

# **CHAPTER 7**

# CHAPTER 7

## THE QUESTIONNAIRE AND THE RESULTS

### 7.1 BACKGROUND

The questionnaire comprises ten questions. An evaluation of the results to the responses of the questions in the questionnaire was done. One hundred copies of questionnaires were distributed to and collected from undergraduates of an Islamic institution. It is of importance and relevance to assess students' reactions with regard to the use of the English language translations of the meaning of the Quran as literary texts in the literature classroom because it is something new. The students have been exposed to mainly Western literature. Furthermore, using the English translated versions of the Quran as literary texts has features which are relevant to the students' understanding of language. This chapter seeks to analyse the questionnaire data. Some of the findings are illustrated by tables.

### 7.2 THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The objectives of the questionnaire are to test:

- i) the understanding,
- ii) acceptability and
- iii) preference of appeal in terms of language use.

The questions in the questionnaire were devised to test and analyse the responses to three main objectives: acceptability, understanding and preference of appeal in terms of language use of two sets of extracts from the two translated versions of the Quran. Ten questions were devised to retrieve certain information needed from the students' responses revolving around the three main objectives. The main questions to test acceptability in the questionnaire are:

**Q5: Have you ever thought of the Quran as a text possessing literary value apart from its religious values?**

**Yes**

**No**

**Q10: Do you think that the English language translations of the meaning of the Quran can be used as a text for the teaching of literature in the English language especially in Islamic institutions?**

**Yes**

**No**

It is important to know how students feel about the texts used in the classroom. There must be a sense of acceptance or agreement towards the text selected and used in the classroom by the students. This way, learning can reach an optimal level because there is a positive interaction between the student and the text. Thus, the teacher can also benefit from this because the students can then give better feedback in terms of discussions and classroom participation. The main question to test understanding in the questionnaire is:

**Q8: In your opinion, which of the 2 sets of the verses above is easier to understand?**

**A**

**B**

It is important to know the students' level of language competence in terms of understanding a particular text. It will be pointless if the student "likes" or accepts a particular text but is unable to give feedback in the form of written exercises or discussions and classroom participation because of lack of understanding. The main question to test preference of appeal in terms of language use in the questionnaire is:

**Q9: Which one of the 2 sets of verses above is more appealing?**

**A**

**B**

It is important to know the students' preference of appeal in terms of the different types of English language used in the two extracts translated from the same original text. This knowledge will help in the final selection of the text, all things considered. A student may find (A) more appealing than (B) although at the same time, the same student may find (B) easier to understand than (A). The extracts printed in the questionnaire were marked (A) and (B) and the names of the translators were not disclosed. Thus, the responses from the students were based solely on their opinions on reading extracts (A) and (B). This is beneficial for those who have no idea who Muhammad Asad and Abdullah Yusuf Ali are. The results were also illustrated by tables to facilitate better understanding of the responses to the questions in the questionnaire.

## 7.3 THE RESULTS

### 7.3.1 AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONDENTS

All the 100 respondents are Muslims. Their ages range from 19 - 28 years of age with a mean of 22 years of age, as explained in Table 1. The majority of the respondents aged between 21 and 23 years .

**Table 1: Age Distribution in Years**

Age in Years	No. of Students	Mean Age in Years
19-20	11	22
21-22	65	
23-24	21	
25-26	1	
27-28	2	

### 7.3.2 NATIONALITY OF THE RESPONDENTS

The majority who responded are females, comprising 84%. There are only 16% of males. The majority of students who responded are Malaysians (89%) and 11% are international students, as explained in Table 2. The 11 international students come from different countries: Thailand, Albania, Tanzania, Algeria, Tunis, Pakistan, Sudan, Nigeria, Indonesia. Out of the 11 international students, 5 are males and 6 are females.

**Table 2: Nationality of the Respondents**

<b>Malaysian Students</b>	<b>International Students</b>
89(89%)	11(11%)

#### **7.4 LANGUAGE BACKGROUND OF THE SPONDENTS ACCORDING TO THE MEDIUM OF NSTRUCTION IN HIGH SCHOOL**

Out of the 100 respondents, the majority are Malay-medium students 77 (77%), 13 (13%) are English-medium students, 7 (7%) are Arabic-medium students and 3 (3%) students under “others”, as explained in Table 3. Specifically, these 3 students had their medium of High School instruction in Thai language (for 2 students) and in Albanian language (for 1 student).

The medium of instruction at this particular institution is English. Thus, the students are expected to deal with texts in the English language. Because the students may have come from High schools which did not have English as their medium of instruction, this writer felt that it is important to know the extent of their exposure to English texts and their ability to understand and interact with the text.

**Table 3: Medium of Instruction in High School**

<b>Medium</b>	<b>No. of Students</b>
Malay-medium Students	77(77%)
English-medium Students	13(13%)
Arabic-medium Students	7(7%)
Others	3(3%)

## **7.5 EDUCATION AT RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS**

Out of the 100 respondents, 70 (70%) had attended religious schools which means they have definitely had Quranic studies included in their curriculum. The 70 (70%) respondents had, for various number of years, studied Arabic language. The 30 (30%) respondents who did not attend religious may still have had the opportunity to study Arabic language.

This section will divide the respondents into 3 subgroups: Malay, English and Arabic medium students. Specifically, the 3 students who are under “others” subgroup- one attended a religious school and had 6 years of Arabic, 2 did not attend religious schools but they had 7 years and 2 years of Arabic respectively.

### **7.5.1 MALAY-MEDIUM STUDENTS**

The total number of Malay-medium students is 77. Out of these 77(100%) students, 55 (71%) had attended religious schools and the remaining 22 (29%) did not

attend religious schools. The majority of the students who attended religious schools 46 (84%) had between 5-8 years of Arabic, as explained in Table 4. The majority of students who did not attend religious schools 18 (82 %) had between 0-4 years of Arabic, as explained in Table 4.

**Table 4: Malay-Medium Students' Attendance of Religious Schools**

No of Years	Attendance of Religious Schools	
	Yes	No
0-4	0	18(82%)
5-8	46(84%)	4(18%)
9-12	9(16%)	0
13-16	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>22</b>

### **7.5.2 ENGLISH-MEDIUM STUDENTS**

The total number of English-medium students is 13. Out of these 13(100%) students, 7(54%) had attended religious schools and the remaining 6(46%) of students did not attend religious schools. The majority of the students 3(43 %) who attended religious schools had between 5-8 years of Arabic, as explained in Table 5. The majority of the students 4 (66%) who did not attend religious schools had between 0-4 years of Arabic, as explained in Table 5.

**Table 5: English-Medium Students' Attendance of Religious Schools**

No of Years	Attendance of Religious Schools	
	Yes	No
0-4	0	4(66%)
5-8	3(43%)	1(17%)
9-12	2(28.5%)	1(17%)
13-16	2(28.5%)	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>

### **7.5.3 ARABIC-MEDIUM STUDENTS**

The total number of Arabic-medium students is 7. Out of these students, all 7(100%) had attended religious schools. The majority of the students 6 ( 86%) had between 5-12 years of Arabic, as explained in Table 6.

**Table 6: Arabic-Medium Students' Attendance of Religious Schools**

No of Years	Study of Arabic in years
0-4	0
5-8	3(43%)
9-12	3(43%)
13-16	1(14%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>

## **7.6 UNDERSTANDING THE QURAN IN ARABIC**

Out of 100 respondents, 42(42%) can understand the Quran in Arabic, 58(58%) cannot do so. Those 58(58%) who cannot understand the Quran in Arabic have had various number of years of Arabic language.

This section will divide the respondents into three subgroups: Malay, English and Arabic medium students. Specifically, the 3 students who are under “Others” subgroup- 2 can understand the Quran in Arabic, one cannot understand the Quran in Arabic but has had 2 years of Arabic.

### **7.6.1 MALAY-MEDIUM STUDENTS**

The total number of Malay-medium students is 77. Out of these 77 students, 27 (35%) can understand the Quran in Arabic, 50 (65%) cannot do so. Those 50 students who cannot understand the Quran in Arabic have had various number of years of Arabic language. The majority of the students 28( 56%) had between 5-8 years of Arabic, as explained in Table 7.

**Table 7: Malay-Medium and English-Medium Students who cannot Understand the Quran in Arabic**

Study of Arabic in Years	Medium	
	Malay	English
0-4	17(14%)	4(57%)
5-8	28(56%)	2(28%)
9-12	5(10%)	1(14%)
13-16	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>7</b>

### **7.6.2 ENGLISH-MEDIUM STUDENTS**

The total number of English-medium students is 13. Out of 13 students, 6(46%) can understand the Quran in Arabic, 7(54%) cannot do so. Those 7 students who cannot understand the Quran in Arabic have had various number of years of Arabic language. The majority of these students 4(57 %) had between 0-4 years of Arabic, as explained in Table 7.

### **7.6.3 ARABIC-MEDIUM STUDENTS**

The total number of Arabic- medium students is 7. Out of these 7 students, all 7 (100%) can understand the Quran in Arabic.

## **7.7 READING THE TRANSLATED VERSIONS OF THE QURAN IN OTHER LANGUAGES**

Out of 100 respondents, 97 (97%) have read the translated versions of the Quran in other languages, 3 (3%) have not read the translated versions of the Quran in any language. Who are these three students? One English-medium student has not read the translated versions of the the Quran in any language although this particular student cannot understand the Quran in Arabic. The other 2 Arabic-medium students who have not read the translated versions of the Quran in any language perhaps because these two students can understand the Quran in Arabic.

This section will divide the respondents into three subgroups: Malay, English and Arabic medium students. Specifically, the 3 students who are under “others” subgroup- 2 have read the English translated version of the Quran and both can understand the Quran in Arabic. One student has read the English translated version of the Quran and this particular student cannot understand the Quran in Arabic.

### **7.7.1 MALAY-MEDIUM STUDENTS**

The total number of Malay-medium students is 77. Out of these 77 students, all have read the translated versions of the Quran in other languages: 71 (92%) have read the English translated version of the Quran, 6 (8%) have read the Malay translated version of the Quran, as explained in Table 8.

### 7.7.2 ENGLISH-MEDIUM STUDENTS

The total number of English-medium students is 13. Out of these 13 students, 12 (92%) have read the English translated version of the Quran, 1 (8%) have not read the translated versions of the Quran in any language, as explained in Table 8.

### 7.7.3 ARABIC-MEDIUM STUDENTS

The total number of Arabic –medium students is 7. Out of these 7 students, 5 (71%) have read the English translated version of the Quran, 2 (29%) have not read the translated version of the Quran in any language, as explained in Table 8.

**Table 8: Malay, English and Arabic Medium Students who have Read Translated Versions of the Quran in Other Languages**

Language of Translation	Medium		
	Malay	English	Arabic
English	71(92%)	12(92%)	5(71%)
Malay	6(8%)	0	0
None	0	1(8%)	2(29%)
Total	77	13	7

## 7.8 READING ABDULLAH YUSUF ALI'S ENGLISH TRANSLATED VERSION OF THE QURAN

Out of 100 respondents, 82 (82%) have read Abdullah Yusuf Ali's English translated version of the Quran. This section will divide the respondents into three

subgroups: Malay, English and Arabic medium students. Specifically, the 3 students under “others” subgroup-all 3 have read Abdullah Yusuf Ali’s English translated version of the Quran.

### **7.8.1 MALAY-MEDIUM STUDENTS**

The total number of Malay-medium students is 77. Out of these 77 students, 65 (84%) have read Abdullah Yusuf Ali’s translated version, 12(16%) have not read Abdullah Yusuf Ali’s translated version, as explained in Table 9.

### **7.8.2 ENGLISH-MEDIUM STUDENTS**

The total number of English-medium students is 13. Out of these 13 students, 10 (77%) have read Abdullah Yusuf Ali’s translated version, 3(23%) have not read Abdullah Yusuf Ali’s translated version, as explained in Table 9.

### **7.8.3 ARABIC-MEDIUM STUDENTS**

The total number of Arabic-medium students is 7. Out of these 7 students, 4 (57%) have read Abdullah Yusuf Ali’s translated version, 3(43%) have not read Abdullah Yusuf Ali’s translated version, as explained in Table 9.

**Table 9: Reading Abdullah Yusuf Ali's Translated Version**

Reading AYA's Translation	Medium		
	Malay	English	Arabic
Yes	65(84%)	10(77%)	4(57%)
No	12(16%)	3(23%)	3(43%)
Total	77	13	7

## **7.9 READING MUHAMMAD ASAD'S ENGLISH TRANSLATED VERSION OF THE QURAN**

Out of the 100 respondents, only 7(7%) students have read Muhammad Asad's translated version. This section will divide the respondents into three subgroups: Malay, English and Arabic medium students. Specifically, the 3 students who are under "others" subgroup-all 3 have not read Muhammad Asad's translated version.

### **7.9.1 MALAY-MEDIUM STUDENTS**

The total number of Malay-medium students is 77. Out of these 77 students, 5(6%) have read Muhammad Asad's translated version, 72(94%) have not read Muhammad Asad's translated version, as explained in Table 10.

## 7.9.2 ENGLISH-MEDIUM STUDENTS

The total number of English-medium students is 13. Out of these 13 students, 2(15%) have read Muhammad Asad's translated version, 11(85%) have not read Muhammad Asad's translated version, as explained in Table 10.

## 7.9.3 ARABIC-MEDIUM STUDENTS

The total number of Arabic-medium students is 7. Out of these 7 students, none have read Muhammad Asad's translated version, as explained in Table 10.

**Table 10: Reading Muhammad Asad's Translated Version**

Reading MA's Translation	Medium		
	Malay	English	Arabic
Yes	5(6%)	2(15%)	0
No	72(94%)	11(85%)	7(100%)
Total	77	13	7

## 7.10 ANALYSIS OF ACCEPTABILITY, UNDERSTANDING AND APPEAL

**For acceptability:** Out of the 100 respondents, all 100% students have answered positively.

**For understanding:** Out of the 100 respondents, 76(76%) feel that Muhammad Asad's version is easier to understand than Abdullah Yusuf Ali's version, 24(24%) feel that Abdullah Yusuf Ali's version is easier to understand than Muhammad Asad's version.

**For Appeal:** Out of the 100 respondents, 59(59%) feel that Muhammad Asad's version is more appealing than Abdullah Yusuf Ali's version, 41(41%) feel that Abdullah Yusuf Ali's version is more appealing than Muhammad Asad's version.

This section will divide the respondents into three subgroups: Malay, English and Arabic medium students. Specifically, the 3 students who are under "others" subgroup-2 feel that Muhammad Asad's version is easier to understand than Abdullah Yusuf Ali's version, one feels that Abdullah Yusuf Ali's version is easier to understand than Muhammad Asad's version. One feels that Muhammad Asad's version is more appealing than Abdullah Yusuf Ali's version, 2 feel that Abdullah Yusuf Ali's version is more appealing than Muhammad Asad's version.

Table 14 compares the responses of Malay, English and Arabic medium students in understanding and appeal of both translated versions.

### 7.10.1 MALAY-MEDIUM STUDENTS

The total number of Malay-medium students is 77. Out of these 77 students, 58(75%) feel that Muhammad Asad's version is easier to understand than Abdullah Yusuf Ali's version, 19(25%) feel that Abdullah Yusuf Ali's version is easier to understand than Muhammad Asad's version, as explained in Table 11.

**Table 11: Response of Malay-Medium Students to Understanding and Appeal**

	Translated version	
	AYA	MA
<b>Understanding</b>	<b>19(25%)</b>	<b>58(75%)</b>
<b>Appeal</b>	<b>31(40%)</b>	<b>46(60%)</b>

Out of 77 students, 46(60%) feel that Muhammad Asad's version is more appealing than Abdullah Yusuf Ali's version, 31(40%) feel that Abdullah Yusuf Ali's version is more appealing than Muhammad Asad's version, as explained in Table 11.

### 7.10.2 ENGLISH-MEDIUM STUDENTS

The total number of English-medium students is 13. Out of these 13 students, 11(85%) feel that Muhammad Asad's version is easier to understand than Abdullah Yusuf Ali's version, 2(15%) feel that Abdullah Yusuf Ali's version is easier to understand than Muhammad Asad's version, as explained in Table 12.

Out of these 13 students, 7(54%) feel that Muhammad Asad's version is more appealing than Abdullah Yusuf Ali's version, 6(46%) feel that Abdullah Yusuf Ali's version is more appealing than Muhammad Asad's version, as explained in Table 12.

**Table 12: Response of English-Medium Students to Understanding and Appeal**

	Translated version	
	AYA	MA
<b>Understanding</b>	2(15%)	11(85%)
<b>Appeal</b>	6(46%)	7(54%)

### 7.10.3 ARABIC-MEDIUM STUDENTS

The total number of Arabic-medium students is 7. Out of these 7 students, 5(71%) feel that Muhammad Asad's version is easier to understand than Abdullah Yusuf Ali's version, 2(29%) feel that Abdullah Yusuf Ali's version is easier to understand than Muhammad Asad's version, as explained in Table 13.

**Table 13: Response of Arabic-Medium Students to Understanding and Appeal**

	Translated version	
	AYA	MA
<b>Understanding</b>	2(29%)	5(71%)
<b>Appeal</b>	2(29%)	5(71%)

Out of these 7 students, 5(71%) feel that Muhammad Asad's version is more appealing than Abdullah Yusuf Ali's version, 2(29%) feel that Abdullah Yusuf Ali's version is more appealing than Muhammad Asad's version, as explained in Table 13.

**Table 14: Responses of all Medium of Students to Understanding and Appeal of Both Translated Versions**

	AYA			MA		
	Malay	English	Arabic	Malay	English	Arabic
<b>Understanding</b>	19 (25%)	2 (15%)	2 (29%)	58 (75%)	11 (85%)	5 (71%)
<b>Appeal</b>	31 (40%)	6 (46%)	2 (29%)	46 (60%)	7 (54%)	5 (71%)

## 7.11 CONCLUSION

Although the majority of the respondents have read Abdullah Yusuf Ali's translated version of the Quran, Muhammad Asad's version scored higher in terms of understanding and appeal. The possible conclusions that can be derived or deduced from this include:

- a) Abdullah Yusuf Ali's translated version of the Quran is well-circulated.
- b) Muhammad Asad uses more straightforward, prosaic language and less classicism, poetic and symbolism.
- c) The preference for Muhammad Asad's version is not dependent on the level of proficiency in Arabic language.