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Teaching Methods in English Speaking Class of a Bilingual Program at an Islamic Boarding School

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Abstract:

This study aims to explore the teaching methods implemented in the English-speaking class of a bilingual program at Darussalam Islamic Boarding School Purwokerto and to describe how these methods are applied in classroom practice. A qualitative descriptive approach was employed to gain an in-depth understanding of instructional practices in a bilingual pesantren context. Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. The findings reveal that three main teaching methods were consistently implemented: Role Play, Presentation, and Think-Pair-Share. Role Play enabled students to practice real-life communication through prepared dialogues, Presentation supported students' fluency and confidence through guided oral performance, and Think-Pair-Share facilitated idea development and reduced speaking anxiety through peer interaction. The study concludes that the implementation of varied, student-centered teaching methods contributes positively to students' speaking skill development in the bilingual program.

Keywords: *Bilingual Program, Islamic Boarding School, Speaking Skill, Teaching Methods*

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Introduction

English plays a significant role in global communication and educational development, particularly in countries where English is taught as a foreign language (Melitz, 2016). In the Indonesian educational context, English instruction is expected to develop students' communicative competence so that they are

able to use the language effectively in academic and social settings (Richards, 2017). However, among the four language skills, speaking remains the most challenging for many EFL learners due to limited exposure, lack of confidence, and anxiety in using English orally (Ambawani et al., 2025). These challenges often result in low student participation and minimal opportunities for authentic oral communication in the classroom.

In response to these challenges, the selection of appropriate teaching methods becomes a crucial factor in supporting students' speaking development. Teaching methods refer to systematic procedures and strategies used by teachers to facilitate learning and achieve instructional goals in classroom settings (Jebahi Khaled, 2022). Student-centered teaching methods are widely recommended in EFL speaking classrooms because they promote interaction, collaboration, and meaningful language use, which are essential for developing communicative competence (Newton & Nation, 2020). Methods such as Role Play, Presentation, and Think-Pair-Share provide learners with structured opportunities to practice speaking, improve fluency, and reduce speaking anxiety through guided interaction and peer support (Harmer, 2007). Another important aspect influencing speaking instruction is the implementation of bilingual education. Bilingual programs are designed to use two languages as media of instruction to support both content learning and language development. Research indicates that bilingual education increases learners' exposure to the target language and encourages meaningful communication across academic and social contexts (Lu & Baker, 1997). Increased exposure to English through classroom activities and daily communication is particularly beneficial for developing speaking skills, as learners require frequent and authentic opportunities to practice oral language use (Newton & Nation, 2020).

In Indonesia, bilingual programs have also been implemented in Islamic boarding schools, commonly known as *pesantren*. Islamic boarding schools are residential educational institutions that integrate academic learning, religious instruction, and character development. Recent studies show that contemporary *pesantren* have expanded their educational orientation by incorporating general subjects and foreign language instruction to respond to global educational demands while maintaining Islamic values (Halimah et al., 2024). Despite their dense curriculum and structured daily routines, *pesantren* are increasingly expected to equip students with global communication skills, including English speaking competence.

Darussalam Islamic Boarding School Purwokerto is one of the institutions that has implemented a bilingual program with a strong emphasis on English speaking skills. Preliminary observations indicate that the English teacher employs various interactive teaching methods to engage students in speaking activities. However, empirical documentation of how these teaching methods are implemented in bilingual speaking classes within *pesantren* contexts remains limited. Therefore, this study aims to explore the teaching methods used in the English speaking class of the bilingual program at Darussalam Islamic Boarding School Purwokerto and to describe how these methods are implemented to support students' speaking skill development. The findings of this study are expected to provide pedagogical insights for English teachers in bilingual and Islamic boarding school contexts, particularly in designing effective speaking instruction.

Research Method

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to explore and describe the implementation of teaching methods in an English-speaking class within a bilingual program at an Islamic boarding school. A qualitative approach was chosen because it enables researchers to obtain an in-depth understanding of teaching practices, classroom interaction, and participants' experiences in

natural settings (Creswell & Poth, 2016). This design was considered appropriate for capturing detailed descriptions of how speaking instruction was conducted and how specific teaching methods were applied in real classroom contexts.

The research was conducted at Darussalam Islamic Boarding School Purwokerto, Indonesia, a residential Islamic educational institution that integrates formal academic learning with religious instruction and implements a bilingual program emphasizing the use of English in academic activities. Data collection was carried out during regular English-speaking classes over approximately three months to ensure sufficient exposure to classroom practices and instructional routines. Conducting the study in the natural classroom setting allowed the researcher to observe authentic teaching and learning processes as they occurred (Tisdell et al., 2025). The participants of this study consisted of one English teacher and students enrolled in the bilingual program. The teacher was selected purposively because of direct responsibility for planning and implementing speaking instruction in the bilingual class. Several students were involved to provide supporting data regarding their learning experiences and responses to the teaching methods applied. Student participants were selected based on their willingness to participate in the interview process, which is considered acceptable in qualitative research where voluntary participation and rich information are prioritized (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Classroom observations were conducted to examine the implementation of teaching methods, focusing on instructional procedures, interaction patterns, student participation, and speaking activities. Field notes were used to record important classroom events and behaviors. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the English teacher to obtain detailed information regarding instructional goals, method selection, teaching procedures, and challenges in teaching speaking skills. Interviews with selected students were also conducted to gain insights into their experiences and perceptions of the teaching methods used. An interview guide was employed to ensure consistency while allowing flexibility to explore emerging issues (Kallio et al., 2016). Documentation, including lesson plans, teaching materials, students' posters, and speaking task guidelines, was analyzed to support and verify data obtained from observations and interviews.

Data analysis was conducted through systematic stages involving data organization, coding, categorization, and interpretation. Data from observations and interviews were transcribed and then coded to identify themes related to teaching methods, classroom interaction, and speaking activities. The categorized data were analyzed descriptively to identify recurring patterns and relationships across data sources. This thematic analysis approach allowed the researcher to interpret how teaching methods were implemented and how they contributed to students' speaking skill development (Braun & Clarke, 2021). To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, several strategies were applied. Credibility was established through data triangulation by comparing information obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation. Prolonged engagement in the research setting also helped enhance the accuracy of the findings. Dependability was ensured by maintaining consistent research procedures and detailed records of the research process, while confirmability was addressed by grounding interpretations in empirical data to minimize researcher bias (Mouwn Erland, 2020).

Results & Discussion

This study investigated the teaching methods implemented in the English-speaking class of a bilingual program at Darussalam Islamic Boarding School Purwokerto. The results presented in this

section are derived from classroom observations, interviews, and documentation and represent the actual instructional practices observed in the field. The findings are organized into thematic subtopics based on the teaching methods identified during the data collection process.

Role Play

Role play is a communicative language teaching technique in which learners assume specific roles and enact simulated real-life situations to practice the target language in meaningful contexts. This method is grounded in the communicative competence framework, which emphasizes the functional use of language rather than mere grammatical accuracy (Canale & Swain, 1980). Through role-based interaction, learners are encouraged to negotiate meaning, respond spontaneously, and adjust their language use according to social roles and communicative purposes. Ampatuan et al. (2016) argue that role play enhances learners' creativity and empathy while strengthening their ability to use language contextually, which is essential for effective oral communication. The findings of this study indicate that role play was systematically implemented as a central instructional method to support students' speaking development. The teacher consistently designed speaking activities that required students to perform everyday communicative scenarios, reflecting the principles of task-based language teaching, where language learning occurs through the completion of meaningful tasks (Nunan, 2004). According to Ellis (2003), repeated engagement in communicative tasks allows learners to develop fluency through sustained interaction, which was evident in students' increasing willingness to speak during role play activities.

Prior to the role play performances, the teacher conducted a pre-task phase by activating students' background knowledge and introducing topic-related vocabulary. This instructional practice aligns with schema theory, which posits that comprehension and language production are facilitated when new input is connected to learners' existing knowledge structures (Anderson & Crawford, 1995). In addition, vocabulary pre-teaching reflects Nation's (2020) view that adequate lexical support is crucial for enabling learners to participate meaningfully in speaking tasks. The findings show that this preparatory stage reduced students' hesitation and increased their confidence during role play, indicating that the implementation functioned as expected in supporting oral language production. In addition, the teacher intentionally focused on vocabulary familiarization before moving to the main speaking task. Vocabulary elicitation and pronunciation correction were emphasized to ensure that students possessed sufficient lexical resources to participate in the role play. This approach aligns with the concept of scaffolding within sociocultural theory, where learners are provided with linguistic support before engaging in independent language production. Previous studies have shown that pre-task vocabulary preparation significantly improves oral performance by reducing cognitive load and increasing accuracy in speaking tasks (Chen et al., 2018).

During the while-activity stage, the teacher introduced a structured dialogue taken from the official English textbook developed by the institution. In this activity, students were assigned the role of "Liam," while the teacher assumed the role of "Sara." This teacher-student role play allowed learners to observe accurate language modeling while actively participating in the interaction. According to Ladousse (Ladousse, 1987), teacher involvement in role play is particularly effective at early stages of instruction, as it provides learners with a clear example of appropriate expressions, pronunciation, and intonation. This practice also reflects Ampatuan et al.'s (2016) component of assigning clear roles to guide learners' communicative performance. Following the initial dialogue practice, students engaged in controlled role play activities such as fill-in-the-blank dialogues and reading tasks related to ordering

fast food at restaurants. These activities simulated real-life communicative situations, such as ordering food at a drive-thru, allowing students to practice functional expressions in a meaningful context. Controlled practice of this nature supports learners' accuracy and confidence before transitioning to freer speaking activities (Harmer, 2007; (Nunan, 2004). Observational data indicated that although students still relied on teacher guidance, they gradually became more familiar with sentence patterns and vocabulary used in daily communication.

In the post-activity stage, students participated in collaborative reading, translation, and follow-up tasks, including creating posters about the negative effects of fast food for presentation in the following meeting. These activities reinforced students' comprehension and provided additional opportunities for language rehearsal. According to Ampatuan et al. (2016), post-role play activities are essential for consolidating learning, as they allow learners to reflect on language use and internalize linguistic forms. Similarly, Harmer (2007) emphasizes that feedback and guided reflection help learners improve pronunciation and accuracy while building confidence in oral production.

Despite the positive outcomes, several challenges were identified in the implementation of role play. The findings indicate that students tended to rely heavily on teacher prompts and structured scripts, resulting in limited spontaneity during interaction. The teacher acknowledged that students often required guidance and occasional use of Indonesian to initiate responses. This finding supports previous research suggesting that excessive teacher control in role play activities may limit learners' opportunities to develop spontaneous and creative language use (Pratiwi, 2023). Nevertheless, the structured roleplay activities observed in this study successfully provided a supportive foundation for speaking practice, particularly in a bilingual context where learners require gradual scaffolding before engaging in more autonomous communication.

Presentation

Presentation is a teaching method that requires students to prepare and deliver structured oral communication in front of an audience, enabling them to organize ideas, improve fluency, and build confidence in speaking. According to Bailey (2005), classroom presentations provide learners with authentic speaking opportunities because students must convey meaning clearly under real communicative conditions. In EFL contexts, presentation activities are particularly beneficial as they encourage extended oral production, systematic organization of ideas, and public speaking practice, which are essential components of speaking skill development.

In the bilingual speaking class at Darussalam Islamic Boarding School Purwokerto, the Presentation method was implemented through a structured sequence consisting of pre-activity, while-activity, and post-activity stages. During the pre-activity stage, the teacher began the lesson with greetings and simple questions to create a relaxed classroom atmosphere. This warm-up interaction served to lower students' affective filters before engaging in a performance-based activity. Brown (2007) explains that lowering affective barriers is crucial in speaking instruction, as students are more willing to speak when they feel comfortable and supported. By initiating brief oral interactions, the teacher prepared students emotionally and linguistically for the presentation task. The teacher then activated students' prior knowledge by reviewing the topic discussed in the previous meeting, namely fast food, and reminding them of the homework assignment to create posters about the negative effects of fast food. Activating background knowledge is an important step in presentation activities because it helps learners connect new tasks with previously learned content. Bailey (2005) emphasizes that effective

presentations require adequate preparation, including familiarity with the topic and clear organization of ideas. This approach is supported by Saad (2019), who found that recalling prior learning before speaking tasks improves students' clarity and confidence during oral presentations.

The posters prepared by the students functioned as visual aids during the presentation. Visual support is an essential component of presentation-based learning because it helps reduce cognitive load and assists learners in recalling key points while speaking. Tsai (2025) argue that multimodal supports such as posters or images enable EFL learners to organize ideas more effectively and maintain fluency during oral performance. In this study, the posters contained keywords and simple illustrations, which helped students structure their explanations and avoid hesitation when presenting in front of the class. Before the presentation began, the teacher provided explicit guidelines on how to deliver a proper presentation, including greeting the audience, introducing the topic, explaining main points, maintaining eye contact, speaking clearly, and concluding the presentation. This instructional scaffolding aligns with Bailey's (2005) view that learners need clear models and structured guidance to perform successfully in presentation tasks. Teacher modeling and explicit instruction help students understand the expected structure of oral communication, which enhances coherence and confidence. Saputra and Tsang (2020) also emphasize that providing presentation frameworks significantly improves students' oral organization and delivery, especially in second language contexts.

During the while-activity stage, students presented their posters in groups in front of the class. When students showed hesitation about presenting first, the teacher randomly selected a group to begin. This strategy ensured equal participation and minimized prolonged anxiety. According to Tsang (2020), structured participation strategies help maintain classroom flow and prevent domination or avoidance in speaking activities. As students delivered their presentations, they demonstrated improved confidence and fluency, supported by the visual posters and clear guidelines provided earlier. Bailey (2005) notes that standing in front of an audience and delivering structured content constitutes the core performance stage of presentation activities, where learners practice pronunciation, fluency, and public speaking skills simultaneously.

At the end of each presentation, the teacher provided immediate feedback, particularly on pronunciation and clarity of expression. Immediate corrective feedback is a crucial component of effective speaking instruction because it helps learners notice errors and improve accuracy without interrupting fluency during performance. Harmer (2007) suggests that feedback given after speaking tasks is more effective than constant interruption, as it maintains students' confidence while supporting language development. Students' responses during interviews indicated that this feedback helped them recognize mistakes and avoid repeating them in future presentations, confirming the pedagogical value of timely correction.

In the post-activity stage, the teacher invited students to reflect on their presentation experience and summarized common strengths and weaknesses observed during the activity. Reflection is an important element of presentation-based learning because it allows learners to evaluate their own performance and develop metacognitive awareness. Bailey (2005) argues that post-presentation reflection helps learners internalize feedback and improve future speaking performance. By combining reflection, feedback, and positive reinforcement, the teacher ensured that the Presentation method functioned not only as an assessment tool but also as a meaningful learning process. Overall, the implementation of the Presentation method in the bilingual speaking class was systematic and theory-based. The use of visual aids, explicit guidelines, teacher modeling, structured performance, and

reflective feedback contributed significantly to students' speaking skill development. These findings are consistent with previous studies indicating that guided presentation activities enhance learners' fluency, confidence, and oral organization in EFL classrooms (Bailey, 2005; Cahya 2020; Pratiwi, 2023). In the bilingual pesantren context, the Presentation method effectively supported students' ability to use English for academic communication while reducing anxiety and increasing active participation.

Think Pair Share

Think-Pair-Share (TPS) is a cooperative learning strategy designed to enhance students' participation, critical thinking, and oral communication skills by structuring interaction into three sequential stages: individual thinking, peer discussion, and whole-class sharing. This method allows learners to process information cognitively before engaging in social interaction, which is particularly beneficial in EFL and bilingual classrooms (Sharma & Priyamvada, 2018). In this study, TPS was implemented during an English-speaking lesson on the topic of Fashion in the bilingual program at Darussalam Islamic Boarding School Purwokerto. The implementation of TPS began with the Think phase, where students were encouraged to reflect individually before responding orally. During the pre-activity, the teacher initiated the lesson with casual greeting and topic-related questions to activate students' prior knowledge, such as their understanding of fashion and daily clothing preferences. This warm-up interaction helped students connect the lesson topic with personal experiences, which is essential for meaningful speaking preparation. According to Saikh (2017), activating prior knowledge supports cognitive organization and prepares learners for deeper engagement during discussion.

The teacher then asked each student to write a fashion style that represented their personality on the board. This activity required students to generate ideas independently without peer influence, ensuring equal participation. This step clearly reflected the Think stage of TPS, which emphasizes individual cognitive processing before social interaction. Sharma and Priyamvada (2018) argue that the Think phase is crucial for reducing anxiety and allowing less confident learners to organize ideas privately. Observation and interview data indicated that this activity helped students feel more prepared and confident before speaking with peers.

The teacher also incorporated a short reading activity by asking students to read a dialogue and an anecdotal text related to fashion. This reading task functioned as cognitive input, familiarizing students with vocabulary, sentence structures, and contextual expressions. From a theoretical perspective, this practice aligns with Kaddoura (2013) notion of internalization, where learners first process information individually before engaging in collaborative learning. Students reported that reading first helped them understand the material and reduced nervousness during later discussion, indicating that the Think phase effectively supported both comprehension and confidence. After individual reflection, the teacher guided students into the Pair phase by asking them to discuss comprehension questions and ideas with their seatmates. During this stage, students exchanged interpretations of the reading passage, clarified vocabulary, and compared answers. This peer discussion created a supportive environment for practicing spoken English without the pressure of speaking directly in front of the whole class.

The Pair phase reflects Kaddoura (2013) social constructivist theory, which emphasizes that learning occurs through social interaction and co-construction of meaning. By discussing ideas with a partner, students negotiated meaning and refined their understanding through dialogue. Gillies (2016) explains that cooperative interaction such as pair discussion enhances reasoning skills and promotes

active participation. Observational data showed that students were more willing to speak and elaborate their ideas during pair discussions than during whole-class questioning. Furthermore, allowing students to rehearse their responses with a partner reduced hesitation and improved coherence when they later shared ideas publicly. This finding is consistent with Ismail et al. (2023), who states that peer interaction in TPS supports idea development and increases learners' readiness to participate in class discussions.

At the end of the lesson, the teacher encouraged students to reflect on what they had learned and how the TPS activity helped them understand the material. Students reported that thinking individually and discussing with a partner made them feel more confident and prepared to speak. Reflection activities such as this support metacognitive awareness and help learners evaluate their learning process (Brown, 2007). Overall, the implementation of Think-Pair-Share in the bilingual speaking class effectively supported students' speaking development by providing structured opportunities for individual reflection, peer interaction, and public speaking. The TPS method created a low-anxiety environment that encouraged participation, built confidence, and promoted meaningful use of English. These findings confirm that TPS is a suitable and effective strategy for developing speaking skills in bilingual and Islamic boarding school contexts, where students benefit from gradual scaffolding and supportive interaction.

Conclusion

This study examined the implementation of teaching methods in the English-speaking class of a bilingual program at Darussalam Islamic Boarding School Purwokerto. The findings indicate that the systematic application of Role Play, Presentation, and Think-Pair-Share effectively created an interactive and student-centered learning environment that supported students' speaking skill development. Role Play facilitated contextual language use and confidence building, Presentation enhanced fluency and idea organization through structured guidance, and Think-Pair-Share promoted collaborative learning and reduced speaking anxiety through peer interaction. The study also highlights the importance of instructional scaffolding, including clear guidelines, teacher modeling, and reflective activities, in supporting students' oral performance. Overall, the integration of interactive teaching methods within a bilingual pesantren context proved effective in maximizing students' engagement and meaningful use of English. These findings offer practical implications for English teachers in similar bilingual and Islamic boarding school settings and provide a foundation for future research on speaking instruction in comparable contexts

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