

Global survivors or national identity: exploring family language policy in Indonesian families

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Article Info	Abstract
<i>Article History:</i> Received 27 June 2024 Approved 30 October 2024 Published 30 October 2024	This article discusses the family language policy incorporating language ideology towards Bahasa Indonesia and English which serves as the driving force of Indonesian parents' language practice and efforts to improve their children's linguistic competence. Indonesian families still hold high regard in Bahasa Indonesia and they are aware of the importance of mastering English in order to survive in the global economy and society. Their ideologies towards their national language and English are revealed through the use of Bahasa Indonesia as their main language practice at home and their efforts to introduce English to their children at a very young age including sending them to bilingual or language schools. The findings of this study will guide other families in their language practice, particularly how to support their children's language development. Further investigation is needed to discover the family language policy in wider scope or different contexts which may lead to other possible findings.
Keywords: bilingualism, bilingual children, family language policy, Indonesian families, language ideology	

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INTRODUCTION

The language hegemony of English, and the increasing prevalence of English as the lingua franca in various domains such as economics, politics, education, science, and media have been the driving force behind learning English. Ricento (2018, p. 221) stated that the role of English in the world today is either as a form of linguistic imperialism or as a vehicle for social and economic mobility. He considers the case for English as the global lingua franca, citing statistics from a variety of sources that demonstrate the reach of English in academic publishing, economic activity, and international communication networks. De Costa et al. (2016,

2019) built on the notion of linguistic entrepreneurship, which is defined as “the act of aligning with the moral imperative to strategically exploit language-related resources for enhancing one's worth in the world” (2016). It is constitutive of the neoliberal ideology of language, which posits that strategic management of linguistic competence, as an integral part of human capital in the knowledge of the economy, leads to individual socioeconomic successes (Kubota, 2020). Under neoliberalism, individuals- no longer protected by the state-sanctioned safety net- are expected to garner knowledge and skills on their own responsibility to survive and thrive economically in increasingly competitive societies (Kubota, 2020).

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Within this framework, language learning (particularly, English) is seen as a commodity, a product to acquire to thrive in the globalized and neoliberal society (Alarcón Utrera and Moreno De Diezmas, 2023).

Being conscious of the supremacy of the English language in the world, parents believe that mastering it always provides extra opportunities in any work situation, as being able to communicate in English is seen as an enabling skill that can be an asset not only for the future employability of their children but also as a chance to be in contact with other cultures (Alarcón Utrera and Nieto Moreno de Diezmas, 2023). Furthermore, parents act as linguistic entrepreneurs and adopt family language policies aimed at providing their children with the best methodologies to enhance English learning, thereby investing their personal and financial capital in extracurricular classes, local English camps, and stays abroad (Nieto Moreno de Diezmas and Alarcón Utrera, 2022). This linguistic entrepreneurship is becoming a new facet of 'good parenting', since 'good parents' spare no effort to provide their children with the necessary tools to have better experiences in their educational and professional lives, in this vein, acquiring English proficiency plays a central role in the collective imagination of the families (Alarcón Utrera and Nieto Moreno de Diezmas, 2023). Within this context, family language policy (FLP) emerges as a significant area of study, examining how family ideologies could contribute to efforts to reverse language shift and support language maintenance (Griva & Stamou, 2014, as cited in Andritsou and Chatzidimou, 2022) as well as the intergenerational transmission of the minority/ heritage home language(s) (Fishman, 1991, as cited in Andritsou and Chatzidimou, 2022). Therefore, the decisions regarding linguistic upbringing shape their family language policy (FLP) that potentially impacts the children and their families (Hollebeke, et.al., 2020).

To acquire a strong command of English, families implement various practices to create immersion environments at home. These practices include using English as the primary language of communication at home (and sometimes outside), even if it is not the mother tongue of any family members nor the language of the broader society (Alarcón Utrera and Nieto Moreno de Diezmas,

2023). This phenomenon has been labeled as non-native bilingualism (Nieto Moreno de Diezmas and Alarcón Utrera, 2022). A study in Spain revealed that different bilingual strategies were implemented in their language practices, from the intensive one "minority language at home" (MLAH), in which all members of the family speak English for all interactions at home, whereas the majority language, Spanish, is learned outside the house. Another strategy, which was the most popular among participants is "time & place" (T&P), using English regularly at a specific time or place (for example during meals, during playtime, for the story before bedtime, etc.). Other techniques are "OPOL" (one parent, one language), i.e., one parent speaks in Spanish, and the other one in English, the second and target language, and the so-called strategy "bilingual siblings" (BS), in which older siblings communicate in English with the younger ones and support the process (Alarcon Utrera and Moreno De Diezmas, 2023).

Furthermore, a study abroad phenomenon in Korea known as *Jogi Yuhak* (Bae 2013; Gao and Park 2015; Lo et al. 2015; Park and Bae 2009 as cited in De Costa, et al., 2016) is a strategy implemented by middle-class parents to send their pre-university children abroad to study in English-speaking countries such as the US, Canada, Australia and sometimes Southeast Asian countries like the Philippines or Singapore to acquire valuable competence in the English language. Parents believe that English proficiency will enhance the value of human capital and help their children get ahead in the competition for better educational and job opportunities upon returning to Korea, where good English language competence is seen as one of the most crucial skills for white-collar work. In addition, they also believe that immersion in English-speaking environments can activate their children's innate ability to become 'native speakers' of English—something considered unattainable within Korea.

Now, research has broadened its focus, not only within the scope of the nuclear family but has been interested in multi-generational family units (Wenhan, et. al., 2021). The study suggests that in addition to parents, some Singaporean grandparent caregivers are pushing their grandchildren away from their 'low status' heritage languages and towards 'high status' languages such as English.

Such ideology about the supremacy of English and the perception of the ‘uselessness’ of their heritage languages has inadvertently trickled down into how language is used and managed in the home. Consequently, one direct impact of a grandparent caregiver’s linguistic ideologies is the influence it has on the day-to-day linguistic practices of the child. From mundane interactions to the selection of what they watch, read, and listen to, grandparents are the overseers of the linguistic diet that each child in families receives. (Wenhan, et. al., 2021)

Moving on to Indonesia, one of the most linguistically diverse nations in the world, where the language policy is shaped by its linguistic diversity, with over 700 languages spoken (Zein, 2020) across the archipelago. The policy reflects efforts to balance the use of the national language, Bahasa Indonesia for national unity, and recognizing the importance of regional and local language preservation and promotion. However, the rising prestige of English as a global language has led many families to incorporate English into their FLP, sometimes resulting in the marginalization of indigenous languages (Zein, 2017). English is used in many domains, in education, English is a compulsory subject in the secondary curriculum and, although it is not mandatory in primary schools, nearly all primary schools offer English instruction (Zein, 2018). In addition, as seen in job advertisements, English proficiency is highly valued in the labor market. Many employers require applicants to demonstrate a strong command of English proficiency, and those graduating from a university overseas are offered much higher salaries than local graduates (Zein, 2018).

Despite public enthusiasm, English language education in Indonesia is a complex phenomenon. Government ambivalence has led to an indifferent political stance among officials regarding English. Although significant governmental support for English in the past existed, recent evidence presents contradictory evidence (Zein, 2018). Critics of global English advocate for a more traditional educational approach, emphasizing the importance of local cultural and religious values for character development (Zein, 2017; Nur Fajriah, 2018), while overlooking the evident need for English proficiency. Furthermore, according to Nur Fajriah, there is a belief that

introducing English at the initial age is considered inappropriate. It is based on the result of over fifty years of studies, showing that people who began learning a foreign language at a secondary stage performed better than those who started learning it in childhood. Put differently, English is claimed to be unnecessary to be taught to primary students. Some policymakers and ECEC (Early Childhood Education and Care) professionals, for instance, still advise against multilingual child-rearing (Nur Fajriah, 2018).

Nevertheless, a different perspective on this issue also comes from others. Many scholars argue that children in Indonesia need to learn English to confront the challenge of the ASEAN-Global Economic Society (Nur Fajriah, 2018; Zein 2018). From the perspective of neurolinguistic study, learning a second language in the early stage could give advantages to the learners; they are developing their brain in electrical activity, functioning to help learners’ capacity in their future learning. Therefore, English is claimed to be very important to be taught from the beginning level (Nur Fajriah, 2018). Despite the advantages and drawbacks, Indonesian families consider English as one of the qualities that their children need to have. There have been many attempts to improve their children’s English competence. One of which is sending their children to national plus/ bilingual or International schools. Statistics show that there has been an increasing number of registered bilingual education institutions in Indonesia.

We have discussed a great amount of research investigating Family language policy in different contexts in the world that greatly contributes to increased knowledge in this area. Research has shown that family language policy is influenced by a myriad of factors, including parental beliefs and attitudes toward languages, socioeconomic status, educational aspirations, and broader societal language ideologies (King & Fogle, 2006; Spolsky, 2012). Understanding how families navigate these factors provides insights into the dynamics of language maintenance and shift, especially in multilingual and multicultural settings as in Indonesia. However, there are only a limited number of studies investigating the Indonesian families’ language ideologies toward their national language and the hegemony of English. This area

needs further research as it may greatly impact the future of Bahasa Indonesia as the national language and identity. Therefore I would like to investigate the practice of LP in Indonesian families, and the research questions are formulated as follows:

1. What are parents' language ideologies toward Bahasa Indonesia and English?
2. How does the attitude impact their language practice at home?
3. What are their efforts to improve their children's linguistic competence?

METHODS

In this study, a semi-structured questionnaire serves as the primary research method to explore three components of family language policy, including analysis of parents' language practices- the habitual pattern of selecting language use/ linguistic repertoire; its language beliefs or ideology- the attitudes/ beliefs about language and language use; and any specific efforts to modify/ regulate/ influence that practice by any kind of language intervention, planning or management (Spolsky, 2004). The questionnaire adapted from surveys and findings from previous studies (Duursma et al., 2007), was designed to investigate parents' demographic information, language background information, their ideologies towards English and Bahasa Indonesia, the languages spoken within the household, their children's challenges in mastering the languages (either Indonesian or English), and their efforts to deal with them. This approach aims to capture a holistic understanding of how parental ideologies shape language practices within the 32 families in Indonesia, and provide valuable insights into the dynamics of multilingualism and language maintenance in diverse family settings. Among the 32 participants, 20 of them send their children to a bilingual/ National Plus School where English is the primary language for instruction and communication, and used as the medium of instruction in most subjects.

Family Language Policy

Spolsky's (2004) model of language policy provides a foundational framework for understanding Family Language Policy (FLP). He distinguished three components, including analysis of its language practices- the habitual pattern of selecting language use/ linguistic repertoire; its language beliefs or ideology- the attitudes/ beliefs about language and language use; and any specific efforts to modify/ regulate/ influence that practice by any kind of language intervention, planning or management (Spolsky, 2004). Family language policy (FLP) is a growing and useful research field, as it bridges the gap between, draws from, and contributes to other research fields like (education) language policy, child language acquisition, and language socialization (Andritsou and Chatzidimou, 2022). FLP is defined as explicit and overt planning concerning language use within the home among family members and providing an integrated overview of research on how languages are managed, learned, and negotiated within families (King, Fogle & Logan-Terry, 2008). A comprehensive framework for understanding family language policy is sketched by bringing together two independent and currently disconnected fields of study: language policy and child language acquisition. (Andritsou and Chatzidimou, 2022, p.101).

Parental ideologies are theorized to play a crucial role in determining language outcomes. De Houwer (1999) draws on a model from developmental psychology to illustrate the relationship between beliefs, practices, and outcomes (see Figure 1) in childhood bilingualism.

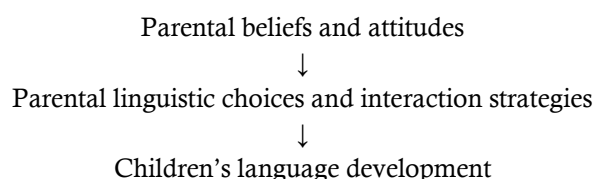


Figure 1. Relationship between parental beliefs/ attitudes and children's language development. (De Houwer, 1999)

Literature Review

The relationships between the three levels are highly complex, and the arrows should probably be bidirectional to account for the nature of parental beliefs regarding children's overall development. Parents' interpretations of very young children's vocalizations influence parents' subsequent linguistic choices in interactions with children. This is a very dramatic and sad example of how important parental beliefs and attitudes can be in determining parents' own linguistic behavior, and, as a result, their children's language learning (De Houwer, 1999)

FLP is interdisciplinary field (language policy and child language acquisition) by nature (Kaveh, 2020), research could focus on one or more of the FLP components, how these components intertwine, what family-external and/or family-internal factors shape FLP and are relevant to children's mental and bilingual development, children's language use, school performance and, ultimately, the maintenance of the minority/heritage language(s) (Andritsou and Chatzidimou, 2022).

Curdt-Christiansen (2009: 354) developed a model that demonstrates the interconnection of FLP components in the micro- and macro-level of the family context. (see Figure 2)

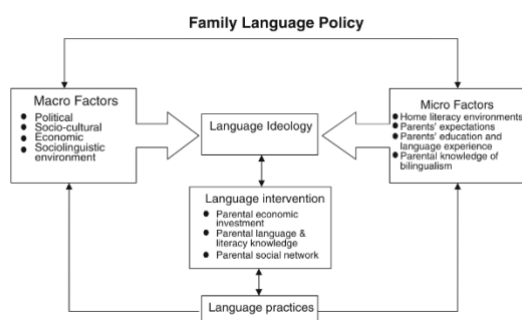


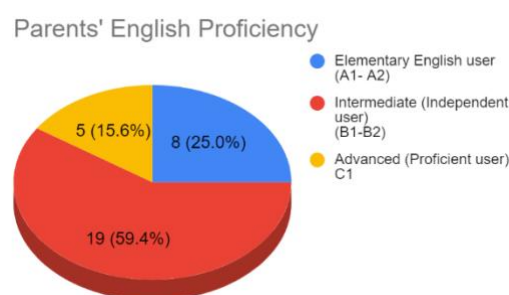
Figure 2. The interconnection of FLP components in the micro- and macro-level of the family context (Curdt-Christiansen (2009: 354))

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Parents' Background

The 32 participants of this study were parents aged 36 to 70 who live in Malang, a small town in East Java, whose children study at primary to tertiary level. They have varied educational backgrounds,

ranging from high school diplomas to master's degrees, but the majority of them have a bachelor's degree. They also have different ethnicity backgrounds dominated by Javanese and followed by Chinese descent, Sundanese, and Dayaknese respectively. Besides Bahasa Indonesia, they also speak English at different levels of proficiency, which ranged from knowledge of simple words to a good command of English language (Graph 1). As reflected in the graph, the majority of parents were at Intermediate level of English by 63%, and there were fewer competent users by 14%, considering that the position of English is as a foreign language in this country.



Graph 1. Overall Parents' English proficiency level (CEFR)
*CEFR: Common European Framework of Reference.

Parents Language Ideology

Despite the vitality of English as the Global language, Indonesian parents still hold Bahasa Indonesia in high regard as their national language as shown in Table 1. Most parents have positive attitudes towards Bahasa Indonesia. Even those who send their children to bilingual school still consider it as an important language to master because it is still used in the country in many areas such as in academics, workplace, socializing as well as networking. They still desire that their children are able to communicate in Bahasa Indonesia as it is used in their neighborhood in everyday life, and more than three quarters are proud of their national language as it reflects their identity.

As we investigate the responses from the open-ended question pertaining to their ideology towards Bahasa Indonesia further, we found that as the Indonesian citizens, they think that they have the obligation to prioritize the mastery of Bahasa Indonesia as it is also used as the lingua franca that allow the diverse backgrounds and multilingual tribes to be united as one. Furthermore, a participant who is a pre-school teacher at a bilingual school,

highlighted the importance of mastering Bahasa Indonesia before being introduced to a foreign language. Although she is aware of the importance of English as the global language, she encouraged parents to introduce Bahasa Indonesia in the first place.

Parents' ideology towards Bahasa Indonesia.	Number of parents
Bahasa Indonesia plays an important role due to its establishment as one the UNESCO languages.	11 (34.37%)
Bahasa Indonesia is needed for internal communication, it also plays an important role in academics, the workplace, socialising and networking.	27 (84.37%)
Parents want their children to be able to communicate and socialise with people in the neighborhood or with people surround them.	25 (78.112%)
They are proud of Bahasa Indonesia as it is their identity.	21 (65.62%)
Bahasa Indonesia mastery is not necessary as most people use English in the International forum.	1 (3.12%)

Table 1. Parents' ideology towards Bahasa Indonesia

"Menurut saya Bahasa Indonesia adalah bahasa pemersatu bangsa Indonesia. Seperti yang kita ketahui bersama bahwa Indonesia terdiri dari ratusan pulau dengan bahasa daerah yang berbeda-beda. Dengan adanya Bahasa Indonesia, kita bisa berkomunikasi dengan seluruh warga negara Indonesia dari daerah manapun. Semakin besarnya paparan bahasa asing melalui internet, pasti berpengaruh terhadap jumlah penutur bahasa Indonesia yang benar-benar fasih. Misalnya, semakin banyak sekolah internasional yang mana menggunakan Bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa pengantarnya akan membuat anak-anak kehilangan kesempatan untuk bisa berbahasa Indonesia dengan baik. Seperti yang saya jumpai di sekolah di mana saya mengajar, anak-anak mulai tidak mengerti kosa kata dalam Bahasa Indonesia. Oleh karena itu, menurut saya akan lebih baik jika anak-anak harus mahir berbahasa Indonesia dahulu sebelum diperkenalkan dengan bahasa asing." (SU)

"In my opinion, Bahasa Indonesia is the lingua franca that unify Indonesia. As we all know, Indonesia is comprised of hundreds of islands with different regional languages. With the existence of

Bahasa Indonesia, we can communicate with all Indonesian citizens from any region. The increasingly intensive exposure to foreign languages through the internet certainly affects the number of people who are truly proficient in Indonesian. For example, the growing number of international schools using English as their medium of instruction may cause children to miss the opportunity to speak Indonesian fluently. This is something I've observed in schools where I teach, where children are starting to not understand Indonesian vocabulary. Therefore, in my opinion, it would be better if children become proficient in Indonesian first before being introduced to (a) foreign language(s)." (SU)

One of the parents sending his child to a bilingual school also emphasized the importance of mastering the Standard Bahasa Indonesia. He stated that parents should anticipate the drawbacks of intensive exposure to social media where Non-standard Bahasa Indonesia is used. He also encourages parents to support their children to get into the habit of reading books so when they start the primary school they will get used to with the Indonesian texts. Therefore, they will be able to comprehend them better. (JL)

"Bahasa Indonesia yang baik sangat penting ya ..khusus nya anak-anak jaman sekarang, kr semua serba sosial media. Jadi kebanyakan anak-anak akan mencontoh dengan cepat apa yang di lihat dan di dengar. Jadi memang harus ada peran dari lingkungan keluarga yang mendominasi didik anak anak sejak dini untuk penggunaan Bahasa Indonesia yang baik dan benar. Dan mengajak anak anak sejak dini membaca buku -buku cerita sesuai dengan usianya, sehingga saat masuk sekolah dasar, anak-anak sudah siap mengerjakan soal-soal cerita dengan benar. Dan bisa paham isi bacaan nya." (JL)

According to parents, as shown in Table 2. major ideologies towards English are the importance of English mastery because it is the international language that is spoken globally, it can provide opportunities in many domains, and it enables people around the world to communicate. These findings align with previous research which highlighted the role of English as linguistic imperialism or as a vehicle for social economic mobility (Ricento, 2018), linguistic entrepreneurship

(De Costa, et.al., 2016, 2019), socioeconomic successes (Kubota, 2020) and English is seen as a commodity, a product to acquire to thrive in the globalized and neoliberal society (Alarcón Utrera and Moreno De Diezmas, 2023).

Parents' ideology towards English	Number of parents
English mastery is very important because it provides opportunities in many areas/ domains such as academics, politics, economics, socio-culture, tourism, etc.	27 (84.37%)
English is an international language/ English is used globally and my kids have to master it.	25 (78.12)
English mastery is more important than Bahasa Indonesia mastery	1 (3.12%)
English mastery can improve the social status	6 (18.75%)
English mastery enables me to communicate with people around the world	22 (68.75%)

Table 2. Parents' Ideology towards English

Language Practice

The language used in the family is the reflection of parents' ideology. The findings reveal that the families in this study uphold towards their national language (Table 2.) and the fact that not all parents were competent users of English, as shown in Graph 1, that majority of them were intermediate and basic users, they mostly used Bahasa Indonesia as the means of communication in their families. Sometimes they mixed or code switch between Indonesian and English (Table 3.). For children who go to bilingual schools, since they have been equally exposed to both languages, they are able to communicate in English and Bahasa Indonesia equally well, despite their preference for speaking English or code switch.

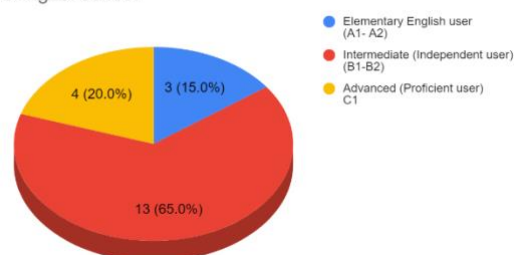
Parents consider that English mastery is essential because it is the international language which provides opportunities in many areas/ domains and that it enables people around the world to communicate (lingua franca). These ideologies towards English align with a model proposed by Curdt-Christiansen (2009: 354), stating that economy is one of macro factors which contributes to language ideology. While their attitude towards Bahasa Indonesia is determined by other macro

factors. The first is political factor, because Bahasa Indonesia is the National and official language used, and the second is socio-cultural/ sociolinguistic environment as it is used in order to socialize with the surroundings. Furthermore, Curdt-Christiansen also proposed micro factors such as parents' expectations, and in this context, we can see that parents obviously desire their children to be able to survive in the future global economy. The next micro factor found in this study is parents' education and language experience (their proficiency in English) as shown in graph 2. which serve as one of determining factors in their language practice at home.

Language used in family interactions	Language used
Electronic communication (text messages: WA/ call, etc)	* Bahasa Indonesia, * Mixed: Bahasa Indonesia dominated
Mother and children interaction	* Bahasa Indonesia, * Mixed: Bahasa Indonesia dominated
Father and children interaction	* Bahasa Indonesia, * Mixed: Bahasa Indonesia dominated
Sibling interaction	* Bahasa Indonesia, * Mixed: Bahasa Indonesia dominated * English * Mixed: English dominated
Children and their grandparents	Bahasa Indonesia
Children and their cousins	Bahasa Indonesia
Children and school friends	* Mixed (English dominated) * Mixed (Bahasa Indonesia dominated)

Table 3. Language used for family interactions

English Proficiency of Parents who send their children to bilingual school



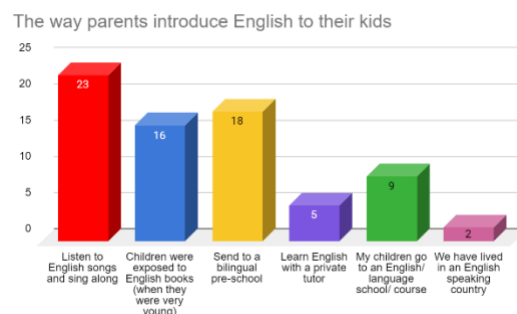
Graph 2. English Proficiency of Parents who send their children to bilingual schools

As we investigate further, all parents in this study agree that introducing English to very young

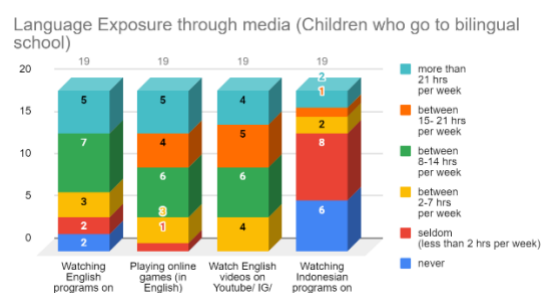
children is very important. Graph 3 provides information regarding the practice parents did to expose their children to English language. The most popular one was listening to English songs (nursery rhymes) and singing along with them, followed by reading story books to their children. Another effort was to send their children to bilingual pre-schools which is believed to be effective for the English acquisition. In addition, some of them sent their children to a language school, this gives evidence on the Curdt-Christiansen model that parental economic investment contributes to families language intervention (figure 2).

Parents also play an important role in their children's language development, as they are the ones responsible for consistent exposure to English as reflected in Graph 4. Allowing their kids to watch English videos, English TV program, and play games in English also contribute to the language acquisition. These findings support the affective filter hypothesis proposed by Stephen Krashen which states that emotional factors, such as motivation, anxiety, and self-confidence, can affect the success of language acquisition. A low affective filter (low anxiety, high motivation) is believed to enhance learning. When children watch English videos or play English games, they pick up some vocabulary or expressions. This is when they unconsciously learn a new language.

Furthermore, the result of this study also supports critical period hypothesis proposed by Wilder Penfield (1959) which states that there is a relatively short space of time in an individual's early life during which it is possible to learn a second language with native-like fluency. People learning a new language after this point, the hypothesis states, will always make certain predictable errors and will likely speak their second language with an accent. Although the exact critical period definition (the number of years during which people can successfully learn a new language) is up for debate, the original researchers suggested that nine years of age was the upper limit for native-like language learning, while newer research suggests that the critical period might extend to the age of seventeen or eighteen.



Graph 3. How parents introduce English to their children

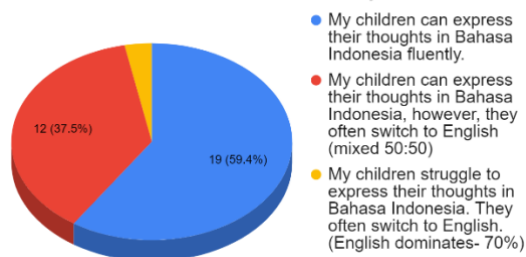


Graph 4. Bilingual school children's language exposure through media

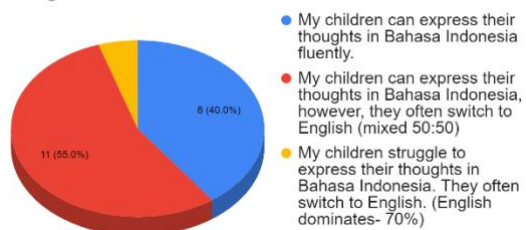
Children's bilingualism

Due to the ideology that the families uphold towards their national language, all of their children are able to speak Bahasa Indonesia with varied level of competence depending on the language practice implemented in their family. As shown in Graph 5, out of 32 families, more than half of their children can express their thoughts fluently and effortlessly. While a quarter often switch to English when expressing their ideas, and there was only a family whose child was struggling in expressing himself in Bahasa Indonesia and was more competent in English. As we investigate the data further, we found that besides he went to a bilingual school, his parents (his mom is an intermediate user of English, while his dad is a proficient English user) also implement non-native bilingualism (Nieto Moreno de Diezmas and Alarcón Utrera, 2022) in his family through creating immersion environments at home. These include the use of English as the language for communication at home (and in some cases, also outside), even if it is not the mother tongue of any of the family members and it is not a society language either. This partially explains why he struggles when it comes to expressing himself in Bahasa Indonesia.

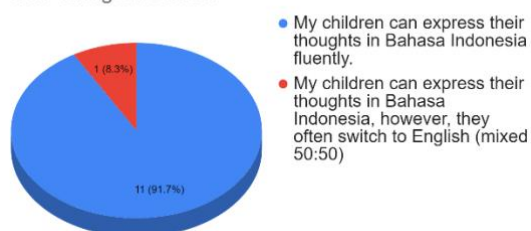
Children's Bahasa Indonesia Proficiency

**Graph 5.** Children's Bahasa Indonesia Proficiency

Bahasa Indonesia proficiency of children who go to a bilingual school

**Graph 6.** Bahasa Indonesia proficiency of children who go to a bilingual school

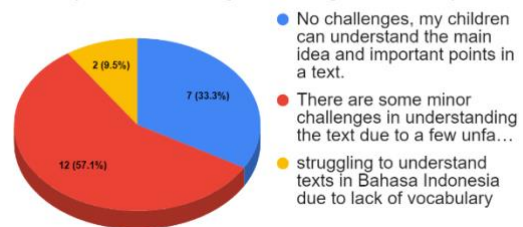
Bahasa Indonesia Proficiency of children who go to non- bilingual school

**Graph 7.** Bahasa Indonesia proficiency of children who go to a non-bilingual school

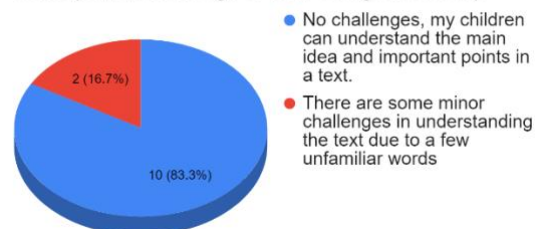
As there are two different family groups in this study, as illustrated and Graph 6 and 7, more than half of the children who go to bilingual school (Graph 6) tend to code-switch and mixed Bahasa Indonesia and English. They also face challenges in comprehending Indonesian written texts (Graph 5). While those who go to non- bilingual school (Graph 4) can maintain their speech in their mother tongue, and face no challenges in understanding Bahasa Indonesia texts. Again, parents need to intervene in order to improve their children's reading skills as well as their vocabulary range. Parents helped them by explaining some unfamiliar words, or accompany them when they read a text to provide immediate support needed, and encourage their children to read more Indonesian texts (as seen in Table 4). Parents' assistance indicates that they are

concerned about their children's proficiency in Bahasa Indonesia as the implementation of the ideology they have towards Bahasa Indonesia.

Challenges in understanding Indonesian written texts (Children who go to Bilingual School)

**Graph 8.** Challenges faced by the children who go to bilingual school in Reading Indonesian texts

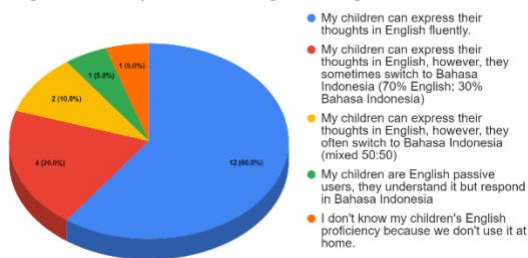
Challenges in understanding Indonesian written Texts (Children who go to non- bilingual school)

**Graph 9.** Challenges faced by the children who go to non-bilingual school in Reading Indonesian texts

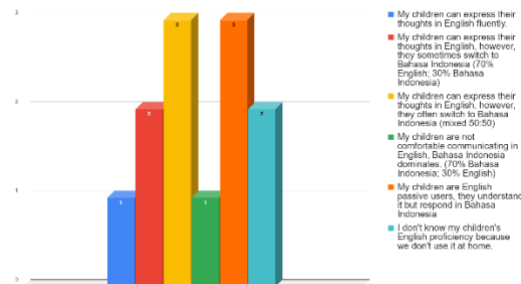
Parents' efforts to support children's challenges in understanding Indonesian Texts	Number of parents
Encourage my children to read more texts in Bahasa Indonesia	15 46.87%
Accompany my children and provide support when they read Indonesian texts	14 43.75%
Ask the teacher to improve the reading time at school	2 6.25%
Allow/ encourage my children to watch Indonesian movies, videos, or TV program.	7 21.87%
Explain/ translate a word/ words if my children ask.	20 62.50%
Nothing, my children is competent in Bahasa Indonesia	4 12.50%

Table 4. Parents effort to support children's challenges in understanding Indonesian Texts

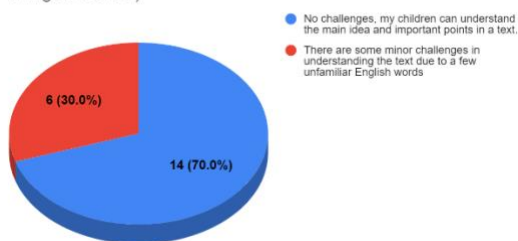
English Proficiency of children who go to a bilingual school

**Graph 10.** English Proficiency of children who go to a bilingual school

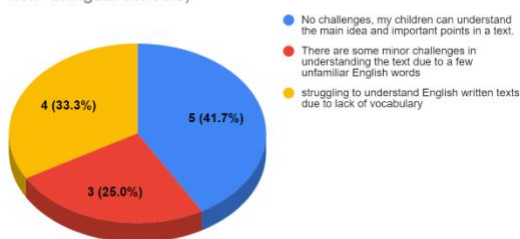
English proficiency of children who go to non- bilingual school

**Graph 11.** English proficiency of children who go to non- bilingual schools

Challenges in understanding English Text (Children who go to a bilingual school)

**Graph 12.** Children's Challenges in understanding English Text

Challenges in understanding English Text (Children who go to non- bilingual schools)

**Graph 10.** Challenges in understanding English Text (Children who go to non- bilingual schools)

As seen in Graph 10. The children who go to bilingual school can express themselves better in English, although code switching was inevitable for some of them but the majority have wider range of

vocabulary that enables them to communicate their ideas better. They can also understand English written text relatively effortlessly, although some may encounter minor difficulties in a few unfamiliar English words (Graph 12). For the students who go to non- bilingual school (Graph 8.), on the other hand, they cannot fully express themselves in English and their speech is either mixed Indonesian-English or dominated by Bahasa Indonesia. However, the interesting finding is that children going to non- bilingual school can manage to understand English text despite some vocabulary challenges they may encounter and this situation leads to passive English users. They have enough vocabulary and understand text, but they lack of speaking ability because they do not have enough opportunity to practice their skills.

These findings have confirmed that sending kids to bilingual schools is an effective way to learn a new language, in this case English, where children can be immersed in an English speaking environment. This is aligned with the Vygotsky's theory that has been adopted in the area of English Language teaching where social interactions help children develop their ability to use language. Therefore, sending children to a bilingual school can be an effective strategy implemented by parents with limited English proficiency but desire their children to master English.

CONCLUSION

This study presents empirical evidence on how Indonesian families manage to uphold Bahasa Indonesia as the national language that unify the varied cultural and linguistic backgrounds of Indonesia. They are also aware the importance of mastering English for their children. The strategies they implemented to support their children English development were introducing English at very young age through English songs, stories, videos and sending their loved ones to bilingual schools or language schools. Parents were not only concerned with the development of English, but they also support their kids Bahasa Indonesia development by encouraging them to improve their vocabulary through reading more books. The findings of this study will guide other families in their language practice, particularly how to support their children

language development. This practice has led to the development of bilingualism at the very early stage of children's lives. The drawback spotted from this bilingualism is the mediocre performance of their language competence. Most of the children could not reached the maximum proficiency of both languages, which possibly caused by their age, that they are still developing their linguistic competence. Therefore, further investigation is needed in order to discover whether the children will be able to develop their competence in both languages as they grow older. Further investigation is also needed to discover the family language policy in wider scope which may lead to other possible findings.

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