Journal of Innovative and Creativity
Journal Homepage: https://joecy.org/index.php/joecy
e-mail: journaljoecy@gmail.com

Faculty of Education
University of Pahlawan Tuanku Tambusai
ISSN 2775-771X (Online)
ISSN 2962-570X (Printed)
6 (2) 2026, Page: 24903-24912

Linguistic Entrepreneurship in English Test Preparation: A Case Study of a Seminar-Based Language Enterprise in Indonesia

Diana Ross Arief [1], Rofiatun Nafiah [2], Dwi Yuli Rakhmawati [3]
[1,2]Politeknik ATK Yogyakarta, [3]Universitas Negeri Surabaya
Corresponding Author: Rofiatun Nafiah, E-Mail: rofi@atk.ac.id

Published: Mei, 2026

ABSTRACT
The study purpose was to examine the emergence of linguistic entrepreneurship in English test preparation practices in Indonesia through a case study of a short-term seminar entitled *"Easy Way to Prepare English Testing."* Drawing on theories of linguistic entrepreneurship, language commodification, and the sociolinguistics of mobility, the study investigates how English proficiency is constructed as economic capital and how short-term educational events function as both pedagogical and entrepreneurial spaces. The research also explores how participants interpret English test preparation as an investment linked to aspirations for academic and professional mobility. **Materials and methods.** This study employed a qualitative case study design supported by a small-scale quantitative evaluation. Data were collected through participant observation during the seminar, semi-structured interviews with organizers and selected participants, and analysis of promotional materials, instructional slides, and participant feedback documents. A pre-test and post-test design was used to evaluate participants' understanding of English testing strategies. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically, while quantitative data were examined using descriptive statistics and a paired-samples t-test following normality testing. **Results.** The findings indicate that test preparation seminars function as sites where neoliberal language ideologies are reproduced, positioning learners as self-managing entrepreneurial subjects responsible for investing in their own linguistic capital. English proficiency was framed as a purchasable resource linked to scholarships, employment, and international mobility opportunities. Quantitative results demonstrate measurable improvements in participants' understanding of English testing strategies, highlighting the dual role of such seminars as both entrepreneurial ventures and pedagogical interventions. **Conclusions.** This study contributes to applied linguistics by providing empirical evidence from the Indonesian context and extending discussions of linguistic entrepreneurship beyond formal institutions to short-term, event-based language enterprises. The findings highlight the importance of examining informal learning spaces to better understand how language learning intersects with market logics, mobility aspirations, and unequal access to linguistic capital.

Keywords: linguistic entrepreneurship; English commodification; language testing; mobility; applied linguistics; Indonesia

© The Author(s). 2021 Open Access This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Atibution 4.0 International License, which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons licence, and indicate if changes were made. The images or other third party material in this article are included in the article's Creative Commons licence, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. To view a copy of this licence, visit http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0

INTRODUCTION

The global spread of English has long been associated with processes of globalization, the internationalization of education, and transnational labor mobility. In many non-Anglophone contexts, English proficiency has become a key form of symbolic and economic capital, mediating access to higher education, employment opportunities, and global professional networks. These dynamics are closely linked to the growing perception of language learning as an investment in future mobility and social advancement (Nguyen & Hajek, 2022). In Indonesia, this trend is particularly visible in the growing prominence of standardized English proficiency tests such as TOEFL and IELTS, which function as gatekeeping mechanisms for scholarships, overseas study, academic promotion, and professional certification.

Alongside formal language education, a wide range of private and semi-formal initiatives has emerged to meet this demand, including short courses, online coaching services, and test preparation seminars. These initiatives often operate outside traditional educational institutions and are organized as entrepreneurial ventures that commodify linguistic knowledge. Such developments can be understood through the concept of *linguistic entrepreneurship*, which frames language learning and

teaching as forms of economic activity shaped by neoliberal ideologies that position learners as self-investing subjects (De Costa, Park, & Wee, 2019; Darvin & Norton, 2021).

This article examines how linguistic entrepreneurship is enacted in the context of English test preparation in Indonesia through an in-depth case study of a seminar entitled *"Easy Way to Prepare English Testing."* Rather than focusing on long-term language programs or formal educational institutions, the study highlights a short-term, event-based initiative. This focus draws attention to how even brief educational encounters can function as entrepreneurial spaces where language learning, mobility aspirations, and economic rationalities intersect.

Despite growing scholarship on language commodification and neoliberal influences in language education, relatively little attention has been paid to short-term, event-based language enterprises, particularly in the Indonesian context. This study addresses this gap by examining how entrepreneurial logics are embedded in English test preparation practices and how participants interpret these practices in relation to their future aspirations.

The study addresses three research questions:

1) How does linguistic entrepreneurship manifest in English test preparation seminars?
2) What motivates participants to attend such seminars?
3) How do these seminars contribute to the commodification of English in the Indonesian context?

By addressing these questions, this article contributes to applied linguistics and sociolinguistics by demonstrating how linguistic entrepreneurship operates within short-term, event-based language initiatives, providing empirical insight into how English test preparation becomes a site where linguistic capital, mobility aspirations, and market logics intersect.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Linguistic Entrepreneurship and Neoliberalism

The concept of linguistic entrepreneurship emerged within broader critiques of neoliberalism in language education. Recent scholarship conceptualizes linguistic entrepreneurship as an affective and institutional regime that positions language learners as self-investing subjects responsible for managing their own linguistic capital (De Costa, Park, & Wee, 2019). Within this framework, language learning is reframed not as a collective cultural practice but as a strategic investment aimed at enhancing personal competitiveness in global markets. This transformation also reshapes learners' identity construction, as individuals increasingly align their linguistic practices with market-oriented expectations and self-development trajectories (Wang, 2021). Recent scholarship further emphasizes how neoliberal governance reshapes language learning into a form of self-management and employability enhancement, aligning linguistic competence with market-driven notions of productivity and mobility (Flores, 2013; Block, Gray, & Holborow, 2012).

Linguistic entrepreneurship can also be understood as a process through which individuals and institutions mobilize language resources to generate economic value, positioning teachers, learners, and educational providers as entrepreneurial actors who package, brand, and market language skills (De Costa, Park, & Wee, 2019). These dynamics are closely related to the development of learner agency, where individuals actively reshape their educational and professional trajectories in response to evolving linguistic and economic demands (Yang & Han, 2022).

Linguistic entrepreneurship therefore extends beyond formal education systems to include private tutoring services, online platforms, and short-term training events, reflecting the broader marketization of language learning in the global knowledge economy (Piller & Cho, 2013; Duchêne & Heller, 2012). More recent studies highlight how these dynamics are intensified by digital platforms and the gig economy, further blurring the boundaries between education, service provision, and entrepreneurial self-branding (Darvin & Norton, 2021).

Commodification of Language

The commodification of language refers to the transformation of linguistic resources into marketable commodities (Heller, 2010). Within commodified contexts, language is valued less for its communicative or cultural functions and more for its exchange value, often quantified through

certificates, test scores, and standardized benchmarks. This shift also raises concerns about the erosion of authenticity in language learning, as linguistic practices become increasingly oriented toward standardized performance rather than meaningful communication (Chen, 2024). This shift reflects broader socio-economic transformations in which language becomes a measurable asset within global knowledge economies (Duchêne & Heller, 2012).

In the case of English, commodification is closely linked to global inequalities, as access to high-quality language education frequently depends on socioeconomic resources and institutional access (Block, Gray, & Holborow, 2012). The expansion of test preparation industries and private language services reinforces the perception that English proficiency can be purchased, optimized, and monetized, thereby normalizing market participation as a pathway to linguistic capital and social mobility (Piller & Cho, 2013; Xu, 2023).

English Testing, Mobility, and Aspiration

Standardized English proficiency tests have become powerful instruments regulating access to global mobility, functioning as gatekeeping mechanisms for scholarships, international education, and professional advancement (Inoue, 2019; Xi, 2025). Within this framework, testing systems not only assess linguistic competence but also institutionalize hierarchies of access, linking language proficiency to broader structures of inequality and opportunity. At a broader level, the globalization of language testing has been closely linked to the expansion of transnational education systems and the increasing standardization of linguistic assessment practices across national boundaries (Spolsky, 2017). Recent scholarship highlights how language testing operates within global mobility regimes, shaping access to transnational education and labor opportunities while reinforcing institutional standards of linguistic legitimacy.

Research on high-stakes language testing further indicates that preparation practices often prioritize efficiency, strategic test-taking techniques, and score maximization rather than communicative competence. These tendencies reflect market-oriented approaches to language learning and the washback effects of standardized assessment regimes (Green, 2007; McNamara & Roever, 2006; Azizi & Ismail, 2023). Recent discussions in language testing ethics also emphasize the importance of transparency, fairness, and accountability in assessment systems, particularly in relation to institutional responsibilities toward test-takers (Deygers & Van Cauwenberge, 2026). More recent studies also emphasize that issues of test validity and ethical responsibility play a central role in shaping assessment practices and learners' experiences (Gao & Liu, 2023).

In Indonesia and other Global South contexts, English testing has become embedded in narratives of upward mobility, particularly among students and early-career professionals seeking international opportunities (Nguyen & Hajek, 2022; Widodo, 2016). Consequently, test preparation seminars operate at the intersection of language learning, aspiration, and economic investment, positioning English proficiency as both a mobility resource and a future-oriented asset.

Collectively, these perspectives highlight how English language learning increasingly operates within market-oriented logics where linguistic skills are treated as forms of capital linked to mobility and opportunity. However, much of the existing scholarship has focused on formal educational institutions or large commercial language centers.

Less attention has been paid to short-term, event-based language initiatives such as test preparation seminars, particularly in emerging educational markets such as Indonesia. Examining these micro-level educational events therefore provides an opportunity to understand how linguistic entrepreneurship is enacted in everyday learning contexts, particularly in short-term language enterprises that operate outside formal educational institutions. In this sense, participation in English test preparation can be understood as a form of linguistic entrepreneurship, where individuals strategically invest in test-oriented skills to enhance their mobility prospects and future opportunities

METHOD

Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative case study design to explore linguistic entrepreneurship within a specific educational context. A case study approach is particularly suitable for examining complex

social phenomena situated in real-life settings, where the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are not clearly defined (Yin, 2018).

Because linguistic entrepreneurship involves the interaction of language practices, economic logics, and individual aspirations, a qualitative case study enables a holistic understanding of how these dynamics unfold within a specific educational event. This design also allows the researcher to capture participants' perspectives, meanings, and experiences, which are essential for interpreting how English test preparation is constructed as an economic and mobility-oriented practice.

To complement the qualitative findings, a small-scale quantitative evaluation such as pre-test and post-test was also conducted to assess participants' learning outcomes before and after the training session. This complementary analysis strengthens the study by linking qualitative interpretations of linguistic entrepreneurship with measurable learning outcomes generated through the training program.

Research Site and Context

The research site was an English test preparation seminar entitled *"Easy Way to Prepare English Testing."* The seminar was organized as a paid, short-term educational event targeting university students, recent graduates, and early-career professionals seeking to improve their English proficiency test scores.

This event-based format reflects the growing expansion of private and semi-formal language learning initiatives operating outside traditional educational institutions. Such seminars represent emerging spaces where language learning intersects with market logics, mobility aspirations, and practices of self-investment. As such, the seminar provides a relevant site for examining how linguistic entrepreneurship is enacted in practice within the Indonesian context.

Participants

Participants consisted of 10 individuals, including one seminar organizer and nine attendees who were master's students majoring in economics at one of universities in Indonesia. The organizer served as a key informant, providing insights into the objectives, structure, and promotional strategies of the seminar, while attendees shared their motivations, expectations, and experiences.

Attendees were purposively selected to capture diverse perspectives and came from varied educational and professional backgrounds, including undergraduate students, recent graduates, and early-career professionals. This diversity enabled a richer understanding of how individuals with different aspirations and life trajectories engage with English test preparation as an investment in future opportunities.

To protect participants' privacy, pseudonyms were used and identifying details were removed from the data.

Data Collection

Data were collected using three complementary methods to ensure depth and triangulation of perspectives. Participant observation was conducted during the seminar to examine instructional practices, interaction patterns, and entrepreneurial elements, including branding strategies, promotional narratives, and the framing of English proficiency as an investable asset.

Semi-structured interviews were carried out with the organizer(s) and selected participants to explore their motivations, expectations, and perceptions of English testing and its perceived value for future mobility and career opportunities.

Document analysis included promotional materials, presentation slides, and participant feedback forms. These materials were analyzed to identify discourses of commodification, entrepreneurial positioning, and the representation of English proficiency as economic capital.

Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative data were analyzed thematically using an inductive coding approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Field notes, interview transcripts, and documentary materials were read repeatedly to

achieve familiarity with the data. Initial codes were generated to capture recurring ideas, patterns, and meanings emerging from participants' narratives and observed practices.

These codes were then organized into broader analytical themes related to linguistic entrepreneurship, participant motivations, mobility aspirations, and the commodification of English. Through an iterative process, themes were refined and interpreted in relation to the study's theoretical framework.

To enhance analytical credibility, data from observations, interviews, and documents were compared to identify converging patterns and ensure consistency across sources.

Quantitative Evaluation of Training Outcomes

To examine the instructional impact of the training program, a quantitative evaluation was conducted using a pre-test and post-test design. Participants completed a short assessment before and after the seminar to measure their understanding of English test preparation strategies.

Descriptive statistics were first calculated to summarize the distribution of scores. Prior to conducting the main analysis, the assumption of normality was tested using the Shapiro–Wilk test. Because the normality assumption was satisfied, a paired-samples *t*-test was used to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores. This statistical procedure allowed the researcher to evaluate whether participation in the seminar resulted in measurable improvements in participants' understanding of English testing strategies.

Ethical Considerations

All participants provided informed consent prior to data collection. Participation was voluntary, and individuals were informed of their right to withdraw at any time without consequence. Pseudonyms were used to protect participants' identities, and identifying details were removed from the data to ensure anonymity. All data were stored securely and used solely for research purposes.

FINDINGS

The Seminar as an Entrepreneurial Space

The seminar was explicitly framed as a solution-oriented product that promised efficiency, practical strategies, and measurable score improvement. Promotional materials and opening presentations emphasized ease, speed, and access to "insider" knowledge about test-taking techniques. This framing positioned the organizer not merely as an instructor, but as an expert entrepreneur offering valuable linguistic capital to participants seeking competitive advantage.

Marketing language highlighted time-saving strategies, guaranteed effectiveness, and strategic shortcuts, reinforcing the perception that success in English testing could be achieved through targeted investment. Such framing illustrates the entrepreneurial packaging of language knowledge as a purchasable resource designed to enhance participants' mobility prospects and future opportunities.

Participant Motivations and Aspirations

Participants described motivations closely tied to scholarships, employment requirements, and opportunities for overseas study. English proficiency was widely perceived as a strategic investment capable of generating future returns in the form of educational access, career advancement, and international mobility.

Several participants framed their attendance as a calculated step toward improving competitiveness in both global and national job markets. This orientation reflects an entrepreneurial self-positioning in which individuals assume responsibility for enhancing their own linguistic capital in order to secure future opportunities.

Discourses of Commodification

English proficiency was consistently framed in quantifiable terms, with strong emphasis on test scores, performance benchmarks, and strategic test-taking techniques. Instructional content prioritized measurable outcomes, positioning success in English primarily as the attainment of targeted score thresholds rather than the development of communicative competence.

Within this discourse, language learning was presented as a transactional process in which participants invest time and money in exchange for improved scores and expanded opportunities. This framing reinforces the commodification of language by transforming English proficiency into a measurable and purchasable asset linked to mobility and economic advancement.

Learning Outcomes of the Training Program

The quantitative evaluation of the training program provides additional evidence regarding its instructional impact. Prior to conducting the main analysis, the assumption of normality for the difference scores between the pre-test and post-test was examined using the Shapiro–Wilk test. The result ($p = .080$) indicated that the data did not significantly deviate from a normal distribution, allowing the use of parametric statistical testing.

Descriptive statistics show that the mean pre-test score of participants ($N = 10$) was 53.00, while the mean post-test score increased to 72.00. This difference suggests a noticeable improvement in participants' understanding of English testing strategies following the seminar.

To determine whether this improvement was statistically significant, a paired-samples t-test was conducted. The results indicate a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores ($t = -4.146$, $p = .002$), demonstrating that participation in the seminar contributed to measurable learning gains among the participants.

In addition to the test scores, participant evaluations of the training implementation were also examined. The evaluation results show consistently high scores across several indicators, including the clarity of material delivery, the quality of instructional content, punctuality of the trainer, professional attitude, and interaction with participants. The clustering of scores near the upper end of the evaluation scale suggests that participants perceived both the instructional approach and the training content very positively.

Taken together, these results indicate that the seminar functioned both as an entrepreneurial language enterprise and as an effective pedagogical intervention that improved participants' understanding of English test preparation.

DISCUSSION

This study demonstrates that English test preparation seminars function as important sites of linguistic entrepreneurship in contemporary Indonesia, where language learning is reorganized around market-oriented logics of investment, efficiency, and mobility. Drawing on recent discussions of language learning under neoliberal conditions and the increasing alignment between linguistic competence and market participation (Darvin & Norton, 2021), the findings illustrate how language education is increasingly organized around market-oriented logics that emphasize self-investment, efficiency, and individual responsibility. These findings also resonate with broader discussions on the globalization of language testing, where standardized assessments contribute to the institutionalization of linguistic competence as a measurable requirement for mobility and access to global opportunities (Spolsky, 2017).

The seminar setting reveals how English proficiency is reframed as a strategic asset within broader mobility and employability regimes. Rather than being confined to formal educational institutions, language learning emerges as a market-mediated practice in which individuals actively invest in linguistic capital to enhance future opportunities. In this context, participants are positioned as self-managing subjects responsible for optimizing their skills in response to global competition.

The quantitative evaluation of the training program further supports this interpretation. The improvement observed between pre-test and post-test scores suggests that the seminar did not merely reproduce entrepreneurial language discourses but also provided measurable instructional benefits for participants. This dual function highlights how entrepreneurial language initiatives can simultaneously operate as pedagogical interventions and market-oriented educational services.

Linguistic Entrepreneurship and Neoliberal Subjectivities

The seminar positioned both the organizer and participants as entrepreneurial actors within a market-oriented learning environment. The organizer framed the seminar as a value-added product,

emphasizing efficiency, strategic shortcuts, and measurable outcomes. This framing aligns with contemporary discussions of language learning under neoliberal conditions, where learners are positioned as autonomous investors who must continuously upgrade their skills to remain competitive in global markets (Darvin & Norton, 2021). Participants were encouraged to view English proficiency not as a long-term educational process, but as a strategic asset that could be optimized through targeted investment.

Interview data further illustrate this entrepreneurial positioning. One participant noted that attending the seminar was "worth the fee because it saves time and gives direct strategies," reflecting a cost–benefit evaluation of language learning. Another participant described English preparation as "a requirement to unlock opportunities," explicitly linking language proficiency to anticipated returns such as scholarships and overseas study. These narratives echo broader observations that neoliberal language learning environments produce self-managing subjects who internalize market rationalities and assume responsibility for enhancing their own competitiveness (Darvin & Norton, 2021).

Commodification of English Through Testing Discourses

The seminar contributed to the commodification of English by framing proficiency in quantifiable and transactional terms. English was predominantly discussed through scores, benchmarks, and discrete test components rather than communicative practices or broader language competencies. Observational data indicated that instructional content focused heavily on test-taking strategies, prediction of question types, and techniques designed to maximize scores within limited preparation time.

These practices reflect Monica Heller (2010)'s notion of language commodification, whereby linguistic resources are detached from their social and cultural contexts and rearticulated as marketable goods. This process also aligns with broader accounts of the political economy of language, in which linguistic competence becomes embedded within market structures that assign exchange value to measurable forms of language performance (Duchêne & Heller, 2012). Promotional materials reinforced this framing by emphasizing outcomes such as "higher scores," "faster preparation," and "proven strategies," positioning English proficiency as a purchasable commodity.

This discourse not only legitimizes paid preparation services but also normalizes the idea that linguistic capital can be acquired through market participation. In doing so, language learning becomes reframed as an economic transaction in which measurable outcomes take precedence over communicative development and cultural engagement.

English, Mobility, and Unequal Access

While participants generally perceived the seminar as empowering, the findings also raise critical questions concerning inequality and access. Attendance required financial investment, time availability, and prior familiarity with English testing systems, factors that may exclude individuals from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. This reveals a central tension within linguistic entrepreneurship: although it promises mobility and opportunity, it may simultaneously reproduce existing social inequalities. Such dynamics reflect broader discussions on the globalization of language testing, where standardized assessments operate within institutional systems that regulate access to educational and professional mobility across national contexts (Spolsky, 2017).

Several participants explicitly linked English proficiency to international mobility, particularly in relation to scholarships and overseas education. One interviewee stated that "without IELTS, it is impossible to apply abroad," underscoring the gatekeeping role of standardized tests. In this sense, English testing operates not only as an assessment tool but also as a regulatory mechanism that stratifies access to global opportunities. This gatekeeping function aligns with contemporary research highlighting how large-scale testing systems establish standardized thresholds that determine eligibility for transnational education and migration opportunities (Xi, 2025).

By positioning English proficiency as a prerequisite for mobility, testing systems contribute to a hierarchy of access in which opportunities are unevenly distributed according to individuals' economic and informational resources.

Comparison with Other Contexts

Similar patterns have been documented across Asia and other Global South contexts, where English test preparation industries have expanded rapidly in response to globalization and the internationalization of education. Studies in countries such as China, South Korea, and Vietnam show how private language training centers capitalize on mobility aspirations and construct English proficiency as a form of economic capital linked to educational and career advancement (Nguyen & Hajek, 2022; Widodo, 2016).

The Indonesian case examined in this study aligns with these broader regional trends while also highlighting the growing importance of short-term, event-based language entrepreneurship. Unlike large commercial language institutions, the seminar format represents a small-scale, temporary initiative that nonetheless operates within the same market-oriented logic (Darvin & Norton, 2021).

By focusing on an event-based seminar rather than a formal institution, this study extends existing literature by demonstrating that linguistic entrepreneurship can also be enacted through micro-level, short-term initiatives. Despite their temporary nature, such initiatives play a meaningful role in circulating neoliberal language ideologies and shaping learner subjectivities (Darvin & Norton, 2021).

IMPLICATIONS

Implications for Applied Linguistics Research

This study contributes to applied linguistics by empirically demonstrating how linguistic entrepreneurship operates at the micro level of educational events. By examining a short-term seminar, the findings highlight how language commodification and entrepreneurial subject formation occur beyond formal educational institutions.

The study also shows that entrepreneurial language initiatives may simultaneously function as pedagogical interventions and market-oriented educational services. The observed improvement in participants' post-training scores suggests that such initiatives can generate measurable learning outcomes while circulating neoliberal language ideologies.

Future research should therefore move beyond classroom-based settings to investigate seminars, workshops, online coaching platforms, and other informal learning spaces as significant sites where language learning intersects with market logics, mobility aspirations, and neoliberal subjectivities. Exploring these emerging contexts can deepen understanding of how linguistic capital is produced, circulated, and valued in contemporary globalized societies.

Implications for English Language Education

For educators, the findings highlight the need to critically reflect on the balance between test-oriented instruction and the development of broader communicative competence. While test preparation responds to genuine learner needs related to academic and professional mobility, an overemphasis on measurable outcomes and score attainment risks narrowing the broader educational purposes of language learning.

At the same time, the quantitative improvement observed in participants' test scores suggests that targeted preparation strategies can support learners' understanding of testing systems when implemented effectively. This indicates that test preparation does not necessarily contradict pedagogical goals, but rather requires careful integration with communicative and context-sensitive language practices.

By maintaining this balance, educators can support students' immediate mobility-oriented goals while also fostering meaningful language use, intercultural awareness, and long-term communicative competence.

Policy and Equity Implications

From a policy perspective, the expansion of private English language entrepreneurship raises important concerns regarding equitable access to linguistic capital. Reliance on standardized testing and market-based preparation services may disproportionately advantage individuals with greater financial resources, access to information, and prior educational support, thereby reinforcing existing social inequalities.

While short-term entrepreneurial initiatives such as test preparation seminars may provide valuable learning opportunities, their accessibility often depends on participants' economic capacity and familiarity with international education pathways.

Policymakers should therefore consider how public education systems can mitigate these disparities by strengthening equitable access to quality English instruction, providing affordable test preparation support, and expanding informational outreach regarding scholarship and mobility opportunities. Such measures can help ensure that access to global educational and professional pathways is not determined solely by individuals' economic capacity.

CONCLUSION

This article has examined English test preparation seminars in Indonesia as sites of linguistic entrepreneurship where language learning, economic logics, and mobility aspirations intersect within short-term, market-oriented language initiatives. Through a qualitative case study supported by quantitative evaluation, the findings demonstrate how English proficiency is commodified and how learners are positioned as entrepreneurial subjects responsible for investing in their own linguistic capital.

The study also shows that entrepreneurial language initiatives may simultaneously function as pedagogical interventions and market-oriented educational services. The observed improvement in participants' post-training scores suggests that such initiatives not only reproduce neoliberal language ideologies but can also provide measurable learning benefits for participants seeking to navigate high-stakes testing environments.

By extending the concept of linguistic entrepreneurship to short-term, event-based educational initiatives, this study contributes to ongoing debates in applied linguistics and sociolinguistics. It highlights how market-oriented language practices reshape learning into an economic investment while simultaneously structuring access to mobility opportunities.

The study calls for more critical engagement with the socio-economic consequences of language commodification, particularly in contexts marked by inequality and intensifying global competition. Understanding these dynamics is essential for developing more equitable and socially responsive approaches to language education in a globalized world.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study is limited by its focus on a single seminar and a relatively small number of participants, which may constrain the generalizability of the findings. In addition, the event-based nature of the study captures a specific moment of engagement rather than long-term learning trajectories or outcomes.

Future research could adopt comparative designs across multiple seminars or language training initiatives to examine how linguistic entrepreneurship operates in diverse settings. Comparative studies across different institutional contexts may help clarify how entrepreneurial language practices vary between formal institutions, private training centers, and informal learning environments.

Further studies may also investigate digital forms of English language entrepreneurship, including online coaching platforms, social media-based language marketing, and app-based learning services, which are rapidly expanding in contemporary language markets.

Finally, longitudinal research would be particularly valuable in exploring how participation in such initiatives shapes learners' educational pathways, career opportunities, and mobility trajectories over time.

REFERENCES

Azizi, Z., & Ismail, S. M. (2023). What ethical requirements should be considered in language classroom assessment? Insights from high school students. *Language Testing in Asia*, 13, Article 23. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40468-023-00235-3

Block, D., Gray, J., & Holborow, M. (2012). *Neoliberalism and applied linguistics*. Routledge.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Chen, N. (2024). Authenticity and language learning. In *Reference Module in Social Sciences*. Elsevier. https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-323-95504-1.00167-8

Darvin, R., & Norton, B. (2021). Investment and motivation in language learning: What's the difference? *Language Teaching, 54*(4), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444821000057

De Costa, P. I., Park, J. S.-Y., & Wee, L. (2019). Linguistic entrepreneurship as affective regime: Organizations, audit culture, and second/foreign language education policy. *Language Policy*, 18(3), 387–406. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10993-018-9492-4

Deygers, B., & Van Cauwenberge, D. (2026). The 2001 ILTA Code of Ethics: Philosophical foundations and historical context. *Language Testing*. https://doi.org/10.1177/02655322261428177

Duchêne, A., & Heller, M. (2012). *Language in late capitalism: Pride and profit*. Routledge.

Flores, N. (2013). The unexamined relationship between neoliberalism and plurilingualism. *TESOL Quarterly, 47*(3), 500–520. https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.114

Gao, S., & Liu, J. (2023). Ethical issues in language testing from a validity perspective. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 11, 697–708. https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2023.1110043

Green, A. (2007). *IELTS washback in context: Preparation for academic writing in higher education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Heller, M. (2010). The commodification of language. *Annual Review of Anthropology,* 39, 101–114. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.anthro.012809.104951

Inoue, A. B. (2019). *Labor-based grading contracts: Building equity and inclusion in the compassionate writing classroom*. Fort Collins, CO: The WAC Clearinghouse. https://doi.org/10.37514/PER-B.2019.0216.

McNamara, T., & Roever, C. (2006). Language testing: The social dimension. Oxford: Blackwell.

Nguyen, T. T. T., & Hajek, J. (2022). Anglo-Sino social mobility? English and Chinese language aspirations of international English-medium students in a Chinese-dominant context. *International Journal of Multilingualism*. https://doi.org/10.1080/14790718.2021.2002335

Piller, I., & Cho, J. (2013). Neoliberalism as language policy. *Language in Society, 42*(1), 23–44. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404512000887

Spolsky, B. (2017). *Language testing and globalization*. In E. Shohamy, I. Or, & S. May (Eds.), *Language testing and assessment* (pp. 123–140). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-02261-1_32

Widodo, H. P. (2016). Language policy in practice: Reframing the English language curriculum in the Indonesian secondary education sector. *English Teaching: Practice & Critique, 15*(3), 127–140. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-22464-0_6

Wang, Y. (2021). Authenticity of identity and second language learning. *SAGE Open*, 11(4). https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440211068516

Xi, X. (2025). Revisiting communicative competence in the age of AI: Implications for large-scale testing. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 45, 200–221. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190525000078

Xu, W. (2023). International students' linguistic entrepreneurship: Motivation, 'Chinese fever' and the neoliberal burden. *Research Papers in Education*. https://doi.org/10.1080/02671522.2023.2248613

Yang, S., & Han, J. (2022). Perspectives of transformative learning and professional agency: A native Chinese language teacher's story of teacher identity transformation in Australia. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.949673

Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods* (6th ed.). Sage.