

## CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY AN ACTIVE BILINGUAL CHILD IN PRODUCTIVE SKILLS

Putu Devi Mas Wulandari<sup>1)</sup>, Ni Putu Era Marsakawati<sup>2)</sup>, Ni Luh Putu Eka Sulistia Dewi<sup>3)</sup>, Made Hery Santosa<sup>4)</sup>

<sup>1,2,3,4)</sup> Postgraduate of English Language Education, Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha

### SUBMISSION TRACK

Submitted : 19 August 2022  
Accepted : 20 September 2022  
Published : 18 October 2022

### KEYWORDS

Active Bilingual Child, Bahasa Indonesia, English Language, Productive Skills

### CORRESPONDENCE

E-mail: devimasw@gmail.com

### A B S T R A C T

The aim of this study was to describe the abilities and difficulties of bilingual children in speaking and writing in English and Bahasa Indonesia. A case study was used to design this research. The subject of this research was an 11-year-old, who communicated in both Bahasa Indonesia and English. Through observation, interview, videotaping of the child speaking English and Bahasa Indonesia, and document analysis, data were gathered. The result showed that the subject was an active bilingual child because he actively spoke Bahasa Indonesia as his mother tongue and English as his second language. In English speaking, he had constraints in pronouncing /wa:.zənt/, /ba:t/. In speaking Bahasa Indonesia, he missed speaking some words, such as *Hari*, *Dermaga*, *Bermain*. In writing English, he had difficulty in writing words. He dominantly had challenge in writing the Indonesian Language, especially in developing content, vocabulary used, and in grammar used.

### Introduction

Bilingual education is one of the most common methods today. García (2009) in Graham (2022), explains that bilingual education covers a broad spectrum of practices and policies. This is because bilingual education has been conceptualized and implemented through different languages and learning settings around the world (Baker & Wright, 2017). One of the countries that implements the field of bilingual education is Indonesia. As a developing country, Indonesia seeks to compete on a world scale, with English as one of the most important factors, by improving the quality of education through bilingual programs (Khabirova & Abrosimova, 2016).

Bilingualism is the acquisition of several languages for various reasons and under various circumstances and the application of that language or the process of learning a second language at a level closer to one's mother tongue (Cañado, 2020). It is very important to increase the communicative capacity of both languages—oral and written (productive skills), as well as knowledge of grammar (Özdemir & İftçi, 2021). A bilingual child should be able to achieve the required level of proficiency in this language course to allow for the potential benefits of having two languages to reduce comprehension problems and concerns (Dourou & Dosi, 2021).

English is an international communication tool and of course it must be studied to the fullest. So that later they can communicate with other people from different cultural and national backgrounds. Bilingualism has become the norm and not the exception worldwide. Everything, including education, has been affected by the growth of English as a world language and lingua franca (Anggi et al., 2022). According to Azka et al. (2022), English has always been one of the mandatory materials in the lesson structure at school. Therefore, English is a foreign language that is included in the National Examination. In principle, the bilingual program uses Indonesian and English as the language of instruction in the learning process.

In some countries, such as Indonesia, this initiative has proven important (Jayanti & Sujarwo, 2019). In Indonesia, one form of providing bilingual education is to establish an international standard school. Currently, many international schools are intended for bilingual and non-bilingual children who want to learn and are fluent in foreign languages (Anggi et al., 2022). From the statement above, it can be concluded that formal environments, such as learning in schools or social contexts, can be used to gain competence in using alternative languages (Hardiyanti, 2017).

Currently, many parents support their children to master foreign languages, especially English. Parents assume that the ability to master English from an early age will have a positive impact on the future and hope that their children can compete in the world of work (Mulyani, 2017). A similar case also occurs in the Indonesian context for bilingual children. When children communicate, they are more fluent in English at home and at school, than their mother tongue, Indonesian, which is used exclusively in extended family settings. This reason is based on the education of bilingual children who attend international schools to be more fluent in using English in their daily activities.

As something new, the application of bilingual programs in learning certainly has many obstacles (Portole's-Falomir, 2012). In its application, bilingual children sometimes become confused in using good and correct language, especially in productive skills, namely writing and speaking. Speaking and writing skills are productive skills that plays an essential role because they give the chances for students to experience the real-life activities (Murad et al., 2021). According to Brown (2004: 140), as cited in Sihotang, Sitanggang, Hasugian, & Saragih (2021), Speaking as a productive skill can be examined directly and empirically in which the accuracy and efficacy of the test takers' listening abilities are always a factor in what they observe, which of course jeopardizes the reliability and validity of oral skills. The writing ability is a complex language skill because it is included as a productive skill. Students must know what other components are needed in writing, such as grammar and vocabulary skills (Aini et al., 2022)

Based on observations, Nathan is an active bilingual child who is studying at an international school in Badung, Bali and is confused about using two languages. The limitations of bilingual child investigated in this study by using aspects of speaking and writing through identification of their writing and speaking in Indonesian and English. This study aims to determine the abilities and difficulties of bilingual children in productive skills (speaking and writing) in two languages, namely English and Indonesian.

### **Research Method**

To achieve the purpose of the study, a qualitative approach was implemented. Qualitative research is referred to as a naturalistic study in which the researcher is the primary instrument and the natural context serves as the primary source of data (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). Furthermore, a case study allows the researcher to explore phenomena. This research was designed using a case study. A case study is a research methodology that explores phenomena in a particular context (Rashid et al., 2019). The study is conducted through various data sources and explores through various lenses to reveal several aspects of the phenomenon (Baxter & Jack, 2008). This case study was utilized to identify the constraints of the bilingual child in using English as well as Bahasa Indonesia in speaking and writing.

The research participant of this study was an 11-year-old, and he was a fifth-grade student who spoke both Bahasa Indonesia and English. The researcher used a purposive

sample strategy to pick the study subjects. Using this method, the researcher determined what information is necessary and then went in search of sources willing and able to supply it based on their expertise or experience. (Etikan et al., 2016). In daily life, he communicated by using English at the house, at school, with his classmates, and with his companion when playing online games. Meanwhile, he communicated in Bahasa Indonesia with his big family, neighbors, and surroundings. His parents spoke English occasionally when he was younger, although Bahasa Indonesia was spoken more frequently.

The data for this study was obtained from interview, voice recording for speaking and a written a short text. In order to collect data for this study, the researcher took the following steps: 1) attempted to interview in order to obtain basic information on the bilingual child's language used in his daily activity. 2) observed the bilingual child by recording his speaking in telling his experience, and 3) asked him to write a short text in English and Indonesian (Rahayu, 2015). These were done to ensure that the data collected was consistent with what were observed.

In data analysis, it is carried out by continuous analysis after gathering all of the data (Huberman and Mile, 1984:27). An analysis model consists of three steps that must all be completed simultaneously: data reduction, data display, conclusion drawing or verification. This theory also followed theories from Gate Liao (2009) to analyze bilingual child's speaking ability and Weigle (2002) to analyze bilingual child's writing ability.

## Result and Discussion

Based on data analysis, it is revealed that the research participant was an active bilingual. Eventhough he was an active one, he still encounters some difficulties in his productive skills. This research used theories from Gate Liao (2009) to observe bilingual child's speaking ability and Weigle (2002) to observe bilingual child's writing ability. The detailed description is described in section below.

### 1. Bilingual Child in Speaking English and Bahasa Indonesia

Language of Environment	Home	Study Place or School	Big Family
Indonesian Language			✓
English Language	✓	✓	

**Table 1.** Table of Bilingual Child's environment language of the Bilingual Child

#### a. Analysis of Bilingual Child in Speaking English

Aspects of speaking	Strengths	Weaknesses
Accuracy	Mastery of sentence construction	Minor problem in constructing the sentence
Grammar	Use correct grammar	Minor problems in structure
Vocabulary	Good selection of words	Some repetition of pronoun "I"
Pronunciation	Confident	Fast
Fluency	Very fluent	Miss some stresses

**Table 2.** Table of analysis of the Subject in Speaking English

**b. The Challenges in Speaking English**

- Woksen = /wɑ:.zənt/ (Wasn't)
- Bot = /bɑ:t/ (Bought)
- Fleverd = /fleɪ.və/ (Flavour)

Based on the results of the analysis, there are three pronunciation of words. The three misspellings. The meaning of the word is still understandable. Overall, the speaking ability of the research subjects is in the good category. This is also supported by the results of data analysis, where there is a slight weakness in speaking.

**c. Analysis of Bilingual Child in speaking Bahasa Indonesia**

Aspects of speaking	Strengths	Weaknesses
Accuracy	Accurate use of structure	Minor problem in accuracy
Grammar	Use correct grammar	Minor problem in grammar
Vocabulary	Good selection of words	Some repetition of pronoun
Pronunciation	Confident	Little bit miss spelling because his accent more fluent in English
Fluency	Speak smoothly	The press is not feasible

Table 3. Analysis of the Subject in Speaking the Bahasa Indonesia

**d. The Challenges in Speaking Bahasa Indonesia**

- Harri = Hari
- Demaga = Dermaga
- Bemain = Bermain
- Besama = Bersama
- Kebali = Kembali
- Keluaga = Keluarga
- Menyenyangkan = Menyenangkan

There are seven mistakes of word pronunciation in analysis of the speaking constraints in Bahasa Indonesia. The errors in speaking are generally occur in pronunciation. In addition, based on the data, research subjects also have shortcomings in conveying word stress and do not pay attention to pauses in speaking.

**2. Bilingual Child in Writing English and Bahasa Indonesia**

**a. Analysis of Bilingual Child in English Writing**

Aspects of writing	Strengths	Weaknesses
Content	Main idea and supporting idea are connected	No title
Organization	Sentence meaning is clear	Minor problem in the organization
Vocabulary	Many vocabularies	Wrong word
Grammar	Good construction	Wrong structure
Mechanics	Good	Less of punctuations and capital letter

Table 4. Analysis of Bilingual Child in English Writing

**b. The Challenges in Writing English Text**

Based on the analysis results, the grammatical structure used follows the tenses, namely the Simple Past Tense, which describes activities that have passed. Errors that tend to arise are in the mechanical aspect, namely punctuation, and capital letters. The subject does not use appropriate punctuation. In addition, the use of capital letters is also still lacking in writing. Then, there are grammatical errors in writing, such as “I bought Crepes that was cheese and milk flavor.” That should be changed to those were because it shows two different foods’ taste.

**c. Analysis of Bilingual Child in Bahasa Indonesia Writing**

Aspects of writing	Strengths	Weaknesses
<b>Content</b>	Good and connected	No title
<b>Organization</b>	Clear and easy to understand	Minor problem
<b>Vocabulary</b>	Good selection of words	Wrong words
<b>Grammar</b>	Good construction	Miss some conjunction
<b>Mechanics</b>	Good	Lack of punctuation and capital letter

**Table 5.** Analysis of Bilingual Child in writing recount the Bahasa Indonesia

**d. The Challenges in Writing Bahasa Indonesia Text**

Based on the analysis results, the Indonesian text written by the research subjects is not much different from the text written in English. Errors that tend to arise are in the mechanical aspect, namely the use of punctuation and capital letters. The subject does not use appropriate punctuation. In addition, the use of capital letters is also still lacking in writing. Then, there is a grammar error in writing. There are written errors, such as “hermaga” which should be a “dermaga” and “berlajar” which should “belajar”.

Based on the findings of the investigation on the challenges faced by bilingual children learning to speak and write Indonesian and English, the result showed that the subject is an active bilingual child because he actively speaks English and has constraints dominantly in writing the Indonesian Language, especially in developing content (he did not put title), vocabulary (there are some wrong words), in grammar (there is some miss conjunction), in mechanic (there is lack of punctuation and capital letter).

**Discussion**

The results of the bilingual child's limitations in speaking and writing appear to be similar to and different from those of other studies that had been undertaken. Similar with this research, (Halitoğlu, 2021), also analyzed bilingual children in writing. Punctuation errors, spelling mistakes, and flaws in language translation came after writing issues with the. As a result, in order to develop their writing abilities in their home tongue, French students must go through a more rigorous learning process. Besides, (Nzai & Boleli, 2013), explored multilingual children from intercultural/interracial homes experience certain phenomenological issues while living in monolingual Spanish-speaking extended families. Data showed that, rather than being cognitively challenged, children who grow up bilingual can acquire more than simply the capacity to communicate in two languages. A slight improvement in one's capacity for creative thought can result from learning and understanding various languages. Actually, these pertinent studies described how bilingual people experienced issues that were largely comparable, but that varied



depending on the topic of the research, its history, its data sources, or the theory that was employed.

### Conclusion

This study concludes that bilingualism is the mutual existence of individuals or communities of two languages: native - primary and non-native - secondary or acquired. This study examined the difficulties that bilingual children encounter while trying to communicate in both English and Indonesian. According to the study, the subject was determined to be a bilingual child who actively spoke English at home, at school, and online with his school buddies. At the same time, his mother tongue was Indonesian, which was used in his big family and home environment. The subject had good ability in speaking English and more minor in writing Indonesian Language. The challenge that was faced by the bilingual child in using English in speaking was miss spelling the word. Besides in Bahasa Indonesia, there were seven mistakes of word pronunciation and research subjects also had shortcomings in conveying word stress and did not pay attention to pauses in speaking. In English writing, the subject had error in the grammatical structure used follows the tenses, namely the Simple Past Tense, which describes activities that had passed. Errors that tended to arise were in the mechanical aspects, namely punctuation, and capital letters. Then, there was a grammar error in writing. The subject did not use appropriate punctuation. In addition, the use of capital letters was also still lacking in writing. As same as in writing English, in Indonesian writing, he had error in the mechanical aspects, namely the use of punctuation and capital letters. The paragraph also was lack of punctuation and the use of capital letters.

### References

- Aini, N., Widayanti, D., & Winarto, A. (2022). An Analysis of Students' Ability in Writing Cause and Effect Essay at SMAN 1 Kediri. *Journey: Journal of English Language and Pedagogy*, 5(1), 64-73. <https://doi.org/10.33503/journey.v5i1.1813>
- Anggung, S. D., Basri, M., & Salija, K. (2022). Teachers' Bilingual Use in an Indonesia Primary Education. *Jornal of Art, Humanity and Social Studies*, 2(2), 16–26.
- Azka, M. Y. A., Ali, M., & Narimo, S. (2022). Implementasi Kurikulum Bilingual Dalam Meningkatkan Kualitas Bahasa Inggris di SD Bilingual. *Jurnal Sinektik*, 5(1), 8–14. <https://doi.org/10.33061/js.v5i1.6812>
- Baker, C., & Wright, W. E. (2017). *Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* (6th ed.). Multilingual Matters
- Baxter, P., & Jack, S. (2008). Qualitative Case Study Methodology: Study Design and Implementation for Novice Researchers. *The Qualitative Report*, 13(4), 544-559. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2008.1573>
- Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. (1992). *Qualitative Research for Education*. United States of America
- Cañado, M. L. P. (2020). Implementing Bilingual Education in Monolingual Contexts : Lessons Learned and Ways Forward. *The Language Learning Journal*, 48(1), 1–4. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2020.1695622>
- Dourou, C., & Dosi, I. (2021). One Word, Two Definitions: A Comparison of Word Definitional Skills between Monolingual and Bilingual Students. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 12(8), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.7176/JEP/12-8-01>

- Ekorini, P. Z. (2021). An Analysis on Students' Mistakes in Writing a Recount Text (A Case Study on Eighth-Grade Students of Mts Al-Amin Ngetos , Nganjuk). *Epigram*, 18(1), 49–58.
- Etikan, I., Musa, S. A., & Alkassim, R. S. (2016). Comparison of Convenience Sampling and Purposive Sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 5(1), 1–4. <https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ajtas.20160501.11>
- Halitoğlu, V. (2021). Determination of the Writing Errors of Bilingual Turkish Students in France (Example of Lyon). *Participatory Educational Research*, 8(4), 297–320.
- Hardiyanti, R. (2017). Analysis on the Difficulties Faced by a Bilingual Child in Reading and Writing. *Advances in Language and Literary Studie*, 8(4), 43–49.
- Jayanti, D., & Sujarwo, A. (2019). Bilingual Education In Indonesia : Between Idealism and the Reality. *Journal of Linguistic and English Teaching*, 4(1), 12–26.
- Khabirova, N. M., & Abrosimova, G. A. (2016). The Phenomenon of Bilingualism on the Current Stage. *International Journal of Humanities And Cultural Studies*, 2016, 74–80.
- Mile, M., & Huberman, M. (1984). *Qualitative Data Analysis*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage
- Mulyani. (2017). Identifying the Concept of Bilingualism and Bilinguals Through Seven Baker ' S Dimensions Of Bilingualism. *Englisia*, 5(1), 29–40.
- Murad, T., Yusra Ghadeer, S., & Assadi, J. (2021). The Effect of Teachers ' Attitudes Towards Collaborative Instruction on Students ' Writing and Speaking Skills. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 12(3), 343–351.
- Nzai, V. E., & Boleli, F. K. (2013). Challenges Faced by Bilingual Children from Mixed Parents in Predominantly Monolingual-Monocultural Spanish- Speaking Extended Families. *Mextesol Journal*, 37(2), 1–9.
- Özdemir, H., & Çiftçi, Ö. (2021). The Evaluation of Monolingual and Bilingual Students ' Writing Skills in Fifth Grade of Secondary School Comparatively. *International Journal of Education & Literacy Studies*, 9(3), 85–91.
- Portole´s-Falomir, L. (2012). Bilingual youth: Spanish in English-Speaking Societies. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 126–130.
- Rahayu, P. (2015). Students' Speaking Skill through Animation. *Jurnal Bahasa Dan Sastra Inggris*, 2(1), 25–33.
- Rashid, Y., Rashid, A., & Warraich, M. A. (2019). Case Study Method: A Step-by-Step Guide for Business Researchers. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 18, 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406919862424>
- Sihotang, A. M., Sitanggang, F., Hasugian, N., & Saragih, E. (2021). The Effective Way To Develop Speaking Skills. *Journal of Language Teaching and Learning, Linguistics and Literature*, 9(1), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.24256/ideas.v9i1.1777>