Oral Transmission to Symbolic Capital: Pragmatic Analysis of Teacher-Student Interaction in *Tasmī' Ḥadīth* Tradition

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Abstract

The interaction between teachers *(kiai)* and students *(santri)* has always played a crucial role in Islamic education, particularly within the *tasmī' ḥadīth* tradition in *pesantren*, where knowledge is transmitted both orally and symbolically. This oral interaction not only represents a pedagogical process but also serves as a social mechanism through which authority, respect, and scholarly values are reproduced. This study aims to examine the pragmatic dimensions of communication during the *tasmī' ḥadīth* performance and to interpret how these interactions generate *symbolic capital* within the *pesantren* context. The focus of this study is directed toward how utterances, corrections, and verbal responses between teachers and students construct symbolic power relations and reproduce religious values within the Islamic scholarly tradition. This research employs a qualitative approach using participatory observation and in-depth interviews. Data were collected through observations conducted at a *pesantren* in East Lombok. Data analysis was carried out by identifying speech acts, politeness strategies, and forms of symbolic recognition that emerge during the *tasmī'* process. The findings show that oral interaction between teachers and students functions not only as a means of transmitting religious knowledge but also as a medium for constructing symbolic capital in the form of scholarly legitimacy, hierarchical respect, and the internalization of pious values. This study offers a new contribution by integrating pragmatic analysis and the theory of symbolic capital within the context of the *tasmī'* tradition, which has rarely been explored from an interdisciplinary perspective.

INTRODUCTION

Since the initial period of Islam, many scholars emerged specifically to study Islamic sciences and interpret the Qur'an. They often held discussions in various places, such as mosques, homes, and other locations. By the mid-8th century CE, these study groups were typically led by a learned scholar, forming the early networks of scholars and students who traveled across regions to teach, disseminate knowledge, and acquire new learning from other areas (Kooria, 2022). During the early period of Islamic law (the 7th to 10th centuries CE), scholars, including the founders of the Sunni schools of thought, emphasized oral transmission in conveying their juridical arguments. However, in the following centuries, their followers began to prioritize texts as the starting point for formulating and disseminating teachings. This shift marked an essential transition from orality (oral transmission) to textuality (written transmission) (Kooria, 2022).

The oral tradition in the teaching of religious knowledge has been practiced since the time of Prophet Muhammad, approximately 1,400 years ago. At that time, *ḥadīth* lessons involved only a few close companions, such as Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq, 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, and Zayd ibn Harīthah. The companions were encouraged to memorize the *ḥadīth* rather than write them down. This practice aligns with the Prophet's prohibition on writing *ḥadīth*, one of whose purposes was to encourage *ḥadīth* students, especially those with strong memories, to commit them to memory (Saidi & Jamil, 2021). This memorization method holds significant historical importance and serves as a model for contemporary *ḥadīth* learning.

The teachings of the Prophet that were preserved in societal traditions subsequently shaped the habitus of early Muslim communities and were recorded as collective memory. Habitus is the culture, lifestyle, and set of habits of a group of individuals (Bourdieu, 1973). This collective memory originated from sensory experiences, namely everything observed and experienced by the community, which then became tradition or custom. Efforts to verify *ḥadīth* at that time did not always refer to documentary or written evidence, as early communities understood *ḥadīth* as part of the traditions practiced in daily life (Rohman, 2025). In this context, Rahman (1999) refers to it as the *living sunnah*, while Orientalists like Joseph Schacht call it living tradition.

Besides serving as a method of knowledge transmission, oral tradition functions not only as a medium for conveying knowledge but also plays a significant cultural role. A particular book or work of a teacher is often read and studied in learning circles (*ḥalaqah*), serving as a means to disseminate the teacher's teachings. *Ḥalaqah* is a traditional oral-based teaching method adopted by these schools to produce authentic and sustainable Muslim contributions within the multicultural society of 21st-century England. Values such as *'aqlīyah* (intelligence), *tadabbur* (spiritual reflection), and *akhlāq* (noble character) have traditionally been cultivated through *ḥalaqah* (Ahmed, 2017).

Oral transmission also reinforces the authority of instructors, particularly when examined through Pierre Bourdieu's framework of symbolic capital, which interprets knowledge transmission as a process of reproducing social and cultural hierarchies (Bourdieu, 1973; Bourdieu, 1991). Studying *ḥadīth* recitation within this theoretical context is significant because it reveals how epistemological authority in Islamic education is not merely textual but embodied and legitimized through oral practice (*talaqqī*) (Nasr, 1992). The *tasmī' ḥadīth* thus becomes the material object of study an observable pedagogical interaction while the concept of symbolic capital serves as the formal object, offering a lens to understand how oral practices generate legitimacy, respect, and scholarly status. This research therefore seeks not only to interpret the meaning of these interactions but also to evaluate the phenomenon of authority construction and the reproduction of scholarly *habitus* within the *pesantren* tradition, which becomes a benchmark for a student's proximity to the authentic source of those teachings, although in practice, differences and debates often arise (Nasr, 1992). Although Islamic history places strong emphasis on writing, oral tradition continues to hold an important role. This is especially evident in the context of hereditary knowledge, such as the teaching of religious and heroic texts that are rarely fully documented, so knowledge is passed down through training from generation to generation and from teacher to student (Yadegari, 2020).

However, in modern developments, the Islamic education system faces new challenges as oral tradition and classical scholarly systems encounter the demands of educational modernization. Beginning in the 20th century up to the present, Islamic education at the theoretical-conceptual level has experienced stagnation due to the strong influence of traditional educational systems. Furthermore, Islamic education still tends to be theological-normative without adequately considering social contexts and contemporary needs. As a result, Islamic education is often slow in reformulating itself to respond to societal changes, making it more oriented toward the past rather than the future (Langgulung, 1988).

Nevertheless, amid these dynamics, *pesantren* continue to serve as spaces where the tradition of classical Islamic scholarship, particularly through oral transmission, is preserved and maintained. In the context of *pesantren*, the tradition of teaching *ḥadīth* is not merely understood as an academic activity but also as part of shaping the manners and spirituality of students (*santri*) (Yadegari, 2020; Adinda et al., 2025). Beyond the mere practice of conveying texts, the tradition of *ḥadīth* teaching embodies pedagogical, cultural, and spiritual values that help shape the character of Islamic scholarly knowledge (Halimah et al., 2021).

One concrete manifestation of this tradition in traditional Islamic educational institutions is the *tasmī' ḥadīth* procession, namely the recitation or submission of *ḥadīth* by students directly to their teacher. Research conducted by Assa'idi (2021) indicates that students involved in *tasmī'* tend to have stronger memorization, deeper understanding of meanings, and better mastery of recitation.

This tradition not only strengthens academic abilities but also supports the formation of students' religious character. Furthermore, *tasmī' ḥadīth* also serves as a means of social interaction between teacher and student, where the learning process involves not only cognitive aspects (mastery of *ḥadīth* material) but also affective and symbolic dimensions. The teacher is not merely a transmitter of knowledge but also a holder of scholarly authority recognized socially (Samsul Arifin, 2023).

The social relationship between teachers (*kiai)* and students (*santri*) reinforces this dimension. A *kiai* is shaped through his relationship with the students as clients (Fox & Dirjasanjoto, 1989). For the students, obedience to the *kiai* becomes the key to attaining blessings in life, making the *kiai*'s words regarded as obligatory (Harnadi et al., 2021). In the context of *pesantren*, a teacher's speech does not merely function as a conveyance of information but also serves to establish authority, motivate students, and reinforce the social norms prevailing in the educational environment (Muasmara et al., 2025).

In the social and cultural context of Indonesia, *pesantren* function not only as centers of religious education but also as hubs for the development of culture, identity, and community solidarity. The relationship between kiai and *santri* in *pesantren* is often viewed as a sacred and respectful bond, in which the kiai serves as a teacher, spiritual mentor, and community leader, while the *santri* are positioned as students who obey and respect the authority of the kiai (Majid, 1997; Azra, 1999; Inayatilllah, 2023). Research by Nisa'u & Karsidi (2025) shows that the *kiai* is represented as a center of symbolic power with inviolable spiritual-charismatic authority, while students display structural and emotional obedience within a patron-client framework. Nonverbal communication symbols and the cultural practice of *pekewuh* further strengthen this structure of domination.

Similarly, findings from Nisa'u and Widianto (2024) indicate that the negotiation of religious and cultural values is significantly influenced by the charismatic authority of the *kiai*, which in turn shapes community perceptions and practices. On the other hand, the analysis of politeness strategies helps map how teacher-student interactions are conducted respectfully (Yoga et al., 2018), despite apparent differences in status and hierarchy.

Beyond the pragmatic perspective, teacher-student interactions during the *tasmī'* procession can also be analyzed through a sociological lens as a form of symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1973). Educational institutions serve as a crucial medium for maintaining inequality by transmitting cultural values that uphold the existence of higher social classes. According to Bourdieu, there is a close relationship between education, family, and social class (Bourdieu, 1973). As an educational institution, the teacher, or *kiai*, functions both as a driving force and an agent who determines the direction and philosophy of the learning model within it. The uniqueness of the *pesantren* as a traditional educational institution lies in the centrality of the *kiai*'s role. This centrality is not only due to the *kiai*'s institutional position at the top of the *pesantren*'s management hierarchy but also because of the community's belief in the *kiai*'s transcendental power (Harnadi et al., 2021).

Although studies on *ḥadīth* in *pesantren* have been widely conducted, particularly concerning teaching methods and chains of knowledge (*sanad*), most research still focuses on the educational aspects of Islamic studies (Asari et al., 2024; Faruq et al., 2022). Studies that highlight the pragmatic interaction dimension in the *tasmī' ḥadīš* (structured *ḥadīth* recitation) process remain limited. In fact, verbal interaction between teachers and students in this context plays a crucial role in shaping the scholarly habitus and the symbolic structures embedded in *pesantren* culture.

This study offers novelty by viewing *tasmī' ḥadīš* not merely as a transmission of *ḥadīth* texts but as a pragmatic practice and a form of symbolic capital that shapes social relations within the *pesantren*. Using a pragmatic analysis approach and Pierre Bourdieu's (1973) theory of symbolic capital, this research aims to uncover how communication strategies in the *tasmī' ḥadīš* process function to reinforce the teacher's scholarly authority, shape the social image of students, and reproduce the distinctive symbolic structure of the *pesantren*.

This concept is relevant for understanding how *tasmī' ḥadīš* in *pesantren* serves not only as a ritual practice but also as a mechanism for constructing and consolidating scholarly authority and

the social legitimacy of both teachers and students. Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the forms of speech acts, politeness strategies, and mechanisms of symbolic capital that emerge in *ḥadīth tasmī'* interactions in *pesantren*. This study aims to analyze the forms of speech acts performed by teachers and students during the *tasmī' ḥadīth* procession and to examine how this practice reproduces symbolic capital within the social structure of *pesantren*.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design, chosen to gain an in-depth understanding of language practices and socio-cultural meanings in religious interactions within the *pesantren* environment. The case study allows the researcher to trace and explore the *tasmī' ḥadīth* phenomenon contextually by observing teacher-student interactions in real-life situations. This approach enables both the description of communication practices and the interpretation of pragmatic and symbolic meanings of speech acts occurring during the process. The research was conducted at a *pesantren* in East Lombok, which consistently integrates the teaching of *ḥadīth* as a core part of its educational program. This location was selected purposively because it maintains an established *ḥadīth* transmission tradition and involves intensive teacher-student interactions.

The data sources consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained from direct interactions between teachers and students during the *tasmī'* process, including participant observation and field notes. The data were collected naturally over the course of the researcher's three-year engagement in the *pesantren*, where she regularly participated in *ḥadīth* learning sessions. The informants consisted of *kiai* and students who were actively involved in the *tasmī' ḥadīth* activities. As an insider researcher, the author had the opportunity to observe and experience the interactions directly, allowing for a deeper understanding of both the pedagogical and symbolic dimensions of the *tasmī'* tradition. Secondary data include the *ḥadīth* books used, literature on *ḥadīth* transmission traditions, and theoretical references relevant to the research focus.

Data analysis adopts Jonathan A.C. Brown's (2007) theory of *ḥadīth* canonization, which views *tasmī'* interactions as a mechanism for reinforcing scholarly authority through mastery of canonically recognized *ḥadīth* texts. To explore the pragmatic dimension, the study also applies J. L. Austin's (1962) and Yule's (1995) theories to identify forms of speech acts: locutionary (the act of saying something), illocutionary (the intended meaning or function behind the utterance), and perlocutionary (the effect produced by the utterance). These frameworks help analyze how language functions as both communication and action within the *tasmī'* context. In addition, Stephen Levinson's (1983) theory of pragmatics is employed to explain how social relations are constructed through linguistic interaction, particularly in terms of politeness, hierarchy, and contextual meaning that emerge during the *tasmī'* sessions. This analysis aims to reveal how communication strategies in the *tasmī'* process strengthen teacher authority, shape students' social image, and reproduce the symbolic structures characteristic of the *pesantren*.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Practice of *Tasmī' Ḥadīth* in Islamic Boarding Schools

One significant concern regarding the conceptual contrast between oral and written strategies is the presence of both the speaker and the listener in speech. This direct presence safeguards the concept from misunderstanding and error. For example, moral instructions on magnanimity, which followers had to learn from their seniors, were referred to as "breath," indicating the close relationship between the senior and the disciple (Afshari & Madayeni, 2009).

Furthermore, *pesantren* embody an intellectual spirit rooted in the Islamic scholarly tradition, which is reflected in the relationship between students (*santri*) and teachers through the system of *sanad*. According to Rahman (1979), as cited in Inayatillah (2023), *sanad* emerged from the traditions of Islamic society and was used as a method to assess the authenticity of knowledge. Historically, Islamic society adopted much of its knowledge from Greek, Persian, and Yemeni

civilizations; however, the concept of *sanad* originated from within Islamic disciplines themselves. In practice, *santri* who study classical Islamic texts (*kitab kuning*) learn directly from their teachers and regard the teacher's name as a benchmark for the source of the knowledge they acquire. This *sanad* tradition not only represents the transmission of knowledge but also shapes a distinctive pattern of communication in the learning process. In this context, the study of speech acts in the *tasmīʿ* process can be understood diachronically as a legacy of Islamic educational traditions that have endured for centuries, and synchronically as a communicative practice that continues to thrive within contemporary *madrasah* learning spaces (Pratiwi et al., 2023; Levin, 1965).

As an implementation of the *sanad* concept, based on observations, the book used in *tasmīʿ al-ḥadīth* activities at one of the *pesantren* in East Lombok is *Ibanatul Ahkam* Volume 1. The choice of this book is not without reason. Structurally, the book is systematically organized into chapters that group *ḥadīths* according to legal (*fiqhiyyah*) themes and religious practices, making it easier for students to understand the connections between the *ḥadīth* texts, Islamic law, and their social context. This type of presentation demonstrates an integrative effort between textual and contextual approaches in the process of teaching *ḥadīth*.

Several recent studies have emphasized the importance of a contextual approach in addition to traditional textual learning to ensure that the understanding of *ḥadīth* remains relevant to the students' lives and contemporary issues (Murjazin et al., 2023; Harun et al., 2021; Hamid & Mokhtar, 2019). In the context of *ḥadīth* learning in *pesantren*, using books organized by legal themes, such as *Ibanatul Ahkam*, becomes an effective means to implement this approach. This is because each chapter in the book naturally connects the *ḥadīth* text to legal applications and social practices, enabling students to understand the relationship between the *ḥadīth*, its historical context, and its relevance in contemporary life.

Furthermore, both teachers and students consider the language used in *Ibanatul Ahkam* to be accessible and easily translatable. This ease of language carries important pedagogical implications, as it enables students not only to memorize the *matan* (text) of the *ḥadīth* but also to understand its syntactic structure and semantic meaning. Thus, the learning process does not stop at mere text reproduction but develops into a critical understanding of the legal messages and moral values contained within the *ḥadīth*. This accessibility of language is further reflected in teaching practices in the field, particularly during *tasmīʿ ḥadīth* activities, which emphasize comprehension and recitation of the text rather than rote memorization.

This ease of language aligns with the methodological tradition in classical *ḥadīth* transmission, as exemplified by Ibn Abī Shayibah in the compilation of *al-Muṣannaf*. He employed various methods of *ḥadīth* narration to ensure the authenticity and accuracy of sources, one of which was direct hearing (*as-samāʿ*), a process of receiving *ḥadīth* directly from the teacher in a single assembly. This is reflected in the use of phrases such as "*haddatsanā*," indicating that Ibn Abī Shayibah heard the *ḥadīth* directly from his teacher, and "*akhbaranā*," which denotes the formal transmission of *ḥadīth* by a teacher to a student. This practice demonstrates methodological rigor in the tradition of *ḥadīth* transmission, where authenticity is maintained through direct engagement between teacher and student. This is exemplified in *Kitāb al-Ṭahārah*, where Ibn Abī Shayibah affirmed the authority of the *sanad* through direct hearing from his teachers (Kurniawan & Dalimunthe, 2025).

This methodological tradition finds its actual form in the practice of *tasmīʿ ḥadīth* within the *pesantren* environment in East Lombok. Based on field observations, the *tasmīʿ ḥadīth* activities in this *pesantren* emphasize the reading and understanding of *ḥadīth* texts rather than mere memorization. Although not entirely based on rote memorization, these activities still function as a form of oral knowledge transmission that reinforces the authority of the teacher and strengthens the pedagogical interaction between teacher and students. The spatial arrangement of the *tasmīʿs* activities is organized hierarchically and symbolically: the teacher sits on a designated chair at the front, elevated and clearly visible, while the students sit cross-legged in neat rows facing the teacher. This arrangement not only facilitates academic interaction but also represents the socio-

religious structure of the *pesantren*, affirming the teacher's role as the holder of scholarly authority and the students' role as recipients of knowledge within the continuous chain of *ḥadīth* transmission.

From a linguistic perspective, the practice of *tasmī' ḥadīš* demonstrates a structured yet dynamic exchange of communication between teacher and student. This interaction reflects the concept of *parole*, namely the actual and spontaneous use of language in a specific context, which manifests in utterances carrying both instructional and symbolic meanings (Saussure, 1983). In the *tasmī'* process, teachers often employ directive speech acts such as *"Begin from the isnād," "Repeat the sanad correctly,"* or *"Slow down your recitation."* These utterances not only function to regulate pronunciation and rhythm but also reaffirm the teacher's pedagogical authority. Conversely, students usually respond with short affirmations such as *"Na'am Abah,"* as an expression of respect and obedience, while also indicating readiness to continue.

In the utterance "Repeat the *sanad* correctly," the sentence structure reveals a syntagmatic relationship that is grammatically organized between the verb and the object (Pratiwi et al., 2023). According to Leech's (1981) classification of meaning, the teacher's directive utterances in *tasmī'* carry both conceptual and connotative meanings. Conceptually, such utterances function to provide instruction within the learning process; however, connotatively and socially, they reaffirm the teacher's position of authority as well as the values of politeness and obedience upheld by students within the culture of Islamic education. In other words, speech acts within the *tasmī'* context do not merely represent linguistic dimensions but also embody the social relations, ethics, and spiritual values that animate the tradition of *pesantren*.

The concept of collective conscience proposed by Durkheim (1893) inspired Saussure in distinguishing between langue and parole, as explained by Toksöz (2023). This concept indicates that language does not exist independently but is part of a collective social system. Such a notion can also be found in Islamic educational traditions, particularly within the *sanad* system in *pesantre*, where the transmission of knowledge occurs not merely on an individual level but within a social framework bound by shared authority, values, and legitimacy (Rahman, 1979; Inayatillah, 2023). The *sanad* tradition can thus be regarded as a concrete form of langue, a social structure of knowledge inherited collectively. Nevertheless, while Saussurean structuralism has been criticized for emphasizing formal systems without adequately considering living social practices, the *pesantren* tradition demonstrates a balance between structure (*sanad* as a social system) and practice (*tasmī'* and teacher student interaction) as manifestations of a dynamic and contextual social language.

Furthermore, in this context, the practice of *tasmī' ḥadīth* shares a fundamental similarity with the *halaqah* system as a form of classical Islamic education. The *halaqah* has long served as a primary platform for the acceleration of *da'wah* (Islamic propagation) and the transmission of religious knowledge since the time of the Prophet Muhammad. According to Karim (2019), the effectiveness of *da'wah* is primarily determined by the depth of a *da'i*'s understanding of religious teachings and their ability to respond to the community's issues quickly and accurately. One of the avenues to achieve this capability is through participation in scholarly *halaqahs*, which are learning forums that intensively study various religious sciences. Karim (2019) explains that a *halaqah* is a teaching-learning process where students sit in a circle around the teacher to listen to their recitation, explanation, or commentary on a text, and this activity occurs continuously.

The continuity of this tradition is clearly evident in the implementation of *tasmī' ḥadīth*, which begins with a series of ritualistic opening activities. These stages typically include an opening greeting, a special prayer for the author of the text and the supervising teacher, and a sequential recitation of the *sanad* of the *ḥadīth*, symbolizing the scholarly connection passed down from generation to generation. After the opening ceremony is completed, the activity continues with the *ḥadīth* being recited in turn by the students in front of the *kiai* or teacher. This form of recitation follows a structured and disciplined pattern, emphasizing accuracy in reading, intonation, and rhythm.

The principle of turn-taking, as explained by Levinson (1983), is also clearly evident in these sessions. The teacher initiates and concludes each reading turn, while students speak only when addressed or permitted. This orderly pattern of exchange demonstrates a hierarchical communicative structure, yet it also cultivates an atmosphere of discipline and attentiveness, values that form an essential part of the *pesantren*'s educational ethos. Moreover, brief informal conversations that occur after the recitation, such as the teacher's praise ("*Ahsanta* or *Ahsanti*, *qirā'atukum jayyid. Bārakallāhu fīkum*") or light humor, serve expressive and phatic functions, maintaining emotional closeness and solidarity between teacher and student.

The teacher plays an active role in correcting mistakes in *makhraj* (articulation points) and harakat (vowel marks), transforming this activity from a mere ritual of recitation into a phonetic exercise and text comprehension practice focused on the accuracy of *sanad* (chain of transmission) and *matan* (text). Such patterns of interaction reflect the principle of *talaqqī wa musyāfahah*, the transmission of knowledge through direct meetings and oral interaction between teacher and student, as classical Islamic scholarly tradition emphasizes the importance of *liqā'* (physical meeting) between the narrator and the source of knowledge (Zaidar et al., 2017).

Generally, *talaqqī* comprises three main elements: *samā', qirā'ah, and ijāzah* (Zaidar et al., 2017). *Ijāzah* is a statement, certification, and permission granted by a teacher (*musnid*) to indicate that a student has mastered a particular field of knowledge well. Typically, the wording of a teacher's *ijāzah* to a student is, *"I grant you this ijāzah as my teacher granted it to me,"* and the student responds with, *"I accept,"* or other phrasing that signifies the teacher's permission for the student to transmit the knowledge to others (Johari & Shah, 2017).

Recent studies support that oral-based learning methods, such as *tasmī'*, play a significant role in maintaining the authenticity of religious texts while also fostering academic discipline among students. For instance, a study by Huda binti Zainal Abidin et al. (2019) demonstrates that the *talaqqī* and *musyāfahah* systems in schools or *pesantren* not only transmit knowledge but also instill values of etiquette, diligence, and intellectual responsibility through direct interaction between teachers and students. Thus, *tasmī'al-ḥadīš* using *Ibanatul Ahkam* can be understood as an integrative pedagogical practice: combining textual dimensions (reading and correcting *ḥadīth*), epistemological aspects (verification of *sanad* through the symbol *'an* and the concept of *liqā'*), and affective elements (the development of emotional closeness between teachers and students). This tradition demonstrates the continuity between the classical *ḥadīth* transmission system and contemporary Islamic educational practices in *pesantren*, as noted by Mahmudulhassan et al. (2025), that the sustainability of the oral learning model in *pesantren* represents the preservation of Islamic epistemology emphasizing scholarly authority based on *riwāyah wa dirāyah* (transmission and critical understanding).

Speech Acts and Pedagogical Functions in *Tasmī'*

In recent developments in the study of the sociology of power, attention to traditional educational institutions as spaces for reproducing power relations has become increasingly significant. Islamic boarding schools, as the oldest Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia, play a central role in shaping social structures supported by the symbolic and charismatic authority of a *kiai* (Nisa'u & Karsidi, 2025). Furthermore, in the *tasmī' ḥadīth* process at this *pesantren*, various types of speech acts were identified that reflect the communicative and social functions between teachers and students. This interaction pattern is not random; instead, it forms a structured and meaningful communication framework, in line with the speech act theory proposed by J. L. Austin (1962). In the context of *tasmī' ḥadīth*, language is not merely a tool for conveying information, but also an instrument for reinforcing authority, teaching, motivation, as well as legitimizing scholarly knowledge and the *sanad*.

In the research conducted by Widodo (2025), the analysis results indicate that several *ḥadīth*s use figurative language, which requires interpretation and deep understanding for their communicative function to be fully comprehended. This shows that speech act theory provides a

strong perspective for understanding Islamic texts, particularly *ḥadīth*s, beyond their literal meaning. It demonstrates that the Prophet's utterances function not only as a conveyance of religious messages in an informative sense but also as communicative acts with purposes, implicit meanings, and psychological as well as social effects on the audience. Thus, the use of speech act theory allows researchers to uncover the layers of meaning hidden behind each utterance of the Prophet, making the understanding of *ḥadīth*s more profound, contextual, and applicable in the religious life of Muslims.

One of the most prominent forms of speech acts in *tasmī' ḥadīth* activities at the *pesantren* in East Lombok is the directive speech act, which refers to utterances aimed at guiding or influencing the actions of the interlocutor (Yule, 1995). In the *tasmī' ḥadīth* process, this directive form appears in teachers' instructions or corrections of students' recitations, such as expressions like *"Repeat from the sanad…"* or *"Slow down your reading a little…"*. Although its function is to give commands or directions, the delivery is subtle and careful, so it does not convey a sense of condescension. This demonstrates the teacher's pragmatic awareness in maintaining a balance between instructional authority and respect for students as learning subjects. This speech act also plays a role in ensuring the accuracy of memorization while preserving the quality of oral transmission of *ḥadīth*, which is highly valued in the Islamic scholarly tradition.

The next type of speech act is the assertive, which involves statements or affirmations of the truth of certain information. In this context, the teacher often provides scholarly explanations to reinforce the validity of the *ḥadīth* being presented, for example, *"This ḥadīth is narrated by al-Bukhari, and its sanad is continuous…."* Such utterances demonstrate the teacher's scholarly authority as a *musnid*, while also providing additional learning for the students regarding the authenticity of the *sanad* and the sources of the *ḥadīth*. The assertive speech act not only conveys information but also builds the teacher's epistemic image as a guardian and inheritor of the authenticity of knowledge. It serves a dual function: as a form of academic legitimacy and as an educational tool (Austin, 1962).

Next, there is also the expressive speech act, which is a form of utterance that conveys the speaker's psychological attitude toward the interlocutor. In the context of *tasmī' ḥadīth*, teachers often use expressions of praise and encouragement to build the students' self-confidence, for example, saying *"Good, your recitation is already fluent,"* or *"Mashallah, just a little more to go."* These expressions serve an important social and affective function: they create a supportive learning atmosphere, strengthen the emotional bond between teacher and student, and foster intrinsic motivation in the students to continue improving their memorization. In pragmatic terms, these expressive speech acts function as a balance to the directive speech acts, which tend to be more instructive (Austin, 1962).

Thus, the entirety of speech acts in the *tasmī' ḥadīth* process functions not only as a means of communication but also as a mechanism for symbolic and social reproduction. Directive speech acts establish discipline and order in the transmission process. Assertive acts reinforce the teacher's scholarly authority, expressive acts strengthen the emotional bond between teacher and students, while commissive and declarative acts represent the pinnacle of the ritual, affirming the *sanad*. This pattern demonstrates that the *tasmī' ḥadīth* process is not merely a cognitive activity of memorization but also a pragmatic and social practice that reflects the hierarchy of knowledge, respect for the *sanad*, and the formation of the scholarly habitus of the *pesantren*. Within the framework of speech act theory by Austin (1962) and Searle, every utterance is an action, not merely "saying" but "doing something." In the context of *tasmī'*, expressive speech acts serve as a "counterbalance" to the rigidity of directives, ensuring that the learning process does not become a mechanical or repressive interaction.

Symbolic Capital and Politeness Strategies

There are three groups with differing views on the *kitab kuning* (classical Islamic texts). The first group comes from the *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) community, which seeks to

preserve the *kitab kuning* as an intellectual heritage of Islamic thought from the past. In the *pesantren* education system, the teaching of *kitab kuning* is an inseparable part of its fundamental elements, the mosque, the students (*santri*), and the *kiai* (Dhofier, 1982). Mastuhu (1994) and Rudiamon et al., (2025) emphasizes that the *kitab kuning* serves as the "software" of the *pesantren* education system. According to Bruinessen (1999), the use of *kitab kuning* as a learning source has become an inherent and inseparable identity; indeed, the *pesantren* functions as an institution capable of transmitting traditional Islam as contained in the *kitab kuning*.

Meanwhile, the second group comes from the modernist circle, which seeks to abandon and replace the classical Islamic intellectual tradition with contemporary literature. According to Marzuki Wahid (1999), this view emerged because the *kitab kuning* is considered irrelevant to the context of the modern era and merely a burden for Muslims in pursuing progress, as it is regarded as having a low level of scholarship and being a factor contributing to intellectual stagnation.

In contrast to the two previous perspectives, the third group adopts a more moderate stance. They continue to preserve the valuable and beneficial intellectual heritage of the past while adopting new and better intellectual products to meet the demands of the times and the challenges of the future. The motto embraced by this group is *"al-ḥifẓ bi al-qadīm al-ṣāliḥ, wa al-akhdzu bi al-jadīd al-aṣlaḥ"* (preserving the good from the old and adopting the better from the new) (Fadhil, 2014).

In the context of the sociology of power, the debate among these three groups can be understood as a form of dynamic relationship between tradition, modernity, and scholarly authority. The *pesantren*, as the oldest Islamic educational institution in Indonesia, functions not only as a center for the transmission of knowledge but also as a site for the reproduction of symbolic power relations (Bourdieu, 1991). Within the *pesantren* tradition, the *kiai* holds a high level of *symbolic capital* as a recognized inheritor of religious and scholarly authority, as well as a guardian of the legitimacy of classical Islamic tradition through the teaching of the *kitab kuning* (Nisa'u & Karsidi, 2025).

One of the significant findings of this study shows that the *tasmī' ḥadīth* ceremony functions as an arena for the production and distribution of symbolic capital within the *pesantren* environment. Referring to the framework of symbolic capital explained by Wajdi and Khabibullah (2025), symbolic capital includes elements such as honor, recognition, and spiritual legitimacy. This form of capital holds considerable power because social acceptance makes it appear natural, proper, and legitimate in the eyes of the community.

In the context of the *pesantren*, this aligns with the findings of Efendi (2020), who identified two orientations in the implementation of gender equality, namely gender normativity and textuality. Normatively, the implementation is carried out by *pesantren* teachers and *kiai*, while textually, it is carried out by *badal* (substitute teachers) and *madrasah* teachers. Meanwhile, Ayu Erviana's research reveals that the roots of *pesantren* tradition are still influenced by patriarchal culture. This influence is evident through the *kiai*'s hegemony over the *santri* (students), one example of which can be seen in the concept of *santri ndalem*, students who voluntarily devote themselves to serving the *kiai* (Faridah, 2019; Erviana, 2021). These two studies illustrate the contradiction between educational values and traditional structures within the *pesantren*.

In the context of the *tasmī' ḥadīth*, this symbolic capital is manifested through scholarly authority and mastery of the *sanad* (chain of transmission), which serve as the main assets for both teachers and students in establishing their position and legitimacy within the *pesantren*'s social structure. Symbolic capital in this context refers to the ability to assert a vision of reality and social hierarchy without the use of physical force, but rather through symbols, language, and culturally accepted and legitimized behaviors (Alam, 2018). Charismatic authority, as proposed by Weber, arises from the belief in an individual's sanctity or extraordinary heroism, granting them influence beyond the limits of institutionalized norms.

Within the framework of communication, the *kiai-santri* communication pattern represents a form of ethical-pedagogical communication that shapes collective habitus within the *pesantren*

environment. Habitus, as explained by Bourdieu, is a system of internalized dispositions formed through socialization that unconsciously structures an individual's perceptions, thoughts, and actions in alignment with the dominant social order. This communication is characterized by emotional relationships and symbolic hierarchies, reinforced through the tradition of *kitab kuning* and the *ijazah* system (Abu Aman et al., 2023).

The analysis of politeness strategies in the *tasmī' ḥadīth* procession shows that the interaction between teacher and student does not occur solely within a pedagogical framework but also contains a strong socio-cultural dimension. Referring to the politeness strategy theory by Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson, the communication structure in *tasmī' ḥadīth* is built upon an asymmetrical social relationship, with the teacher occupying a position of scholarly authority and the student as the learning subject who shows respect and obedience. In this context, the practice of politeness can be understood as a form of preservation, that is, the action of maintaining and ensuring that something remains in its original condition. Conceptually, the term *preservation* not only refers to physical conservation but also encompasses efforts to safeguard values, traditions, and socio-cultural identity (Hayden & Wong, 1997). Thus, politeness strategies in the *tasmī' ḥadīth* procession function as a mechanism for preserving the values of *adab* (proper conduct), scholarly hierarchy, and traditional ethics in Islamic education.

In this study, the concept of preservation is used to explain the role of *pesantren* in maintaining the status of the *kiai* as traditional religious authorities, particularly amidst the emergence of new religious authorities in the digital space. In a situation described by Dale Eickelman and James Piscatori (2004) as the "fracturing of Islamic authority," the role of the *kiai* is preserved through the function of the *pesantren* as a space for social and cultural reproduction.

The ritual of *tasmī' ḥadīth* also reflects a mechanism of symbolic exchange between teacher and student. Students confer respect and legitimacy to their teachers through practices of *ta'dzim* (veneration), obedience, and recognition of the teacher's scholarly authority. In return, teachers provide formal acknowledgment that enhances the student's status within the *pesantren* community. This exchange is not material in nature but symbolic, yet it has tangible effects on the social structure and distribution of honor within the *pesantren* environment. In Bourdieu's (1973) terminology, this process illustrates how symbolic capital is produced and reproduced through ritual practices that appear simple but are laden with social and political significance.

This perspective is reinforced by Clifford Geertz's (1957) analysis, as cited by Bashri (2021). In studies of Islam and socio-political life in Indonesia, scholars often focus on the figure of the *kiai* as a key actor who holds social roles, such as educating the community, driving social change, and performing functions of control and conflict resolution within society. Geertz describes the *kiai* as a cultural symbol that connects various dimensions, physical, organic, social, and psychological, which are manifested within the *pesantren* system.

Zulkifli (2013) explains that the paradigm of the *kiai* as a religious figure has created symbolic power, which subsequently develops into certain political preferences within the social structure of society. The *kiai* is positioned as an agent of change because of their role in shaping public attitudes. Their views and opinions carry binding authority on various issues not only in the religious domain but also encompassing political, economic, and cultural matters. As a religious scholar, the *kiai*'s authority over society is not limited to social relationships but also extends to the political sphere; this authority possesses both theological validity and socio-political legitimacy. Indeed, within both traditional and modern societal structures in Indonesia, *kiai* receive higher respect compared to other elites (Zulkifli, 2013).

The two roles of the *kiai* described earlier are carried out with the support of a leadership pattern often associated with classical attributes, namely charismatic and traditional leadership. This pattern characterizes the *kiai*'s leadership across various roles, such as teaching and guiding students in religious matters, performing social control within the community, driving change, acting as a mediator, and resolving various social issues. Bahtiar Effendy (2011) argues that *kiai* in

this position have carried out what is referred to as the "domestication of Islam" within the cultural and political structure of society.

The *tasmī' ḥadīth* procession in the *pesantren* tradition functions not merely as a memorization ritual but also as a social mechanism that maintains structures of authority, regulates hierarchies of respect, and reproduces the core values of the *pesantren*. In this context, religious practice cannot be separated from the dynamics of symbolic power. The findings of Makki et al. (2025) indicate that the leadership of *tuan guru*, rooted in Islamic values and humility, enables them to navigate social resistance while inspiring active community participation, both in material and non-material forms. Thus, the religious charisma of the *tuan guru* serves as a source of moral authority that strengthens their social legitimacy within the *pesantren* community and the surrounding society.

However, when viewed from the perspective of Paulo Freire's (2007) philosophy of education, this tradition contains its own paradox. Freire (2007), through his philosophy of humanism, positions humans as active subjects in the educational process rather than as objects who merely receive knowledge. For him, humans are entities that exist within a dialectical relationship with the social realities surrounding them. Within this framework, the educational practices in *pesantren* can be critically examined in terms of how far they open dialogical spaces and foster critical consciousness (*conscientization*), or conversely, reinforce vertical and hierarchical relationships between teachers and students.

The position of teachers within the *pesantren* environment carries a complex dimension of power. Firmansyah et al. (2024) emphasize that teachers hold a central role in the production of symbolic capital. As *musnid*, teachers gain scholarly legitimacy recognized by the *pesantren* community due to their mastery of *sanad* and expertise in the field of *ḥadīth*. However, this authority does not stem solely from academic capability but also from social recognition, both from the *santri* (students) and fellow teachers. Thus, the teacher becomes the holder of symbolic capital who determines who is recognized as the authority of *sanad*, who has the right to submit memorization, and how academic standards are upheld. Every correction, praise, or approval expressed by the teacher during the *tasmī'* process is not merely an academic evaluation, but also a form of symbolic capital reproduction that strengthens the teacher's authority and reinforces the scholarly hierarchy within the *pesantren*. At this point, *pesantren* education can be understood as a space of dialectics between tradition and critical consciousness, between the reproduction of authority and the potential for liberation that positions the *santri* as subjects of knowledge.

A concrete form of recognition of this symbolic capital is evident in the physical actions of students who humble themselves before their teachers, such as bowing or lowering their heads during interactions. These actions reflect spiritual and educational respect that is an integral part of the scholarly ethics in *pesantren*. Such hierarchies of respect are deeply rooted in Islamic tradition, where reverence for knowledge and for those who convey it is a highly esteemed principle. Thus, both symbolically and in practice, the relationship between teachers and students in *pesantren* becomes a space where symbolic capital is produced, acknowledged, and transmitted through interactions rich in meaning (Azra, 2015; Firmansyah et al., 2024).

In today's digital era, *ḥadīth* scholars face two realities. First, as sources of religious guidance, *ḥadīth* are expected to provide solutions for various aspects of life, requiring adaptation to modernity. Second, understanding *ḥadīth* necessitates appropriate methodologies that can be applied to contemporary contexts to ensure accurate knowledge for practical use (Ansori & Fiddaroyni, 2023).

The *tasmī' ḥadīth* procession in *pesantren*, when examined closely, represents one of the most authentic forms of oral transmission practices within the Islamic scholarly tradition. This activity cannot be equated with routine academic tasks or mere memorization of religious texts. It has strong historical and epistemological roots, directly stemming from the traditions of the Prophet's companions, the *tabi'in*, and classical *ḥadīth* scholars. Throughout the history of *ḥadīth* development, the transmission of knowledge has always occurred through direct encounters

between teachers and students, between a *muhaddith* as the guardian of the *sanad* and the *ṭālib al-ʿilm* as the seeker of knowledge, following a highly distinctive pattern of interaction.

In the tradition of *tasmīʿ ḥadīth* in *pesantren* in East Lombok, this activity constitutes the core of the learning process, emphasizing the direct transmission of religious knowledge through oral interaction between teachers and students. Unlike mere memorization, the form of *tasmīʿ* in this *mahad* emphasizes the oral recitation of *ḥadīth* texts before the teacher, where students read carefully, paying attention to *tajwīd*, intonation, and the meaning of the text. This principle is grounded in the concept of *isnād*, which serves as the foundation of *ḥadīth* scholarship. As the classical scholars stated, "*al-isnād min ad-dīn*" (the *sanad* is part of the religion), emphasizing that the authenticity of religious knowledge is determined not only by the content of the text but also by a valid and reliable chain of transmission. Within this framework, teachers do not merely assess students' memorization but act as a living link in the chain of Islamic scholarly transmission. Their presence as *musnid* makes every *tasmīʿ* procession not just a memorization ritual, but an actualization of scientific and spiritual authority that connects directly to the primary source: the Prophet (Zaidar, 2017).

Furthermore, the implementation of *tasmīʿ* in *pesantren* also serves as a form of preserving the authenticity of religious knowledge. Amidst the changing times and the development of print and digital technologies, this oral tradition continues to be maintained as a form of *living tradition* that safeguards the continuity of Islamic scholarly authority. It is not merely a symbol of traditional conservatism, but rather evidence of the resilience of the classical Islamic transmission system that has endured across centuries (Marlina, 2025). In this context, *tasmīʿ* of *ḥadīth* can be understood as an epistemological practice that goes beyond mere teaching and learning activities, serving as a means of preserving the *sanad* (chain of transmission), *adab* (ethical conduct), and the authority of Islamic knowledge itself.

The principles that safeguard the authenticity of knowledge through *tasmi,'* namely precision, ethical conduct, and continuity are also relevant in social and political contexts. Over time, social and political norms evolve, and the Qur'an supports adaptation to change while upholding ethical principles. By combining ancient wisdom with modern knowledge, society can manage progress while ensuring justice, equality, and the common good. Thus, the continuity of Islamic scholarly tradition is not only manifested in the realm of education but also provides inspiration for the practice of sustainable and just governance (Ruhullah & Ushama, 2024).

The findings of this study affirm that the *tasmīʿ ḥadīš* tradition in Indonesian *pesantren* represents a living form of oral transmission that integrates pedagogical, linguistic, and symbolic dimensions. Unlike previous studies that have primarily examined *tasmīʿ* from theological or didactic perspectives (e.g., Assa'idi, 2021; Huda binti Zainal Abidin et al., 2019), this research expands the discussion by incorporating a pragmatic analysis of speech acts and politeness strategies, alongside Bourdieu's (1973) theory of symbolic capital. This interdisciplinary framework reveals that every verbal exchange between teachers and students is not merely an instructional act but also a performative process that reproduces social hierarchy, *adab* (ethical conduct), and scholarly authority within the *pesantren*. The results indicate that the *pesantren*'s oral tradition sustains its epistemic legitimacy through disciplined and symbolic interactions, a perspective that complements Yadegari's (2021) findings on the preservation of cultural meaning through oral communication. While Mahmudulhassan et al., (2025) explored the integration of Islamic epistemology in education, this study contributes by demonstrating how that epistemology is linguistically enacted through directive, expressive, and assertive speech acts in *tasmīʿ* sessions. Furthermore, the findings align with yet extend beyond the sociological insights of Zulkifli (2013) and Nisa'u & Karsidi (2025), who conceptualized the *kiai* as a holder of symbolic power. In the context of *tasmīʿ*, symbolic capital is not only embedded in the teacher's authority but also reproduced dialogically through students' acts of acknowledgment and verbal submission, forming a reciprocal exchange of respect and legitimacy. This finding offers a new perspective by linking

symbolic capital with pragmatic speech behavior, an area that remains underexplored in *pesantren* studies.

CONCLUSION

The *tasmī' ḥadīth* procession in *pesantren* is not merely a practice of reading religious texts, but rather a social, linguistic, and symbolic event that embodies educational values, spirituality, and the legitimacy of Islamic knowledge. Through pragmatic analysis and Pierre Bourdieu's theory of symbolic capital, this study demonstrates that the interaction between teachers and students during the *tasmī'* not only reflects pedagogical relationships but also reveals the living socio-religious structures within the *pesantren* environment. Speech acts that emerge, whether directive, assertive, or expressive, function not only as a means of communication but also as a mechanism for shaping scholarly *habitus*, reinforcing the authority of teachers, and instilling values of politeness and respect for knowledge. The politeness strategies employed by teachers emphasize that the teaching process in *pesantren* occurs in a balance between authority and compassion, guidance and respect. From a sociological perspective, *tasmī' ḥadīth* serves as a space for the reproduction of symbolic capital, where students' respect for teachers and teachers' recognition of students form a mechanism of symbolic exchange that strengthens the social structure of the *pesantren*. Thus, *tasmī' ḥadīth* not only preserves the continuity of the oral transmission of *ḥadīth* knowledge but also serves as a medium for maintaining authority, *adab* (ethical conduct), and the authenticity of the *sanad* (chain of transmission) in the face of modernity and digitalization. Overall, this study affirms that the practice of *tasmī' ḥadīth* represents a heritage of Islamic education that remains relevant in contemporary contexts. It serves as a symbol of the continuity of tradition, scholarly integrity, and spiritual knowledge, connecting the past, present, and future of *pesantren* in Indonesia. This study provides theoretical contributions by strengthening the understanding of *tasmī' ḥadīth* as an epistemological practice that integrates social, linguistic, and symbolic dimensions. Thus, this study provides an original contribution to the fields of pragmatic linguistics and Islamic education by bridging theoretical and ethnographic approaches. It positions *tasmī' ḥadīth* as a dynamic communicative ritual where knowledge, ethics, and symbolic power intersect. Future research is recommended to conduct cross-cultural comparisons of oral pedagogical models in other Muslim communities to assess how pragmatic strategies can sustain religious epistemologies in the era of digital transformation.

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