching (ELT) practices are strongly underpinned by an epistemological view. Different beliefs on what constitute as sources of knowledge and methods of knowledge acquisition bring about different instructional implications. The case is true within the context of ELT at Indonesian Islamic higher education where the desired goals of the English teaching are not only for mastering language skills and pedagogy but also for strengthening Islamic faith and nurturing virtuous action. This research, therefore, aims to provide a description of how the decision makers and ELT practitioners at the Islamic higher education view the Islamic epistemology conceptually and practically. It addresses an attitude toward the epistemological contestation between Islam and West, as well as the strategies of integrating Islamic epistemology into English language instruction. A case study with a qualitative technique of data collection was conducted. Four decision makers, with a formal educational background of Islamic epistemology, and three ELT practitioners were involved as the research participants. The findings show that: *First,* ELT has its roots in Quranic revelation and prophetic tradition. *Second,* the Islamic epistemology and the Western epistemology ought to be interconnected rather than to be put within a contestation framework. *Third,* the Islamic epistemology should be integrated, explicitly or implicitly, into the curriculum, teaching materials, classroom scenario, assessment, academic atmosphere, and research policy. It is recommended that ELT practitioners responsibly explore the notion of Qur'an as the basis of linguistics and language pedagogy, and creatively accommodate the issues of locality and particularity into their instructional activities.

Keywords: Epistemology, ELT, Islamic Higher Education

A. Introduction

It has been widely accepted that philosophy is the mother of all sciences. It discusses fundamental aspects and the nature of all sciences including English Language Teaching

(ELT). While a philosophical belief influences the instructional goals and objectives in general, it also specifically determines how the learners acquire the intended knowledge. The 'how' aspect of acquiring knowledge is called epistemology.

A rich body of researchers and studies on Islamic epistemology have been conducted by many scholars. *First*, Halstead (2004) notes three central points related to Islamic epistemology. First, knowledge may be based on revelation and the activity of human intellect. All branches of knowledges are aimed to make people aware of Allah and of their relationship with Allah. Second, the pursuit of knowledge should enhance students' spiritual consciousness that nurtures their faith *(īmān)*, virtuous action *('amal sālih)*, and certainty *(yaqīn)*. Third, teachers should possess academic expertise and character and moral integrity for parts of their teaching objectives are to expand the students' spiritual and moral awareness. *Second*, Adebayo (2010) emphasizes that the Islamic education promotes the acquisition of foreign languages like English through the framework of Islamization of science. Thus, religion should be integrated into linguistics or language pedagogy. In other words, ELT should be delivered in the way it fits Islamic religious principles.

Third, Sa'adi (2011) analyzed the epistemological perspectives proposed by Iqbal, Fazlur Rahman, Al-Faruqi, Nasution, Madjid, Abdullah, and others within the context of Indonesian Islamic higher education (henceforth PTKI-*Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam*). It is concluded that Abdullah's notion of interconnection and integration between religious knowledge and certain study area is fairly comprehensive. It implies that the curriculum of the Indonesian Islamic higher education should consist of religious knowledge, natural and technical sciences, and social and humanities sciences. *Fourth*, Diallo (2012) emphasizes that September 11 attacks on US and bombing in Bali, Indonesia, are among the cases that lead academicians to explore more about Islamic pedagogy and epistemology and to compare them with those rooted in western education. Islamic pedagogy and epistemology are strongly attached to Quranic revelation, prophetic tradition *(Sunna and Hadith)*, and the opinion of the righteous predecessors *(qawl al-salaf al-salih)*. By comparison, western pedagogy and epistemology are based on secular and rationalist philosophies and ideologies which exclude religious subjects from public education.

Fifth, Shah, Muhamad, & Ismail (2012) report that the design of English language curriculum should be grounded in *tawhīd* principle in that the ultimate goal of the curriculum is to make the students aware of the existence of Allah. It includes the Islamization of appropriate Western curriculum model. The adapted curriculum model should be prudently supported by Islamic ELT materials. *Sixth*, Ghofur (2016) reports that the Islamic educational epistemology should deal with several aspects of human life such as religion, family, economy, society, politic, art, and science. These aspects should be guided by Islamic faith and teachings. *Seventh*, Mudzakir (2016) reveals that Moslem scientists should include spirituality and morality into the body of knowledge. Otherwise, they will fail to play the role of *khalifatullah*. *Eighth*, Astaneh (2017) urges the role of context in

defining epistemological aspects of information and knowledge. Different contexts result in different interpretation and implementation of epistemological aspects.

Although many pieces of research and studies on epistemology have been conducted, little attention has been directed toward the epistemological study of ELT in PTKI. It is not easy to find research in such context as many, if not most, of senior English teaching practitioners in Indonesia graduate from public university. Those are familiar with Western epistemology and pedagogy embedded in the mainstream ELT training. Therefore, the present study is aimed at filling the gap by investigating the incorporation of Islamic epistemology into the ELT field. Specifically, the purpose of this article is formulated into the following questions:

1. How do policymakers and ELT practitioners in PTKI see the sources of knowledge and the method of knowledge acquisition?

2. What do the policymakersand ELT practitioners in PTKI say about the contestation between Islamic epistemology and Western epistemology?

3. What do the policymakers and ELT practitioners in PTKI say about Islamic epistemology integration into the English Education Department?

The findings of this research will shed light on the integration of Islamic epistemology into English Education Department. The findings could also be used to design appropriate curriculum, classroom scenario, learning materials, and assessment. They serve as a stepping stone for English practitioners in current post method teaching era to explore the particularity of teaching English in Islamic higher education.

B. Literature Review

From the epistemological standing, Islamic educational philosophy admits three sources of knowledge: revelation *(wahy)*, human reason *('aql)*, and empirical observation and experimentation *(kaun)*. Reasoning capability *('aql)* is needed to understand revelation *(Qur'an and hadits)* and to reach proper conclusion from empirical observation and experimentation. Nevertheless, *'aql* could be misleading without the guidance of *wahy* as *wahy* helps *'aql* understand the unseen phenomena (Kasule, 2008).

More specifically, Hery (2008) maintains that Islamic educational epistemology refers the sources of knowledge and the method of knowledge acquisition. The former refers to rationalism *(bayānī),* senses *(burhānī),* intuition *('irfānī),* and texts *(al-ta'wīl).* The latter pertains to four types of method: rationalism (curiosity, skepticism, and debate), empiricism (verification, experiment, objectification, lab work), intuition (spiritual exercises *(riyadhah)*, seclusion *(uzlah)*, remembrance of Allah *(zikr)*), and hermeneutic (interpretation, understanding, explanation, interpretation method). It is obvious that Islamic epistemology is different from that of Western which does not acknowledge revelation as the source of knowledge.

It is worth noting that ELT must have its roots in Islamic tradition. While it might be challenging for English teachers to access the roots, the following quotation might

be helpful. *First,* Alwasilah (2010) maintains that al-Qur'an is the basis of all branches of knowledge including linguistics and language pedagogy. Some verses of could serve as a springboard to further explore such belief, among others: "O men! Behold, We have created you all out of a male and a female, and have made you into nations and tribes, so that you might come to know one another" (Holy-Quran, Al-Hujurat 49: 13), and "And among his wonders is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the diversity of your tongues and colors: for in this, behold, there are messages indeed for all who are possessed of [innate] knowledge!" (Holy-Quran, Ar-Rum 30: 22). *Second,* the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, once asked Zaid ibn Thabit to study foreign languages so as to build a bridge of communication with other communities. Adebayo (2010) uses the above story to state that Islam promotes multilingualism and calls for the Muslim to integrate religion into linguistics and language pedagogy. Thus, sharing the above information alone in English classrooms would reflect the use of the revelation as the sources of knowledge.

Currently, the epistemological polarization between Islam and West has been real. Moslem scholars from generation to generation have realized the domination of the Western epistemology. Such domination has brought negative cultural and intellectual impacts toward Islamic epistemology (Qomar, 2012). Through the imperialist agenda, Western worldview and epistemology have gradually replaced the values and culture of Islamic educational system *(Tarbiyah)* (Amin, 2009). Western hegemony can be seen in the curriculum used by many schools all over the world. The schools excluding the western standards are often labeled to be underdeveloped (Al-Hadar, 2011).

C. Research Methodology

The present research adopted a case study approach. According to Gall., Gall, & Borg (2007), the case study is an in-depth study on a particular instance of a real-life phenomenon reflecting the perspectives of the involved participants. The participants of the research were four decision makers and three English practitioners in State Institute of Islamic Studies (IAIN) Metro, previously known as State Islamic College (STAIN). The former were all scholars of Islamic religious studies serving as decision makers such as the rector, postgraduate program deputy, head of quality assurance unit, and head of Islamic study program. The latter were certified English lecturers with rich experience of teaching English at Islamic higher institutions such as at university affiliated with *Muhammadiyah* organization and *Nahdhatul Ulama* organization. All participants involved directly in the instructional process at English Education Department of IAIN Metro.

Data were mainly collected through in-depth interview. Related documents such as curriculum, syllabus and teaching materials were used as secondary data. The data analysis included the six steps which are proposed by Creswell (2015). They are: organizing the data, coding the data, coding to build description and themes, reporting findings, interpreting the findings, and validating the findings through triangulation and auditing. The findings of the research were reviewed externally and disseminated.

D. Findings

1. The Sources of Knowledge and the Method of Knowledge Acquisition

a. The Sources of Knowledge

For an Islamic higher education, the sources of knowledge should include rationalism *(bayānī),* senses or empirical facts *(burhānī),* intuition *('irfānī),* and texts *(al-ta'wīl)* which refer to the Quranic revelation and prophetic tradition. The first three sources are accepted by Western epistemology while the last source, texts, is not. Islamic epistemology is underpinned by a belief that the advance and evolution of science and knowledge merely serve as the evidence of the truth within the Qur'an and the prophetic tradition. The truth within these texts are absolute, rather than relative, and should be the point of departure for exploring all branches of knowledge. Unlike Western epistemology which is based on observable and measurable phenomena, Islamic epistemology includes the so-termed *aqli* truth and *naqli* truth. The first refers to the truth gained from human intellectual activity while the second pertains to the absolute truth found in the Qur'an and the prophetic tradition. A phenomenon which has not yet been explained or proved scientifically, like metaphysical phenomenon, should be returned to the *naqli* explanation.

When asked about the Qur'an and *hadith* as the sources of knowledge, a respondent said:

> *From an Islamic perspective, Qur'an and hadith are the sources of knowledge. There are a lot of verses in the Qur'an which are scientifically proven. The Qur'an is indeed an ultimate source of the knowledge which is then observed, researched, and proven empirically.* (Hadi)

Further, the stakeholders of English Education Department in PTKI realize that Western epistemology embedded in the mainstream ELT practice is not free from secular values. Such realization should encourage ELT practitioners in PTKI to revitalize the Qur'an and the prophetic tradition as the sources of knowledge. While Western epistemology cannot be separated from ELT, the practitioners should creatively and appropriately utilize the Qur'an and the prophetic tradition in their instructional activities. The separation between religious and secular sources of knowledge might not be effective as it has been proven by Pakistan government, particularly under the regime of President Ziaul Haq. Through the scheme of Islamic integrated curriculum, Western epistemology and Islamic epistemology should be linked wisely.

Supporting documents,like curriculum and learning materials, in the research setting show the need of creating professional ELTpractitioners with the capability of integrating Islamic values into their teaching activities. To achieve the need, ELT practitioners should utilize the sources from Islamic and Western traditions. The sources, particularly in the form of teaching materials, include the texts that nurture students' cognitive domain, research sense, intuition, and spiritual growth. Hence, the existing academic papers often represent the 'knowledge' derived from Islamic sources and Western's. These findings reflect that the use of sources from the two traditions is inevitable.

b. The Method of Knowledge Acquisition

While Islamic sources of knowledge are utilized together with Western sources, the method of knowledge acquisition is conducted in Islamic manners such as by reciting *basmalah* (in the Name of Allah the Beneficent, the Merciful), and performing certain prayer like 'I am pleased with Allah as my Lord, with Islam as my religion, and with Muhammad, may Allah's peace and blessing be upon him, as the prophet and messenger of Allah. O, Allah. Advance me in knowledge and true understanding.' Reciting *basmalah* is a must for the Prophetic tradition says, 'Any matter of importance which is not begun with *basmalah* remains defective.' The same is true with performing *du'a* for it helps learners gain the true understanding.

The following extract shows the importance of spiritual method in acquiring knowledge.

A: As'ad; R: Researcher

R: The prophets like Ibrahim a.s. and Yusuf a.s. gained knowledge from their dreams. Such knowledge acquisition as from dream, intuition, and inspiration are categorized as spiritual methods which can be improved through self-purification (tazkiyah al-nafs). How do you see the inclusion of the spiritual methods into ELT practices in PTKI?

A: Reciting Bismillah and offering du'a are inseparable ingredients of Islamic instruction tradition. The spiritual methods are then important. Allah, as the owner of the knowledge, is sacred and should be approached through sacred ways. Students of PTKI should always keep the purity of their bodies and souls so as to protect themselves from secular influences...In short, spiritual methods of knowledge acquisition should not be ignored. (As'ad)

The students of PTKI are suggested to undertake spiritual exercises *(riyadhah)* and remembrance of Allah *(zikr)* outside the classrooms individually. The related adage which is commonly used to support self-purification for knowledge acquisition is *al 'ilmu nuurun wa nuurullah la yuhdaa lil'asi.* True understanding is symbolized as *nuur* (light) and is treated as sacred. The light of Allah is not bestowed upon a sinner. As such, learners need to purify themselves as a method to acquire true knowledge.

This research study reveals that reciting *basmalah* and offering *du'a* are part of the knowledge acquisition process due to three reasons. First, they pedagogically serve as a conditioning phase and the prerequisite conduct for gaining true knowledge, attitude, and skills. Second, they are the distinctive features that reflect the Islamic institutional context. They represent religion practice within a communal context. As all of the lecturers and students are Moslem, the Islamic code of conduct in acquiring knowledge could or should be performed communally. Third, they serve as strategies for inculcating oneness *(tawhīd)* principle emphasizing that Allah is the ultimate source of all knowledge, and that true understanding should expand the learners' awareness of Allah. Further, the teaching and learning process should involve *basmalah* and *du'a* recitation in the very beginning phase. Only then can the instructional activity be a worship to Allah.

2. The Contestation between Islamic Epistemology and Western Epistemology

According to a respondent of the research, Aguswan, Islamic civilization was adopted by the Western countries following the ruin of Islamic countries in the crusade era. Moslem scholars realize that Islam, Qur'an, and *hadith*have provided answers to all human's questions and curiosity. Unfortunately, ...*they (Western scholars) are good at research methodology while at the same time we (Muslim scholars) don't have yet an outstanding research tradition.*

The phenomenon of the epistemological contestation is agreed by the participants of this research. Many parts of Islamic educational institution have adopted western standards, dress code, and architecture. Western epistemology has colored Islamic religious studies. The name of the courses remained Islamic, yet their substances might have been invaded by western way of thinking. Through the colonization process, Western countries stole the knowledge treasures of Muslim countries and distorted the true story. What once belonged to the Muslim worlds has now been claimed to be from the Western tradition. These facts place Islamic education system inferior to that of the western.

Nevertheless, the participants also admitted the sophistication of the Western epistemology in that a careful adoption is then needed. The facts that most, if not all, Islamic schools, ranging from elementary to higher education, include the English language in their curriculum, cannot be denied. As ELT practices cannot be separated from Western pedagogy, PTKI stakeholders should creatively find a way to incorporate the Islamic pedagogical tradition. ELT practitioners might utilize the teaching materials, teaching methods, and standards issued by the inner–circle countries (England, America, Australia, etc.), yet the orientation of the learning and the code of conduct applied in the instructional activity should be based on Islamic tradition.

Epistemological contestation is perceived to exist. Although Western values and standards are not totally compatible with Indonesian Islamic education system, some of the values and standards are needed to be adopted. The Western epistemology and pedagogy tradition are not to be frontally criticized, but to be responsively and responsibly integrated into Islamic education system in general, and into English Education Program of PTKI in particular. As Qomar (2012) maintains, Indonesian Islamic education today tend to be philosophically in the state of neo-modernism following the long-established adage within Islam itself: *al-muḥâfazhah 'alâ al-qadîm al-shâliḥ wa al-akhdzu bi al-jadîd al-ashlah.* This implies that ELT practitioners at PTKI should combine the Islamic epistemology and pedagogy tradition and the Western epistemology, rather than separate the two traditions and put them within the contestation framework.

3. Islamic Epistemology Integration into the English Education Department

The participants of the research said that Islamic epistemology might be integrated into several strategies, such as: *using Islamic reading texts like the stories of 'khulafa al rosyidin'* (Hadi); *inserting the courses of Islamic teachings...strengthening researches that focus on ELT in Islamic schools...*(As'ad); *branding the English department like 'pedagogically outstanding and spiritually sound...*

(Aguswan); *connecting reading texts with relevant hadith*(Yawisah); *curriculum* (Ninsiana); *code of conduct, dress code, and congregation prayer* (Roza); and *Islamic text-based grammar* (Astuti).

The integration could be conducted through the explicit mode and the implicit mode. The former pertains to the elements directly related to the instructional activities such as curriculum, teaching materials, classroom scenario, and assessment. The latter refers to other elements that indirectly underpin the instructional activities like academic atmosphere, dress code, code of conduct, and research policy.

E. Discussion

The main aim of this research was to explore the epistemological aspects of English language teaching (ELT) in an Indonesian Islamic higher education. The first research question described the perspectives of the policymakers and ELT practitioners of the sources of knowledge and the method of knowledge acquisition. The finding supports the results which many scholars (Adebayo, 2010; Alwasilah, 2010; Halstead, 2004; Mudzakir, 2016; Sa'adi, 2011; Syah, 2009) have reported.

The second research question depicted the perspectives of the policymakers and ELT practitioners of the contestation between Islamic epistemology and Western epistemology. The findings are in tune with what some scholars (Al-Hadar, 2011; Amin, 2009; Qomar, 2012) have revealed.

The third research question explored the integration of Islamic epistemology into the curriculum, teaching materials, classroom scenario, assessment, academic atmosphere, and research policy. With regard to the curriculum, it is worth noting that a curriculum cannot be philosophically and politically neutral. The philosophical and political views are often represented through the so-termed official curriculum, operational curriculum, hidden curriculum, null curriculum, and extra curriculum (Posner, 2004). With regard to the theory, the curriculum of English Education Department at PTKI has its roots in the Islamic epistemology. In the case of IAIN Metro, the epistemology is officially integrated through such courses as Islamic theology *(kalām)*, Sufism manners *(tasawwuf, mysticism)*, Islamic jurisprudence *(fiqh)*, Islamic pedagogy, Islamic philosophy *(falsafa)*, Arabic, history of Islam, Qur'an recitation. As for the extra curriculum, Qur'an recitation betterment *(tahsīn)* and foreign languages intensification (Arabic and English) programs are held regularly. Not only do the courses and programs include all aspects of Islamic epistemology--rationalism *(bayānī)*, senses *(burhānī)*, intuition *('irfānī)*, and texts *(al-ta'wīl)*– they also represent the basic objectives of Islamic education tradition: strengthening students' faith *(īmān)* and virtuous action *('amal sālīh)*. Zainuddin (2011) urges that a curriculum, in an Islamic educational context, should include character education, Islamic value inculcation, communication skill enhancement, community service, and leadership within the framework of *kahlīfah* on earth.

Concerning the teaching materials, the existing English textbooks used at the English Education Department are mostly published by Western publishers. Few books combining

English teaching and Islamic content are available, among others: *Digest Islam and Build Up Your English* written by Bustami (2006); Islamic *English: A Competency-Based Reading and Self-Study Reference* authored by Syah (2009); and *English for Islamic Studies* compiled by Darwis (2012). To cope with the provision of Islamic-related English teaching materials, strategies proposed by Kumaravadivelu (2012) can be taken into account, namely: (1) lecturers form a small group and design a contextually-relevant and culturally-sensitive materials; (2) use the materials in the classrooms; (3) ask feedback from colleagues and learners; (4) use feedback to revise the materials; (5) circulate the revised materials digitally; and (6) undertake a small pilot study. Alternatively, the lecturers might want to adopt the internationally published materials following the techniques proposed by Richards (2001), namely: (1) modifying content; (2) adding or deleting certain parts of the content; (3) reorganizing content; (4) addressing omissions by adding relevant vocabularies and activities; and (5) modifying tasks. It is worth noting that that the published materials might not suit every learning situation. Adaptation, then, ought to be undertaken in order to meet the distinctive features of the English Education Department at PTKI.

With regard to the classroom scenario, the most common classroom scenario ELT in the research setting consists of three phases: opening, instructional, and closing. Of the three stages, Islamic epistemology is frequently manifested in the opening and the closing stages. To begin the class, lecturers invited the students to recite *basmalah,* offer *du'a,* and chant the blessing of the Holy Prophet *(shalawāt)* to prepare them psychologically and spiritually engaging in the knowledge acquisition. It is after the ritual, the lecturers remind the students about what has been learned, and introduce what to learn. Meanwhile, to end the lesson, the lectures invite the class to recite praise be to Allah *(alhamdalah).* One point worth mentioning here is that the Islamic epistemology could be creatively incorporated into the main activity stage. For example, when assigning students to work in pairs or groups, the lecturers could insert theological ground of cooperative activity such as *wa ta'awanu alal birri wattaqwa walaa ta'awanu alal itsmi wal'udwan* (QS. Al-Maidah (5): 2). The students are told that helping one another in knowledge acquisition is a goodness and is in line with Islamic teaching.

Concerning the assessment, Bloom's taxonomy might be the most used assessment system of ELT in the Indonesian context. The revised taxonomy consists of six levels: remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating. Respectively, the students are assessed based on their capability of recalling information, explaining ideas, using information in another situation, exploring the relationship, justifying information, and generating new ideas or products (Pohl, 2000). It should be noted that Bloom's taxonomy is a cognitive-based assessment system in that a lecturer should use another taxonomy, singly or alternately, to assess students' skills. Göçer (2014) proposes an alternative system called Barrett's Taxonomy that could be used to assess cognitive, affective, and intuitive domains. These domains were included within the five sub-levels of Barrett's Taxonomy

namely: comprehension, reorganization, appreciation, and evaluation, as can be seen in Figure. 1 below.

Barrett's Taxonomy sublevels	Level Qualities and Examples/Patterns
Level 1: Literal Comprehension	**Recognition of: (1) details** (Who? What? Where? Why?.); **(2) main ideas** (What happened when or during ___?); **(3) a sequence** (What did ___ do first/next/last?); **(4) comparison** (Are___and___the same?); **(5) cause and effect relationships** (Find out the reasons for__); and **(6) character traits** (Find the words and phrases which describe the characters) **Recall of: (1) details** (Write a list of all the details you can remember); **(2) main ideas** (What happened to___?); **(3) a sequence** (Tell in correct order); **(4) comparison** (In what ways were__and__similar/different?); and **(5) cause and effect relationships** (What was the purpose of___?)
Level 2: Reorgani zation	**Classifying** (Which of the following are___?); **outlining** (Divide the information in the text into__parts); **summarizing** (Tell the text in your own words); and **synthesizing** (How many times did__take place?)
Level 3: Inferential Comprehension	**Supporting details** (Do you think__?); **main ideas** (Discuss the significance of___); **sequence** (What will happen next?); **comparisons** (Are ___and ___ related?); **cause and effect** (How did__know___?); **character traits** (What kind of person is___?); **outcomes** (Do you think__will__?); and **figurative language** (What is meant by the phrase___?)
Level 4: Evaluation	**Judgments of reality or fantasy** (Is the story of Moses and Khidr fact of fiction?); **judgments of fact or opinion** (Do you think__had anything to do with__?); **judgments of adequacy and validity** (Did__ever actually___?); **Judgments of appropriateness** (What part of the stories best describe the main character?); and **Judgments of worth, desirability and acceptability** (How do you feel about this character?)
Level 5: Appreciation	**The emotional response to the content** (Are you surprised?); **identification with characters or incidents** (What would you do if you were___?); **reactions to the author's use of language** (How did the author express the idea of___?); and **imagery**(How does___make you feel?)

Figure 1. Barrett's Taxonomy
Source: Adapted from Göçer (2014)

It seems obvious that in order for the assessment system to meet the needs of Islamic epistemology in a meaningful way, an alternative system like Barrett's Taxonomy is needed for it is in line with the aspects of rationalism *(bayānī),* senses *(burhānī)* andintuition *('irfānī).*

With regard to the academic atmosphere, the participants of this research realized that not all English language lecturers had formally learned Islamic epistemology at Islamic higher education nor did they all experienced studying at Islamic schools *(madrasah).* Yet, they still could integrate the Islamic epistemology implicitly through modeling virtuous

action and digesting Islamic conduct for lecturer and students. For this purpose, the lecturer could refer to the code of conduct proposed by Al-Ghazali (2013). Accordingly, a Moslem lecturer should: be polite, patient, caring, not arrogant, not to joke excessively, humble in lectures and conferences, opened to argumentation and criticism, and knowledgeable of religious duty. The teacher should always remind the students about the intention of learning that is to seek Allah's blessing. On the other hand, a Moslem student should be respectful towards and polite to the teachers. That is by greeting the teacher first; standing when the teacher stands; listening attentively to the teacher; not speaking to the teacher much when s/he is tired; not to asking him/her a question when s/he is on his/her way home; asking the teacher's permission before addressing a question; and arguing politely with the teacher. Moreover, Barni, & Mahdany (2017) urge that Al Ghazali's thought on education leads to a holistic education that aims at developing physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual domains of the learners.

Concerning the research policy, research variables ought to incorporate either Islamic schools, as the research setting, or Islamic values integration into ELT. The first variable helped student researchers obtain a real description of Islamic schools and figure out the opportunity for an effective English teaching in the schools. The second variable help student researchers to strengthening what the theorists termed English as an International Language (EIL). English teachers are nowadays challenged to accommodate local or particular needs into their teaching practices because, in the globalized world, a student is supposed to talk about his/her own local culture and international culture (Brown, 2012). Thus, a research on English language skills, teaching strategies, teaching models and teaching materials that are linked with Islamic values ought to be a part of the research policy.

F. Conclusion

That Islamic epistemology acknowledges the revelation, Qur'an, and *hadith,* as the source of knowledge makes it different from that of the Western epistemology. Such divergence ought to be seen as an entry point for the notion of integration and interconnection, rather than a phenomenon of epistemological contestation. Within the context of ELT at PTKI, the interconnection is a must since English language pedagogy has been strongly attached to Western pedagogy. Western andvancement in science and technology should be objectively acknowledged, and the same time Islamic spiritual aspect which is inherent in Islamic epistemology, should be preserved (Hawasi, 2015). What the stakeholders of the English Education Department at PTKI could do is integrating the Islamic epistemologically, explicitly or implicitly, into the curriculum, teaching materials, classroom scenario, assessment system, academic atmosphere, and research policy.

In line with the findings of the research, two recommendations are proposed. First, ELT practitioners are to explore the philosophy of language education within Indonesia context in general and in Islamic educational institutions in particular. For this purpose, the notion of al-Qur'an as the basis of all branches of knowledge including linguistics and

language pedagogy could be a stimulating point of departure. Second, a relevant workshop must help the lecturers of English Education Department at PTKI integrate Islamic epistemology into the instructional activities. The workshop ought to be linked with the current issues in ELT field such as post method pedagogy and EIL. With the understanding of the issues, ELT practitioners will observe, conduct researches, and generate educational products that accommodate the particularity of Islamic educational institution.

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