

Bismillah Before Learning, but Does Islamic Value Shape the Classroom?
A Critical Discourse Analysis of Ideological Tensions in ELT
within an Islamic University in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

In the rapidly evolving landscape of language education, the integration of cultural and religious values has become increasingly significant. While previous studies have explored the relationship between language, ideology, and globalisation in English language teaching, limited attention has been paid to how Islamic higher education institutions critically negotiate these ideological influences within classroom practices. This study examines the influence of Islamic values on the ideological practices of English language teaching at an Islamic university in Indonesia. Using the Critical Discourse Analysis approach developed by Fairclough (1993), this study analyses classroom interactions in English language courses. The primary data for this study came from three classroom interaction sessions, while secondary data included academic documents, such as the institution's vision and mission statements, observations, and teaching materials to reinforce the data analysis. The findings reveal that Islamic values remain marginal in both pedagogical discourse and instructional content. ELT practices tend to reproduce dominant global pedagogical norms, with limited critical engagement from an Islamic epistemological perspective. This pattern reflects a structural disconnection between institutional religious identity and enacted classroom discourse. In this case, Islamic education should not only function as an institutional setting but also appear as a discursive force capable of shaping ideological orientations in English language teaching.

Keywords: critical pedagogy; Islamic education; language ideology; faith-based institution; speaking

INTRODUCTION

Higher education in Indonesia, particularly in Islamic universities, presents significant challenges in integrating religious values with global academic demands. Islamic universities, including English Language and Literature departments, are not only expected to produce graduates who are academically competent, but also required to uphold institutional missions that emphasise the formation of Islamic character and identity (Alfian et al., 2021). In the context of language education, English departments in Islamic universities therefore carry a dual function. In addition to developing students' language skills, they are also expected to guide students toward understanding and applying Islamic values in their daily lives (Mulyati & Kultsum, 2023). This causes a distinctive tension between international academic standards that demand students to master English fluently, and the mission of Islamic education that emphasises character building

and morality. One aspect that is still rarely studied in depth is how religious values, especially Islamic ideology, are interpreted, negotiated, and realised in daily pedagogical practices, for example, through classroom interactions. This aspect is particularly important in language skills courses such as Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing, which are traditionally considered more neutral.

In contrast, English language teaching in Islamic higher education is often viewed as a technical domain that is separate from the teaching of religious values, based on the assumption that language skills courses primarily focus on developing linguistic competence rather than engaging with ideological dimensions (Irwansyah et al., 2021). However, a number of studies have shown that language is never neutral, and any teaching practice, including language skills teaching, is always influenced by a particular ideology (Fairclough, 1993; Pennycook, 2017). Even in the context of language education, the choice of texts, teaching approaches, and lecturer-student interactions can reveal larger ideological values that shape the way students view the world and themselves (Muhaimin, 2023). Although numerous studies highlight that language is inherently ideological and never neutral, most existing research remains at the level of conceptual or policy analysis, leaving a limited number of studies that examine in depth how ideology is manifested and negotiated within classroom interactions, particularly in the context of Islamic universities.

In fact, teaching English in Islamic universities is not only about mastering the language as a technical skill, but it is also an arena where social and cultural ideologies, including Islamic values, can be enacted (Sahin, 2018). As stated by Mori (2014), language is a very powerful medium in shaping ideologies, whether social, political, or cultural. English, as the dominant global language, is not only taught as a means of communication, but can also reflect certain values, including broader ideological values, such as Islamic values, in the context of Islamic higher education. This is in line with the thoughts of Pennycook (2006), who states that language teaching, especially English, can strengthen or challenge existing ideological structures, including global ideologies that may clash with local or religious ideologies.

Within this framework, the teaching of English in Islamic universities can be seen as an opportunity to question the role of language in education. On the one hand, English is taught with the aim of preparing students to be competent global language users (Slapac, 2021; Ushioda, 2017). Then, there is the potential to instil a critical understanding of the values contained in the language, as well as how Islamic values can be integrated into the way the language is learned and applied in the local context. This is in line with the ideas put forward by Phillipson (1997), who criticises the dominance of English in the global education system and reminds us of the importance of balancing international language skills with local cultural and religious identity. Therefore, this study does not intend to develop a normative integration of Islamic values into English language teaching, but to critically examine what and how Islamic ideology is present in the real practice of teaching language skills courses in English Language and Literature departments in Islamic universities.

Furthermore, this study proposes a more ideologically conscious language teaching approach, which not only focuses on developing language skills alone, but also pays attention to how religious and cultural values shape the way language is learned and applied in everyday life. This approach recognises that language is not just a means of communication, but also a powerful medium in shaping one's identity and ideology (Pennycook, 2017). Therefore, the results of this study are expected to open up space for the transformation of discourse in English language teaching in Islamic universities, making it more responsive to the cultural and religious context in Indonesia and contributing to the development of a more inclusive language teaching model

sensitive to local ideologies. In detail, this study explores how ideologies are realised linguistically in classroom interactions, how they are reproduced, negotiated, or resisted through pedagogical practices, and how the institutional context of Islamic higher education shapes these classroom discourses. By framing the research in this way, the study moves beyond assessing the normative presence of Islamic values to critically examine the mechanisms of ideological negotiation in everyday ELT practice.

LITERATURE REVIEW

LANGUAGE AS AN IDEOLOGICAL PRACTICE

Language is not merely a neutral communication tool, but also a social practice that is loaded with ideological content (Gal, 2023). Every use of language reflects and at the same time shapes power relations, social structures, and cultural values prevailing in society (Fairclough, 2009). In other words, language functions as a medium to convey and maintain dominant ideologies, both explicitly and implicitly. In this case, language teaching, including English, cannot be separated from ideological issues. This becomes even more important when we realise that English, as a global language, has become a hegemonic symbol of modernity, professionalism, and civilizational progress, which indirectly puts other languages in a subordinate position.

Through the process of globalisation and Western political-economic dominance, the spread of English is often accompanied by the spread of accompanying cultural values, such as individualism, secularism and capitalism (Pennycook, 2006). This process is known as linguistic imperialism, which is a form of cultural domination that works through language (Phillipson, 1997). In the classroom, this domination can manifest through curricula, textbooks, competency assessments, and expectations of accents and communication styles that are considered "standard" but actually reflect Western linguistic norms (Kubota & Okuda, 2016; Mehdi & Mahmood, 2020). When English language teaching is not ideologically critiqued, education will play a role in reinforcing global inequality and local cultural inferiority.

A number of studies have confirmed that language teaching, especially English, is inseparable from ideological interests that work through policies, curricula, classroom practices, and representations of identity. In the global context, for example, Warriner (2016) shows that neoliberal ideology dominates language education through an emphasis on global mobility, market competence, and the erasure of learners' local identities. In the classroom, the ideology of native-speakerism, which idealises native speakers as the best language model, remains the dominant standard that creates discrimination against non-Western accents and language styles (Preece, 2016). In the context of Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, several studies have found that English language teaching often reproduces the ideology of language standards, westernisation of values, and neglect of learners' local contexts (Yulianti, 2017). For example, the use of teaching materials dominated by Western culture and the lack of representation of Islam or local culture creates an identity distance between students and learning materials (Widodo et al., 2018). These findings show that language is not only a learning tool but also a complex terrain of struggle for social meaning. Therefore, this study positions ideology as a key lens to understand the dynamics of English language teaching in Islamic Religious Universities, as well as a basis for formulating a more equitable and contextual pedagogical approach.

CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), as developed by Fairclough (2009), provides a conceptual framework for analysing language as a social practice loaded with dimensions of power and ideology. CDA views that language is not just a means of communication, but also plays a role in shaping and maintaining unequal social structures. In the three-dimensional model introduced by Fairclough (1993), analysis is conducted at three interrelated levels. First, text analysis focuses on lexical choices, syntactic structures, metaphors, and discourse patterns used in teaching materials, verbal interactions, or curriculum documents. Second, discursive practices examine how these texts are produced, disseminated, and received by learners and teachers, for example, how certain ideologies are embedded through classroom practices or interactions. Third, social practices concern the broader institutional, historical, and ideological contexts that shape and are influenced by texts and discursive practices, such as national education policy, the language globalisation agenda, or the institution's Islamic vision and mission (Fairclough, 1995; Lin, 2018) by using this approach, the research can reveal how discourses in English language teaching in Islamic higher education shape and are shaped by broader social and ideological forces.

In the last five years, CDA has been widely used in research to uncover ideologies in English language teaching, both in terms of teaching materials, curriculum, and teaching practices. For example, research by Song (2013) analysed ELT textbooks in South Korea and found the dominance of Western values and the obscuring of local identities in learning content. In Indonesia, a study by Yuni Yulianti (2017) revealed that in some ELT programs in higher education, English is presented as a symbol of global progress, but lacks integration of local and Islamic values, which causes identity alienation for students on faith-based campuses. This finding shows that CDA is very relevant to analyse how ideologies, whether global, national, or institutional, are hidden behind seemingly neutral linguistic forms. Therefore, in the context of this study, CDA is used as a critical tool to assess and dismantle the discourse that develops in teaching English in Islamic universities.

ISLAMISATION OF KNOWLEDGE AT ISLAMIC HIGHER EDUCATION

Islamisation of knowledge, as developed by contemporary Muslim thinkers such as Al-Attas in Amir and Rahman (2023), is an attempt to reconstruct modern science by integrating Islamic values and principles into the epistemological structure of science. This idea does not simply add Islamic content to the curriculum, but rather reorganises the way of thinking and approach to science in accordance with the Islamic worldview. In the context of Islamic higher education (PTKI), this concept becomes an important ideological and epistemological framework, especially when institutions face the dominance of Western knowledge systems that are often secular and hegemonic. Islamisation of knowledge does not mean rejecting modern science but trying to renegotiate its underlying values to be in line with the ethics and goals of Islamic education.

Various studies have shown the challenges in implementing the idea of Islamisation of knowledge, especially in teaching foreign languages such as English. A study by Huda (2025) revealed that English lecturers at PTKI find it difficult to balance global academic demands with the institution's ideological mandate, such as Islamic character development. Meanwhile, research by Tarmizi (2020) shows that although there is a push to Islamise the curriculum, the approach remains largely symbolic and has yet to engage with the methodological or epistemological aspects of teaching itself. In this context, approaches such as Critical Islamic Pedagogy (CIP) developed by Muslim scholars, including Raihani (2020) and Talukder (2021), offer a more substantive

alternative. Instead of merely inserting Islamic content into existing curricula, CIP foregrounds three interrelated principles: (1) critical awareness of epistemic power relations embedded in educational knowledge, (2) dialogic and ethically grounded classroom engagement, and (3) the integration of Islamic epistemology into pedagogical reasoning and practice. Through this lens, Islamisation is understood not as a symbolic curricular adjustment but as a transformative reorientation of how knowledge is framed, questioned, and enacted in the classroom. Therefore, discussing the Islamisation of knowledge in the context of English language teaching at PTKI is not just a theoretical issue, but a strategy to navigate the tension between the demands of globalisation and commitment to Islamic values.

METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH DESIGN

This research uses a qualitative design with the main approach of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as developed by Fairclough (2009). CDA was chosen because it is able to uncover power relations and ideological constructions hidden in linguistic practices, especially in educational contexts where language, religion, and institutional norms interact with each other (Wodak & Meyer, 2016; Rogers, 2011). As a qualitative critical case study, this research does not aim for statistical generalisation, but for analytical depth in examining how ideological meanings are constructed and negotiated in situated ELT classroom practices. The case study design enables a focused and context-sensitive analysis of recurring discursive patterns within an Islamic higher education setting.

RESEARCH CONTEXT AND PARTICIPANT

This research was conducted at one of Indonesia's Islamic universities, focusing on teaching English in speaking courses. This course was selected because it features a high level of classroom interaction, making it a key space for ideological negotiation. The participants included one lecturer and 25 second-semester first-year undergraduate students enrolled in the program. As students in an introductory speaking course, their proficiency can be described as intermediate and developing. The lecturer was intentionally chosen because of their responsibility for teaching core speaking courses and their affiliation with an Islamic higher education institution.

DATA COLLECTION

This study aims to reveal the ideological dynamics in English language learning, especially in speaking for an explanation and argumentation course in an Islamic university in Indonesia. Data collection in this study was designed to capture naturally occurring classroom discourse and pedagogical practices through which ideological meanings related to English language teaching are enacted, negotiated, or marginalised in an Islamic higher education context. Three speaking class meetings were purposively selected based on the relevance of the learning topic to the research context. Observation was conducted using a non-participatory approach, where the researcher was not directly involved in the learning process but acted as an observer. Data were collected through audio recordings and systematic field notes, covering the opening of class,

delivery of materials, interaction between lecturer and students, as well as discussions or oral assignments. The three meetings were:

- Meeting 1: The Importance of Speaking Skills as an English and Literature Student
In this meeting, the lecturer delivered the material with a storytelling model that contained motivation and emphasised the importance of speaking skills in students' academic and professional development. Observation is directed to see how certain ideologies, such as meritocracy ideology, global professionalism, or Islamic values, such as goodwill in communication, are conveyed in the motivation.
- Meeting 2: Understanding Exposition in Speaking
In this session, students were asked to watch TED Talks videos as examples of good oral exposition practice. After watching, they were asked to re-narrate the content of the video with a logical and systematic structure. Observations focused on how the Western communication model in TED Talks is adopted and how students are asked to imitate the style, rhetoric, and argument structure of the video, as well as the extent to which this approach leaves room for local and Islamic values in their rhetoric.
- Meeting 3: Critical Thinking in Argumentation and Explanation
In this meeting, students were given the task of making a video containing critical arguments about the prospects of majoring in English Language and Literature in a global context. The focus of observation was directed at how the concept of critical thinking was applied, as well as the extent to which the narratives developed by students reflected a global, local, or Islamic worldview, both in terms of language, content, and form of delivery.

To support interpretation at the discursive and social practice levels, additional data were gathered, including the university's official vision and mission statements and teaching materials (such as presentation slides and assigned references) used during the observed sessions. Consistent with Fairclough's (1993) three-dimensional CDA framework, these documents were analysed to determine how Islamic identity and institutional commitments are formally expressed and how they connect to classroom discourse. Their inclusion allowed for a systematic comparison between institutional discourse and actual pedagogical practice.

DATA ANALYSIS

TEXT ANALYSIS (DESCRIPTION)

At this stage, the researcher identifies the linguistic features of classroom interaction, especially in the utterances of the lecturer. Some linguistic aspects to focus on include:

- Lexical and metaphorical choices, such as the use of religious terms (*alhamdulillah, subhanallah*) or global ideological terms (*confidence, global era, critical thinking*).
- Modality, to assess the extent to which a statement implies certainty, obligation or opinion (e.g. *you must speak, we should be confident*).
- Intertextuality, by examining references or quotes from outside sources (e.g. TED Talks, Qur'anic verses, motivational quotes).

In this study, Islamic ideology is indicated through the presence of religious lexicon, moral framing, and references to Islamic epistemology, while global ELT ideologies are reflected in discourses of professionalism, competitiveness, confidence, and standardised communicative norms.

DISCURSIVE PRACTICE (INTERPRETATION)

At this level, discursive practice is analysed to examine how ideological meanings are negotiated, reproduced, or constrained through pedagogical interaction rather than being explicitly stated. This study examines:

- Subject position: how the lecturer positions himself and his students (e.g. as a motivator, spiritual guide, or academic director).
- Questioning patterns and discursive control: the extent to which the lecturer controls the direction of the conversation and the extent to which students are given agency.
- Rhetorical strategies: how ideology is implicitly inserted through narrative, analogy, or humour.
- Students' Response: whether students show acceptance, negotiation, or subtle resistance toward the ideological positions embedded in the lecturer's discourse.

SOCIAL PRACTICE (EXPLANATION)

At this level, classroom discourse is examined as part of wider institutional and socio-cultural structures that shape, enable, or constrain the circulation of particular ideologies. Researchers interpret how class interactions reflect or contradict:

- Institutionalised Islamic values, such as intellectual da'wah, adab, and integration of knowledge;
- The dominance of global English ideologies, such as meritocracy, professionalism, and competition.
- Negotiation of students' academic identity as Muslims, as well as future global professionals.

To enhance analytical credibility, the data were examined iteratively through verbatim transcription, repeated close reading, and manual coding of recurring linguistic and ideological patterns, which were then interpreted within Fairclough's three-dimensional framework. Interpretive validity was strengthened through peer debriefing, cross-checking discursive patterns across the three classroom sessions, and triangulation with relevant institutional documents such as programme vision and mission statements and selected teaching materials.

ETHICS CONSIDERATION

This study adhered to ethical standards for research involving human participants. Prior to data collection, permission was obtained from the faculty administration and the course lecturer. All participating students were informed about the purpose of the study, the use of audio recording, and their right to withdraw at any stage without academic consequences. Written informed consent

was obtained from both the lecturer and the students. To ensure confidentiality, all names and identifiable information were anonymised in transcripts and reporting. Audio recordings and transcripts were securely stored on a password-protected device accessible only to the researchers and will be retained solely for research purposes.

FINDINGS

As an initial stage in presenting the findings, the analysis begins at the textual level to identify how linguistic features in classroom interactions reflect and shape the ideological constructions hidden behind learning practices in the context of Islamic universities.

TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

This analysis aims to identify how certain linguistic features, such as lexical choice, modality use, metaphor, and intertextuality, shape and reproduce ideology in English learning interactions in Islamic universities. This approach views language not merely as a means of communication, but as a social practice that contains and produces ideological meanings (Leung & Street, 2014). Therefore, the linguistic features that appear in the utterances of the lecturer and students are systematically analysed to reveal the value orientation, subject position, and dominant discourse at work in the classroom. The preliminary findings are presented in Table 1, which summarises the frequency of occurrence of various linguistic features from the three class meetings analysed.

TABLE 1. Frequency of occurrence of various linguistic features from the three class meetings.
 Source Proceed by authors

Lexical Category	Representative Excerpts	Linguistic Features (Text Level)	Discursive Positioning (Classroom Practice)	Ideological / Pedagogical Implication (Social Practice)	Frequency Pattern
Islamic lexical	<i>“Walaikumslam”, “InsyaAllah”, “Alhamdulillah”</i>	Ritualised greetings and formulaic expressions; symbolic markers of Islamic identity	Student’s position within Islamic identity and classroom rituals; teacher signals belonging and cultural norms	Reproduces Islamic values; ceremonial rather than epistemic	Limited to class openings and closings
Global-oriented lexical	<i>“English is important for your future career” “Many graduates work in PR, media, or marketing” “You must speak confidently” “Public speaking itu tentang engaging your audience” “Speaking trains communication, critical thinking, and cultural awareness” “I want to see personal performance” “Tim Urban’s talk is a great example of how</i>	The use of modal verbs (<i>must, will</i>), declaratives, career and performance-oriented lexis, focus on skills, global competence, and performance	Students' position as future-oriented, globally competent actors; the teacher as normative authority	Promotes global competence, career readiness, and performance-oriented ideology; emphasises competitiveness and global skills	Recurring across career-oriented, performance, and skill-development activities

	<i>to build an effective exposition."</i>				
Reflective / Pedagogical / Critical / Lexical	<i>"Do you want to say something?" "Can you try in English?" "He can use a new strategy"</i>	Modal verbs (<i>can</i>), interrogatives; lexical focus on thinking, strategy, and problem-solving	Students' position as active, reflective learners; teacher as facilitator, encouraging cognitive engagement	Promotes learner agency, reflection, and critical thinking	Frequent in speaking, strategy, and problem-solving activities
Neoliberal / Meritocratic / lexical	<i>"We must never give up" "You have to be creative, optimistic, and determined." "You won't be accepted if you don't have the ability" "Speaking is performance"</i>	High-obligation modal verbs (<i>must, have to</i>); imperatives; lexical focus on effort, self-determination, and competitiveness	Students' position as self-regulated, performance-oriented actors; teacher as authority setting expectations	Reinforces meritocratic and neoliberal ideology; emphasises competitiveness, self-regulation, and performance	Frequent in motivational talk, performance guidance, and skill development activities

Analysis of the transcripts of three purposively selected speaking class meetings based on the relevance of the material shows an ideological construction that moves in the tension between Islamic institutional identity and the dominance of progressive global values. In practice, teaching English in the classroom is not merely a linguistic exercise, but also a vehicle for the transmission of values and ideological positions shaped through language choices and discursive strategies. The findings of the text analysis show that the use of high modality, such as "must", "have to", and "will", consistently asserts the lecturer's authoritative position in organising the class structure, emphasising performance, and controlling the direction of participation. However, low modality such as "can", "even if", and "don't worry" also appear, signalling a supportive discursive strategy that creates a safe space for students to learn without fear of mistakes.

Meanwhile, Islamic lexicons only appear in the form of symbolic expressions such as "assalamualaikum", "insha Allah", and "alhamdulillah", which reflect institutional courtesy rather than a substantive ideological framework. In contrast, progressive global lexical such as performance, critical thinking, structure, and job market appear in instructional narratives, tasks, and learning objectives, indicating the strong internalisation of the value of professionalism and global competence. The use of metaphors and visual images, such as "supporting system", "hook", and "stand alone and show your voice", shows how motivational values and personal responsibility are instilled in a performative context. These metaphors replace the absence of religious narratives in the framing of learning values.

The reflective or pedagogical critical lexical category emphasises cognitive engagement that encourages critical thinking. Expressions such as "Do you want to say something?" or "Can you try in English?" indicate the lecturer's position as a facilitator who encourages students to become active, reflective learners who are responsible for their own thinking processes. In contrast, the neoliberal or meritocratic lexical category highlights competition, personal achievement, and individual accountability as central to academic and professional success, often expressed through high-modality language. Statements such as "We must never give up" or "You won't be accepted if you don't have the ability" place students as subjects who must comply with competitive standards, regulate themselves, and continuously improve their abilities to meet global and job market demands. Interestingly, although there are some utterances that use Islamic lexical items such as "Bismillah" or "Alhamdulillah," their use is ceremonial and does not implicitly direct

students to Islamic-based sources or values. Thus, from a textual perspective, the apparent ideological preference remains dominated by a global and neoliberal orientation, which paves the way for further analysis of how this ideology is discursively reproduced in classroom practice.

ANALYSIS OF DISCURSIVE PRACTICES

Analysis at the level of discursive practices is directed at understanding how spoken texts used in speaking class interactions are produced, distributed, and consumed within the framework of power relations and ideologies inherent in the institutional context. The data sources in this analysis are the full transcripts of three learning meetings that were purposively selected because they contain relevant instructional content: exposition, argumentation, and learning motivation. The data were analysed using Fairclough's (1993) categories of discursive practices, which include subject positions, discursive strategies, and the process of negotiating meaning between participants.

LECTURER AS DISCOURSE DIRECTORS AND IDEOLOGICAL AGENTS

In various statements, the lecturer positioned himself as the main director in shaping the flow of interaction, assessing performance, and establishing academic norms. For example:

"You have to stand alone and show me your voice."

(Meeting 3)

This phrase not only emphasises performative demands but also frames students as individuals who must appear confident, in accordance with the values of self-presentation and personal branding in global professional discourse. In this sentence, students are required not only to complete assignments but to appear as public figures, speaking with expression, authority, and authenticity. The lecturer's position as evaluator is not only administrative (giving grades), but also normative in determining the ideal form of a "successful learner" within the framework of global competence. Similarly, when the lecturer says:

"I will choose randomly, jadi pastikan kalian siap."

(Meeting 2)

This example shows a discursive control strategy in the form of structured uncertainty. The lecturer uses the element of spontaneity as a motivational technique, but within a framework that he still controls. This strategy is an example of pedagogical surveillance (Foucault, 1977, as cited in Murphy, 2013), where students' readiness is monitored at all times, and adherence to performance standards is assessed through active participation and readiness to perform unexpectedly. In this context, spontaneity does not mean freedom, but is part of a control system that encourages students to be alert and ready to perform. Control over discursive directions and norms is also evident in the following statement:

"Don't just read from the screen. I want to see you speak."

(Meeting 3)

The lecturer set the norm for how academically legitimate "speaking" should be done: not only through content accuracy, but also through expressive and authentic oral communication skills. Speaking, in this framework, is not merely a linguistic skill, but a representation of public performance. Thus, the lecturer's assessment is not only of the content, but also of the style and personality of the students when performing.

In another instruction, the lecturer stated:

"I don't want lazy videos." Dan, "It's not about what you write. It's about how you deliver your ideas."
(Meeting 3)

This statement confirms that the performative aspects of speaking assignments are central to evaluation. The lecturer stipulates that grades are not determined by written cognition, but by verbal delivery and bodily expression, in line with the values of performativity and visibility that are the norm in contemporary global work culture. This shows that lecturers are not only delivering English materials, but also transferring certain ideological values on how to be a competent, expressive and competition-ready "successful student".

The collection of statements above confirms that lecturers typically act as ideological agents who reproduce global norms of professionalism into the local classroom context in Islamic universities. Through discursive strategies that include heightened modality, turn-taking control, standard-setting, and reframing of learning expectations, lecturers produce student subjects who fit the ideal image of the global job market, not as Muslim intellectuals grounded in substantive Islamic values. Thus, the role of the lecturer in this class is not neutral. He or she actively constructs maps of meaning, establishes the legitimacy of discourse sources, and shapes value orientations. This shows that language teaching in speaking classes is not just about grammar or fluency, but also about who has the right to speak, how to speak, and what values should be displayed in that speech.

GLOBAL REFERENCES AND DISCOURSE AUTHORITY

One of the most striking aspects of discursive practice in the speaking class was the use of global reference sources as epistemic and rhetorical grounding. The lecturer explicitly referred to materials such as TED Talks to explain the structure of exposition, as well as demonstrate effective forms of public speech. For example, in the second meeting, the lecturer stated:

"Tim Urban's talk is a great example of how to build an effective exposition."
(Meeting 2)

In this excerpt, the TED Talk not only served as a teaching example but also functioned as a normative rhetorical model, presented as an ideal practice. The speech structure, which includes a hook, thesis, argument, and a powerful closing, was introduced as a recommended framework for students' assignments. Students were encouraged to incorporate elements such as personal narratives, humour, visualisation, and a well-structured argument flow, as demonstrated in the video. Therefore, Western academic discourse is primarily used as a reference to establish credibility and effectiveness in public communication.

The same thing happened in the third meeting, when the lecturer modelled the construction of an argument:

"Let's say your argument is: 'English Literature is important for the job market.' Then you must have a clear claim, supported by reasons and credible evidence, like from news articles, journals, or WHO surveys."
(Meeting 3)

This instruction shows how the validity of arguments is directly linked to authoritative Western sources, such as international journals or data from global organisations like the WHO. The argumentation process is not only a rhetorical exercise, but also a process of internalisation of evidence-based discourse sourced from secular-global epistemology. In classroom interaction, students tended to adopt a dialogic positioning toward the lecturer's framing. Student contributions generally reflected acceptance and alignment with the suggested argumentative structure. This pattern indicates that the global rhetorical framework introduced by the lecturer was largely taken up by students, although their responses also suggest subtle forms of negotiation as they adapted the structure to their own communicative resources. In the CDA framework, this reflects the reproduction of dominant global academic norms, where certain knowledge sources are implicitly constructed as more legitimate than others.

THE ABSENCE OF ISLAMIC REFERENCES: A FORM OF IDEOLOGICAL SILENCE

Based on the dominance of global references, it is noteworthy that there was not a single reference to Islamic sources in the learning process, even in contexts that are very likely to discuss the value of hard work, perseverance, or honesty, values that are actually very strong in the Islamic ethical treasury. During the three meetings, there were no quotations from Qur'anic verses, Prophetic hadiths, or scholarly opinions that were used as references in framing topics, strengthening values, or preparing arguments. In fact, as an Islamic educational institution, the university where the learning takes place has an ideological mandate to integrate faith, knowledge, and charity. However, Islamic discourse is not present in the substantive dimension of learning, either as a cognitive source or a value orientation.

Nonetheless, it is important to note that values aligned with Islamic ethics are not entirely absent. In the first meeting, for example, the lecturer recounted his struggle to get an education in order to make his parents happy:

"I want to see my father talk on the podium. That was my biggest dream. And I want to pay my parents by giving them the best position at that time."

(Meeting 1)

This statement contains the value of *birrul walidain* - filial piety, which is a central principle in Islamic teachings. However, because it is not explicitly linked to an Islamic framework, the value comes in the form of personal morality, not as part of a structured Islamic educational discourse. In other words, Islam is present as an implicit cultural value, not as an epistemological framework that frames the content and teaching approach.

In critical discourse studies, the absence of a discourse in the discursive space is referred to as ideological silence (Kumaravadivelu, 1999), that is, when a system of knowledge or values is systematically excluded from the dominant flow of communication. In this context, Islamic values are not explicitly rejected, but they are not given a role as a source of academic legitimacy, and thus, lose their transformative potential in shaping the meaning structure and ideological direction of learning.

SOCIAL PRACTICAL ANALYSIS

In this study, social practices are analysed to understand how institutional structures, curriculum orientations, and power relations influence the way English language teaching is conducted and interpreted, particularly in speaking courses in Islamic universities. The analysis reveals a clear tension between the symbolic presence of Islamic values and the dominance of global and neoliberal ideologies in the Speaking class. Although Islamic lexical markers such as “*Bismillah*” and “*Alhamdulillah*” are always used at the beginning of meetings, their function is ceremonial and does not influence curriculum design, pedagogical strategies, or the epistemic orientation of learning. Instead, classroom interactions show that lecturers act as discourse directors and ideological agents, guiding students according to global academic norms and international performance standards. Lecturers consistently refer to international sources, such as TED Talks, books by Western authors, YouTube videos by native speakers, and TOEFL and IELTS-based assessments. so that global references become the authoritative discourse. This positions students as competitive, independent subjects who are required to internalise and reproduce these global norms in order to succeed academically

Critically, the absence of explicit references to Islam in the material, discussions, and evaluation criteria constitutes a form of ideological silence. Even when moral or motivational values appear, such as responsibility, hard work, or the desire to make one's parents happy, these values are rarely linked to Islamic epistemology or integrated into academic content. Thus, the classroom reflects a social practice in which Islamic identity is symbolically present but epistemically marginalised, highlighting the gap between the institution's mission to integrate faith and knowledge and the discursive reality of teaching.

This pattern is reinforced through triangulation with secondary data, including the department's vision and mission and the Guidelines for Scientific Integration, which explicitly emphasise the need to integrate Islamic values into teaching, research, and community service. A comparison between institutional directives and classroom interactions shows that, although the ideal of integrating Islamic values exists rhetorically, the discursive reality of the classroom is more aligned with global and neoliberal ideologies, revealing subtle but powerful ways in which dominant epistemic and cultural norms shape pedagogical practices in Islamic higher education settings.

Through social practice analysis, it can be concluded that English teaching in speaking class takes place in a situation that reflects the hegemonisation of secular global values in an Islamic institutional context. The Islamic identity of the campus is symbolically present in the form of greetings and etiquette, but it does not play a transformative role in curriculum design, reference sources, or epistemological orientation of learning. Thus, Islamic values are not explicitly eliminated but experience a form of ideological marginalisation where the idealised integration of faith and science only appears at the level of formal identity, not in the pedagogical structure that is carried out. The teaching process in the classroom becomes a reflection of a broader social process, how Islamic institutions respond to the pressures of globalisation through accommodation, not epistemic resistance.

DISCUSSION

Previous studies have generally focused on curriculum development or teaching materials related to Islam, but not many have investigated how classroom teaching practices can reflect and reinforce Islamic ideological values in English language teaching. Most studies emphasise the integration of Islamic values in the curriculum in general, but do not examine in depth the influence of these values in classroom teaching interactions. For example, studies by Irawan (2020) and Nirwana and Darmadali (2021) highlighted the importance of Islamic values in education, but did not directly examine the influence of Islamic ideology in English language teaching in Islamic universities. Wati and Kuryani (2024) also noted that English language teaching in Islamic universities is often seen as a challenge in maintaining a balance between global academic standards and Islamic values of moderation.

Viewed through the lens of CIP, the observed ELT practice reflects more than an institutional dilemma; it indicates a limited integration of Islamic epistemological principles within classroom discourse (Raihani, 2020; Talukder, 2021). CIP highlights the importance of critical awareness of epistemic assumptions in educational practice and the alignment of pedagogy with Islamic knowledge traditions. In the observed classroom, however, global discourse models and reference sources continue to shape how effective communication and credible knowledge are defined, reinforcing English as a form of academic and symbolic capital in higher education contexts (Rahman & Singh, 2022). These findings suggest that while Islamic identity is institutionally affirmed, it has not yet substantially shaped the discursive and methodological dimensions of English language teaching. This condition points to the need for a more reflective pedagogical orientation in which lecturers should critically examine how global ELT norms are adopted, negotiated, or reinterpreted within Islamic higher education contexts.

In addition, Sidqurrahman (2024) identified the important role of Islamic religious colleges in the character building of a moderate Muslim generation, but did not explore how these values are integrated in English language teaching. Therefore, it is important to dig deeper into how Islamic ideology influences English language teaching in Islamic colleges, particularly in skills courses such as speaking. This study aims to fill the void by empirically investigating how Islamic ideology is articulated in English language teaching practices in Islamic colleges, providing new insights into the relationship between language, ideology, and education in Indonesia (Sadiq, 2024). Along with that, the observed classroom context provides new insights into the tensions that arise between international academic demands that emphasise global language competence and the ideological mission of Islamic universities that focus on strengthening Islamic identity. As stated by Phillipson (2018) in Elga Romadhon (2024), language education at the international level is often coloured by dominant standards, while Islamic universities have the challenge of maintaining and integrating local and religious values in a globally recognised teaching system.

Finally, a significant strain emerges between the religious identity of the institution and the demands of global professionalism, echoing recent studies that highlight how religious-based educational institutions face pressure to meet international academic standards while maintaining their core values. It also highlights the importance of critical engagement by educators in managing such ideological tensions. Professional development and reflective practice can help educators become aware of the value assumptions embedded in pedagogical choices, curriculum design, and evaluation (Fudiyartanto, 2024; Malizal, 2025). By equipping lecturers with the ability to critically evaluate global norms and Islam-based epistemology, Islamic universities can create a learning environment that is not only globally competitive but also culturally and contextually meaningful.

This approach not only broadens the discourse on ideology in education but also offers practical strategies for teacher training and curriculum development in religious higher education institutions.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of learning interactions in speaking classes indicates that the ideological construction of English teaching in Islamic universities is largely dominated by progressive global values derived from Western educational discourse. At the textual level, linguistic features such as high modality, motivational metaphors, and global intertextual references (e.g., TED Talks, WHO, and international journals) appear more prominently than expressions rooted in Islamic values. Islamic elements are mainly present symbolically through greetings and mild religious expressions, while references to Islamic epistemological sources are absent. Classroom interactions construct a performative narrative emphasising students' ability to perform, think critically, and argue using scientific data within an evaluation framework shaped by meritocratic and global professional standards. At the levels of discursive and social practice, what appears as a neutral and technical learning process reflects the hegemony of global values reproduced without epistemological resistance, where lecturers act as discourse directors who structure interactions, tasks, and academic standards based primarily on global references. Although moral narratives such as filial piety occasionally emerge, they are not explicitly linked to Islamic teachings and remain in the personal domain rather than as institutional ideological expressions. Overall, these findings suggest that Islam in English language learning functions more as a symbolic cultural identity than as a substantive epistemological framework, resulting in a form of ideological silence in which the integration of faith and science is not articulated in classroom practice.

To address the gap between Islamic institutional identity and learning practices dominated by secular global values, a systematic effort is needed to integrate Islamic values epistemologically into the design of English pedagogy. This does not mean rejecting global standards or modern communication models, but reinterpreting and adjusting them to align with Islamic scientific principles. For example, curriculum development can include material that combines Islamic perspectives in the context of academic literacy and argumentation, the use of reflective assignments that encourage students to relate global content to Islamic values, and teacher training to apply reflective pedagogy that balances global demands with Islamic identity. In addition, the development of teaching materials can include primary sources or case studies based on Islamic culture and epistemology, so that students learn to think critically and competitively on a global scale while remaining connected to the values that form the basis of the institution.

DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTEREST

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