

**AN EXPLORATION OF THE LANGUAGE IDEOLOGY,
MANAGEMENT AND PRACTICES OF
A BILINGUAL FAMILY
IN SOUTH SUMATRA**

A THESIS

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter firstly provides the background to the study. Then, the problem of study and research questions are listed, followed by the significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Due to the demand for global competition in this era, bilingualism or multilingualism is becoming one of the requirements all over the world to be effective citizens of the world. Rodriguez (2015) states there are three kinds of factors affecting children's speaking ability in two languages: the individual, the family, and society. Additionally, Edmonson (1999) declares children can acquire language from two factors, which are the internal and external factors. Internal factors are those that an individual language learner brings with him or her to the particular learning situation, especially in general cognitive, skills, abilities, and different individual characteristics. Internal factors include age, personality, gender, motivation (intrinsic), experiences, intellectual ability or cognition, native language. Meanwhile, external factors are those that characterize a particular language learning situation, especially in the environment of society and family, such as curriculum, instruction, culture, the family's language proficiency and use of L1 and L2, socioeconomic status, and the parents' attitude toward bilingualism also affect the acquisition of two languages.

In order to achieve bilingualism actively in early childhood (the ability to speak both L1 and L2) and passive bilingualism (the ability to understand L1 but only speak L2 or vice versa) require attention to the child and family's needs, early childhood teachers and the community (Rodriguez, 2015). Spolsky (2004) classifies language policy into language ideology, practice, and management. He further defines ideology as the belief of language use or language itself, practice as the habit or strategy to perform language, and management as an effort to influence the practice (having management or planning).

Moreover, to implement the strategy and build up the bilingual children, there are some benefits and challenges faced by bilingual children at home and in society. Kalisa (2019) explains the benefit of bilingual children includes the awareness of comparing phonological between two languages since they are exposed to both languages at the same time, especially at an early age. Young children can have better development of phonological awareness. Besides, bilingual children have a more advanced stage of metalinguistic development than monolingual. They can manipulate the rules of syntactic of a language because of children's experience having 2 systems of language (Appel & Pieter, 2005). They also explain the negative side towards bilingual children on the personality development that often encounter the attitude of racists and discriminating in the majority population, so that it can lead the children to have the problems in the emotional and psychological. Furthermore, Caldas (2006) also explains the challenges of bilingual children. First, giving enough input to the children in the foreign language. Second, making sure to the children about the importance of foreign language. Then, the inclination of the siblings at home to speak in the majority language which is not a foreign language. Next, there is a belief of parents about bilingualism that will cause a delaying language, the language mixing, and the incompetence of children to speak bilingual language.

Therewith, another challenge of bilingual children is supported by Schwartz et al. (2009) that suggest the cause of delayed acquisition of morphology in the irregular forms towards bilingual children is an insufficiency of input in using languages. It means the children are not able to perform two languages well because the use of both languages are not maximized. Additionally, the children will lead to be frustrated and have communication difficulties since they have to learn two different rules, systems, and mechanisms of both languages to whom and when it is used (Cunningham, 2011). Therefore, it considers that when children learn both languages at the same time, they will be confused, and obtain difficulties expressing the languages well (Kalisa, 2014). In fact, this phenomenon is faced by one of the students of Kindergarten of Islamic School that is able to speak English fluently and dominantly as his first language,

not a foreign language, especially in Palembang, Indonesia. One of the factors is he practices English with his parents and siblings at home, but he has communication difficulties to speak Bahasa Indonesia and interaction difficulties, especially at school in the majority language of the population. Firstly, gesturing, crying, and shouting express his emotions and feelings in the school environment. Consequently, he cannot socialize well with his classmates, particularly at the beginning of the semester. However, his teachers always speak Bahasa Indonesia with him at school especially in the classroom, so that he can acquire another language which is Bahasa Indonesia, even though it is not clear enough. Because of this, he can speak two languages, English as his first language and becoming a dominant language than Bahasa Indonesia, so it is called bilingualism.

Many researchers have discussed all the components of family language from different contexts such as transnational families who live apart and separated each other and how family expose and acquire new language in a new area with different culture and language background, then practice in the multiple community by providing in depth-understanding of language practice, planning, to implement in the context of immigrant home (Cobas & Eugenia, 2001; Parmon, 2013; Silvhiany, 2019; Gu & Yawen, 2020). In contrast, there are few researchers, discussed one of FLP which is an ideology as the parents' foundation to practice and control children's language development, especially in Indonesia. However, parents have various characteristics as well as beliefs such as strong and weak beliefs. Parents can have strong belief if they can practice both languages daily at home with family members, but a weak belief means parents has a low competence in speaking bilingual, so they enroll their children to bilingual or international school to practice the languages. Moreover, the researcher discovered that parents having a strong belief forming bilingual children be dominant in English as their native and not a foreign language, especially in Indonesia. The supporting factors are the existence of parental belief, interest, expertise in English which influence them to create the English dominant environment at home. By having dominant languages, children can get positive sides and also the difficulties in several aspects of development such as speech, cognitive, emotional, and social (Schwartz et al.,

2009; Cunningham, 2011). Besides children, parents also face the difficulty of choosing a right language for their children, called ideological conflict. They have responsibility to maintain the national language, Bahasa Indonesia as children identity and also international language to succeed in broader society (Ong, 2021)

Because of this, to explore how bilingual children can develop languages, the researcher applied Spolsky (2004) framework to classify language policy into language ideology, practice, and management. He further defines ideology as the belief of language use or language itself, practice as the habit or strategy to perform language, and management as an effort to influence the practice (having management or planning). Along with determining the compatible strategies that the parents can apply at home for raising bilingual children. Therefore, the researchers adopt Spolsky's framework to explore the role of the parents in promoting bilingualism in the development of early childhood concerning three crucial elements of the family language policy such as the ideology, practice, even management, then its challenge faced by children who generally grow up with the dominant English language spoken at home that is different from language used in society.

1.2. The Problems of the Study

In relation to the background above, the problems of this study are formulated into the following questions:

1. What are the perceptions of the parents in terms of developing bilingual children, particularly on bilingual in English?
2. What are the language practice strategies that parents implement to their children?
3. What are the language management strategies that parents employ to their children?

1.3 The Objectives of Study

Based on the problem mentioned earlier, the objectives of this study are to:

1. Find out and explore parental ideologies toward the development of bilingual children.
2. Examine the language practice strategies that parents implement to their children
3. Examine the language management strategies that parents employ to their children

1.4 Significance of the Study

Based on the research objectives to be achieved, this study has a contribution both theoretically and practically to the field of bilingualism in early childhood education. This study is expected to increase a new insight and scientific knowledge regarding for bilingual children acquisition process that has a significant contribution to the development of bilingual acquisition theory, particularly to understand how children acquire a second language in their environment internally from family for example parental ideology and how their practice to manage both languages or externally from children's society. Besides, the result of this study is hoped to be a foundation or reference for the next study concerning the family language policy of bilingual children.

Moreover, this study aims to contribute and provide beneficial information and knowledge, especially for people around children who have an essential element to influence bilingual children's development such as parents and educators as language managers. By having this study, it is hoped that the one who plays the crucial role of language managers like the parents to control, encourage and develop bilingual children in the family can determine the appropriate strategies and management following their ideologies and beliefs that will be applied to bilingual children to stay away from the challenges and negative threats of the effects of bilingualism. By adopting this study, it is contributed to how to treat and communicate between teachers and bilingual children, especially children who speak English dominantly than local language.

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