



Research Article

The Influence of English Language Proficiency on Professional Performance in the Sharia Economic Sector

Muhammad alhadifauzan¹, Kuran Nila², M.Adrius Arjuanda³

1. Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri Bengkulu, Indonesia; lhdfzn@gmail.com
2. Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri Bengkulu, Indonesia; quranila01@gmail.com
3. Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri Bengkulu, Indonesia; adriusadit72@gmail.com

Copyright © 2025 by Authors, Published by **Regulate: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan, Hukum dan Bisnis**. This is an open access article under the CC BY License <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Received : February 15, 2025
Accepted : April 13, 2025

Revised : March 14, 2025
Available online : May 17, 2025

How to Cite: Muhammad alhadifauzan, Kuran Nila, & M.Adrius Arjuanda. (2025). The Influence of English Language Proficiency on Professional Performance in the Sharia Economic Sector. *Regulate: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan, Hukum Dan Bisnis*, 2(2), 119–126. <https://doi.org/10.61166/regulate.v2i2.38>

Abstract. English language proficiency is a strategic competency in facing economic globalization, particularly in the sharia economic sector, which has shown significant growth and increasing involvement in international financial networks. This study aims to analyze the influence of English language skills on the professional performance of workers in the sharia economic sector, focusing on the relationship between linguistic abilities and performance indicators such as work efficiency, cross-cultural communication, and the accuracy of professional reports. The study employs a qualitative approach using the library research method, reviewing relevant national and international scientific literature from 2020 to 2024. Data were collected through systematic documentation and analyzed thematically using a descriptive-analytical approach. The findings reveal that English language proficiency, particularly in the context of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), significantly contributes to the improvement of professional work quality in Islamic financial institutions, halal companies, and other supporting institutions. The study also identifies limitations in learning motivation, availability of ESP instructors, and contextual teaching materials as major obstacles in strengthening language competencies. The conclusion affirms that mastery of the English language not only supports individual performance but also serves as a key factor in enhancing the global competitiveness of sharia human resources. This study offers a conceptual contribution to the theory of multilingual professional

competence and provides a practical foundation for formulating language training policies in the sharia economic sector.

Keywords: English Language Proficiency, Professional Performance, Sharia Economy

INTRODUCTION

English language proficiency has become a crucial indicator of professional success, especially in the context of economic globalization. In Indonesia (futika,2024), the sharia economic sector has shown significant growth, contributing 6.99% to the GDP in 2023, covering banking, microfinance, and the halal industry (KNEKS, 2024). However, many workers in this sector have not sufficiently mastered English to interact in international forums or access global literature. This presents a major challenge in promoting the global competitiveness of Indonesia's sharia human resources (Ridwan et al., 2021). Globally, the sharia economy is projected to reach USD 7 trillion by 2025, with English serving as the primary medium for cross-border business communication (Ghulamallah et al., 2021). From an Islamic perspective, the ability to engage in cross-cultural communication is part of a humanitarian mandate. This aligns with the words of Allah SWT in Surah Al-Hujurat verse 13:

يَأَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ١٣

“O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing and All-Aware.” (Qur'an, Surah Al-Hujurat: 13)

This verse states that humanity was created as nations and tribes so that they may know one another (*lita'arafu*). It highlights the importance of cross-cultural interaction as a form of respect for diversity and as a medium for building global synergy. In the context of the sharia economy, this ability is manifested through professional communication, economic diplomacy, and international knowledge exchange — all of which heavily rely on proficiency in the global language, namely English.

Furthermore, the Qur'an also emphasizes the importance of wise and effective communication in conveying Islamic values, including within the realm of the sharia economy. This is reflected in Surah An-Nahl, verse 125:

ادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَدِّلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ ١٢٥

“Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best. Indeed, your Lord is most knowing of who has strayed

from His way, and He is most knowing of who is rightly guided.” (Qur'an, Surah An-Nahl: 125)

This verse calls upon believers to "invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction." In a professional context, this can be interpreted as an encouragement to convey the principles of Islamic economics in a language that is widely understood, using intelligent and persuasive approaches. Therefore, English is not only a tool for acquiring information, but also a medium for universally communicating the ethical values and economic teachings of Islam.

Previous research has shown that English proficiency has a significant impact on work effectiveness, particularly in sectors that depend on international communication. Harahap et al. (2019) found that students of Islamic economics had limited understanding of Arabic and English terminology within the context of Islamic finance, which affects their professional readiness. Suwandi (2023) also highlighted the gap between expectations and actual English proficiency among Islamic economics students, while Umam (2024) noted the challenge of accessing academic references in English as a significant barrier to professional development (dhanan 2022).

Nevertheless, most of these studies are still centered around academic contexts and have yet to explicitly link English language proficiency with professional performance in the Islamic economic sector. Research integrating linguistic aspects with job performance in this specific sector remains very limited. Therefore, there is a research gap in understanding the extent to which English language competence can improve productivity, communication efficiency, and service quality in Islamic financial institutions and the halal industry.

This study aims to empirically examine the impact of English proficiency on the professional performance of practitioners in the Islamic economic sector, including Islamic financial institutions, halal companies, and other supporting organizations. The research will assess relevant linguistic variables and performance indicators such as work efficiency, cross-cultural communication ability, and the accuracy of professional reports written in English (sarah 2025).

Theoretically, this research contributes to the development of a multilingual professional competence framework in Islamic economics, by integrating Canale and Swain's (1980) theory of Communicative Competence into the contemporary sharia context. In addition, the study enriches the discourse on English for Specific Purposes (ESP) within the field of Islamic economics, which is still largely dominated by conventional language education approaches.

From a practical standpoint, the results of this research may serve as a foundation for designing vocational education curricula and English training programs for workers in the sharia economic sector. Higher education institutions, professional certification bodies, and government agencies — such as the National Committee for Islamic Economy and Finance (KNEKS) — can formulate more applicable, industry-oriented language competency policies to enhance human resources (Widiyanto, 2015).

Therefore, the urgency of this research lies not only in fulfilling academic objectives, but also in addressing the strategic challenge of developing a globally-

oriented national sharia economy. The transformation of sharia human resources through enhanced English proficiency is a key step toward elevating Indonesia's reputation as a global hub for Islamic economics.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative approach using the method of library research, aiming to explore in depth the relationship between English language proficiency and professional performance within the sharia economic sector, based on published theoretical and empirical sources. This approach was selected due to the study's focus on critical analysis and synthesis of relevant literature to build a conceptual framework and formulate a comprehensive theoretical understanding of the phenomenon (Zed, 2021; Ridwan, 2023). The research design is descriptive-analytical, which involves presenting findings from literature and systematically analyzing them using a thematic approach.

The population of this study includes all national and international academic literature relevant to the topic of English language proficiency and its influence on professional performance in the Islamic economic sector, published between 2020 and 2024. Sources were selected through purposive non-probability sampling — selecting materials that meet criteria for relevance, authority (peer-reviewed), and recency.

Data collection was carried out through systematic documentation, involving the gathering of journal articles, academic books, research reports, and government policy documents. These sources were accessed through academic databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, SINTA, ScienceDirect, and DOAJ. To ensure the validity and relevance of sources, a critical literature evaluation process was conducted using the CASP (Critical Appraisal Skills Programme) criteria, which include the author's authority, contextual suitability, research methodology, and clarity of argumentation. Additionally, inter-rater reliability was applied to minimize subjective bias in interpreting the literature data (hiyatai, 2020).

Through this method, the study is expected to make a significant conceptual contribution to the development of professional competency theory in Islamic economics, particularly in relation to the strategic role of English language proficiency in enhancing the global competitiveness of human resources in the sharia sector.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that English proficiency plays a crucial role in enhancing the quality and professional performance in the Islamic economic sector (Fakhrul, 2022). Globalization has impacted the Islamic finance industry, pushing for standardized international communication and documentation, most of which are formulated and delivered in English. In this regard, English is no longer merely a communication tool, but a strategic component that reinforces the professionalism of the workforce in this sector.

In today's modern Islamic economy, professionals are confronted with various challenges that require comprehension of terminology and concepts originating not

only from classical Islamic literature but also from modern financial systems based on international standards. Essential documents such as financial reports, contracts, and global Sharia regulations (e.g., AAOIFI – Accounting and Auditing Organization for Islamic Financial Institutions, IFSB – Islamic Financial Services Board, and IFRS for Islamic Finance) are predominantly written in English. Thus, mastering English becomes a necessity for accurately understanding and implementing Sharia principles in a professional manner.

Proficiency in English enables Islamic economic actors to access international academic literature, stay updated with the latest developments in Sharia finance practices, and participate in global forums discussing contemporary issues in the industry. In daily operations, command over English language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—improves work efficiency, reduces communication errors, and accelerates processes, especially in companies with international relations (luqman 2014).

To illustrate the contribution of each English skill to professional performance in the Islamic economic sector, the table below summarizes the main findings:

Table 1

Relationship Between English Skills and Professional Performance in Islamic Economics

English Skill	Application in the Islamic Work Context	Impact on Professional Performance
Listening	Following international webinars, global scholars' lectures, Islamic economic forums	Enhances understanding and adaptability to contemporary issues
Speaking	Investment proposal presentations, discussions with foreign investors, multinational teamwork	Increases professional credibility and competitiveness
Reading	Reading international journals, Sharia financial reports, AAOIFI standards	Strengthens technical knowledge and professional literacy
Writing	Writing reports, business emails, and legal documents in a Sharia context	Improves administrative efficiency and professional communication
Grammar & Vocabulary	Using fiqh muamalah and technical finance terms in English	Minimizes miscommunication and enhances clarity

Hence, this study emphasizes that English functions not only as a technical communication tool but also as a means of boosting the competitive value of Islamic economic professionals in the global market. This underscores the need for educational and training institutions to incorporate English as an integral part of the Islamic economics curriculum. Implementing English for Specific Purposes (ESP)

tailored to the needs of the Islamic financial sector is a highly recommended step (rahman 2023).

These language skills are interrelated and must be mastered in an integrated manner. Special emphasis on ESP based on Islamic economics is highly relevant, as many terms in this field are absent from general English curricula.

Furthermore, the learning approach used in this study—Cooperative Learning—also contributes to building a collaborative and communicative learning environment. Students working in groups can exchange ideas, discuss Islamic economic terms in English, and solve cases collaboratively. This hones not only language skills but also critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, all of which are vital in the professional world.

The main findings of this research show that English proficiency has a significant positive correlation with improved professional performance in the Islamic economic sector. This includes better comprehension of global financial documents, cross-country communication, and increased individual credibility in international forums. English skills, particularly within the context of ESP, serve as essential tools for Islamic finance professionals to convey ideas, interpret international reports, and participate in global economic discourse.

These findings align with Hymes' Communicative Competence theory, which emphasizes that language mastery goes beyond linguistic aspects to include the ability to use language in appropriate social and professional contexts. In Islamic finance, communication must adhere to principles of transparency, prudence, and Islamic business ethics (adab muamalah), which, when conveyed in English, requires sensitivity to formal language, politeness, and terminological precision.

Previous studies have found that limited understanding of English and Arabic terminology in Islamic finance leads to errors in reporting and cross-divisional communication. Meanwhile, Anver & Awan argued that need-based ESP training significantly improved Islamic bank employees' performance in Pakistan within a short period (Ninsiana, 2019).

Table 2

Relationship Between Previous Literature and Current Findings

Source	Findings	Correlation with This Study
Harahap et al. (2019)	Foreign languages (Arabic and English) are crucial for understanding Sharia documents	Supports the idea that Sharia terminology requires bilingual competence
Anver & Awan (2016)	Need-based ESP enhances Islamic banking staff performance	Emphasizes the need for contextual English curriculum development
Isa et al. (2020)	Weaknesses in speaking and writing are primary industry concerns	Reinforces the need to prioritize these two competencies

Yusmaherizam et al. (2023)	Malaysian Islamic banking staff need task-based ESP modules	Aligns with the finding that cooperative learning is highly effective
-----------------------------------	---	---

These findings contribute to strengthening the literature on the relationship between language competence and performance in value-based financial sectors, which have traditionally been discussed in more general or conventional economic contexts. In terms of scientific development, this expands ESP studies into the Islamic economics domain and encourages the reformulation of more practical and applicable vocational and undergraduate Sharia economics curricula.

It also indicates that understanding *fiqh muamalah* and global Islamic finance cannot be separated from foreign language proficiency, especially English. Thus, future Sharia professionals must possess a combination of technical, Sharia, and linguistic competencies.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

Supporting factors include:

1. Global labor market demand for bilingual Islamic economics graduates.
2. Availability of international standards such as English-based AAOIFI.
3. Digital technology support facilitating online ESP learning access.

Inhibiting factors include:

- Low motivation to learn English among Islamic economics students due to the perception that the language is unrelated to Islamic law.
- Lack of competent ESP instructors in Sharia economics.
- Limited contextual learning materials, as most modules are based on conventional economics.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that English proficiency plays a vital role in enhancing professional performance in the Islamic economic sector. In the globalization era, English serves as the main medium for cross-border communication, access to international literature, and understanding global standards such as AAOIFI and IFRS for Islamic Finance. The lack of English proficiency among many Indonesian Sharia professionals poses a serious challenge to national human resource competitiveness on the global stage.

From an Islamic perspective, the importance of intercultural communication aligns with QS. Al-Hujurat:13 on *lita'arafu* (mutual understanding) and QS. An-Nahl:125 on delivering values with wisdom. In a professional context, this underscores the urgency of English proficiency as an effective medium for conveying Islamic economic values.

This study enriches the theory of Communicative Competence in a Sharia context and supports the development of ESP tailored to the needs of the financial and halal industry sectors. Skills such as speaking, writing, and vocabulary have proven to improve efficiency, cross-cultural communication, and the quality of professional documentation.

Nevertheless, obstacles such as low motivation, lack of ESP instructors, and insufficient contextual teaching materials remain. Therefore, English must be systematically integrated into vocational curricula and professional Sharia training. Strengthening language competence will better prepare Indonesian Sharia human resources to compete globally and contribute to positioning Indonesia as a leading center of Islamic economics worldwide.

DAFTAR PUSTAKA

- Permatasari, Futika. "Implementasi Program Pengayaan Bahasa Inggris Untuk Mahasiswa Ekonomi Dan Bisnis: Evaluasi Dan Dampaknya." *Dharma Pendidikan* 19.1 (2024): 64-72.
- Nasution, Sarah. "Penggunaan Bahasa Inggris Secara Maksimal Untuk Menyongsong Masyarakat Ekonomi Asean (Mea) 2025." *Bisnis-Net Jurnal Ekonomi Dan Bisnis* 1.1 (2018).
- Aziz, Aulia Luqman. "Penguatan Identitas Bahasa Indonesia Sebagai Lambang Identitas Nasional Dan Bahasa Persatuan Jelang Penerapan Masyarakat Ekonomi Asean (Mea) 2015." *Jurnal Studi Sosial* 6.1 (2014): 14-20.
- Hidayati, Dewi, And Arif Nur'aini. "Analisis Kebutuhan Bahasa Inggris Pada Mahasiswa Ekonomi Syariah." *Eksyar: Ekonomi Syari'ah Dan Bisnis Islam (E-Journal)* 7.2 (2020): 21-34.
- Abimanto, Dhanan. "Bahasa Inggris Dan Ekonomi Transportasi." *Jurnal Ekonomi, Bisnis Dan Manajemen* 1.1 (2022): 21-28.
- Widiyanto, Sigit, And Sri Sulastri. "Peranan Kemampuan Komunikasi Bahasa Inggris Guna Peningkatan Daya Saing Sdm Menghadapi Mea (Masyarakat Ekonomi Asean)." *Jabe (Journal Of Applied Business And Economic)* 2.2 (2015): 193-201.
- Azmi, Fakhrol. "Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris Pada Mahasiswa Ekonomi Syariah Sebagai Modal Dalam Dunia Kerja." *Intelektualita* 11.01 (2022).
- Ninsiana, Widhiya, And Agus Trioni Nawa. "Analisis Kebutuhan Bahasa Inggris Mahasiswa Jurusan Ekonomi Syariah: Studi Kasus Mahasiswa Ekonomi Syariah Institut Agama Islam Negeri Metro." *Tapis: Jurnal Penelitian Ilmiah* 3.1 (2019): 17-38.
- Rahman, Muthia, And Fauziah Fauziah. "Analysis Persyaratan Mata Kuliah Bahasa Inggris Pada Jurusan Ekonomi Syariah Stes Manna Wa Salwa." *Jurnal Kajian Dan Pengembangan Umat* 6.1 (2023).