



BILINGUALISM IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE ENTITLED *25 BEAUTIFUL FRIENDSHIP*

Muhammad Adek^{1*}; Lilia Zahra Asifa²

Affiliation: Indonesian Department, Universitas Negeri Padang, Padang, Indonesia ^(1,2,3)

Email: 1) marximalize@fbs.unp.ac.id; 2) liazahra0505@gmail.com

*Corresponding Author Email: marximalize@fbs.unp.ac.id

Abstract

Indonesia is one of the countries that has implemented a bilingual education program through English lessons since entry level. Therefore, this study aims to describe the effect of bilingual education on children's language used. The object of research is a novel entitled 25 Beautiful Friendship by Annisa Zhahrotushama Balqis. Data description is managed by showing facts related to the influence of bilingualism (foreign language) on the language used by Balqis in her novel, such as giving names of titles, characters, places, food items, events and others. Based on the findings and results of the analysis above, it can be concluded that the massive teaching of foreign languages such as English into basic-level education has a significant impact on the way children convey their feelings and experiences in verbal communication.

Subject Area is the Children Literary Criticism

Keywords: *Bilingualism, Children's Literature, 25 Beautiful Friendship*

1 Introduction

To keep pace with the rapid development of science and technology in the era of globalization, people worldwide have to master more than one language apart from their native language (Shin, 2017). A group of speaking community now communicate by using at least two languages or commonly known as "bilingualism". The term bilingualism in Indonesian is called *kedwibahasaan* (Mukhtar, 2018). According to Garcia and Wei (2013), bilingualism is generally defined as the practice of using language interchangeably, from one language to another, by a speaker.

As a citizen of the world, Indonesia is also one of the countries that have participated in implementing educational policies with bilingual programs through English lessons (Pramudita & Anugraheni, 2017). Hayati, (2016) claims that English subjects have been taught since the early stages, particularly from first grade of Elementary School (SD). In fact, in several institutions, some have introduced English since Kindergarten (TK). Not only that, in few private schools with international standard manages bilingualism programs by placing English as the language of instruction (Wijaya, 2015).

Based on the phenomena found above, it is clear that the presence of bilingual education program is aimed at boosting basic level students' skills in speaking English as the language used in international relations. However, the strong urge to teach English in childhood towards children in Indonesia significantly influences the children's mother tongue (Kaushanskaya & Marian, 2009). In some preliminary observations, today's younger generations prefer to use foreign language. They are also proud to be able to speak a foreign language compared to their mother tongue or local language.

One of the parameters that can be used as an initial reference is the writing of literary works written by young author. It was identified that the inexperienced writers tend to use a foreign language (English) to express the soul voices in their creative writing.

The definition of children's literary works is a work of fiction intended for young readers (McGillis, 1996; Shavit, 2010). Generally, adult writers is dominated this genre but young people can write this works as well. The juvenile authors referred here are children aged 9-12 years (Lesnik-Oberstein, 2004). According to McDowell (1973), literary work is a proven tool for teaching children about everything, such as science, moral values, ethical values, and religious values. This is possible because literary works are supported by story structures that help children understand better things in science and the teaching of these moral values (Tucker, 1972). Therefore, children's literature can be understood as a written work of art that talks about the world and children's thoughts through language and logic that is easily understood by children. The above also suggests that understanding children's literature is not as complicated as understanding adult literary works because the language and content explored in children's literature are simpler version (Butzow & Butzow, 2000).

The presence and dissemination of children's literature today cannot be separated from the the role of publisher (David, 1997). In Indonesia, several publishers focus their operation on publishing children's literary works. Recently, several publishers such as Lingkar Pena Publisher, Gramedia Publisher, and Mizan Pustaka Utama have collaborated in publishing a collection of children's writing in the genre of Children Fiction with the theme Kecil-Kecil Punya Karya (KKPK). From several writings, there is a work that reflects the phenomenon of bilingualism in children's literature, namely *25 Beautiful Friendship* with the author Annisa Zhahrotushama Balqis.

To conclude, this paper focuses on bilingualism (Indonesia-English) on the use of language used by selected children's author in her work of fiction. This problem was taken because it was to understand the side effects of foreign languages from the bilingual education program implemented by the government for early-level students in Indonesia. The use of English can be found from the selection of names of characters, places, objects, events, and more.

2 Literature Review

There are various factors that influence the occurrence and formation of bilingualism in a person. One of the most dominant factors is the attitude towards a language. In a study, Lestholo (2009) revealed that there was a growing scarcity of speakers of Ikalanga among the Botswana citizens motivated by the attitude of native speakers who exhibit negative feelings when communicating in the language to non-native people. Furthermore, they are more confident in using English or Setswana in their daily communication.

This language hegemony is not only found in Africa but also in Europe, where bilingual speakers will feel great prestige when speaking Greek or Latin as a second language (Bathia & Ritchie, 2014). The research findings above are in line with studies conducted by Hong et. al. (2000) and Han (2010) which state that bicultural identity and bilingualism were positively related to economic achievement. The more prosperous a speaker, the better the bilinguality. In the above context, speakers will prefer the language they learn a second to over their native language.

For Indonesia, bilingualism is not something new because the Indonesian people have been colonized by other countries such as Portugal, Spain, Netherlands, England, and Japan. Apart from that, Indonesians also have their own local languages which are routinely used in daily social activities (Dawis, 2009). Indonesian itself was only introduced in 1928 as the language of unity at the Youth Congress. Until now, bilingualism in Indonesia is still maintained across generations, which is not subject to significant obstacles by national language enforcement policies such as those in France and Germany (Yağmur & van de Vijver 2012).

In recent times, the phenomenon of bilingualism has become increasingly unbearable with globalization (Rahayu, 2016). In addition, education policies in Indonesia, especially education for young people, are increasingly supporting the creation of a bilingual and even multilingual society

(Mukminin et. al., 2018) However, research on the phenomenon of bilinguality in young speakers has not been widely found. From the literature review above, bilingualism is still often highlighted in terms of causes but has not yet reached the real implications of the speakers. At that point, this research took a stepping stone.

3 Methodology

This type of research is qualitative research. According to Creswell & Creswell (2018), one of the characteristics of qualitative research is a study that is more descriptive with data collected in the form of words or pictures, so it does not emphasize numbers. Furthermore, the method used in this research is descriptive analysis. Silverman (2015) states that the descriptive method of analysis is done by describing words, followed by analysis. So, it can be concluded that qualitative research with descriptive methods is used to describe existing phenomena, either natural or imagined, experienced by research subjects by describing them in the form of words and language.

The scope of bilinguality in this study is to see the ability of young writers to use two languages (Indonesian and English) in her piece of writing. There are three ways to measure the speaker's bilinguality level. The first way can be attained by observing her reaction towards the two languages she uses. If the person has poor bilinguality, she tends to avoid conversations in a language that is different from her mother tongue. The second step that can be completed is to see a person's ability in receptivity. A person can be said to have good bilingualism if she can accept another language's speech well. The last way is that one's ability to complete one's speech and spontaneous pronunciation preferences can also be used as benchmarks for one's bilinguality. Though, only the first and second methods could be observed and analyzed in this study (Cummins, 1979).

Data analysis and description were performed by showing facts related to the influence of bilingualism (foreign language) on the language used by Annisa Zhahrotushama Balqis in her work entitled *25 Beautiful Friendship*, such as naming titles, characters, places, food, objects, events, and any others.

4 Results and Findings

Language as a medium for conveying aspirations is essential to support children's expressions, one of which can be expressed through writing literary works. The relationship and influence of bilingualism on children's language mastery is the child's ability to balance the use of the primary language (Indonesian) with the second language (foreign languages, especially English). So that, a child can master the first language better and ignore the second language or vice versa. In this paper, the child author is prone to use a second language (English) compared to her first language to express her ideas and experiences.

Based on research on the novel by Annisa Zhahrotushama Balqis entitled *25 Beautiful Friendship* (2017), the author emphasizes her choice of a second language or English, which is illustrated by selecting titles, naming characters, naming places, objects, events, and other things though not entirely, however, it is possible that someday the author will use a foreign language (English) entirely.

The use of foreign languages (English) depicted in Annisa Zhahrotushama Balqis' writing entitled *25 Beautiful Friendship* is as follows.

3.1 Entitling

The most obvious thing from the review of the author's bilinguality is the selection of the title of her work. The young author deliberately choosed the title of the novel in English, namely *25 Beautiful Friendship* although in fact she can use her mother tongue (Indonesian). Furthermore, in the mention of the song titles, the writer prefers to mention the song titles in English rather than in Indonesian. The song title in question, among others *Chocolate Love, It is My Stile, Brightness of*

Sun, Book is My Friend, Good Cook, Goodie Rangers, and others. This can be seen in the following quote.

- (1) "...sekarang, aku sedang mendengarkan lagu *Chocolate Love* yang dinyanyikan *girlband f(x)* dan menikmati cemilan kue kering..." (Balqis, p. 45).
"...Kami menyanyikan single pertama kami, yaitu *It's My Stile...*" (Balqis, p. 48)
- (2) "...Kami melanjutkan konser dengan menyanyikan lagu yang berjudul *Brightness of Sun...*" (Balqis, p. 49).
- (3) "...Teman di awan, *Brightness of Sun, It's My Style, Book is My Friends, God Cook, Hidup Tak Selamanya*, dan *Goodie Rangers*. Hanya itu yang aku tahu..." (Balqis, p. 50).

There is an apparent difference between Annisa's knowledge and experience regarding Indonesian and English songs. Annisa clearly stated that she only knew two Indonesian song titles, namely "teman di awan/friends in the clouds" and "hidup tak selamanya/life is not forever". This is inversely proportional to showing her knowledge of English songs. However, on the other hand, the author's tendency to show his knowledge of Indonesian and English songs shows an adequate level of bilingualism.

3.2 Characters Naming

In the novel *25 Beautiful Friendship*, the author used several character names or nicknames in English, such as *Bodyguard, The Stupid Swimmer, Power Club, Girls, Celly, Cinnamoroll, Kitty White, Chole, Gladys*, and others. This can be seen in the following quote.

- (4) "...Baiklah. sampai nanti *Power Club*." Teriak Celly, lalu menghilang. Kamipun melanjutkan perjalanan ke kantin..." (Balqis, p. 67).
- (5) "...Aku, Luthfi, Dilla, dan Dana adalah anak yang tidak bisa berenang. Kelas 5 Zaid menjuluki kami *The Stupid Swimmer...*" (Balqis, p. 69).
- (6) "...Saat semua sudah terjamin aman aku memandu. "*Girls, lets go!*" ucapku..." (Balqis, p. 78)

In italicized word indicates the use of foreign terms (English) which has an equivalent meaning in Indonesian. For instance 'bodyguard' in Indonesian means '*pengawal*' and 'girls' which means '*anak gadis*'. However, the authors prefer to use the term in English rather than terms in Indonesian. Another example is the following.

- (7) "...*Jasmine*, cepat pimpin!" seru Alvin kepada *Jasmine*. "Iya, iya" sahut *Jasmine...*" (Balqis, p. 12).
- (8) "...Esoknya aku, *Antonio, Ran, Mutia*, dan *Celly* jalan-jalan pagi. Sementara *Ann, Bagas, Ken, Hana, Haney, Tiara, Charlie, Conny, Ceast*, dan *Chole* masih tidur..." (Balqis, p. 104).

From the description above, there are many names of characters who come from foreign languages such as *Jasmine, Alvin, Antonio, Ran, Celly, Ann, Ken*, and so on. The names which are commonly found in Indonesian are *Puput, Mutia, Bagas, Tiara*. This imbalance between knowledge shows the great interest of the writer in English. The author's skill in combining the above names in characterization shows an sufficient level of bilingualism.

3.3 Naming of Objects and Food

Apart from the characters' names, the naming of objects also tend to use English, such as *diaries, headphones, t-shirts, tuxedos, makeup, prints, cellphones, and dresses*. This can be found in the following quotation.

- (9) "...Kemudian, *film* itu selesai. Aku melanjutkan kegiatanku dengan menulis *diary*..." (Balqis, p. 18).
- (10) "...Sementara kostum untuk laki-laki adalah celana *denim cool* selutut dengan *t-shirt* keren, *tuxedo* hitam mengkilat..." (Balqis, p. 47).
- (11) "...Umm bagiku buku, pulpen, *handphone, headphone*, kostum, dan aksesoris rambut..." (Balqis, p. 52)

The terms in English above are quite popular terms for teenagers. However, these terms have their equivalent in Indonesian such as diary: *catatan harian*, t-shirts: *kaos oblong*, cellphones: *telepon genggam*, etc. However, the author focuses her choice more on English.

Apart from naming of objects, many mentions of food types also use English. The naming of foreign languages is appropriate considering the food served is not traditional Indonesian food, including *ice blend blueberries, keecho, cup noodles, ice cream, lollypop, soft drinks, apple juice, chocolate cream, mini coffe, mozarella pizza, blueberry juice* as illustrated in the following quote.

- (12) "...Aku ingin membeli *ice blend blueberry, keecho, mie cup*..." (Balqis, p. 13).
- (13) "...Aku pesan *mini coffe* saja" Celly memandangi *Magic Menu*. "Aku *spicy bread, pizza mozarella, dan blueberry juice*" Pesananku dengan mata tak lepas dari menu yang sedang dipandangi Celly..." (Balqis, p. 21)

Although numerous English terms are found, the application does not violate the speaker's native language grammar. In this situation, the speaker shows a reasonable degree of bilingualism.

3.4 Naming of Places and Events

In naming the setting, the author of the novel *25 Beautiful Friendship* also shows her inclination to use English. The foreign language names include *Blossom Outlet, Soyama Fabulous Boutique, and The Shopaholic*. See the following attachment.

- (14) "...Aku pergi ke outlet terbaik tempat ini, yaitu *Blossom Outlet*..." (Balqis, p. 53)
- (15) "...Selanjutnya aku pergi ke *Soyama Fabulous Boutique* dan membeli baju balon biru muda..." (Balqis, p. 53).
- (16) "...Klotie jemput Annisa di depan toko *The Shoppaholic*..." (Balqis, p.55).

In addition to showing the setting of the place, the author also uses English in explaining some activities such as *Ice Breaking* and *Open House*. Consider the quote below.

- (17) "...Pada saat *Ice Breaking* Pak Eki menulis di papan tulis..." (Balqis, p. 21).
- (18) "...Drama ini akan ditampilkan untuk *Open House* nanti..." (Balqis, p.23).

The use of the two foreign terms, particularly *ice breaking* and *open house* above shows that the author has adopted the speech community's language habit. This can be seen also from place names and events in Indonesia written in English, such as *Alfamart, Grand Zuri Hotel, Open House, Ice Breaking, Wedding Party*, etc. Although the naming of places and events is written in English terms, their use does not violate the rules of the speaker's native language, namely Indonesian. In this situation, the speaker shows good bilinguality skills.

3.5 Other Uses

The use of other English terms is also found in the novel *25 Beautiful Friendship* (2017) such as in *games, pink, green, magic, big, fashionable, cool, single, paparazzi, cute, dessert, soft drink*, and greeting words such as *miss, morning* and there are many others. This can be found in the following quotation.

- (17) "...Kami menyiapkan buku pelajaran dan menunggu *Miss Dian* datang..." (Balqis, p. 13).
- (18) "...Aku Chole" kata peri *Pink*, perempuan. "Kalian berada di dunia *game*." sambut Ceast..." (Balqis, p. 33).
- (19) "...aku meminum *soft drink*. Gluk... gluk. Segernya..." (Balqis, p. 51).
- (20) "...*Morning!* Huh! Kemarin capek banget. Sekarang, aku dan teman-teman sedang lari pagi..." (Balqis, p. 56).

Although the terms above are written in English, their general usage does not violate the speaker's native language rules, in detail Indonesian grammar. In this situation, the speaker displays a reasonable degree of bilinguality.

Based on the above findings, the phenomenon of bilingualism in young authors arises due to two factors. The first is internal factors, especially factor from within the child herself. She considers that English is more effective in conveying her true expressions or genuine feelings regarding an experience. This can be found from how the author determines the names of the characters to support characterizations. The characters with excellent and modern faces are represented by English origin names such as Alvin, Ken, Jasmine, Ann. Familiar characters will be given familiar names in Indonesian, such as Tyas, Bagus, Tiara, and Mutia.

The second factor is external factors, specifically influence from Indonesian's inability to provide equivalents for certain things and circumstances. This applies to the names of *mozzarella, pizza, blueberries, lollypop, and kecho* and activities like *ice breaking* and *open houses*. In this case, the author has no other choice but to use foreign terms to express it.

However, in some situations, the writer deliberately chooses English terms over Indonesian, such as in the vocabulary *Miss, t-shirts, cellphones*, which have quite popular equivalents such as *bu, kaos oblong, and telepon genggam*. In this case, the writer shows her genuine attitude to favor English as the language that best represents her creative expression and authentic experience.

5 Conclusion

Based on the findings and analysis results above, it can be concluded that the massive teaching of foreign languages such as English into early childhood education has a significant impact on the way children convey their feelings and experiences. This can be seen through observations in a literary work written by children where the young author named Annisa Zhahrotushama Balqis which prefers to use English terms for naming characters, place settings, objects, even in a conversational language such as greetings or nicknames. The use of literary works written by children can be used as a simple barometer in measuring the influence of foreign language on children's cognitive development, incredibly expressive abilities through vocabulary.

At one point, this juvenile author did not realize and pay close attention to the relationship between foreign languages and national identity. Likewise, parents should be at the forefront of efforts to maintain Indonesian as a national identity. The absence of attention to indigenous languages has made the bilingualism program flourish in Indonesia. This program should place English as a second language, but this program triggers parents to support the children being fluent in English fully, so they forget to maintain the existence of the primary language, that is Bahasa Indonesia.

6 References

- Bhatia, T. K., & Ritchie, W. C. (Eds.). (2014). *The Handbook of Bilingualism and Multilingualism* (2nd ed.). Chichester, England: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Butzow, J. W., & Butzow, C. M. (2000). *Science through Children's Literature: An Integrated Approach* (2nd ed.). Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Cummins, J. (1979). Linguistic Interdependence and The Educational Development of Bilingual Children. *Review of Educational Research*, 49(2), 222–251.
- David, W. (1997). *Extending literacy: Children Reading and Writing Non-Fiction*. Taylor & Francis Group.
- Dawis, A. (2009). *The Chinese of Indonesia and their search for identity: The relationship between collective memory and the media*. Cambria Press.
- Garcia, O., & Wei, L. (2013). *Translanguaging: Language, Bilingualism and Education*. London: Palgrave Pivot.
- Han, W. J. (2010). Bilingualism and Socioemotional Well-Being. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 32(5), 720–731.
- Hayati, Y. (2016). *Representasi Gender dalam Sastra Anak di Indonesia*. Padang: UNP Press.
- Hong, Y. Y., Morris, M. W., Chiu, C. Y., & Benet-Martínez, V. (2000). Multicultural Minds. A Dynamic Constructivist Approach to Culture and Cognition. *The American Psychologist*, 55(7), 709–720.
- Kaushanskaya, M., & Marian, V. (2009). Bilingualism Reduces Native-Language Interference During Novel-Word Learning. *Journal of Experimental Psychology. Learning, Memory, and Cognition*, 35(3), 829–835.
- Lesnik-Oberstein, K. (Ed.). (2004). *Children's Literature: New Approaches*. London, England: Palgrave Macmillan UK.
- Letsholo, R. (2009). Language Maintenance or Shift? Attitudes of Bakalanga Youth towards Their Mother Tongue. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 12(5), 581–595.
- McDowell, M. (1973). Fiction for Children and Adults: Some Essential Differences. *Childrens in Education*, 4(1), 50–56.
- McGillis, R. (1996). *The Nimble Reader: Literary Theory*. Farmington Hills, MI: Twayne.
- Mukhtar, A. S. (2018). Bilingualisme dan Diglosia. Retrieved September 13, 2020, from <https://kantorbahasamaluku.kemdikbud.go.id/2018/07/bilingualisme-dan-diglosia/> website:
- Mukminin, A., Haryanto, E., Sutarno, S., Rahma Sari, S., Marzulina, L., Hadiyanto, H., & Habibi, A. (2018). Bilingual Education Policy and Indonesian Students' Learning Strategies. *İlköğretim Online*. doi:10.17051/ilkonline.2018.466330
- Pramudita, W., & Anugraheni, I. (2017). Studi Penguasaan Matematika dan Bahasa Inggris Mahasiswa Program Studi Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar (PGSD). *Scholaria: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Kebudayaan*, 7(1), 70.
- Rahayu, D. (2016). Bilingualism of two Indonesian siblings living in Australia. *Studies in English Language and Education*, 3(2), 112.
- Shavit, Z. (2010). *Poetics of Children's Literature*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.
- Shin, S. J. (2017). *Bilingualism in Schools and Society: Language, Identity, and Policy* (2nd ed.). London, England: Routledge.
- Silverman, P. D. (2015). *Interpreting Qualitative Data* (5th ed.). London, England: SAGE Publications.
- Tucker, N. (1972). How Children Respond to Fiction. *Children s Literature in Education*, 3(3), 48–56.

- Wijaya, I. K. (2015). Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris di Sekolah Dasar. *Bahtera Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra*, 14(2), 120.
- Yağmur, K., & van de Vijver, F. J. R. (2012). Acculturation and Language Orientations of Turkish Immigrants in Australia, France, Germany, and the Netherlands. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 43(7), 1110–1130.