

IMPACT OF MULTILINGUAL USE ON SPEECH DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN AGED 4-5 YEARS IN TK TA 03 PENGKOL

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Abstract

The use of more than one language in everyday life is common in many families around the world. Children are often exposed to more than one language from an early age. Multilingualism, also called bilingualism, refers to a person's ability to communicate in two or more languages. This study aims to analyze the impact of multilingual use on speech development in children aged 4-5 years. Researchers will explore the positive or negative impacts, as well as factors that can moderate the results. The method used in this study is qualitative. The type of research used is a case study. The results of this study show that the use of multilingual (Indonesian, Javanese, and English) in the daily lives of children aged 4-5 years has both positive and negative impacts. The positive impacts include improving cognitive abilities and social skills, as well as readiness to face the times. However, some children experience confusion and speech delays. Significant supporting factors are a supportive school environment with structured and interactive teaching methods, as well as the consistent role of parents in language habituation at home. The influence of social media also motivates parents to teach foreign languages, especially English. Therefore, the right approach and support from the school environment and parents is essential in optimizing the benefits of multilingualism for children's language development.

Keywords: Multilingual; Speech Development of Children; TK TA 03 Pengkol

INTRODUCTION

The use of more than one language in everyday life is common in many families around the world. Children are often exposed to more than one language from an early age. Multilingualism, also called bilingualism, refers to a person's ability to communicate in two or more languages. Being able to speak more than one language is a valuable asset that opens doors to diverse cultural experiences, as well as provides communication excellence in an increasingly connected global world. However, there is debate and differing views in the literature regarding the influence of multilingualism on children's language development (MacLeod et al., 2019).

Language development in preschool-aged children is an important stage in cognitive growth and communication. Children aged 4-5 often begin to express themselves in multiple languages, especially if they are exposed to a multilingual environment. This phenomenon has sparked interest in research on the impact of the use of various languages on children's speech development. In this era of globalization, many families have diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Children in these kinds of families tend to be exposed to different languages from an early age. The question that arises is whether the use of multiple languages in these environments has a positive or negative impact on children's language development (Newbury et al., 2020).

Language development in children aged 4-5 years is strongly influenced by social interaction and language use in everyday life. Therefore, providing good attention and support in the use of language is key to helping children develop good speaking and communication skills. The use of language in the speech development of children aged 4-5 years has an important role in shaping children's language and communication skills. Adults around children, especially parents and caregivers, serve as role models in the use of good and correct language. Children will imitate what they hear from adults (Antonijevic-Elliott et al., 2020).

Children aged 4-5 years are actively expanding their vocabulary. Adults should give them plenty of opportunities to hear and use new words. Adults need to use clear and precise language when talking to children. Avoid using words or expressions that are too complex for the child's understanding. Talk to children in a language that is appropriate for their age. Adults must be consistent in their use of language. It helps the child understand

the rules of the language and creates a stable environment for their language development (Langeloo et al., 2019).

The importance of understanding the impact of multilingual use on 4–5-year-olds is because this period is an important phase in language development. At this age, children experience rapid development in language comprehension and production. Fundamental questions arise, such as do children who grow up in multilingual families have advantages or challenges in their language development compared to children who grow in only one language (Kwon et al., 2021).

This study aimed to analyze the impact of multilingual use on speech development in children aged 4-5 years. Researchers will explore the positive or negative impacts, as well as factors that can moderate the results. In addition, researchers will seek answers to whether certain approaches to language learning in multilingual contexts can better support children's speech development. Researchers believe that the results of this study will provide deeper insight into the complexity of language development in multilingual children, as well as provide practical guidance for parents and educators in supporting children's language development (Bruinsma et al., 2023).

METHODS

The method used in this study is qualitative. Qualitative research is research that has the intention to understand the phenomena experienced by research subjects such as behavior, perception, motivation, action and others by way of description in the form of words and language, in a special natural context that utilizes various natural methods (Fadilla et al., 2024). The type of research used is a case study. What will be examined in this study is the impact of multilingual use on speech development in children aged 4-5 years. This research will be carried out in Jepara Regency, namely at TK Tarbiyatul Athfal 03 Pengkol which is addressed at Pengkol RT Village. 01 RW. 03, Pengkol, Jepara District. The subjects of the study were parents, and students of TK Tarbiyatul Athfal 03 Pengkol. This peelitian will be carried out from April 20 to May 19, 2024.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on observations made by researchers at TK TA 03 Pengkol, Jepara Regency, found several children who use multilingual or use more than one language. According to

the results of the researchers' interviews with group A class teachers, there were some students who used more than one language to communicate. The languages used are Indonesian, Javanese, and English. The use of some of these languages is motivated by several factors, namely from the environment and parental involvement (parenting)(Tsinivits & Unsworth, 2021). Bahasa Indonesia is the national language so it is more often used in schools to communicate within the scope of schools. The use of Javanese and English in TK TA 03 is carried out on certain days only, for example on Wednesday there is a Javanese language schedule so that later children will be taught to speak Javanese and taught habituation such as "dalem, nggih, mboten". English in TK TA 03 is taught every day through singing at the beginning of learning, namely singing "Good morning and how are you" and habituation to greet with English "good morning children" so that children have been taught to speak English even if only a few syllables. Not only that, TK TA 03 also has a magazine book for learning Javanese and English so that teachers also have guidelines in teaching the language so that it can overcome the lack of teacher knowledge in a particular language. Multilingual learning is not easy for all early childhood, there are children who are quick to accept and understand a new language, there are also children who are still difficult to understand a language, causing confusion and delays in speech development in children (Filippi et al., 2020).

According to the results of interviews with parents of group A students of kindergarten TA 03 Pengkol totaling 14 people, researchers obtained results related to the impact of multilingual use on speech development in children aged 4-5 years. The biggest factor of multilingual use in children is one of the involvement of parents / parenting, so that habituation in language at home is very influential on the language used by children to communicate with their surroundings. The role of both parents, including the family, as the main educator greatly determines the success of children in the present and future. Therefore the personality, character and ability of children are largely determined by coaching, habituation and education from their parents. Where children with more abilities, such as being able to master various languages, then they will be better prepared to face the development of this very fast era (Siddiqui, 2023). The results of interviews with parents, researchers also found parents who apply commitment in language, for example if communicating with parents must use Javanese, but if at school children must use Indonesian or vice versa. The influence of social media motivates parents in getting children to speak various languages from an early age. The trend of combining various

languages is used as a language style that is considered to reflect a person's level of education and social status. Indonesian culture and society consider English as a high-level language (Rethfeldt et al., 2023). The use of foreign languages, especially English, is considered to be able to lift the degree of someone who uses it. More details can be seen in the table below as follows: Consistency and rules of language use at home help children understand and master different languages. Results of observations, interviews and analysis in the form of tables:

Tabel 1. Results of observations, interviews, and analysis

Aspects	Observation	Interview with Master	Interview with Parents	Conclusion
Languages Spoken	Indonesian, Javanese, and English	- Indonesian used daily - Javanese is used on a certain day - English is taught through singing and greetings	- Language habituation at home according to family rules - The influence of social media encourages the use of English	- Children are exposed to multilingualism from the school and home environment
Learning Methods	Structured teaching through daily schedules and magazine books	- Use of singing for English - A special day for Javanese	- Parental commitment to language use at home	- Interactive and structured teaching methods help children in language acquisition
Positive Impact	Anak-anak menunjukkan kemampuan kognitif yang lebih baik	- Children who quickly accept a new language show good development	- Children with the ability to be better prepared to face the times	- Multilingual mastery improves children's cognitive and social abilities
Negative Impact	Some children experience kebingungan dan keterlambatan dalam perkembangan	- Some children show language confusion and speech delays	- Parents notice confusion and delays in some children	- Not all children can easily master several languages, causing confusion and speech delays

Aspects	Observation	Interview with Master	Interview with Parents	Conclusion
	bicara			
	A supportive school			
Factors	environment with			
Supporting	language			
Language	schedules and			Interview with
Development	magazine books	Aspects	Observation	Master
				- Indonesian used daily -
				Javanese is used on a certain day -
			Indonesian,	English is taught
Interview with		Languages	Javanese, and	through singing
Parents	Conclusion	Spoken	English	and greetings
- Language				
habituation at				
home according				
to family	- Children are			
rules - The	exposed to		Structured	
influence of	multilingualism		teaching through	- Use of singing for
social media	from the school		daily schedules	English -
encourages the	and home	Learning	and magazine	Special day for
use of English	environment	Methods	books	Javanese
	- Interactive and			
	structured			
- Parental	teaching methods			Children who
commitment to	assist children in		Children show	quickly accept a
language use at	language		better cognitive	new language show
home	acquisition	Positive Impact	abilities	good development

Source: Field Observation Results

This table summarizes the results of observations and interviews conducted at TK TA 03 Pengkol regarding multilingual use and its impact on the speech development of children aged 4-5 years.

DISCUSSION

Multilingual

Multilingual is the ability of someone who understands more than one language. It means someone who uses a lot of language in his daily life according to the context and object. In this sophisticated and modern era, many people have mastered more than one language. Not only adults but also children. All they can get from studying at school and hanging out in the home environment. Multilingual use in early childhood is also influenced by several factors, namely the environment and parents. In addition to these factors, multilingual use also has an impact on early childhood (van Wonderen et al., 2023).

Factors that have a considerable influence on children's language development are the environment. Because with the environment, children can live their daily lives well without any difficulty in interacting. Language development in children will get influence through stimuli from the environment. The main place used to facilitate language development in children is the family, It is in this family that the child's closest environment. From birth to age 6, children spend more time at home with their parents so that the intensity of interacting with family members is more (Zheng et al., 2023).

The role of parents is needed to reprimand and give direction to children that what they have said is not appropriate to say. To develop their potential, guidance for children is needed. Therefore, parents should give examples or models for children, speak politely and slowly so that they are easily followed by children and parents must be ready to give criticism or correct if children make a mistake in speaking. Guidance should be done continuously and consistently so that children will easily talk to others (Abderrazak, 2020).

Children who are accustomed to several languages since childhood have the ability to adapt better to the environment which means it makes it easier for children to socialize. Children who speak more than one language have better academic skills. Children who use multilingual (more than one language) can concentrate more optimally, be meticulous in problem solving, understand language structure and multitask. Children with multilingual skills have a *sense of self-worth, identity and belonging*. Children become confident when communicating and socializing with large communities and talking to them according to the language used. Concerns that children who use multilingualism may experience impaired brain development that will affect their social performance. One that stands out is the assumption that multilingual children tend to experience language confusion and even

speech delay which can hinder children's social skills. Teaching children from an early age to learn one more language when their first language skills or mother tongue is not fluent can have a negative effect on their language development. This is because the penetration of both languages confuses children at once, especially if the language mastered by children is different and not used by their peers (McLeod, 2014). Negative impacts arising from applying multilingual from an early age:

a. *Speech Delay*

Toddlers are prone to confusion when they are introduced to more than one language when their mother tongue skills are not fully perfect. In this phase, children experience confusion choosing the language they should use in communicating every day. This is what causes speech delay. However, applying multilingual from early childhood is not the only reason that results in children experiencing delays in speech.

b. Language Deterioration

According to Erika Hoff, Professor of Psychology, simultaneously learning more than one language can limit the number of words a child learns. For example, the amount of vocabulary that a child should learn in a span of one month reaches 20 words, but because he also learns other languages, the capacity of his first vocabulary will be divided, 10 mother tongue words and 10 second language words. This is what is feared to cause children to be late in mastering new vocabulary.

c. Some children may question their parents' identity because they live in Indonesia but learn a variety of foreign languages. Because the cultural component itself is inseparable from the existence of language.

d. Stress

Introducing children to various languages has the potential to cause children to become stressed. Give your child time to get to know their mother tongue to the fullest and not force them to learn another language. Children need adjustment time which may affect their growth and development.

In the current era of globalization, children are expected to be able to master the necessary language, especially their mastery of foreign languages without leaving the native language of the region and Indonesian as a national identity. Parents must think about the needs of children who are appropriate for their age. The use of multilingualism is not an

easy thing, especially improving it according to the development and age stage of the child requires patience and the right strategy.

Language Development in Preschoolers

Language development in preschool-aged children is an important stage in cognitive growth and communication. Children aged 4-5 often begin to express themselves in multiple languages, especially if they are exposed to a multilingual environment. This phenomenon has sparked interest in research on the impact of the use of various languages on children's speech development. In this era of globalization, many families have diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Children in these kinds of families tend to be exposed to different languages from an early age (N. M. Mackenzie, 2012).

The Influence of Multilingualism on Language Development

Positive Impact

Better Cognitive Abilities: Children who are exposed to multilingualism often show better cognitive abilities. They are more skilled at problem-solving tasks and have higher thinking flexibility. **Faster Language Mastery:** Multilingual children can recognize and understand language structures better, speeding up language acquisition. **Social Skills:** The use of more than one language improves children's social skills by allowing them to interact with more people from different cultural backgrounds. **Broader Cultural Knowledge:** Multilingual children are more aware and open to other cultures, helping them understand and appreciate cultural diversity (Olpe et al., 2014).

Negative Impact

Language Confusion: There is a risk of language confusion, where children mix up vocabulary or language structures from different languages. **Speech Delay:** Some children may experience speech developmental delays because they process and learn more than one language simultaneously. However, this is usually temporary. **Stress and Anxiety:** Children may experience stress or anxiety if they feel overwhelmed by the demands of learning different languages.

Factors Supporting Language Development

Appropriate Teaching Methods: The use of interactive and fun teaching methods is very important in supporting children's language development. **Supportive Environment:** A supportive learning environment, including support from peers and teachers, helps children

feel comfortable using multiple languages. Parental Involvement: Parents who actively communicate and read books in multiple languages give children more opportunities to practice and strengthen their language skills.

The Importance of Support in Language Use

Language development in children aged 4-5 years is strongly influenced by social interaction and language use in everyday life. Providing good attention and support in the use of language is key to helping children develop good speaking and communication skills. Adults, especially parents and caregivers, serve as role models in the use of good and correct language.

CONCLUSION

The results of observations and interviews at TK TA 03 Pengkol show that the use of multilingual (Indonesian, Javanese, and English) in the daily lives of children aged 4-5 years has both positive and negative impacts. The positive impacts include improving cognitive abilities and social skills, as well as readiness to face the times. However, some children experience confusion and speech delays. Significant supporting factors are a supportive school environment with structured and interactive teaching methods, as well as the consistent role of parents in language habituation at home. The influence of social media also motivates parents to teach foreign languages, especially English. Therefore, the right approach and support from the school environment and parents is essential in optimizing the benefits of multilingualism for children's language development.

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