CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

English has long been taught in Indonesia as a foreign language (EFL) in primary education, secondary education and tertiary education levels. In primary schools (grades four to six), based on the Decree of Minister of National Education No. 22/2006 in Content Standard Chapter Two on Structure of General Education Curriculum (point B No.1), English is not explicitly mentioned as a subject. However, in some primary schools in Indonesia, English is taught as a local content subject. In junior high schools (grades seven to nine), based on the regulation above (point B No.2), English has been a compulsory subject taught throughout Indonesia and its time allotment is as high as Indonesian Language, Mathematics, Science, and Social Science.

In secondary education levels (grades 10 to 12) English is also as one of the compulsory subjects in Senior High School, and Vocational High School, throughout Indonesia. Nowadays, in both types of schools English has been served as English for SMK, identified as English for Specific Purposes (ESP), instead of English for General Purposes (especially in grades eleven and twelve). It can be seen from the use of specific English textbooks, released by Textbooks Center of National Education Department (PusatPerbukuanDepartemenPendidikanNasional), by the students of both types of schools, such as textbooks of English for Science, English for Social Science, and English for Language Program for Senior High School students in grade 11 and 12, and textbooks of English for Vocational High School for Vocational High School students in grade 10 to 12.

In tertiary education levels, English subject is one of the compulsory subjects taught to freshmen in the first two semesters as determined by the National Education Law No. 20/2003 in Chapter 10, article 37, paragraph 2 and in Chapter 2,article 9, paragraph 2 of the Government Regulation No. 19/2005 on

National Standards of Education. Chapter 10, article 37, paragraph 2 of the National Education Law No. 20/2003 stipulates that the curriculum of the tertiary education should include religious education, civic education, and languages. Chapter 2, article 9, paragraph 2 of the Government Regulation No. 19/2005 on National Standards of Education specifically mentions what languages should be included in the curriculum. As stated by this regulation, the curriculum of the undergraduate higher education should include religious education, civic education, Indonesian and English. Therefore, based on the regulation and the law above, all tertiary education levels in Indonesia, including Islamic institutes or universities, must include English into the curriculum and implement English teaching and learning to the undergraduate students as mandated by the law and the regulation above.

In practice, English courses in non-English departments of higher education in Indonesia have been popularly called general courses of English included to one of general courses (MKDU) offered and taught to freshmen in the first two semesters (Alwasilah, 1999; Kusni, 2007). Initially, as English is included as one of general courses, for quite long term there has been confusion of teaching English for undergraduate students whether as general English or English with special needs until the government enacted the regulation of classifying curriculum in higher education as local (institutional) curriculum and national curriculum (Kusni, 2007:64). Based on the Minister of National Education Decree No. 232/U/2000 Chapter 4, article 10, paragraph 2, English can be included in one of Personality Development Subjects (MPK) in the Institutional Curriculum. In addition, according to Chapter 4, article 7, paragraph 4, the subjects in the Institutional Curriculum are arranged by considering the situation, the surrounding needs, and also the characteristics of the institute.

Furthermore, in the case of curriculum development, the National Education Law No. 20/2003 in Chapter 10, article 38, paragraph 3 and the Government Regulation No. 19/2005 on National standards of Education in

Chapter 2, article 9, paragraph 4 stipulate that the curriculum of the tertiary education is regulated and developed by the institution itself by referring to the national standards of education. In other words, the institution and the lecturers of the institution have their own right to determine and develop the curriculum referring on national standards of education. In the case of the English course, the teachers may determine what materials, methods, and assessment should be included in the syllabus, and they may develop the syllabus. Consequently, the universities have autonomy to develop the syllabus based on the students' needs. Therefore, carrying out a needs analysis for the syllabus development in an institution of higher education is necessary for the institution as mandated by the rule above. Nunan (in Gatehouse, 2001) stated that "It seems fairly obvious that if teachers are to be the ones responsible for developing the curriculum. They need the time, the skills, and the support to do so."

However, based on Government Regulation No. 17/2010 in Chapter 11, article 97, paragraph 1, the curriculum of higher education must be developed and maintained as a competency-based curriculum, including the curriculum of the English language. Therefore, for the teaching of English in the tertiary education in Indonesia, it is compulsory for all tertiary institutions or universities to develop and apply the English competency-based curriculum. In the decree of Minister of National Education No. 45/U/2002, competency is defined as "a set of intelligent and fully responsible attitudes owned by an individual as requisites to be regarded as being capable by the society in performing tasks in certain field of work." Richards (2001: 129) also points out that competency refers to "observable behaviours that are necessary for the successful completion of real world activities."

Accordingly, the competence-based English curriculum means the curriculum which puts the learning outcomes to cover necessary performances and capabilities based on the students' needs to cope with problems in the field of work after the completion of the course. Consequently, students' needs analysis is

necessary for the institutions to design or develop the English curriculum to find out a set of competencies needed by the students. Needs analysis to find specific needs for the students in the institution may direct the institution to an English program called English for Specific Purposes (ESP).

Needs analysis emerged in the 1960s through the ESP movement and increasingly began to be employed in the language teaching by applied linguists since its emergence. Needs analysis was also known as a necessary phase in planning educational programs as the demand for specialized language programs grew from that time, such as English for science, business, and medicine (Richards, 2001: 51). In Indonesia, the English subject in some non-English departments of higher education has shifted from General English Course to English for Specific Purposes Course such as English for Law, English for Chemistry, English for Technical, English for Business, English for Tourism, English for Islamic Studies, and other ESP topics (Kusni, 2007: 64).

However, according to Kusni's (2007) survey, the status of ESP in some higher education levels hadn't been perceived to get more concern from interested parties. Kusni's (2007 and 2010) report portrayed that though some universities offered ESP course to the students, the design of ESP hadn't been initiated by a comprehensive needs analysis as the basis for ESP course design, and the use of materials were still far from the characteristics of an ESP course (see also Alwasilah, 1999 and 2007).

In the last few years in some countries abroad, the studies on needs analysis for ESP course were varied in the context of business, science and technology, health, and arts (Al-Harby, 2005; Oanh, 2007; Rosa, 2008; Al-Tamimi and Shuib, 2010; Eslami, 2010; Kaur and Khan, 2010; Atai and Shoja, 2011; Rodis*et al*., 2011; and Kaewpet, 2011).

In Indonesia, there were also some research studies of needs analysis and ESP in the context of business, science and technology (Floris, 2008; Fahmi, 2010; Petrus, 2010; Sismiati and Latief, 2012 Hardiningsih*et al*., 2012) and in the

context of Islamic studies conducted by Zuniati (2010) in terms of course book development, Sucipto (2010) in terms of syllabus development, Meisuri (2009) in terms of the relevance of English materials to the students' needs, and Kurniadin (2008) in terms of the use of specific English textbook to Islamic Studies students.

The present study attempts to conduct needs analysis as a starting point to design an ESP-based syllabus in an Islamic Studies Education College. This college has two majors: Islamic Studies Education and Islamic Judicature Program in which their concerned studies are related to Islamic knowledge and Islamic studies teaching such as *Tafseer*, *'Ulumul Hadith,* Islamic Studies Education, etc. In addition, their graduate students are commonly expected to be Islamic Studies teachers. This college undertakes Regular Classes and Non-Regular Classes and the number of students of each class are large around 30-50 students.

In the curriculum of this institution, English is maintained as a Basic Competency Subject. English also has an important position in this college. This can be seen from the proportion of teaching periods for English in this institute which is high. English is taught six semester credits for three semesters in which English has 2 credits per semester.

However, along the last few years of English teaching and learning in this college, the designing of English syllabi and the teaching of English have been carried out without considering the learners' needs. In the previous period (2007-2011) the students were given General English from English 1 to 6. In this new period, 2011-2015, the instructors have tried to make specific English for the students in the first and the second semester by teaching some reading topics on Islamic issues and precepts, and reading comprehension on general topics in the third semester. Nevertheless, the syllabi have been designed without considering the learners' needs. Meanwhile, Nation and Macalister (2010: 65), in one of twenty principles of language teaching, suggest that the contents of a syllabus in a language course should be based on the learners' needs Considering the learners'

needs as the bases of teaching and learning English seems necessary for the students of this institute because they are students of Islamic Studies Education, and they might need specific English, as Richards (2001: 32) states "Different types of students have different language needs and what they are taught should be restricted to what they need." Furthermore, Hutchinson and Waters (1987: 8) states that the learning based on the learners' needs "would improve the learners' motivation and thereby make learning better and faster."

1.2 Research Problem

Based on what has previously been discussed, this study formulates research questions as follows:

1. What are the students' needs of English in the context of an Islamic Studies Education program?

2. Has the existing English syllabus met the students' needs of English in the context of an Islamic studies Education program?

3. What type of English syllabus that meets the students' needs of English?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

Related to the problems above, this study aims at:

1. Investigating students' needs of English in an Islamic Studies Education program.

2. Finding out whether the existing English syllabus has met the students' needs of English.

3. Proposing a type of English syllabus to meet the learners' needs of English.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study provides empirical data for an ESP course intended for Islamic Studies field. This study has significant roles for both the learners and the teachers. For the learners, this investigation may give some beneficial information

of what language skills that the students need to learn. For the teachers, the information gained from this investigation can be useful for designing syllabus and selecting appropriate materials. This study may also contribute to the developing issues in ESP.

1.5 Thesis Organization

This thesis is organized into five chapters. The first chapter is introduction which highlights the basic description of this study. The second chapter concerns literature review building up theories and references for this study. The third chapter describes the methodology that was used in conducting this research. It presents the research design, setting, participants, and data collection method, procedures, and data analysis. The fourth chapter elaborates research findings and discussions. Finally, the fifth chapter points out the conclusion of the study and offers some suggestions for further research.