

## **LANGUAGE AS A REFLECTION OF THOUGHTS AND A COMMUNICATION TOOL IN GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The language that emerges in interactions between individuals reflects the close relationship between language and culture, which contributes to the mindset and behavior of individuals. As a means of expression, language not only functions as a means of communication, but also as a reflection of how a person understands the world around them. Language reflects an individual's identity, shapes thinking habits, and influences how individuals interact with others. In the realm of language psychology, language is seen as an important factor in building perceptions, emotions, and effective communication patterns. Language is not only limited to verbal aspects, but also includes nonverbal expressions that help shape communication in guidance and counseling. Counselors who are able to use language cohesively, coherently, accurately, and meaningfully will be more effective in building empathetic relationships with clients. In the counseling process, the language used by the counselor must be able to create a comfortable, supportive atmosphere, and encourage clients to express their thoughts honestly. Thus, language becomes the main tool in building healthy communication, directing clients towards better self-understanding, and helping them find solutions to the problems they face. This study will further explore how the language used by counselors and the language responses of clients can affect the effectiveness of communication in guidance and counseling services. Data for this study will be collected through interviews with counselors and clients, as well as observations of counseling sessions, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the communication patterns and their impact on the counseling process. This study examines appropriate language use

strategies in the context of language education and psychology, in order to optimize interactions between counselors and clients and improve the quality of counseling services.

**Keywords:** *Language Psychology, Communication, Guidance and Counseling*

## INTRODUCTION

Communication is a process of interaction that involves the use of language as the primary medium in conveying and receiving messages. Language not only functions as a means of communication, but also as a reflection of a person's way of thinking and acting in everyday life. An individual's ability to understand language enables effective interaction, language develops from the social and cultural experiences experienced by the individual. (Masuda, T., & Wang, 2022) investigated how perception is guided by language and moderated by culture and beliefs. They found that language and culture together influence how individuals process information and understand the world around them. The relationship between language and culture greatly influences a person's mindset and behavior. Language is the primary means of expressing an individual's thoughts, which indirectly reflects their character and personality (Vaishnav, 2025). In the context of education, language has a central role as a medium for transferring knowledge, while in guidance and counseling, language is used as the primary tool for understanding the way of thinking and feeling of the counselee.

Guidance and counseling aim to optimize the potential possessed by the client through supportive and motivating interactions. Therefore, good language skills are a fundamental aspect in building a strong relationship between the counselor and the client. Language not only functions as a means of communication, but also as an instrument in building a therapeutic relationship and directing the client's behavioral intervention more effectively. In addition, counselors are also required to have the skills to respond to the client's statements appropriately, so that the process of clarification, understanding, and problem solving can run effectively (Adiputra, S., & Saputra, 2015). Effective communication in guidance and counseling is highly dependent on the use of appropriate language according

to the educational context, so that guidance services can run optimally and provide significant benefits for the development of the client.

This study emphasizes the crucial role of language in building a positive therapeutic relationship and delivering interventions that are appropriate to the educational context. The central argument is that effective counselor-client communication—both verbal and non-verbal—can significantly influence the success of guidance and counseling services in educational settings. To support this argument, data will be collected through interviews with school counselors and students, as well as questionnaires designed to explore perceptions of communication effectiveness and the counselor-client relationship. These methods aim to provide comprehensive insights into how language shapes the counseling experience and outcomes. Previous studies on guidance and counseling have largely focused on techniques, psychological approaches, or the outcomes of counseling sessions. However, there is still limited research that specifically examines the strategic use of language as a key factor influencing the effectiveness of counselor-client interactions. This study contributes to the field by highlighting the role of language not only as a medium of communication, but as a tool that shapes clients' cognitive and emotional responses within the educational counseling context.

Further research can explore strategies for using appropriate and effective language in guidance and counseling, aiming to increase the quality and impact of services and to provide greater benefits for clients' personal and academic development. By understanding how language influences thought patterns and behavior, counselors can become more precise in guiding clients and offering interventions, thereby optimizing the overall counseling process.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive analytical approach. Qualitative research is used to research natural object conditions, where the researcher is the key instrument, data collection techniques are carried out through triangulation, data analysis is inductive, and the results of qualitative research emphasize meaning rather than

generalization (Sugiyono, 2018). Contextual action theory focuses on goal-directed action, provides a theoretical connection between action and career, incorporates social context, and emphasizes the importance of meaning in human behavior (Young, R. A., & Valach, 2016). This approach was chosen to understand how language plays a role as a reflection of thoughts and a means of communication in guidance and counseling. This study focuses on the meaning and interpretation of language used in counselor and client interactions.

The methods used in this study are library research and in-depth interviews. The literature study was conducted to analyze relevant theories and concepts related to language, communication, and guidance and counseling. In-depth interviews were conducted with professional counselors to gain insight into their experiences in using language to understand and guide clients. The informants in this study consisted of certified school counselors who have at least three years of experience working in educational institutions such as junior high schools and senior high schools. The criteria for selecting informants included: (1) having formal educational qualifications in guidance and counseling, (2) actively practicing in a school setting, and (3) having experience handling diverse student backgrounds and problems. These criteria were intended to ensure that the data collected would reflect both theoretical knowledge and practical experience in the use of language in counseling.

The data sources in this study consist of both primary and secondary data. The primary data were obtained from in-depth interviews with four professional counselors who work in various settings such as schools, universities, and psychological institutions. These interviews focused on their experiences and strategies in using language effectively during the counseling process. The secondary data include literature sources such as books, scientific journals, and previous research that discuss the role of language in communication, guidance, and counseling. These sources were used to support the analysis and interpretation of the findings from the interview data.

One counselor stated, "The words we choose matter a lot. Sometimes, just changing how we phrase a question can make a student feel more understood and open to talk." Another informant emphasized the importance of adjusting language based on the client's

emotional state: "If I see the student is anxious, I try to speak slowly and clearly, using simple and reassuring words."

Another counselor from a university setting explained, "In academic counseling, using empowering language like 'you are capable' or 'you have options' can motivate students who feel stuck." These utterances reflect how counselors strategically use language not only to convey information, but also to build trust and encourage positive change.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Language as a symbol of communication

Language as a symbol of communication plays a role as the main means of conveying messages, ideas, and emotions between individuals. In guidance and counseling, language not only functions as a means of communication between counselors and clients, but also reflects the client's mindset, emotions, and experiences. Through word choice, intonation, and verbal and nonverbal expressions, language reveals a person's psychological condition, allowing counselors to understand the client's feelings more deeply. Thus, language is not only a medium of communication, but also a reflection of thoughts that help counselors design effective guidance strategies according to the client's needs.

Language functions as a communication tool used by every individual in everyday life to convey information and arguments to others. Language cannot be separated from culture because it represents a nation and has a close relationship with the attitudes or behavior of the group of speakers of the language. In this case, language acts as a communication symbol that reflects the cultural and social realities of society.

This is supported by the theory of grammar which explains that languages spoken by larger and more socially complex groups tend to be morphologically simpler, suggesting grammar adapts to communicative efficiency (Lupyan, G., & Dale, 2016). In the context of guidance and counseling, this language adaptation is reflected in how counselors adjust their communication style, word choice, and language structure according to the psychological condition and needs of the client. Language as a reflection of the mind allows counselors to understand how clients think, feel, and experience, while as a communication tool, language becomes a means to build empathetic relationships and deliver effective solutions. Thus,

flexibility and adaptation of language in guidance and counseling communication are key to creating meaningful interactions and supporting the client's recovery process.

Language also has a social function that allows its users to express themselves and manipulate objects in their environment. In guidance and counseling, clients often use language to express their feelings, experiences, and hopes. These verbal expressions reflect their thoughts and emotions, which are then interpreted by the counselor to understand the client's psychological condition. Thus, language is not only a means of communication, but also a reflection of the client's mindset and emotional condition. In addition, language as a means of communication in guidance and counseling also plays a role in building a relationship of empathy and trust between the counselor and the client. The use of appropriate language, including the choice of gentle and non-judgmental words, helps create a comfortable atmosphere for the client to speak openly. Counselors can also use communication techniques such as reflection, paraphrasing, and clarification to ensure that the message conveyed by the client is understood correctly. This technique helps the client feel heard and understood, which is an important step in the counseling process.

In the perspective of language adaptation, the theory proposed by (Ellis, N. C., Römer, U., & O'Donnell, 2016) usage-based approaches to language acquisition and processing: Cognitive and corpus investigations of construction grammar. Each client has a different background, experience, and way of thinking, so counselors must be able to adjust the language used to suit the client's understanding and comfort. For example, counselors working with children need to use simpler and more visual language, while with adult clients, counselors can use more complex and reflective language. Language also has the power to shape a person's thoughts and perceptions of themselves and their environment. In guidance and counseling, the choice of words a counselor uses can influence how clients view their problems. Positive and empowering language can help clients build self-confidence and find solutions to the problems they face. Conversely, negative or less supportive language can worsen a client's emotional condition. Therefore, counselors must be careful in choosing words so that they can have a positive impact on clients.

In addition to being a verbal communication tool, language can also be used in written form as part of the counseling process. Techniques such as writing a journal or letter can help clients express their feelings and reflect on their experiences. In some cases, clients who have difficulty expressing their feelings verbally may find it easier to do so through writing. Therefore, language in written form is also an important part of the communication process in guidance and counseling. Language as a communication system plays an important role in guidance and counseling. As a reflection of thoughts, language helps to express the psychological condition of the client, while as a communication tool, language allows for effective interaction between counselor and client. By understanding how language functions in communication and social adaptation, counselors can create a supportive environment, build empathetic relationships, and help clients find solutions to their problems. Therefore, a deep understanding of language and its use becomes a very important aspect in effective guidance and counseling practice.

## **2. Language on Thought Patterns and Behavior**

Language use can affect a person's mental representations, even outside the context of direct communication. This study shows that language experience can lead to systematic differences in cognitive representations, supporting the view that language has long-term effects on an individual's mindset. Language has a fundamental role in shaping human thought patterns and behavior. As a means of communication, language not only conveys information, but also influences how a person understands the world, forms self-concept, and interacts with the social environment. For example, individuals who speak a language with a complex grammatical system may have a more analytical way of thinking compared to those who use a language with a simpler structure. In the context of behavior, language also plays an important role in shaping habits and social norms. The way a person speaks, chooses words, and constructs sentences reflects his or her cultural background, education, and life experiences. Language can be used to build harmonious social relationships or, conversely, can be a tool that triggers conflict. In guidance and counseling, understanding the relationship between language, thought patterns, and behavior is very important. Counselors need to understand how the language clients use reflects the way they think and



feel, so they can provide appropriate responses to help clients change negative thought patterns and develop more adaptive behaviors.

Writing is a way of thinking, a way of discovering what you think (Murray, 2019). In this process, individuals have time to reflect on ideas, construct arguments, and organize appropriate language structures, so that writing is considered a higher form of language than oral communication. Effective counseling requires the ability to understand and communicate the client's worldview, which includes their language, thought processes, and cultural norms. In guidance and counseling, language plays an important role as a communication tool that helps counselors understand the psychological condition and thought patterns of clients. Counselors can analyze how clients use language, both verbally and in writing, to express emotions, experiences, and challenges they face. Moreover, the language used in counseling sessions not only reflects the client's mental state, but can also be directed to form more rational and responsible thinking.

Language is not merely a vehicle for expressing pre-existing thoughts; it is a medium that shapes and constrains thought itself. The structure and vocabulary of a language influence the way its speakers perceive and conceptualize the world (Lucy, 2016). In this case, the counselor is responsible for guiding the client to use language more consciously, teach more objective ways of thinking, and build behavioral patterns that are in accordance with social norms. Thus, language not only reflects a person's thoughts, but also becomes an effective tool in helping clients understand themselves, develop more positive thinking, and build more responsible behavior. In the International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences, Gomila puts forward the Neo-Whorfian hypothesis, which states that language influences our cognitive categories and perceptions. While not entirely deterministic, language can shape how we categorize and understand the world Antoni (Gomila, 2015). Understanding the flow of language has a major impact on various aspects of life, especially in the fields of education, psychology, and social communication. In the world of education, understanding how language shapes thinking can help teachers design more effective learning strategies. In psychology and counseling, language is an important tool for counselors to understand the emotional state and thought patterns of clients, and to



help them develop more positive and rational thinking. Awareness of the arbitrary nature of language can also increase tolerance for cultural and linguistic differences. Someone who understands that the meaning of words is the result of social agreement will be more receptive to language variations and dialects in everyday communication.

### **3. The Role of Language in Education, Guidance, and Counseling**

Language plays a very important role in various aspects of human life, including education, guidance, and counseling. Meaning is the basis of the philosophy of language which emphasizes that when individuals speak, they are actually conveying meaning to others. In the context of education, language is not only a means of communication, but also becomes the main medium in the process of learning and intellectual development. Likewise in guidance and counseling, language becomes a means that allows a counselor to understand his clients and help them find solutions to the problems they face.

In the world of education, language plays a key role in the delivery of knowledge, the formation of mindsets, and the development of students' social skills. Through language, educators can provide a deeper understanding of a concept, encourage students to think critically, and teach moral and ethical values. The learning process does not only depend on students' ability to understand the material logically, but also on how they are able to articulate their thoughts through language. Thus, good language proficiency will help students develop analytical skills and more effective communication skills.

In the context of guidance and counseling, language functions as the main tool in the interaction between counselors and clients. Guidance and counseling is a process carried out by counselors to help students or clients to make decisions or solve a problem through understanding the facts, hopes, needs, and feelings of the client. The goal is for clients to be able to see their problems more clearly so that they can choose the most appropriate way out. In this process, the choice of words, tone of voice, and method of delivery greatly determine the effectiveness of communication between the counselor and the client.

According to, language has a central role in the process of education, guidance, and counseling. Language not only functions as a means of communication, but also as a means to develop thinking skills, communicate, and understand educational situations. In the

context of counseling, language reflects individual feelings and behavior, and plays a role in self-expression, social control, and social integration.

Language also functions as a reflection of one's thoughts in guidance and counseling. A client who is experiencing confusion or emotional stress often shows irregularities in their use of language, such as speaking unstructuredly, using emotional words, or even being silent because they are unable to express their thoughts. A good counselor will be able to recognize their client's language patterns and help them organize and understand their thoughts more directedly. In addition, language has the power to build awareness and self-reflection. In counseling sessions, counselors often use reflective questioning techniques to explore clients' thoughts and feelings. Through effective dialogue, clients can see their problems from different perspectives and find more rational solutions. This process shows that language is not only a means of communication, but also a means of organizing and understanding the world around us.

Most counselors work to help clients find their way in various aspects of life, including education, work, relationships, and family. Throughout this process, counselors are tasked with defining the client's efforts with the rules and consultative approaches in counseling. In practice, counselors and clients engage in communication-centered interactions, with language as the primary tool in conveying messages, exploring problems, and understanding the client's experience. Therefore, the effectiveness of communication in counseling depends not only on the understanding of counseling theory and practice, but also on how language is used to build a good therapeutic relationship between counselor and client.

In the counseling process, language is not only a means of verbal communication, but also reflects the psychological condition and mindset of the client. Counselors must be able to listen with empathy, adjust their communication style to the client's needs, and interpret the meaning behind the words expressed. In addition, language is also a tool for counselors to provide insight, direct clients' thinking, and help them understand themselves better.

Effective communication can help clients feel heard, appreciated, and understood, so that they are more open in expressing the problems they face and more confident in finding solutions. However, in practice, a counselor often faces various obstacles that can hinder the

effectiveness of communication in counseling sessions. According (Li, X., Kivlighan, D. M., Jr., & Gold, 2015), identified common mistakes made by novice group counseling trainers, such as a lack of understanding of the stages of group development and errors in dealing with problematic group members. These mistakes can affect group dynamics and therapy outcomes.

First, error of approach, which is an error in choosing a counseling method or strategy that is not in accordance with the client's needs. Counselors who do not understand the characteristics of their clients may use an irrelevant approach, so that the client feels uncomfortable or has difficulty understanding the directions given.

Second, error of interpretation, which is an error in interpreting the client's statement or expression. This error can occur if the counselor is too quick to conclude or assume a certain meaning without considering the context and background of the client. This can lead to miscommunication and reduce the effectiveness of the intervention carried out.

Third, language errors, namely the use of language that is inappropriate or difficult for the client to understand. Counselors must be able to adjust their language style to the client's level of understanding and cultural background. Language that is too technical, abstract, or rigid can make the client feel confused and less connected to the counselor. Therefore, it is important for counselors to use clear, simple, and empathetic language so that communication runs effectively.

Fourth, error of judgment, which is an error in giving advice or solutions to clients. Counselors must be careful in giving advice and ensure that the decisions made are truly based on a deep understanding of the client's situation.

Fifth, the error of omnipotence, which is when the counselor feels that he has full authority over the client and ignores the client's perspective and desires. Counseling should be a collaborative process, not just one-way instructions.

By understanding the importance of language as a communication tool in counseling and avoiding the various mistakes that can occur, counselors can create better relationships with clients. The use of appropriate language not only helps clients understand their

problems more clearly, but also encourages them to be more confident in finding solutions that suit their needs.

In the context of guidance and counseling, language has a very important role as the main communication tool between counselor and client. Language is not just a means to convey messages, but also a medium that allows a deeper understanding of the psychological condition, feelings, and thoughts of the client.

Language in the guidance and counseling process functions not only as a means of communication, but also as an important medium for building a therapeutic relationship of mutual understanding between counselors and clients. Language allows counselors to explore problems in depth and help clients formulate solutions that suit their needs. Therefore, effective language skills are the main skills that every counselor must have so that the counseling process runs optimally (Yulianti, Y., Zubaidah, Z., & Amalianita, 2024).

Overall, language in guidance and counseling not only functions as a means of communication, but also as a means to build understanding, create therapeutic relationships, and help clients find solutions to the problems they face. Therefore, counselors need to have good language skills in order to carry out the language function optimally in every guidance and counseling session.

## **CONCLUSION**

Language is a fundamental communication tool that plays a crucial role in education, guidance, and counseling. In education, language is not only used to convey information but also to shape students' mindsets, enhance critical thinking, construct logical arguments, and understand diverse perspectives. It helps individuals adapt, communicate effectively, and develop cognitive skills necessary for learning and interaction.

In guidance and counseling, language carries a deeper psychological function. Counselors use empathetic and supportive language to build trust, help clients identify problems, and guide them toward solutions. Language enables clients to express emotions, gain self-awareness, and understand their social environment, influencing their behavior and decision-making. Beyond communication, language also reflects personality, emotions,

and worldview—serving as a bridge that connects thought, feeling, and social relationships, and thus shaping identity and human interaction in everyday life.

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