

## **The Role of Indonesian Language Learning in Developing University Students' Academic Communication Ethics**

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**Abstract:** Academic communication ethics is one of the essential competencies that university students must possess in higher education environments. However, in practice, many students are still unable to use Indonesian politely and in accordance with academic conventions. This issue indicates that Indonesian language learning has not yet been fully optimized in shaping students' academic communication ethics. This study aims to examine the role of Indonesian language learning in building students' academic communication ethics at Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Sunan Giri. The study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive design. The research subjects consisted of students and lecturers teaching the Indonesian language course. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, and were analyzed through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that Indonesian language learning plays a role in shaping students' academic communication ethics through the habituation of formal, polite, and objective language use in academic activities. Students demonstrated positive development in both oral and written communication after participating in Indonesian language learning. The role of lecturers as facilitators and language role models also supported the formation of students' academic communication ethics. The implications of this study suggest that Indonesian language learning needs to be continuously optimized as a means of developing academic communication ethics and strengthening academic culture in higher education.

**Keywords:** Indonesian language learning, academic communication ethics, students, higher education

### **INTRODUCTION**

Higher education plays a strategic role in shaping the quality of human resources who are not only academically competent but also ethical in communication (Zaakiyyah & others, 2024). In the university environment, students are required to express ideas both orally and in writing using appropriate, accurate, and polite language (Karyuaty, 2018; Widodo, 2023). Academic communication is an essential component of learning processes, scholarly discussions,

presentations, and the writing of scientific papers(Eppler et al., 2021; Taranov & Taranov, 2020). The use of Indonesian in accordance with academic conventions functions as a medium for conveying knowledge objectively and systematically. Therefore, Indonesian language learning in higher education is not solely oriented toward linguistic aspects but also toward the formation of language attitudes. Academic communication ethics reflect students' intellectual maturity and character as members of the academic community(Abubakar, 2024; Bieliauskait\,e, 2021). Thus, Indonesian language learning holds an important position in fostering an ethical academic culture.

Indonesian, as the national language and the language of instruction in education, plays a central role in academic activities at universities (Barirohmah et al., 2021; Zein, 2022; Zein et al., 2020). Students are required to use Indonesian appropriately in various academic contexts, such as classroom discussions, seminars, paper writing, and thesis preparation. Good language proficiency must be accompanied by an understanding of communication ethics to avoid misunderstandings(Siddoo et al., 2019; Yan et al., 2025). Academic communication ethics include politeness, the use of formal language, and respect for others' opinions. In practice, not all students are able to consistently apply academic communication ethics. This indicates that language mastery alone is insufficient without learning that emphasizes ethical values. Therefore, Indonesian language learning in higher education needs to be directed toward strengthening academic communication ethics.

Although Indonesian language courses are compulsory in higher education, reality shows that various problems in students' academic communication still persist. Many students use non-standard language in academic forums, both orally and in writing. In addition, impolite attitudes in expressing opinions, especially in discussions and academic digital media, are still frequently encountered. Students' academic writing also shows weaknesses in language ethics, such as plagiarism, inappropriate word choice, and a lack of objectivity. At Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Sunan Giri, similar phenomena are also observed in learning processes and students' academic activities. This condition indicates that Indonesian language learning has not yet been fully effective in shaping students' academic communication ethics. Therefore, a more in-depth study is

needed to examine the role of Indonesian language learning in developing students' academic communication ethics.

Several previous studies indicate that Indonesian language learning influences students' academic language skills. Research conducted by various scholars has found that students' writing and speaking skills improve after taking Indonesian language courses. Other studies reveal that Indonesian language learning contributes to improving the quality of students' scientific writing. These studies generally emphasize linguistic aspects, such as sentence structure, vocabulary use, and grammar. The findings suggest that Indonesian language learning is essential for supporting students' academic success. However, most studies still focus on language skills. The ethical dimension of academic communication has not yet become a primary focus in these studies.

Other research has examined the relationship between academic literacy and students' language attitudes in higher education. Findings indicate that students with strong academic literacy tend to have more effective communication skills. Several studies emphasize the importance of character education in language learning to foster politeness and responsibility. In addition, research on communication ethics in academic environments shows that ethical violations often occur due to a lack of understanding of academic language norms. However, these studies generally discuss communication ethics in a broad sense and are not specifically linked to Indonesian language learning. Studies integrating Indonesian language learning with the formation of academic communication ethics remain limited. Therefore, more specific research in this context is needed.

Based on a review of previous studies, a research gap can be identified. Most existing research focuses on language skills and academic literacy, while academic communication ethics receive less attention. Furthermore, studies that specifically examine the role of Indonesian language learning in building students' academic communication ethics are still limited. Research conducted in higher education institutions based on Islamic and Nahdlatul Ulama values, such as Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Sunan Giri, is also scarce. In fact, these values have the potential to strengthen students' academic communication ethics. Therefore, this study offers novelty by examining the role of Indonesian language learning in developing students' academic

communication ethics. This research is expected to contribute both theoretically and practically to the development of Indonesian language learning in higher education.

Based on the identified problems and research gaps, this study aims to examine the role of Indonesian language learning in building students' academic communication ethics. Specifically, the study seeks to explore the implementation of Indonesian language learning at Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Sunan Giri. In addition, this research aims to analyze students' academic communication ethics within the context of Indonesian language learning. The study also aims to identify factors that support and hinder the formation of students' academic communication ethics. The findings are expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between Indonesian language learning and academic communication ethics. Furthermore, the results are expected to serve as evaluation material for Indonesian language course management. Ultimately, this study is expected to contribute to improving the quality of learning and strengthening academic culture in higher education.

## **METHOD**

This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive design aimed at providing an in-depth description of the role of Indonesian language learning in building students' academic communication ethics(Achjar et al., 2023). This approach was chosen because the research focuses on processes, meanings, and students' experiences within real learning contexts. The study was conducted at Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Sunan Giri as the research site. The research subjects consisted of students who had taken the Indonesian language course and lecturers responsible for teaching the course(Majid, 2017). The selection of participants was carried out purposively by considering their direct involvement in the Indonesian language learning process. Through this approach, the researcher was able to obtain comprehensive and contextual data. The collected data are expected to represent the actual condition of students' academic communication practices.

Data collection was conducted through observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation was carried out to directly examine students' academic communication practices during lectures, classroom discussions, and presentations(Majid, 2017). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with students and lecturers to explore their understanding, experiences,

and perspectives regarding academic communication ethics. Documentation was used to collect data such as syllabi, course lesson plans, students' written assignments, and examples of academic papers. These techniques enabled the researcher to obtain complementary data from multiple sources. All data collection processes were conducted systematically in accordance with the research objectives. Thus, the collected data provide a realistic portrayal of the role of Indonesian language learning.

Data analysis was carried out through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing(Cantya, 2022). The collected data were selected and classified according to the research focus, namely Indonesian language learning and students' academic communication ethics. Subsequently, the data were presented in the form of narrative descriptions to facilitate understanding and interpretation. Conclusions were drawn by identifying patterns, tendencies, and meanings derived from the analyzed data. Data validity was ensured through source and technique triangulation to strengthen the credibility of the findings. The entire analysis process was conducted continuously throughout the study. Through this method, the research results are expected to be accurate and scientifically accountable.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Result**

#### **Implementation of Indonesian Language Learning at Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Sunan Giri**

Indonesian language learning at Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Sunan Giri is implemented as a compulsory course for all students. This course aims to equip students with academic language skills that meet the demands of higher education. Learning materials include critical reading skills, academic writing, formal speaking, and an understanding of language rules. The learning process is systematically designed based on the Semester Learning Plan. Students are actively involved through discussions, presentations, and written assignments. Learning is not only oriented toward theoretical mastery but also toward practical language use in academic contexts. This indicates that Indonesian language learning is directed toward students' real academic needs.

In terms of implementation, Indonesian language learning is conducted in a structured and consistent manner. Lecturers act as facilitators who guide students in understanding the use of academic language. Students are given opportunities to express opinions and ideas orally. In addition, written assignments constitute an essential part of the learning process. These assignments are used to train students' academic writing skills. Learning takes place in an interactive and communicative atmosphere. This creates opportunities for students to practice academic communication.

Observation results show that lecturers consistently use formal Indonesian during lectures. Students are directed to use language that conforms to academic conventions when engaging in discussions and asking questions. Lecturers provide direct corrections for inappropriate language use. During classroom discussions, students appear to make efforts to express ideas using more structured language. The use of non-formal language gradually decreases throughout the learning process. Observations also indicate active student participation. These findings demonstrate that Indonesian language learning is implemented in an applicative manner.

Interview results with lecturers teaching Indonesian language courses indicate that learning is designed to develop students' academic communication skills. Lecturers state that language ethics are a primary concern in the learning process. Assignments are assessed not only in terms of content but also language use. Lecturers view Indonesian as a foundation for students' academic success. Learning is directed to enable students to communicate politely and objectively. Interviews indicate that Indonesian language learning has comprehensive objectives. These objectives encompass both academic skills and attitudes.

### **Students' Academic Communication Ethics in Indonesian Language Learning**

Students' academic communication ethics at Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Sunan Giri demonstrate varied conditions. Some students are able to apply formal and polite language in academic communication. However, others still use non-formal language in academic situations. Academic communication ethics include respect for others' opinions and the use of context-appropriate language. Students show varying levels of awareness regarding the importance of

communication ethics. This variation is influenced by students' backgrounds and academic experiences. Academic communication ethics are still in the process of development.

Students use Indonesian in various academic activities, such as discussions, presentations, and written assignments. In these activities, communication ethics become an important aspect of assessment. Students are expected to present ideas logically and systematically. However, these abilities are not evenly distributed among students. Some students still experience difficulties in controlling their language style. This indicates the need for continuous habituation of academic communication. Communication ethics develop along with the learning process.

Observation results show that during classroom discussions, students begin to pay attention to their communication styles. Students attempt to express ideas using more formal language. Although informal expressions are still found, their frequency decreases. Students also demonstrate respect for their peers' opinions. Interactions become more orderly and directed. These observations indicate progress in academic communication ethics. Such progress occurs gradually.

Interview results with students indicate that they understand academic communication ethics as speaking politely and appropriately in academic contexts. Students state that Indonesian language learning helps them understand proper language use. Some students acknowledge that they still experience difficulties in applying these principles. However, they recognize the importance of communication ethics in academic environments. Students also note that lecturers' guidance is very helpful. Interviews reveal students' growing awareness of academic communication ethics.

### **The Role of Indonesian Language Learning in Shaping Students' Academic Communication Ethics**

Indonesian language learning plays an important role in shaping students' academic communication ethics. Learning materials focus not only on language structure but also on language attitudes. Lecturers relate language use to real academic situations. Students are guided

to use polite and objective language. Indonesian language learning serves as a medium for habituating academic communication. The formation of ethical communication occurs gradually. This indicates that Indonesian language learning makes a significant contribution.

The role of Indonesian language learning is evident in changes in students' communication styles. Students begin to pay closer attention to word choice and sentence structure. Communication becomes more directed and systematic. Students also demonstrate mutual respect during discussions. Indonesian language learning helps students understand the boundaries of academic language. This role is not limited to classroom settings. Its impact is also evident in other academic activities.

Observation results show that students apply academic communication ethics during presentations and discussions. Students appear more confident in expressing ideas. The use of formal language becomes more dominant. Students also show respect for others' opinions. Discussions become more orderly and productive. These observations indicate changes in students' communication behavior. Such changes are closely related to Indonesian language learning.

Interview results with students show that Indonesian language learning influences their communication practices. Students state that they become more aware of the importance of language ethics. They feel better prepared to participate in academic forums. Interviews indicate that students understand communication as part of academic attitudes. Indonesian language learning helps foster this awareness. Students consider the course relevant to their academic needs. Thus, Indonesian language learning plays a role in building students' academic communication ethics.

## **Discussion**

Indonesian language learning in higher education plays a strategic role in developing students' academic communication abilities. According to Tarigan (2008), language learning aims to develop language skills that include both linguistic aspects and language attitudes. Research findings indicate that Indonesian language learning at Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Sunan Giri does not only focus on mastering language structure but also on practicing academic

communication. This aligns with Chaer's (2011) view that language functions as a scientific communication tool that must be used systematically and politely. Structured learning provides students with opportunities to practice language in academic contexts. Thus, Indonesian language learning serves as a medium for habituating scientific communication. This habituation becomes the foundation for developing students' academic communication ethics.

Academic communication ethics constitute an essential component of students' academic competence. According to Keraf (2010), language ethics reflect speakers' attitudes toward their interlocutors and communication contexts. Research findings show that students are still in the developmental stage of academic communication ethics. This indicates that language ethics are not formed instantly but through learning and habituation processes. Indonesian language learning provides a normative framework for appropriate academic language use. Students learn to distinguish between formal and informal language. This process aligns with language learning theories that emphasize the importance of contextual language use. Consequently, academic communication ethics develop through continuous learning experiences.

Indonesian language learning also functions as a means of developing students' academic literacy. According to Kern (2000), academic literacy includes the ability to understand, produce, and reflect on academic texts ethically. Research findings show that students begin to pay attention to structure and politeness in both oral and written communication. This indicates an improvement in academic literacy through Indonesian language learning. Learning that emphasizes academic writing and speaking practices helps students understand academic norms. These norms include objectivity, clarity, and linguistic politeness. Thus, Indonesian language learning contributes to the formation of ethical academic literacy. Such literacy serves as a foundation for students' academic success.

The role of lecturers in Indonesian language learning is crucial in shaping students' academic communication ethics. According to Vygotsky's (1978) constructivist theory, learning occurs through social interaction between educators and learners. Research findings indicate that lecturers serve as models of proper academic language use. Lecturers provide direct examples in classroom communication and offer feedback on students' language use. These interactions help

students understand ideal academic communication practices. The learning process becomes a space for internalizing language ethics. Therefore, lecturers function not only as knowledge transmitters but also as shapers of students' academic attitudes. This reinforces the importance of contextual Indonesian language learning.

Indonesian language learning also plays a role in shaping students' academic character. According to Lickona (1991), character education can be integrated into learning processes, including language learning. Research findings show that students begin to demonstrate mutual respect in academic discussions. These attitudes reflect character values such as responsibility, honesty, and politeness. Indonesian language learning serves as a medium for internalizing these values through communication practices. Language is used as a means of shaping ethical academic attitudes. Thus, Indonesian language learning contributes not only to cognitive aspects but also to students' affective development. This highlights the strategic role of Indonesian language learning in character education in higher education.

In higher education institutions grounded in Islamic and Nahdlatul Ulama values, Indonesian language learning has even greater relevance. Values such as tawadhu', mutual respect, and ethical speech align with principles of academic communication. Research findings at Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Sunan Giri show that Indonesian language learning can serve as a means of strengthening these values. This aligns with humanistic education perspectives that view language as a means of holistic human development. Indonesian language learning becomes a medium for integrating academic competence and moral values. This integration strengthens students' academic communication ethics. Therefore, Indonesian language learning holds contextual and cultural significance, consistent with the character of the institution.

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that Indonesian language learning plays a significant role in building students' academic communication ethics. This learning not only develops language skills but also shapes academic attitudes and character. The research findings reinforce theories of language learning, language ethics, and academic literacy. Indonesian language learning functions as a foundation for scientific communication in higher education. Therefore, optimizing Indonesian language learning is a strategic necessity for fostering an ethical

academic culture. Contextual and continuous learning will further strengthen students' academic communication ethics. Thus, Indonesian language learning holds a central role in enhancing academic quality in higher education.

## **CONCLUSION**

Indonesian language learning plays a significant role in building students' academic communication ethics at Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Sunan Giri. Indonesian language learning not only functions to improve language skills but also shapes polite, objective, and context-appropriate language attitudes in academic settings. Through structured and applicative learning, students are accustomed to using formal Indonesian in both oral and written communication. Students' academic communication ethics show positive development, particularly in discussions, presentations, and academic writing. The role of lecturers as facilitators and language role models further supports the formation of students' communication ethics. Thus, Indonesian language learning contributes to the development of an ethical and professional academic culture in higher education.

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