

INTEGRATING A BILINGUAL TO IMPROVE LEARNING OUTCOMES AT AT SRJ STATE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Article history: Received: July 21, 2024 Revised: July 28, 2024 Accepted: August 12, 2024 Published: August 15, 2024</p> <p>Keywords: Bilingual learning Elementary school students Car</p>	<p>In today's globalized world, English language proficiency is essential for academic and professional success. This study investigated the effectiveness of a bilingual learning approach in improving English language skills among second grade students at Sumberrejo Elementary School in Banyuwangi. The study involved 16 students and implemented a strategy that integrated Indonesian as a first language (L1) with English as a second language (L2). Using Classroom Action Research (CAR) methodology, this study conducted tests that showed an increase in students' English language skills, with an average score increasing from 79.6% to 86.1%. These findings highlight the benefits of a bilingual approach. Integrating L1 and L2 in the learning process facilitates better understanding and retention of English concepts, reduces cognitive load, and increases students' self-confidence. The use of culturally relevant local materials engages students by making learning more relevant and stimulating. This study underscores the importance of using students' mother tongue as a scaffold in English language learning. The bilingual method successfully overcomes language barriers and creates an inclusive classroom atmosphere, improving linguistic skills and enhancing cognitive abilities such as problem solving. Despite the diverse backgrounds of students, the bilingual approach effectively meets individual learning needs and preferences. This study concludes that the implementation of bilingual strategies, complemented by relevant local content, can significantly improve English teaching and learning in primary schools.</p> <p>This is an open access article under the CC BY-SA license.</p> 
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INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization, English has become an essential skill for students worldwide, including in Indonesia. The role of English has shifted from being merely a "foreign" language to a universal language crucial for academic and professional success (Brutt-Griffler, 2017). This shift has significant implications for how students are prepared and taught, particularly at the elementary school level, where foundational language skills are developed. As a result, effective English teaching methods have become a critical focus in education. One method that is often debated is bilingual education, where both the first language (L1) and the second language (L2) are used concurrently in the classroom through techniques such as code mixing. Recent research supports the idea that code-switching is an effective pedagogical strategy in second or foreign language teaching (Sakaria & Priyana, 2018) (Ofelia García and Angel M.Y. Lin, 2017)

In Indonesia, English is still considered a foreign language, and its introduction to young learners poses challenges. Many students find English difficult, which can lead to confusion and disengagement, especially among those who have not attended kindergarten. This can be particularly challenging in diverse educational settings where students come from various backgrounds, including those from orphanages, who may face additional difficulties in adapting to new languages. Observations in elementary schools show that students often struggle with English, resulting in low proficiency levels. This highlights the need for innovative teaching methods that can make English learning more accessible and engaging for young learners.

The existing methods of teaching English in Indonesian elementary schools often fail to address the diverse needs of students, leading to low proficiency and engagement. Students from different backgrounds may not have had prior exposure to English, making it appear as a difficult and foreign language. The challenge is to find teaching strategies that make English learning more approachable and effective, catering to the needs of all students.

Bilingual education emerges as a promising solution to this problem. By integrating both English and the native language in classroom instruction, teachers can create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment. This approach can help demystify English for students, making it less intimidating and more relatable. Methods such as using pictures, videos, and interactive activities can further enhance engagement and understanding. The frequent use of both languages in the classroom encourages students to practice and become more comfortable with English (Chang, 2024)

Studies have shown that bilingual education can lead to improved cognitive development and academic performance. Additionally, beginning second language study at a young age can bring cognitive benefits such as improved problem-solving skills, multitasking ability, and increased creativity (Bialystok, 2018).

Introducing bilingual education in elementary schools will improve students' English proficiency, cognitive skills, and cultural awareness. By utilizing both languages in instruction, students will be more engaged and motivated to learn English, leading to better academic outcomes (Susanto & Jelimun, 2023). Bilingual education will not only help students grasp English more effectively but also foster cognitive development and cultural sensitivity, providing long-term benefits that extend beyond language learning.

This study was conducted for 1 month with 1 cycle, allowing for in-depth observation and focusing on the effectiveness of the bilingual approach. In this short period of time, the results showed an increase in students' English language skills, indicating the great potential of the bilingual learning method in the context of elementary education. If the study was conducted longer, more complex and deeper, it would certainly provide clearer results and could become new discussion material.

In conclusion, while there are challenges associated with implementing bilingual education, the potential benefits make it a worthwhile investment in the development of young learners. With the right support and teaching strategies, bilingual education can significantly enhance students' language abilities and cognitive skills, preparing them for future success in a globalized world. As educators, it is crucial to adopt innovative approaches that make learning enjoyable and effective, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to excel in their language studies.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses the Classroom Action Research (CAR) method to address the problem of low English learning scores by implementing bilingualism in the classroom to improve elementary school students' English skills. This method was chosen because it allows researchers to intervene directly in the learning process and observe its impact in real-time (Nanda et al., 2021). CAR focuses on specific situations and contexts, developing reflective practices based on participants' interpretations (Spencer Clark et al., 2020).

In addition, this study uses a quantitative research method because it is in accordance with the purpose of the study, which is to analyze whether bilingualism can help students improve their English skills. This method helps in understanding classroom dynamics, especially in the use of language by teachers, as well as students' responses and data source participation to this teaching method.

Data collection was carried out using a questionnaire to explore students' perceptions, experiences, and responses to the bilingual teaching model. This questionnaire was designed to collect quantitative data that provides an overview of attitudes towards the use of two

languages in education and assesses its effectiveness from the perspective of learners (Miftahul janna, 2021).

Primary Data The main data source comes from the school, especially teachers and students at Srj elementary school Banyuwangi. **Secondary Data** Secondary data sources include the principal, school documents, and research journals. Data were collected from various sources to provide a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of the use of two languages in teaching English at Srj elementary school Banyuwangi

Population and SampleThe population in this study was all students of Srj elementary schools, with a sample of 16 students in grade 2. The sample selection was carried out by considering the deficiencies in the class. The researcher used methodological triangulation to test the validity of the data, namely by combining qualitative and quantitative data. Triangulation involves verifying data from various sources in different ways and at different times (Darwin M, 2021). This theory is used to increase the validity of the data through triangulation, which increases the validity, reliability, and credibility of the study by using various sources, methods, and theories for data collection and analysis, thus providing a comprehensive understanding of the research topic.

This study uses qualitative and quantitative descriptive research methods. Qualitative descriptive methods require extensive observation and in-depth interpretation. The purpose of this study is to provide a comprehensive summary of certain events experienced by individuals or groups of individuals in everyday terms (Prof. Dr. A. Muri Yusuf, 2019). The data were analyzed using the same formula and method as observations of children during classroom learning.

The value of each student answering the test

Data is calculated using the following formula:

$$X = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

Note: **X** : Average Calculation that is searched for

∑X : Total Score **N** : Number of Subjects

No	Indicator	Rated aspect	Score
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1	Speaking	Student are able to use the questions word “Do You Like It”	35
2	Meaning vocabulary	Students are able to interpret vocabulary well	35
3	Filling blank	Students are able to fill in the blank words in sentences	30

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

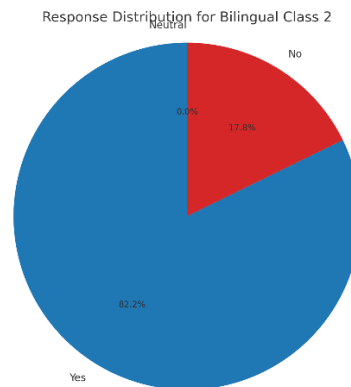


Chart 1 Questionnaire

Yes: 82.2%

No: 17.8%

Neutral: 0.0%

This pie chart shows that the majority of the responses were “Yes,” indicating a positive response to the questions in the questionnaire. The number of “No” responses was quite small, and there were no “Neutral” responses recorded. This could indicate that the majority of participants have a positive view of the bilingual class. The following is a discussion that can be done based on the pie chart of the questionnaire results from the bilingual class:

1. Majority of Positive Responses

The pie chart shows that 82.2% of participants gave a “Yes” response, indicating that the majority of students felt satisfied and may have benefited from bilingual learning. This could indicate that the teaching method used was effective in increasing students’ understanding and comfort in learning.

Positive Implications:

The bilingual learning method may have helped students understand the material better by combining their mother tongue and English.

Students felt more motivated and confident in using English because of the support from their mother tongue.

Increased student engagement in class and higher confidence in using English.

2. Minimal Negative Responses

A total of 17.8% of responses were “No,” indicating that some participants may have been dissatisfied or did not see immediate benefits from the bilingual learning method.

Challenge Analysis:

There may be students who find it difficult to adapt to the bilingual learning method, especially if their English skills are very basic. There may be differences in language ability between students that cause some to feel left behind. Differences in individual learning styles may cause some students to not respond well to the bilingual approach.

3. No “Neutral” Responses

The absence of “Neutral” responses may indicate that students have a clear opinion about the effectiveness of the bilingual class, either positive or negative.

Interpretation:

A clear opinion indicates that the students’ experiences were strong enough to influence their views, either positively or negatively. This may indicate that the approach used was impactful enough to sway students to one side.

Overall, student response patterns vary from one question to another, indicating that there is a diversity of perspectives in this bilingual class regarding the topics raised with students tending to like bilingual learning in the classroom.

result test table

Cycle 1	Total	N	Mean
Test 1	1275	16	79,6%
Test 2	1378	16	86,1%

The test result table for Cycle 1 shows that there is a significant increase in the average score of students after the implementation of the bilingual learning method. The following is a detailed discussion of the results obtained:

1. Sample Size and Average Score:

The sample size (N) for Cycle 1 was 16 students.

The average score for Test 1 was 79.6%, which reflects the initial level of understanding of students before the implementation of the bilingual learning method.

After the implementation of bilingual learning, the average score for Test 2 increased to 86.1%. This indicates an increase of 6.5% from the initial average score.

2. Performance Improvement:

The increase in the average score from the pre-test to the post-test indicates an increase in the performance or understanding of participants after undergoing Cycle 1. This could be an indication that the intervention or learning carried out during Cycle 1 was effective in improving participants' learning outcomes.

The use of bilingual methods can improve students' cognitive and language skills, because they are given the opportunity to understand concepts in the language they have mastered before switching to a second language (Amal Mahmoud Ali, 2024).

3. The Effect of Bilingual-Based Learning

Based on the results of the study above, it can be seen that bilingual based English learning has a positive influence and improves the English scores of Srj Elementary School students.

-Learning English using two languages shows a significant increase. Through this approach, the bilingual learning method aims to develop students' competence in foreign languages, especially English, by using both languages for teaching plus materials related to the local culture of Banyuwangi.

Chen & Li (2023) found that bilingual learning that links local content can increase student engagement and understanding, because they can see the direct relevance between the material being studied and their daily environment.

4. Benefits of Bilingual Teaching

This approach not only improves students' understanding and communication skills but also develops their cognitive abilities. Jones et al. (2021) noted that early exposure to a second language can improve problem-solving skills, multitasking abilities, creativity, and cultural awareness in young students. Early English language learning helps young students become accustomed to using English, which is currently transitioning from a “foreign” language to a universal language (Brutt-Griffler, 2017). Effective English language teaching methods, such as bilingual education involving the use of both the first language (L1) and second language (L2) in the classroom, are essential (Sakaria & Priyana, 2018) so that students can understand easily.

CONCLUSION

This study aims to investigate the use of bilingualism in improving English classes for young learners in the second grade at Srj Public Elementary School for the 2024/2025 academic year. The findings indicate that the implementation of bilingual learning, using both Indonesian and English, is effective in improving students' English skills.

The use of students' mother tongue, Indonesian, alongside the target language, English, helps support the learning process and makes the content more understandable for young learners. The bilingual approach allows students to draw connections between the two languages, develop metalinguistic awareness, and build a stronger foundation in English. Recent studies have confirmed that leveraging the mother tongue in bilingual education enhances comprehension and academic performance, especially among young learners (Ofelia García and Angel M.Y. Lin, 2017)

Furthermore, bilingual learning encourages a more engaging and interactive classroom environment. Students are more willing to participate and ask questions when they can use

Indonesian to clarify their understanding. This contributes to increased motivation and confidence in using English., bilingual settings foster a supportive learning environment where students feel more comfortable expressing themselves and exploring new concepts .

The study also highlights the important role of teachers in implementing the bilingual approach effectively. Teachers need to have a good command of both languages and possess the pedagogical skills to blend the two languages smoothly in their lessons. emphasize the necessity of teacher training in bilingual education to maximize its benefits for students .

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