

SKILLED SPEAKING STUDENTS AT ULIL ALBAAB ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL EAST LOMBOK

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Abstract. The purpose of this study is to examine the teaching and learning of speaking skills at the Ulil Albaab Islamic Boarding School in the 2023/2024 academic year, with an emphasis on the reasons for and practices of its implementation. This study uses a qualitative case study approach with data collection through observation, in-depth interviews with teachers and students, and document analysis. The results show that speaking skills learning is dominated by a communicative approach that utilizes group discussion, presentation, and simulation strategies to encourage the use of language in real contexts. This approach is capable of creating an interactive learning atmosphere, despite facing challenges such as limited resources, varying levels of student confidence, and limited vocabulary mastery. Nevertheless, the integration of practice-based methods continues to play an important role in improving students' speaking skills. These findings have implications for the development of strategies for teaching speaking skills in Islamic boarding schools and similar educational institutions.

Keywords: Speaking Skills, Teaching, Learning, Case Study, Islamic Boarding School

Abstrak. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengkaji pengajaran dan pembelajaran keterampilan berbicara di Pondok Pesantren Ulil Albaab tahun ajaran 2023/2024, dengan menekankan pada alasan dan praktik pelaksanaannya. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan studi kasus kualitatif dengan pengumpulan data melalui observasi, wawancara mendalam dengan guru dan siswa, serta analisis dokumen. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pembelajaran keterampilan berbicara didominasi oleh pendekatan komunikatif yang memanfaatkan strategi diskusi kelompok, presentasi, dan simulasi untuk mendorong penggunaan bahasa dalam konteks nyata. Pendekatan ini mampu menciptakan suasana belajar interaktif, meskipun menghadapi tantangan berupa keterbatasan sumber daya, variasi tingkat kepercayaan diri siswa, dan penguasaan kosakata yang terbatas. Meskipun demikian, integrasi metode berbasis praktik tetap berperan penting dalam meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara siswa. Temuan ini memberikan implikasi bagi pengembangan strategi pembelajaran keterampilan berbicara di pondok pesantren maupun lembaga pendidikan serupa.

Kata Kunci: Keterampilan Berbicara, Pengajaran, Pembelajaran, Studi Kasus, Pesantren

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INTRODUCTION

Speaking is one of the four essential skills in English, alongside writing, reading, and listening. Among these, speaking holds a particularly significant place in language learning as it is the primary mode of communication and interaction in real-life situations. Speaking is an interactive and dynamic process that requires active engagement and the ability to convey thoughts, ideas, and emotions effectively. This skill goes beyond the mere production of words; it involves cognitive, linguistic, and social components that enable meaningful communication (Thornbury, 2022). Effective speaking demands that learners actively participate in conversations, respond appropriately to different communicative situations, and adjust their language based on context and audience. According to Gass and Mackey (2023), active engagement in speaking involves seeking opportunities for interaction, practicing regularly, and receiving feedback to refine fluency and accuracy. Additionally, Richards (2020) highlights that proficient speakers can articulate their ideas clearly, structure their speech logically, and use appropriate intonation and gestures to enhance communication.

Furthermore, Brown (2021) emphasizes that speaking is not just about linguistic competence but also about expressing emotions and attitudes effectively. This requires pragmatic and sociolinguistic awareness, allowing speakers to convey meaning beyond words through tone, body language, and contextual appropriateness. By integrating linguistic skills, cognitive processing, and emotional intelligence, speakers can communicate effectively in diverse personal, academic, and professional settings.

Speaking is a fundamental language skill that both teachers and students must prioritize, as it plays a crucial role in building confidence, improving pronunciation, enhancing fluency, and fostering the ability to think in the target language (Thornbury, 2022). Developing strong speaking skills enables learners to express themselves clearly and interact effectively in various communicative settings. For students, improving their speaking proficiency opens the door to meaningful conversations, cultural exchange, and better career opportunities. According to Richards (2020), the ability to communicate fluently in a second language is essential in academic, professional, and social contexts, as it allows individuals to participate actively in discussions, negotiations, and collaborations. Furthermore, Brown (2021) highlights that thinking in the target language, rather than translating from the native language, is a key milestone in achieving fluency. This cognitive shift helps students respond more naturally and confidently in real-time conversations.

Despite its importance, many students in pesantren settings still face difficulties in developing speaking proficiency. Challenges such as limited exposure to authentic communication, varying levels of confidence, and restricted vocabulary hinder their ability to speak effectively. These issues highlight the need for further investigation into how speaking skills are taught and practiced in such contexts. Therefore, this study aims to explore the teaching and learning of speaking skills at Pondok Pesantren Ulil Albaab during the 2023/2024 academic year, with particular attention to the methods employed, the challenges encountered, and the underlying reasons behind their implementation.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach within a case study framework to explore the process of teaching and learning speaking skills at the Ulil Albaab Islamic Boarding School. Data was collected through direct observation in the classroom to capture the dynamics of teacher-student interactions, the use of teaching materials, and teaching strategies; in-depth interviews with teachers and students using open-ended questions to explore experiences, obstacles, and the role of extracurricular activities such as *Muhadatsah* and *Muhadhoroh*; as well as documentation in the form of lesson plans, teaching materials, and student activity records to provide context for the practices observed. The three data sources were compared through triangulation to enhance the credibility of the findings, so that differences or similarities between participant reports, field observations, and written evidence could be clarified. Data analysis was conducted using Miles and Huberman's interactive model, which was practically operationalized into four stages: data collection and selection, condensation or reduction of data to highlight central themes, presentation of data in the form of matrices, tables, and thematic summaries to make patterns easier to recognize, and drawing and verification of conclusions through cross-source checking. This analysis process was iterative so that the final findings were a synthesis that had been verified between sources, strengthening the validity and depth of understanding of the speaking learning practices at the pesantren.

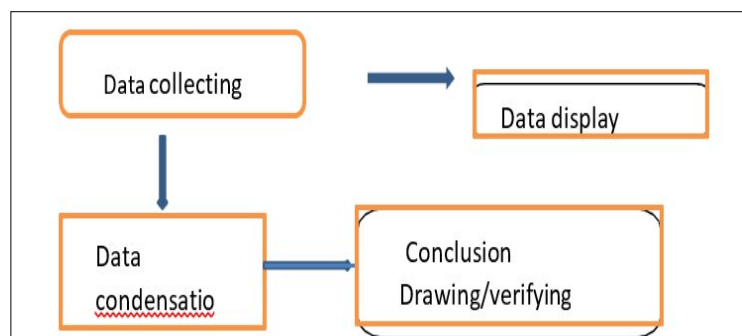


Figure 1. Data analysis

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In the findings section of this study, the researcher explores the teaching and learning strategies of speaking skills in Wusto class at Ulil Albab Islamic Boarding School during the academic year of 2023/2024. Wusto class, which is equivalent to the intermediate level, is a crucial phase for students to achieve English language proficiency. Through observation methods, interviews with teachers and students, and document analysis, this study provides a comprehensive picture of the techniques applied in teaching speaking skills and the obstacles faced during the process.

Profile of Ulil Albab Lendang Jaran High School

SMAS Ulil Albab Lendang Jaran is a private school in Montong Gading District, East Lombok, which was established on September 16, 2000 with NPSN 50202407. This school is accredited B based on SK BAP-SM No. 275/BAP-SM/KP/VIII/2016 and is under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Culture. The teaching and learning process takes place six days a week with a morning system, using a curriculum that emphasizes academic quality and character building. Facilities available include internet access, PLN electricity, conducive classrooms, and digital learning media. In the implementation of learning, various methods are used, such as role-playing, repetition exercises, discussions, and peer teaching, with evaluation through formative assessment in the form of direct feedback and summative assessment in the form of speaking tests and formal presentations to assess the accuracy, fluency, and vocabulary variation of students. The results of observations of speaking skills learning can be seen in the table below.

Table 1. The observation Result

Aspect	Observation Results
Role of Teachers	Teachers act as facilitators, motivators, and guides in speaking lessons. They encourage students to speak confidently, provide constructive feedback on errors, and motivate them to overcome their fear of making mistakes.
Instructional Materials	The materials used are practical and contextual, including everyday dialogues, discussions on Islamic topics, and role-playing scenarios relevant to the boarding school environment. Materials are tailored to students' proficiency levels and gradually increase in complexity.
Teaching Methods	Interactive methods such as discussions, role-playing, and speaking exercises are used to enhance students' speaking skills.
Learning Media	Media includes conversation texts, audio resources, and direct activities that support speaking practice.
Evaluation	Evaluation is conducted through direct observation, teacher feedback, and gradual improvement in students' speaking abilities.

Conditions for Learning Speaking Skills

Teaching speaking skills at Ulil Albab Islamic Boarding School is based on observations that include several important components: the role of teachers, teaching materials, teaching methods, learning media, and evaluation processes. Teachers function as facilitators and motivators, encouraging students to practice speaking confidently and providing constructive feedback that helps overcome their concerns about mistakes.



Figure 2. Pictures of teaching and learning process

The teaching materials used are practical and contextual, including everyday dialogues and discussions on Islamic themes, adapted to the students' ability level to gradually challenge them. The use of varied learning media, such as audiovisual aids and digital platforms, also increases students' engagement in language learning. The teaching methods applied include communicative approaches—such as group discussions and role-playing—that develop fluency in natural contexts. The evaluation process is divided into formative and summative, allowing teachers to assess students' progress and provide targeted feedback. Role-playing sessions have proven effective in simulating real-life situations, while discussions boost students' confidence in expressing ideas spontaneously. Peer teaching also supports collaborative learning. Learning media, such as audio recordings and instructional videos, also enrich the teaching-learning process.

Evaluation of Speaking Skills Learning

Evaluation is structured with a formative approach that provides immediate feedback during learning, and a summative assessment that involves formal speaking tests to assess overall development. This approach ensures students receive ongoing support while being held accountable for their progress. Observations showed that interactive methods improved students' confidence and fluency. Active involvement in discussions and feedback from

teachers motivated students to continue practicing. The combination of practice, contextual teaching materials, and coherent evaluation strategies created an effective learning environment

An interview with Mrs. Iis Naini, an English teacher, revealed that the biggest challenge faced by students was lack of confidence. She used interactive methods and grouped students based on ability to provide appropriate speaking tasks. The evaluations prepared included formative and summative assessments to ensure the development of students' speaking skills. The results of the evaluation of English speaking skills can be seen in the table below.

Table 2. The table evaluation and results of 25 students' speaking skills and their scores:

No	Student Name	Pronunciation (25)	Fluency (25)	Grammar (25)	Vocabulary (25)	Total Score (100)	Grade
1	Ahm Fauzi	22	21	20	23	86	A
2	Siti Aisyah	18	19	17	20	74	B
3	Muhammad Rizky	23	24	22	23	92	A
4	Fatimah Zahra	19	20	18	21	78	B
5	Ali Akbar	24	22	23	24	93	A
6	Nurul Hidayah	17	18	16	19	70	B
7	Fadilah Rahman	21	20	19	22	82	A
8	Aulia Safira	16	17	15	18	66	C
9	Siti Salna Rodianti	23	23	22	24	92	A
10	Zahra Kamila	20	21	19	22	82	A
11	Hanif Pratama	22	23	21	23	89	A
12	Aisyah Humaira	19	18	20	20	77	B
13	Ilham Saputra	21	22	20	22	85	A
14	Syifa Anindya	18	19	17	20	74	B
15	Reza Maulana	24	23	22	24	93	A
16	Anisa Putri	20	19	18	21	78	B
17	Daffa Ramadhan	23	24	23	24	94	A
18	Salsa Amelia	22	21	20	23	86	A
19	Rafi Pratama	16	17	15	18	66	C
20	Naila Khairunnisa	18	19	16	20	73	B
21	Farhan Alif	22	23	22	24	91	A
22	Zahra Alifah	19	20	18	21	78	B
23	Rizky Ramadhan	24	24	23	25	96	A
24	Alifia Zahra	17	18	16	19	70	B
25	Malik Hidayat	23	22	21	23	89	A

The evaluation of speaking skills is based on four main components: pronunciation, fluency, grammar, and vocabulary, to assess students' abilities and identify areas of improvement. A table of evaluation results from 25 students is provided, followed by an analysis of their performance. Of the 25 students, 14 students (56%) managed to achieve an A grade (85-100), indicating excellent speaking ability. A total of 9 students (36%) achieved

a B grade (70-84), indicating satisfactory performance with potential for improvement. Meanwhile, 2 students (8%) achieved a C grade (60-69), indicating that they need additional support and practice, especially in fluency and grammar. The highest score reached 96, obtained by Rizky Ramadhan, while the lowest score was 66, achieved by Aulia Safira and Rafi Pratama. Overall, the majority of students showed solid speaking skills, especially in pronunciation and vocabulary, while fluency and grammar were still areas that needed improvement.

Based on the teaching and learning process of speaking skills at Ulil Albab Islamic Boarding School, it appears effective in overcoming the challenges faced by students, by providing a supportive learning environment, appropriate and interesting materials, and structured evaluation. These practices are guided by teacher insights and systematic learning plans, thus ensuring a focused approach to students' needs in learning the language. This finding strengthens the effectiveness of the strategy in improving students' speaking skills in similar educational contexts. Observations show that the combination of teacher support, relevant materials

Teaching and Learning Approaches to Speaking Skills at Ulil Albab Islamic Boarding School

Ulil Albab Islamic Boarding School, teaching and learning of speaking skills is oriented towards an interactive approach that focuses on students. This approach is in line with previous research on effective language acquisition (Brown, 2007; Richards, 2008), where teachers act as facilitators, motivators, and guides in speaking activities. Practice-based teaching has been shown to increase students' confidence and fluency (Harmer, 2007).

In an effort to create an interesting learning environment, various methods such as role-playing, discussion, peer teaching, and structured speaking exercises are applied. Various studies indicate that these methods are effective in helping students practice speaking in real contexts, as well as strengthening their communicative competence (Littlewood, 2013). Constructive feedback provided by the teacher also plays an important role in improving students' pronunciation and grammar, in line with the communicative language learning theory (Lightbown & Spada, 2013). A supportive and motivating learning environment is essential in the development of speaking skills. By creating a comfortable atmosphere, students feel more confident in communicating, which in turn contributes to more effective language development (Nunan, 1991; Thornbury, 2005).

The teaching program at Ulil Albab integrates Islamic educational principles, resulting in a holistic learning experience that encompasses intellectual development and character building. This approach balances cognitive and spiritual growth, combining IQ, EQ, and SQ (spiritual quotient) to make students become well-balanced individuals. The curriculum not only encourages academic excellence but also instills values such as honesty, responsibility, and tolerance. The integration of Islamic values in language learning strengthens students' ability to use English with a strong ethical approach (Anwar, 2017).

The teaching materials in the speaking class are designed to be relevant and practical, combining conversations in everyday life and Islamic discussions, thus reflecting students' experiences in Islamic boarding schools. This is in accordance with the findings of Wahyuni (2021) which show that the integration of Islamic values in English language teaching creates a meaningful learning experience. In addition, the use of multimedia resources such as videos and visual aids improves students' understanding of authentic English speaking contexts and strengthens Fitriani's (2018) research on the use of digital tools in learning. Interactive teaching materials not only provide pronunciation models but also help students understand sentence structures, in line with Octavia (2023) research which shows the effectiveness of repetition exercises and cooperative learning.

Assessment also plays an important role in tracking progress, with formative and summative approaches ensuring continuous improvement, supporting Rahman's (2019) findings which emphasize the importance of real-time feedback and peer evaluation. However, challenges such as students' fear of mistakes and lack of self-confidence remain, as found by Hidayat & Maulana (2020). In this case, tailored instructional strategies, such as differentiated teaching and immersive language programs, can help overcome these challenges. The school also implemented a structured program centered on weekly English conversation sessions, systematically improving students' speaking skills and addressing limited practice opportunities.

Implementation of Teaching and Learning Speaking Skills at Ulil Albab Islamic Boarding School

The interactive and student-focused teaching method at Ulil Albab Islamic Boarding School is implemented through an emphasis on communication and practical language use. This approach is in line with Rahman's (2019) study on communicative language teaching

(CLT), which shows that strategies such as role-playing and group discussions can improve students' confidence and speaking skills. Speaking skills are considered important at Ulil Albab, given that students are expected to be active in discussions, deliver speeches, and engage in social interactions, as noted by Wahyuni (2021) on the relevance of teaching English in the context of Islamic education.

Students are trained using role-playing methods and peer discussions, improving their fluency and engagement, in line with Octavia (2023) findings. By focusing on context, Ulil Albab moves away from a rote approach, seeking to engage students meaningfully with English, in line with Suardi's (2017) research. This immersive approach not only improves linguistic abilities but also reinforces Nasrullah & Sari (2022) findings on the importance of extracurricular activities that contribute to speaking fluency. Speaking skills are integrated into a multi-layered curriculum, including language training, discussions, and public speaking practice. In addition, activities such as organizational training and scientific visits provide practical applications in language use. Regular evaluation and feedback help students improve their speaking skills over time (Sah, 2024).

The integration of Islamic themes in speaking exercises provides an opportunity for students to practice English in the context of religious teachings and everyday conversations. This approach is in line with Wahyuni's (2021) research, which emphasizes that the integration of Islamic values in English teaching makes the learning process more meaningful. Thus, students not only acquire language skills but can also communicate religious concepts effectively. Hidayat & Maulana (2020) showed that a structured language environment with religious-based content improves language fluency without eliminating students' religious identities.

Teaching strategies at Ulil Albab Islamic Boarding School also address the challenge of confidence in speaking English. To overcome the fear of making mistakes, teachers create a supportive environment where students feel comfortable speaking. Through a combination of formative feedback, peer collaboration, and structured speaking assessments, students can build confidence. In addition, a commitment to continuous learning is reflected in the implementation of formative and summative assessments, ensuring ongoing feedback as students progress.

CONCLUSION

Speaking skills instruction at Pondok Pesantren Ulil Albab emphasizes an interactive,

student-centered approach that integrates real-world communication practices, Islamic values, and the use of digital media. Strategies such as role-playing, discussions, peer teaching, and structured exercises have been proven to improve students' confidence, fluency, and communicative competence, while also strengthening their character through the instillation of spiritual and moral values. Assessment is conducted formatively and summatively to monitor progress, although challenges remain in the form of limited vocabulary and fear of making mistakes. With the support of a conducive learning environment, the integration of an Islamic values-based curriculum, and the application of contextual learning strategies, Ulil Albab has succeeded in creating a meaningful learning experience, equipping students not only with English language skills, but also with confidence, ethical values, and the readiness to face academic and social challenges.

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