



The Teaching of Sociolinguistics to Students of the English Language Education Study Program, State Islamic University of Mataram

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the teaching of sociolinguistics to students of the English Language Education Study Program at the State Islamic University of Mataram through a comprehensive library research approach. The study was conducted within the context of higher education and focused on literature published primarily between 2022 and 2025. The population of this study consists of scholarly works related to sociolinguistics and language education, with a sample of 15 selected academic sources including peer-reviewed journal articles, books, conference proceedings, and institutional documents. The research instruments involved documentation techniques through systematic literature review and data extraction from relevant academic publications. The data were analyzed using a qualitative descriptive approach through thematic synthesis, which involved identifying patterns, themes, and conceptual frameworks related to sociolinguistic instruction. The findings indicate that sociolinguistics plays a significant role in English language education by enhancing students' linguistic awareness, intercultural competence, and critical understanding of language ideology. In addition, effective pedagogical approaches such as contextual learning, project-based learning, and discussion-based learning enable students to connect theoretical knowledge with real-life language use. However, several challenges were identified, including limited instructional materials, lack of contextualization in local sociocultural settings, and the need for more interactive teaching strategies. Therefore, sociolinguistics instruction should emphasize contextual and student-centered learning to improve its effectiveness in teacher education programs.

Keywords: teaching of sociolinguistics, student, English language education, library research

Pengajaran Sociolinguistik kepada Mahasiswa Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Universitas Islam Negeri Mataram

ABSTRAK

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Kata kunci: media pembelajaran, Lomi education, keterampilan menulis, teks eksposisi

Submitted
23/03/2026

Accepted
26/03/2026

Published
28/03/2026

Citation	Pauzan, P. (2026). Teaching of Sociolinguistics to Students of the English Language Education Study Program at State Islamic University of Mataram: A Library Research. <i>Jurnal Pembelajaran Bahasa dan Sastra, Volume 5, Nomor 2, Maret 2026, 1585-1594. DOI: https://doi.org/10.55909/jpbs.v5i2.1320</i>
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Publisher
Raja Zulkarnain Education Foundation

INTRODUCTION

Language plays a central role in human communication and social interaction. In the field of language education, understanding the relationship between language and society has become increasingly important, particularly in multicultural and multilingual contexts. Sociolinguistics, as a discipline that examines how language functions within social structures, offers valuable insights for language learners and educators. It enables students to recognize how social variables such as culture, identity, gender, ethnicity, and power influence language use in everyday communication (Holmes & Wilson, 2022).

In the context of English language education, sociolinguistics provides theoretical and practical foundations for understanding language variation and communicative competence. English is no longer viewed solely as a standardized linguistic system but rather as a dynamic global language shaped by diverse social and cultural contexts. As a result, English language learners must develop not only grammatical competence but also sociolinguistic competence, which involves the ability to use language appropriately in different social situations (Taguchi & Ishihara, 2023).

Recent studies have emphasized the importance of incorporating sociolinguistic perspectives into language teacher education programs. Future English teachers need to understand how language practices vary across communities and how these variations affect language teaching and learning processes (Zhang & Sun, 2023). Without sociolinguistic awareness, teachers may unintentionally promote rigid language norms that ignore linguistic diversity and cultural differences.

Indonesia, English language education programs in universities play a crucial role in preparing prospective English teachers. One of the institutions that offers such a program is the State Islamic University of Mataram. Within the English Language Education Study Program, sociolinguistics is typically included as a core course designed to introduce students to the

relationship between language, culture, and society. The course aims to help students understand linguistic diversity and develop critical perspectives on language use in social contexts.

However, the teaching of sociolinguistics in higher education often faces several challenges. One challenge is the complexity of sociolinguistic theories, which may be difficult for undergraduate students to comprehend without appropriate pedagogical strategies. Additionally, sociolinguistics courses sometimes rely heavily on theoretical explanations without sufficient application to real-life language situations (Nguyen & Hamid, 2022). This situation may limit students' ability to connect sociolinguistic concepts with practical language teaching contexts.

Another challenge involves the integration of sociolinguistic knowledge into teacher education curricula. While sociolinguistics is widely recognized as an important field, its role in shaping teaching practices is not always fully explored. Many teacher education programs still prioritize grammar and linguistic accuracy over sociocultural understanding (Canagarajah, 2023). Consequently, prospective teachers may graduate with limited awareness of how social contexts influence language learning.

Recent educational research suggests that sociolinguistics can significantly enhance language pedagogy when it is taught using interactive and contextualized approaches. For example, incorporating classroom discussions, discourse analysis, and community-based linguistic observations can help students develop deeper sociolinguistic awareness (Garrett & Bell, 2022). Such approaches encourage students to analyze real linguistic phenomena rather than simply memorizing theoretical concepts.

Moreover, sociolinguistics plays an important role in promoting intercultural competence among English language learners. As English functions as an international language used by people from diverse backgrounds, learners must understand how cultural values and social norms influence communication patterns. Sociolinguistic



knowledge enables students to interpret language meaning beyond its literal form and recognize the cultural implications embedded in linguistic expressions (Piller, 2023).

Within the Indonesian educational context, sociolinguistic awareness is particularly relevant because the country is characterized by significant linguistic diversity. Indonesia has hundreds of local languages and dialects, which interact with the national language, Bahasa Indonesia, as well as foreign languages such as English. This multilingual environment provides rich opportunities for sociolinguistic exploration and analysis. For students in English Language Education programs, understanding this linguistic diversity is essential for developing effective teaching strategies in multicultural classrooms.

Despite the importance of sociolinguistics, relatively limited research has focused specifically on how sociolinguistics is taught in English teacher education programs within Indonesian Islamic universities. Most existing studies examine sociolinguistics in general language education contexts rather than focusing on pedagogical practices within specific institutions. Therefore, a comprehensive review of relevant literature is necessary to understand how sociolinguistics instruction can be improved.

Based on the background above, the research questions are formulated as follows:

1. What is the role of sociolinguistics in English language education programs?
2. What pedagogical approaches are commonly used in teaching sociolinguistics to university students?
3. How can sociolinguistic knowledge contribute to the professional development of prospective English teachers?

This study aims to examine the teaching of sociolinguistics to students of the English Language Education Study Program at the State Islamic University of Mataram through a library research approach. Specifically, this study aims to identify the role of sociolinguistics in English language education programs, analyze pedagogical

approaches used in teaching sociolinguistics and explore the contribution of sociolinguistic knowledge to the professional development of prospective English teachers.

This study is expected to provide benefits from an academic and practical perspective. Academically, the findings of this study are expected to enrich the literature on sociolinguistics in language education, particularly in the context of English teacher education programs. Practically, the results of this study are expected to provide insights for educators and curriculum developers in designing more effective and contextualized sociolinguistics instruction. From a pedagogical perspective, this study may help prospective English teachers develop greater sociolinguistic awareness and intercultural competence in their teaching practices.

Several previous studies have examined the role of sociolinguistics in language education and teacher training contexts. First, a study by Nguyen & Hamid (2022) highlights that sociolinguistics plays a crucial role in developing students' awareness of language diversity and sociocultural contexts. Their findings indicate that integrating sociolinguistic perspectives into classroom activities can improve students' communicative competence, although challenges remain in bridging theoretical knowledge with practical application.

Second, research conducted by Garrett & Bell (2022) emphasizes the importance of interactive pedagogical approaches in teaching sociolinguistics. The study shows that methods such as discourse analysis, classroom discussions, and community-based observations can enhance students' understanding of real-life language use. These approaches are considered more effective than traditional lecture-based methods in fostering critical thinking and sociolinguistic awareness. Third, Zhang & Sun (2023) investigate the role of sociolinguistics in English teacher education programs. Their study reveals that sociolinguistic knowledge significantly contributes to the development of intercultural competence and

professional readiness among prospective teachers. However, the study also points out that many teacher education programs still lack sufficient emphasis on sociocultural aspects of language teaching.

Third, Piller (2023) discusses the importance of sociolinguistics in understanding global communication and cultural interaction. The study highlights that sociolinguistic competence enables learners to interpret meaning beyond linguistic forms and recognize the influence of cultural values in communication.

Fourth, Rifsana et al. (2025) entitled Register Used in the Official Instagram Account of the French National Football Team: A Sociolinguistic Perspective. The results show that, from 100 analyzed posts, three dominant register categories were identified: formal register (75 data), consultative register (4 data), and casual register (35 data). The formal register was used to convey institutional or match-related information, the consultative register appeared in invitations or interactions with followers, and the casual register was employed in relaxed, emotional, and expressive expressions. All data contained both conceptual and connotative meanings, where conceptual meaning conveys literal and neutral definitions, while connotative meaning provides symbolic, emotional, and expressive nuances that reflect identity, collective spirit, and socio-cultural values.

Fifth, Mantra et al. (2025) entitled Role of Sociolinguistics in Shaping Students' Language Use in Multilingual Classrooms. With an emphasis on how social and cultural elements impact communication, identity, and interaction, this study investigates how sociolinguistics shapes students' language use in multilingual classrooms. Students frequently switch between local, national, and international languages like English in multilingual educational settings, leading to intricate linguistic patterns. Using a qualitative design, the study examined how sociolinguistic dynamics emerge through teacher and student interviews and classroom observations in regular learning

interactions. The results show that various factors, including peer pressure, instructors' language preferences, and the sociocultural status of particular languages, influence how students use language. Interviews revealed, for example, that students frequently transition between Indonesian, English, and their native tongues based on the situation and the person speaking to them. Teachers also purposefully employed sociolinguistic techniques like translanguaging to establish connections and guarantee understanding.

In addition to facilitating communication, these activities helped students develop their social identities. The findings highlight how crucial sociolinguistic understanding is to creating welcoming classrooms that celebrate linguistic variety. According to findings, incorporating sociolinguistic perspectives into teaching methods can improve language acquisition, advance linguistic equity, and fortify students' multilingual proficiency.

Based on these previous studies, it can be concluded that sociolinguistics has a significant role in language education, particularly in enhancing communicative competence, intercultural awareness, and teaching effectiveness. However, there is still a need for further research focusing on how sociolinguistics is taught in specific institutional contexts, such as Islamic universities in Indonesia.

Sociolinguistics is a branch of linguistics that examines the relationship between language and society. The discipline focuses on how language varies and changes across social groups, cultural contexts, and communicative situations. Sociolinguistic studies investigate how factors such as social class, gender, ethnicity, age, and cultural identity influence language use. According to Holmes & Wilson (2022), sociolinguistics seeks to understand how language reflects and shapes social realities in everyday communication.

In language education, sociolinguistic competence is an essential component of communicative competence. It refers to the ability to use language appropriately according to social



norms and cultural contexts (Taguchi & Ishihara, 2023; Anvarovna, 2017). Sociolinguistics is also closely related to teacher education, where it helps prospective teachers understand linguistic diversity and develop inclusive teaching practices. Furthermore, effective sociolinguistics instruction requires appropriate pedagogical approaches, such as contextual learning, discussion-based learning, and project-based learning, which enable students to connect theoretical knowledge with real-life language use (Garrett & Bell, 2022).

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative library research design to examine the teaching of sociolinguistics to students of the English Language Education Study Program at the State Islamic University of Mataram. Library research is a method that involves collecting and analyzing information from various academic sources such as books, journal articles, conference proceedings, institutional reports, and other scholarly documents. This method is widely used in educational research to synthesize theoretical perspectives and identify trends in existing literature (Snyder, 2019; Nguyen & Hamid, 2022; Razak, 2010).

The purpose of using library research in this study is to explore contemporary discussions regarding sociolinguistics education in teacher training programs. Through the analysis of scholarly literature, the research aims to understand the role of sociolinguistics in English language education, identify effective pedagogical strategies, and examine how sociolinguistic knowledge contributes to the professional development of prospective English teachers.

Library research is considered appropriate for this study because the focus is on conceptual and theoretical analysis rather than empirical field investigation. By reviewing existing literature, the researcher can synthesize findings from various studies and develop a comprehensive understanding of sociolinguistics teaching practices in higher education.

This study uses a qualitative approach with a library research design. The qualitative design allows the researcher to explore and interpret theoretical perspectives and findings from previous studies. The focus of this design is to analyze concepts, patterns, and themes related to sociolinguistics teaching in English language education programs.

The data sources used in this research consist of academic publications related to sociolinguistics, language education, and teacher training programs. The sources include peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, and conference proceedings published between 2022 and 2025, although several earlier foundational works are also referenced to support theoretical discussions.

The literature was collected from several academic databases, including: Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, Taylor & Francis Online, and ERIC (Education Resources Information Center).

The selection of sources followed several criteria:

1. Publications must discuss sociolinguistics or sociolinguistic competence in language education.
2. The studies must relate to English language teaching, teacher education, or sociolinguistics pedagogy.
3. The sources must be scholarly publications such as peer-reviewed journals or academic books.
4. Priority is given to publications from 2022 onwards to ensure the relevance of contemporary perspectives.

A total of 15 key references were selected for detailed analysis in this study.

The data collection process was conducted through several stages. First, the researcher identified relevant keywords related to the topic, such as sociolinguistics teaching, sociolinguistic competence, language variation in education, and sociolinguistics in teacher education. These

keywords were used to search academic databases and identify relevant publications.

Second, the researcher conducted a screening process to determine which sources were relevant to the research objectives. Titles, abstracts, and keywords of the publications were reviewed to evaluate their relevance. Sources that did not directly address sociolinguistics education or language teaching were excluded from the analysis. Third, the selected literature was carefully read and analyzed. Important information related to sociolinguistic theories, teaching strategies, and educational implications was extracted and categorized according to thematic patterns.

The data analysis in this study used a thematic analysis approach. Thematic analysis involves identifying recurring patterns or themes within qualitative data. According to Braun & Clarke (2022), thematic analysis allows researchers to organize and interpret complex information systematically.

The analysis process consisted of several steps:

1. Familiarization with the data
The researcher read the selected literature repeatedly to gain a comprehensive understanding of the content.
2. Coding the data
Relevant information related to sociolinguistics teaching was coded and categorized into thematic groups.
3. Developing themes
The coded data were analyzed to identify key themes related to sociolinguistics education.
4. Interpreting findings
The themes were interpreted in relation to the research objectives and existing theoretical frameworks.

Through this analytical process, the study identified several major themes related to sociolinguistics teaching in English language education programs.

RESULT

The analysis of the selected literature revealed several key findings related to the teaching of sociolinguistics in English language education programs. These findings directly address the research questions concerning the role of sociolinguistics, pedagogical strategies, and its contribution to teacher development. The findings can be categorized into three main themes: the importance of sociolinguistics in teacher education, pedagogical strategies for teaching sociolinguistics, and challenges in sociolinguistics instruction.

The Importance of Sociolinguistics in Teacher Education

One of the most prominent findings in the literature is the recognition that sociolinguistics plays a crucial role in preparing prospective English teachers. Sociolinguistics provides essential knowledge about how language functions within social and cultural contexts. This knowledge enables teachers to understand linguistic diversity and develop more inclusive teaching practices. Several studies highlight that sociolinguistic awareness helps teachers recognize the legitimacy of different language varieties and dialects. Instead of perceiving non-standard language forms as errors, teachers with sociolinguistic knowledge can interpret them as expressions of cultural identity and social belonging (Piller, 2023).

Furthermore, sociolinguistics contributes to the development of intercultural communicative competence, which is increasingly important in globalized educational environments. English is widely used as an international language, and communication often occurs between speakers from diverse cultural backgrounds. Understanding sociolinguistic variation allows teachers and students to navigate cross-cultural communication more effectively.



Pedagogical Strategies for Teaching Sociolinguistics

The literature also reveals several pedagogical approaches that can enhance the teaching of sociolinguistics in higher education.

One effective strategy is context-based learning, in which students analyze authentic language use from real-life communication. Examples include analyzing conversations, examining social media interactions, or observing language use in community settings. Such activities allow students to see how sociolinguistic concepts operate in everyday communication.

Another strategy is project-based learning, where students conduct small-scale research projects related to sociolinguistic phenomena. For example, students may investigate code-switching practices among bilingual speakers or analyze language attitudes toward certain dialects. These projects encourage students to apply theoretical knowledge to real linguistic contexts.

Collaborative learning activities such as group discussions and classroom debates are also frequently recommended. Sociolinguistic issues often involve social and cultural perspectives, and discussions allow students to explore different viewpoints while developing critical thinking skills.

Contribution and Challenges in Teaching Sociolinguistics

Despite its importance, the teaching of sociolinguistics also faces several challenges. One challenge is the abstract nature of sociolinguistic theories, which can be difficult for undergraduate students to understand. Concepts such as language ideology, discourse power, and linguistic identity require careful explanation and contextualization. Another challenge is the limited availability of teaching materials that connect sociolinguistic theories with local linguistic contexts. Many textbooks focus on Western sociolinguistic examples, which may not fully reflect the linguistic diversity of countries such as Indonesia.

Additionally, some teacher education programs still prioritize grammatical accuracy over sociocultural understanding. As a result, sociolinguistics courses may receive less attention within the overall curriculum.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study underscore the significant role of sociolinguistics in English language education, particularly within teacher training programs. Sociolinguistics not only provides theoretical insights into language variation but also equips students with essential analytical skills to understand linguistic diversity in real-world contexts. These findings reinforce the argument that language learning cannot be separated from its social and cultural dimensions, and therefore, purely structural approaches are insufficient in contemporary language education. One of the most important implications of sociolinguistics education is the development of critical language awareness. Critical language awareness enables students to examine how language reflects social power relations and cultural values. According to recent research, integrating critical perspectives into sociolinguistics courses can help students recognize issues related to linguistic inequality and language ideology (Canagarajah, 2023). This suggests that sociolinguistics instruction contributes not only to linguistic competence but also to students' broader critical understanding of social issues embedded in language use.

In teacher education contexts, sociolinguistics also supports the development of culturally responsive teaching practices. Teachers who possess sociolinguistic awareness are better prepared to address the diverse linguistic backgrounds of their students. They are able to design instructional strategies that respect students' linguistic identities while promoting effective communication skills. This finding highlights that sociolinguistic competence is a crucial component in shaping professional and adaptive English

language teachers in multicultural educational settings.

Another important aspect highlighted in the literature is the role of experiential learning in sociolinguistics education. Activities such as linguistic fieldwork, community observation, and discourse analysis allow students to directly explore sociolinguistic phenomena. These experiences help bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application (Garrett & Bell, 2022). From an argumentative perspective, this approach addresses the limitations of theory-dominated instruction by fostering contextual and applied understanding among students.

In the context of the English Language Education Study Program at the State Islamic University of Mataram, sociolinguistics courses can play a vital role in preparing future English teachers. Indonesia's multilingual environment offers rich opportunities for sociolinguistic exploration. Students can analyze interactions among local languages, Bahasa Indonesia, and English, thereby gaining deeper insights into language use within multicultural societies. This indicates that the Indonesian context itself serves as a valuable resource for developing relevant and context-based sociolinguistics instruction.

However, the study also indicates that sociolinguistics instruction requires continuous improvement to address existing challenges. Curriculum designers should incorporate more locally relevant examples and encourage students to conduct research on language use within their own communities. Such strategies can enhance student engagement and deepen their understanding of sociolinguistic concepts. Therefore, sociolinguistics teaching should be designed more innovatively to meet the evolving demands of language education in a globalized era. The strength of this study lies in its use of a library research approach, which allows for a comprehensive synthesis of recent academic literature. This approach enables the researcher to identify key theoretical perspectives and emerging

trends in sociolinguistics education. In addition, the study contributes conceptually by integrating sociolinguistic perspectives into the context of English teacher education, particularly within Islamic higher education institutions in Indonesia. Nevertheless, this study has several limitations. As a library-based study, it does not include empirical data from classroom practices, and therefore cannot fully capture the actual implementation of sociolinguistics teaching. Furthermore, the limited number of sources analyzed may affect the breadth of the findings. Future research is therefore recommended to adopt empirical approaches, such as case studies or classroom action research, in order to provide more in-depth and context-specific insights into sociolinguistics instruction.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion, it can be concluded that sociolinguistics plays a important role in English language education programs, particularly in the context of teacher training. Sociolinguistics provides essential theoretical and practical insights into how language functions within social and cultural contexts, enabling prospective teachers to understand linguistic diversity and develop inclusive and culturally responsive teaching practices. This finding directly answers the first research question, confirming that sociolinguistics is not merely a complementary subject but a core component in shaping effective language education.

Furthermore, the study reveals that the teaching of sociolinguistics can be effectively enhanced through various pedagogical approaches, including context-based learning, project-based learning, and collaborative learning activities. These approaches allow students to engage with real-life language use, apply theoretical concepts, and develop critical thinking skills. Therefore, the second research question is addressed by demonstrating that interactive and experiential learning strategies are essential for making sociolinguistics instruction more meaningful and applicable in higher education contexts.



In addition, sociolinguistic knowledge significantly contributes to the professional development of prospective English teachers. It fosters intercultural communicative competence, critical language awareness, and the ability to address diverse linguistic backgrounds in the classroom. These competencies are crucial in preparing teachers to operate effectively in multicultural and multilingual environments. Thus, the third research question is answered by confirming that sociolinguistics supports both the pedagogical and professional readiness of future educators.

However, the study also indicates that the teaching of sociolinguistics still faces several challenges, including the abstract nature of theoretical concepts, limited contextualized teaching materials, and the dominance of grammar-oriented instruction in some teacher education programs. These challenges highlight the need for continuous improvement in curriculum design and instructional practices.

In general, this study concludes that the integration of sociolinguistics into English language education programs is essential for developing competent, critical, and culturally aware teachers. To maximize its impact, sociolinguistics instruction should be delivered through innovative, context-sensitive, and student-centered approaches that connect theory with real-world language use.

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