

THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE PHILOSOPHY IN ELT SPEAKING SKILLS AT ZUBDATUL ASRAR NU ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL PAREPARE

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ABSTRACT

The philosophy of language is a branch of philosophy that examines the nature of language, meaning, and communication, as well as the relationship between language, thought, and reality. This study aims to gain new insights into the role of the philosophy of language in developing speaking skills in English language classes, specifically by exploring how philosophy functions not only as a tool for communication but also as a tool for social interaction among students at the NU Zubadatul Asrar Islamic Boarding School in Parepare. This study employs a qualitative descriptive method, in which the researcher will explain the role of the philosophy of language in the development of English speaking skills. Data were collected through observation and interviews, as well as by utilizing secondary data obtained from various sources, such as books and journals, relevant to the research topic. The role of the philosophy of language has shown that speaking skills play a crucial role in the development of language proficiency, enabling students at the NU Zubdatul Asrar Islamic Boarding School in Parepare to convey ideas, opinions, information, and feelings orally with precision and clarity, in accordance with the context. The study concluded that the role of the philosophy of language is to serve as a space for reflection and practice where students can understand and examine the relationship between the speaker's intention, the meaning of utterances. Through this space, the role of language philosophy in speaking skills in English learning is not only to train fluency, but also to build constructive understanding between speakers and listeners. It also fosters pragmatic awareness in choosing appropriate utterances according to their function. Through speaking skills, students are expected to be able to convey messages effectively, interpret meaning accurately, and establish meaningful interactions in various communication situations.

Keywords: *Philosophy of language, Speaking Skills, ELT*

A. Introduction

Language plays a vital role in human life as a means of communication for conveying ideas, feelings, and thoughts. In the field of education, particularly in English Language Teaching (ELT), language serves not only as a medium for

delivering content but also as a tool for developing students' communicative competencies. Among the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing), speaking is often considered the most challenging skill because it requires students to use language accurately, fluently, and

spontaneously in real-life communication situations. Therefore, effective speaking instruction is essential to help students communicate confidently and meaningfully in English.

The philosophy of language is a branch of philosophy that examines the nature of language, meaning, and the relationship between language, thought, and reality. From the perspective of the philosophy of language, language is not merely understood as a set of grammatical rules, but as a means of constructing and conveying meaning in social interaction. This view provides a theoretical foundation for the idea that learning speaking skills requires more than just a focus on mastering vocabulary and language structures; it must also consider students' ability to use language to convey their ideas and understand meaning in various communicative contexts.

The teaching of English speaking skills in an Islamic boarding school setting has its own unique characteristics because it takes place within an educational environment that emphasizes character building, discipline, and language immersion. At the Zubdatul Asrar NU Islamic

Boarding School in Parepare, various English language learning programs are implemented to improve students' communication skills, such as conversation practice, English speeches, discussions, and other mandatory language programs. These programs provide students with opportunities to actively use English so that their speaking skills can develop through real-life communication experiences.

The philosophy of language is a field of study that combines linguistics and philosophy, investigating the characteristics and role of language as a human activity, as well as the theoretical and conceptual foundations of linguistics. The philosophy of language can also be viewed as philosophers' efforts to gain an understanding of conceptual knowledge through an understanding of language. The philosophy of language is a specialized branch of philosophy whose subject is language. One of the tasks of the philosophy of language is to effectively analyze key concepts. This is done through linguistic analysis (Handayani, Zaim, and Ardi 2025). The philosophy of language is also about how language is used, or how we speak about

language in relation to it. For language is a vital tool in philosophy. In the context of education, the philosophy of language makes a significant contribution to the development of educated individuals who are able to convey information precisely and accurately.

However, speaking instruction in Islamic boarding schools faces various challenges, such as a limited vocabulary that hinders sentence construction, a lack of confidence due to insufficient practice, pronunciation issues, a lack of intensive training in public speaking, a shortage of instructors specializing in public speaking, and a lack of adequate teaching materials. These challenges highlight the need for a more holistic approach to speaking instruction.

Based on this description, a study on the role of the philosophy of language in the teaching of English speaking skills is important to conduct. Language instruction in the pesantren environment requires a strong philosophical foundation to ensure that the learning process does not merely focus on linguistic mastery but is also aligned with cultural and moral values. This approach views language as a critical instrument that not only

facilitates effective communication but also empowers students to articulate religious values within the broader context of social interaction.

B. Research Method

This study employs a qualitative descriptive method, in which the researcher will explain the role of the philosophy of language in the teaching of English speaking skills. The researcher utilizes secondary data obtained from various sources, such as books and journals, that are relevant to the research topic, as this study adopts a literature review approach (Siswadi and Maharani 2022).

C. Result and Discussion

1. The Role of the Philosophy of Language in Speaking Instruction

The philosophy of language plays a central role in classroom speaking instruction. The philosophy of language views language as a means of constructively building and conveying ideas, holding that language is not merely a tool for communication. In the field of linguistics, the philosophy of

language plays a crucial role in language research aimed at generating new languages. Philosophy is used as a starting point to analyze ideas and reflect on the most important role of language in expressing thoughts and opinions orally. This raises issues, such as the fact that everyday language has limitations that cannot be expressed in philosophical terms. (Mizkat et al. 2024).

Speaking skills play a crucial role in language learning, as they enable students to communicate effectively and purposefully, allowing them to express ideas, opinions, information, and feelings in a verbal accurately and clearly in context. As it has evolved, the philosophy of language has contributed to our understanding of the relationship between language, meaning, and the communication process. In speaking instruction, the philosophy of language teaches that language use is not limited to mastering grammar, memorizing sentence patterns, or simply expanding one's vocabulary, but also on the ability to deeply understand the meaning and purpose of communication.

Therefore, the goal of speaking instruction is not only to develop fluency but also to serve as a means of fostering constructive understanding between the speaker and the listener. Through speaking skills, students are expected to be able to convey messages effectively, interpret meaning accurately, and engage in meaningful interactions in various communication situations. Thus, speaking serves as a medium for developing communicative competence supported by critical, reflective, and contextual thinking skills, as emphasized in the philosophy of language.

2. Language as a Tool for social Interaction

Language is the most important tool for social interaction, enabling people to communicate, build relationships, and collaborate within society. According to the KBBI, language is a system of arbitrary sound symbols used by society to collaborate, interact, and identify themselves.

Furthermore, language is the most important tool of communication in human life; it not only serves as a

medium for conveying messages but also plays a role in shaping social identity, building relationships between individuals, and regulating social interactions particularly in the context of Islamic boarding schools, where language serves as the primary vehicle for social interaction, enabling students from diverse regions and cultures to interact, share knowledge, and exchange perspectives to foster social harmony through various functions such as building solidarity and closeness among students, introducing oneself and expressing religious identity, conveying intentions and goals, and using language as a means of learning and preserving local culture. Solidarity through polite language, in which students practice courtesy—such as using respectful forms of address for seniors, gentle phrasing to avoid coming across as bossy, and non-blaming language—which not only maintains social harmony but also strengthens their religious identity as individuals who remain courteous even in the face of conflict. Meanwhile, interactions between the pesantren and the surrounding community take the form of cooperation, accommodation, and

assimilation behaviora relationships between students in the boarding school and the broader community aimed at achieving social values. These interactions yield positive outcomes such as preventing students from feeling lonely, reducing feelings of alienation, preventing depression, and fostering an understanding of cultural diversity, thus the language within the pesantren functions as a tool for social interaction that regulates communication, builds solidarity, and strengthens religious identity, serving as a bridge between the traditional values of the pesantren and the challenges of modernity so that the pesantren remains relevant in instilling its vision and mission in students through thematic discussions on issues, thereby ensuring the pesantren is not merely a traditional Islamic educational institution but also a religious communication tool that shapes students into polite, critical, and responsive individuals capable of adapting to the changing times (Abror and Sukmawati 2025).

In addition, mastering these language skills enables students to become competent international

ambassadors of Islam, capable of spreading Islamic messages through discourse that is relevant and universally accepted (Rosyada and Ramadhianti 2021). Furthermore, the creation of an immersive environment through language programs and other learning programs at the Zubdatul Asrar NU Islamic boarding school in Parepare, combined with daily activities, has proven effective in fostering religious and moral character while enhancing the students' communication skills (Novitasari, Susani, and Putri 2025).

The ability to speak effectively also helps students become international ambassadors of Islam who can convey Islamic messages in a way that is relevant and acceptable to the general public and the wider world. Thus, language in Islamic boarding schools is not merely a system of signs, but a social manifestation that reflects Islamic values, hierarchy, and camaraderie among students.

3. Challenges in Speaking skills

At the Islamic boarding school, students face many challenges when learning to speak English. The main challenges faced by

students at the Zubdatul Asrar NU Islamic boarding school in Parepare are a lack of interest in English class, difficulty constructing conversational sentences when speaking with fellow students, and a lack of practice when not supervised by their teachers. Students also lack confidence when speaking because they worry about making mistakes and becoming the subject of their peers' ridicule. They also struggle with the pronunciation of English words, which is not yet accurate. Additionally, within the Zubdatul Asrar NU Parepare boarding school environment, students predominantly use Indonesian, interspersed with English and Arabic, in accordance with the designated language days set by the boarding school.

Another challenge faced is the shortage of teachers specializing in English public speaking, as well as a lack of effective teaching methods for speaking. Students also lack adequate teaching materials for English language practice. All these factors make it difficult for students to develop their English speaking skills. However, to minimize these issues in the English learning process at the Zubdatul Asrar NU Islamic Boarding

School in Parepare, the school has implemented a daily conversation practice program on designated language days, offers an English speech and speaking practice program, and provides mentoring from students who are more proficient in English.

D. Conclusion

This study highlights the role of the philosophy of language in the development of speaking skills at the Zubdatul Asrar NU Islamic boarding school in Parepare. The results of this study indicate that speaking skills play a crucial role in the development of communication abilities, enabling students at the Zubdatul Asrar NU Islamic boarding school in Parepare to convey ideas, opinions, information, and feelings verbally in an accurate and clear manner, in accordance with the context.

This study asserts that language serves as a tool for social interaction because it is the most important means of communication in human life; it not only functions as a medium for conveying messages but also plays a role in shaping social identity, building relationships between individuals, and regulating social

interactions—particularly in the context of Islamic boarding schools, where language serves as the primary tool for social interaction, enabling students from diverse regions and cultures to interact, share knowledge, and exchange perspectives in order to foster social harmony.

In addition, this study reveals the challenges faced in speaking skills at the Zubdatul Asrar NU Islamic boarding school in Parepare. The main challenges are the students' lack of interest in learning English, as well as difficulty constructing conversational sentences when speaking with fellow students due to a lack of practice using English; students also lack confidence when speaking. They also struggle with the pronunciation of English words, which is not yet accurate.

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