

Bilingual Education in Rural Islamic High Schools: Teachers' and Students' Perspectives and Experiences

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Received:
 January 2023
 Accepted:
 June 2023
 Published:
 June 2023

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the perceptions of bilingual teaching held by both teachers and students, as well as the processes used to conduct bilingual language instruction and the results obtained from using bilingual language education. The qualitative research approach was utilized for this investigation. For the purpose of this study, a teacher and ten students from the XI IBB Man 2 Bone Class served as participants and served as the study's subjects. In addition to that, the data gathering was done by a combination of observation, interviews, and documentation. The findings indicated that teachers and students had a favorable impression of bilingual education, placing it in the category of highly perceived bilingual education. The incorporation of bilingual education, which is soundly founded on Baker's theory (2001), comprises the separation of language and the concurrent use of language inside a lesson. Last but not least, there was a beneficial effect that teaching students in two languages has on the overall accomplishment of such students. The present study implies that the bilingual education approach could foster students' EFL repertoires in the context of Senior high school students and specifically within rural regions, as evidenced by the study.

Keywords: *Bilingual instruction, ELT, Implementation, Students' Achievement*

INTRODUCTION

The government has recommended that English become compulsory in secondary school. The students of primary school, secondary school, high school and university formally learn this language (Harmer, 2007). According to Saville-Troike and Barto (2017), English is regarded as a foreign language (EFL) that is not commonly used by learners in their local social setting, particularly in Indonesian. In educational settings where English is taught as a topic, students seldom utilize English as their primary language for communication or social engagement. The students mostly speak Indonesian or their native tongue inside and outside of the school.

The above-described condition effects the language used to teach English as a second language in the classroom. Language instruction as a selected language that used in the class. The official or national language of the nation, an international language like English, the

students' mother tongue (the language they speak at home and in their community), or a combination of these languages may be used as the language of instruction (May, 2012). In this case, the teacher may employ a bilingual approach in accordance with the use of language instruction. Bilingual teaching is a method of delivering curricular materials in two languages to improve students' proficiency in a foreign language.

Being bilingual has always been regarded as an essential skill in daily life; according to Richards and Schmidt (2013), A bilingual is someone who utilizes at least two languages with a degree of proficiency. Having been described as the use of two languages, the bilingual technique combines the target language and first language in instruction (Arham & Akrab, 2018). Brisk (2006) states that the schools using two languages were seen as high-quality schools because they applied bilingual instruction.

In this study, the primary focus was the utilization of bilingual teachers in the classroom. This study intends to investigate teachers' and students' perspectives on bilingual instruction. Kleinke (1978) states that perception is essential for teachers and students because it influences teaching and learning.

In addition to this, it is of the utmost importance to have a solid understanding of how language instruction is implemented when teaching English as the target language. In connection with this, it was discovered the conditions for the release of bilingual instruction in the teaching of English from the instructor, as well as whether or not it follows the phases of the implementation of bilingual education provided by specialists. Within the scope of this study, Baker's theory (2001) was applied in order to investigate the utilization of bilingual education.

Bilingual education, as a multifaceted and influential pedagogical approach, has received widespread attention in modern education. In the current global society, where multiculturalism and multilingualism are often celebrated, bilingual education plays a pivotal role in promoting language proficiency and cross-cultural understanding (Garica & Wei, 2015; Abduh, 2018). The approach not only teaches students to communicate effectively in two languages but also fosters an appreciation of diverse cultures and perspectives. Bilingual education has been lauded for its benefits, including cognitive advantages, increased academic achievement, and enhanced career opportunities in an increasingly interconnected world. Yet, its implementation and reception vary significantly across different contexts, necessitating continuous research to examine its practical implications and effects.

In this regard, the present study seeks to explore bilingual education within the context of a rural Islamic high school, a setting that presents unique characteristics and challenges. The rural environment may be marked by limited resources and access to diverse linguistic inputs compared to urban settings. At the same time, the Islamic high school context implies a particular cultural and religious background that may influence the perspectives and experiences of bilingual education. It is crucial to understand how bilingual education is perceived and practiced within such a context, as these insights could inform more effective and inclusive language education policies and practices.

Moreover, the focus of this study on an Islamic high school in a rural setting is particularly relevant considering the global prevalence of English as a lingua franca and the increasing internationalization of education. English language proficiency is often seen as a key to accessing higher education and better career opportunities. However, in rural and religiously-oriented settings, achieving this goal may be met with unique obstacles, such as fewer opportunities for language exposure and cultural barriers. Understanding the practice of bilingual education in these settings can shed light on how to better support students in

developing their English language skills without sacrificing their cultural and religious identities.

Bilingual Instruction

Richards and Schmidt (2013) defined bilingual instruction as instruction using the target language and the teacher's native language. Some curriculum material is taught in both the students' target language and Indonesian within the Indonesian bilingual education program. The introduction of bilingual education is based on Article 3, Verse 3 of Law No. 23 of the National Education System of 2003: "Foreign language may be employed as a medium of instruction to enhance students' foreign language skills" (National Education System Law, 2003). This constitution provides the basis for bilingual education legislation. The most frequently spoken foreign language is "English." The multilingual policy of Indonesia was implemented in reaction to globalization.

Implementation theory based on Baker's theory (2001) includes *the separation of language* and the *concurrent of language* in a lesson. Baker (2001) also divided it into several parts in the *separation language* section, including *subject or topic, person and time, place, medium of activity, curriculum material, function, and student*. *Concurrent of language in a lesson* is divided including *randomly switching of language in a lesson and translating, previewing and reviewing, Purposeful Concurrent Usage (PCU) and translanguaging*.

Baker's (2001) theory of bilingual education serves as the theoretical underpinning for this study. The theory, which emphasizes the importance of separating language instruction while simultaneously using two languages in a lesson, has been recognized for its pedagogical value. However, how this theory is applied in practice, especially in diverse contexts like the rural Islamic high school of this study, is not fully understood. This study aims to elucidate the practical processes of bilingual instruction based on Baker's theory and examine their impacts on students' language proficiency and academic achievement.

In summary, the present study seeks to contribute to the growing body of literature on bilingual education by offering a fresh perspective from a rural Islamic high school. This research aims to understand the perceptions of teachers and students regarding bilingual education, examine how Baker's theory is actualized within this specific context, and explore the outcomes of bilingual education. The findings from this study may inform more effective, inclusive, and culturally sensitive language education policies and practices in similar contexts. Therefore, the present study aims to find out; (1) the teachers' and students' perception of bilingual instruction, (2) the implementation of bilingual instruction, and (3) the Impact of bilingual instruction on students' English achievement.

METHOD

Research Design

In this study, the authors applied a qualitative design. Qualitative uses a natural setting to interpret phenomena that occur and carried by involving various existing (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011) The qualitative research technique in this study will use a case study research. It means a research strategy and an empirical inquiry that investigates a phenomenon within its real-life (Harrison et al., 2017). The purpose of case study research is to provide a description of a case and to cultivate a profound comprehension of the circumstances surrounding a particular instance (Tomaszewski, et al., 2020). In this particular instance, this methodology was applied in order to investigate the ways in which teachers and students perceive bilingual instruction,

the processes by which bilingual instruction is carried out, and the effects of bilingual instruction on students' levels of achievement when learning English.

Research Instrument

In order to collect data for this study, the authors made use of a series of three different tools: an observation checklist, an interview guide, and documentation. The observation would be useful if the information takes into account the natural conditions of the respondents as well as the facts, behavior, and results in their natural settings (Sukardi, 2015). In order to investigate the use of bilingual instruction in English education, valid data were obtained through observation on the environment of the schools, the activities of the students, and the teaching and learning process.

In the course of this investigation, an interview was carried out. According to the viewpoint of Sukardi (2015), the authors questioned correspondents in order to acquire information from them. The authors interacted with the subjects by asking them direct questions and recording their responses. A recording device was used to capture the responses, and later, the recordings were transcribed into a narrative format.

In addition, the authors employed documentation as well as asking the students concerning their results from assignments and their score reports in order to determine the impact of bilingual instruction on students' academic accomplishment in English.

Data Analysis

The study used qualitative data analysis based on Miles and Huberman's (2020) theory to evaluate the data, which is comprised of four steps: the collecting of data, the presentation of data, the condensation of data, and the drafting of conclusions (verification).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Teachers' And Students' Perception Of Bilingual Instruction In Teaching English At Indonesian Islamic Senior High School

The study uncovered a number of different sessions on bilingual instruction based on the perspectives of both teachers and students. These sessions focused on positive perception. The authors inquired about the teacher's thoughts on the significance of speaking the language of instruction in the classroom as well as how the idea of bilingual instruction was implemented in the classroom setting.

"My learning objectives are more achieved, meaning that the material that I convey is achieved more quickly. If you use full English, you can achieve it too, but maybe it's slower and you need your own strategy in teaching, for example, assisted with body language, but of course it's actually quite difficult if the student's ability to fully English is not ready. The point is that the time period is achieved faster when using bilingual rather than full English"

The preceding phrase indicates that the material can be acquired more rapidly. It is also possible to accomplish this goal when using standard English; but, the process may be somewhat more sluggish, and my technique in teaching, for instance, requires assistance from body language. On the other hand, this can be challenging for the learner if they do not yet have the capacity to speak English completely. The main idea is that the time period goes by more quickly when education is provided in both English and the student's native language. (Interview with the Teacher).

Based on the analyses, it appears that teachers believe that the impact of bilingual instruction is the appropriate and effective strategy in learning strategies for students because it shortens the amount of time it takes for students to comprehend new information and makes that comprehension more efficient.

After that, the authors proceeded with the interview of the students. When it came to student perspectives, the authors used a three-tiered system to categorize favorable perceptions in order to measure the students' degree of comprehension regarding when teachers use bilinguals in the classroom. They have a high level of perception, a moderate level of perception, and a low level of perception about bilingual education.

Highly Perceived Bilingual Instruction

At this level, some students perceive their opinion regarding the use of bilingual instruction by the teacher. The following is the result of students' perceptions:

"I like it, sis because it is very important to use two languages so that we understand" (Interview with S1)

"It's great, sist, so that we can understand the material, not using just one language, especially if it's in full English. We don't use Indonesian, so we are also used to English" (Interview with S3)

The typical student reports that they agree with and like receiving education in both languages. In order to comprehend the information being conveyed by the instructor, it is believed important to do so in the classroom.

Moderately Perceived Bilingual Instruction

The second perception is the moderate. Students have this perception means they have a positive perception but do not have high enthusiasm.

"It's good, sist, but because the teachers mostly use English, sometimes I don't understand" (Interview with S5)

Interview data shows that students like and agree regarding the bilingual instruction in the classroom, but S5 stated that the more frequent use of English made him not understand the material that the teacher conveyed.

Lowly Perceived Bilingual Instruction

"I prefer to use Indonesian more often sist, even though the teacher still uses two languages. That is because my (English) skill is still lacking" (Interview with S9)

Based on the data, S9 agreed with the implementation of bilingual instruction by the teacher in the classroom, but wanted more frequent use of Indonesian so that he can fully understand the material due to his lack of English.

2. The Implementation of Bilingual Instruction In Teaching English at Indonesian Islamic Senior High School.

The current study discovered numerous crucial areas in the implementation of bilingual instruction in teaching senior high school students through the use of observations.

2.1. Subject or topic

Following the observations of teachers and students in the teaching process, the teacher provides English language material using bilingual as the language of instruction using the curriculum. The teacher provides learning topics according to what has been previously designed.

Person, time, and place

Based on observation, the teacher uses bilingualism when teaching. The observations also showed that students were accustomed to using English in the learning process.

Medium of activity

Observations conducted by authorss show that teacher taught face-to-face with students. In the teaching process, teachers often provoke students to participate in using bilingualism so that the use of language in the classroom remains balanced between teachers and students.

Curriculum Material

Based on observation, the authors found that English teachers used textbooks that were used to provide material. The teacher followed the school's curriculum but made modifications to the use of bilingualism in the classroom.

Function and student

Based on interview data conducted with teachers, the use of bilingual (Indonesian-English) is not only in the classroom, but there is a program three days a week students can speak bilingually to the teachers, students, staff, and the school community.

2.2. Concurrent language use of languages in a lesson

Randomly switching of language in a lesson and translating

Based on observation, it shows that in teaching English, the teacher applied translating stage the words or sentences that students do not understand.

Previewing and reviewing

Previewing and reviewing is one of the teacher's strategies for explaining teaching materials using English after being reviewed in Indonesian and it was her responsibility to make students understand, so he carried out previewing and reviewing methods, especially when explaining the material.

Purposeful concurrent usage (PCU)

The use of two languages simultaneously and teacher consciously start to switch one language to another, is referred to as PCU. Based on observation, teachers routinely change the use of two languages, English and Indonesian.

Translanguaging

Translanguaging is teacher's strategy go encourage students to use their entire linguistic repertoire to empower them and help them realize their full potential. Teacher simulates students' skill such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing of language users in various context.

3. The Impact of bilingual instruction on students' English achievement

To determine the impact of using language on student achievement, the teacher conducts an assessment in the form of a score to see precise results of students' final abilities. The teacher carries out various kinds of assessments in the classroom to determine students' achievement. The following table shows the scores of students' English achievement.

Table 1. Student Scores of English Achievement

No.	Classification	Frequency	Percentage
1	89-100 (Very good)	8	42%
2	77-88 (Good)	11	58%
3	65-76 (Enough)	0	0%



4	0-64 (Poor)	0	0%
Total		19	100%

Students' achievement in shows that eight students (42%) were classified into very good achievement. Eleven students (58%) were classified into good achievement. None student (0%) was classified into enough achievement, and none student (0%) was classified into poor achievement.

The standard score, set by MAN 2 Bone, is 75. The presentation of the table above shows that all students only fall into the very good and good achievement category, where all student scores are above the standard score or KKM. This shows that the teacher successfully teaches English by using bilingualism as the language of instruction in class. Then bilingual instruction has a positive impact on student achievement in the classroom.

Discussion

Perception can be analyzed based on two types of perception, namely positive and negative perception (Robbins & Timothy, 2001). The authors only finds out positive perception on bilingual instruction. The result of interviewing teacher in the category of positive. The teacher apprehends that the use of bilingual instruction in the classroom is very suitable for the current state of the students. The teacher understands the concept of bilingual instruction, which is applied in class. The teacher has preparation before teaching English and then using bilingual instruction.

The reason for using bilingual instruction according to the teacher, is that students are expected to be familiar with the use of English in class (Nurhikmah et al., 2020). Using bilingual instruction to make it easier for students to learn the target language. This situation is consistent with Brown's viewpoint from 2001, in which he stated that using students' first language (L1) in foreign language classroom situations is becoming an option, as long as it is limited by the need for the first language itself and provides some distinct advantages in learning the target language (L2). Furthermore, students' opinions also are positively perceived the use of bilingual instruction in the classroom. Authors divide students' perceptions into three categories, namely highly perceived, moderately perceived, and lowly perceived.

Having been perceived as positive, bilingual instruction also has many perceived benefits for students (Amirullah et al., 2022). According to Baker (2011), bilinguals can have a purpose of support by expanding one's communication. Students get many benefits when applied in the classroom as a language of instruction by the teacher. Students and teachers perceive bilingual instruction increases their vocabulary, and they can reach the target language better. This means that the goal of improving foreign language skills as a means of communication can be successful. Based on the explanation of teacher's and students' perception on bilingual instruction, the authors concluded that the result of analyzing the data showed HPBI (*Highly Perceived Bilingual Instruction*).

The following discussion is about the implementation of bilingual instruction in English language teaching by teachers in the classroom. Implementation theory based on Baker's theory (2001) includes *the separation of language* and the *concurrent of language* in a lesson. Baker (2001) also divided it into several parts in the *separation language* section, including *subject or topic, person and time, place, medium of activity, curriculum material, function, and student*. The following is an explanation of *separation language* that is adjusted to the observation data and interviews conducted by authors. Based on the explanation of the implementation of

bilingual instruction in teaching according Baker's theory (2001), the authors concluded that the result of analyzing the data showed WIBI (*Well Implemented Bilingual Instruction*).

Finally, the teacher highlights that bilingual instruction is very important. Data from teacher's interview and documentation shows the impact of bilingual instruction on students' English achievement. In the implementation, teacher directly measured students' achievement. The teacher found out that the students showed high motivation when teacher using bilingual instruction. Students were being active and have confident in speaking English. They were not afraid to make mistake in English because of the bilingual instruction. That is related to the documentation of students' score in English that had been measured by the teacher from students' task or practice in the class. Their final score increases and is above the standard or KKM along with their abilities are also better. This is in line with Santoso and Ginting (2015) view. They stated that bilingualism is intended to provide students with good skills, particularly English language skill. Based on the explanation of the impact of bilingual instruction on students' achievement, the authors concluded that the result of analyzing the data showed PIBI (*Positive Impact Bilingual Instruction*).

CONCLUSION

This study represents an attempt to bridge a gap in the body of knowledge about bilingual education, specifically within the unique context of rural Islamic high schools. The insights derived from this research shed light on the positive perceptions of bilingual education held by both teachers and students in this setting, providing valuable information that may assist in advancing the pedagogical practices associated with bilingual education. The results with the teacher and students of MAN 2 Bone indicate that both teachers and students hold a favorable view of bilingual instruction, a sentiment so prevalent that it has been categorized as Highly Perceived Bilingual Instruction (HPBI). This positive perception underscores the potential of bilingual instruction as an effective pedagogical tool in enhancing students' language skills and overall academic performance.

In terms of its practical implementation, the bilingual instruction in this context is solidly grounded in Baker's (2001) theoretical framework. This approach encompasses the distinct separation of languages and the concurrent use of languages within a single lesson, ensuring an optimal learning environment that caters to the unique cognitive needs of bilingual students. The successful adoption of Baker's theory in this context has led to a new designation: Well Implemented Bilingual Instruction (WIBI). This term reflects the effective execution of bilingual teaching strategies in line with the theoretical principles that have been established in the field. Furthermore, the study provides empirical evidence supporting the positive impact of bilingual instruction on students' academic performance. The data, including students' scores and the achievement of learning objectives, clearly demonstrate the beneficial outcomes associated with bilingual instruction. This evidence reinforces the argument that bilingual instruction can significantly contribute to enhancing students' academic achievement.

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