

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the context of the research, formulation of the research questions, objective of the research, significance of the research, scope and limitation, and definition of key terms.

A. Context of the Research

Bilingual education has been traditionally defined as the use of two languages in education, the main goal of bilingual education is for students to become bilingual (proficient in two languages) and biliterate (able to read and write in two languages). However, in the context of education for language-minoritized groups, bilingual education can also serve to enhance comprehension and develop linguistic competence in the dominant language.¹ Bilingual education scholars share both an interest and a preoccupation with the growing importance of English as the dominant language in various aspects of life, including socio-cultural, political, economic, legal, and educational fields. On one hand, the dominance of the English language further emphasizes the importance of bilingual education, as many people around the world want their children to be proficient in English.²

¹ Ofelia García and Angel M. Y. Lin, *Extending Understandings of Bilingual and Multilingual Education* (Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing AG, 2017), p. 2

² Ibid, 6

Indonesia, as a developing country, strives to enhance its educational quality through bilingual programs to compete globally. As stated by Jayanti and Sujarwo (2019), One of the most popular methods nowadays is using bilingual education.³ The use of language in a bilingual classroom has a greatly important role in the teaching and learning process.⁴ Implementing bilingual education in classroom is considered an important step in improving English proficiency in Indonesia. The importance and benefits of being bilingual are undeniable in today's interconnected world. Bilingual not only enhances communication skills but also promotes cognitive flexibility, problemsolving abilities, and cultural awareness.⁵ It is also found in the research Espinosa, (2015) research shows that children who grow up with two languages in the United States can learn more than one language from an early age and gain social, linguistic, and cognitive benefits. Thus, bilingual schools play a significant role for early childhood, especially in fostering the habit of using a foreign language in daily activities. This is important to ensure that children do not fall behind in mastering English in today's era.

The existence of bilingual classes has become one of the leading alternatives in modern education systems. Bilingual classes also encourage

³ Dwi Jayanti, Anton Sujarwo, *Bilingual Education in Indonesia: Between Idealism and the Reality*, (Samarinda: Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan, Universitas Widya Gama Mahakam Samarinda, 2019), p. 13

⁴ Kuran puasa, Andi Asrifan, Yan Chen, *Classroom Talk In Bilingualn Class Interaction*, (Research in Pedagogy, Vol. 7, issue 1, 2017), p. 106

⁵ Shirova M. S. Qizi and Ziyodullayeva A. Akmalovna, *The Importance And Benefits Of Being Bilingual*, (Uzbekistan: Golden Brain Publishers, 2024), p. 142

students to be more active in the learning process through communicative and participatory approaches. A study conducted by Fauz et al. (2024) found that the implementation of bilingual learning at Pesantren Al-Mashduqiah had a significantly positive impact, both academically and socially, particularly through the use of active and enjoyable learning methods. Students showed improvements in academic performance as well as greater classroom participation.⁶ This success is supported by findings from Octika (2024), who stated that social interaction-based practices in bilingual classrooms can effectively enhance students' communication skills and self-confidence. Interactions conducted in two languages not only strengthen vocabulary acquisition and mastery of foreign language structures but also foster self-confidence, independence, and openness to diversity.⁷ With a consistent approach and a supportive learning environment, bilingual classes have the potential to produce a generation proficient in foreign languages and globally competitive, thereby enhancing the quality of education and students' future competitiveness.

Al Azhar Islamic Elementary School Kediri, there are several parallel classes at each grade level, namely Class A, B, C, and a special class that implements a bilingual system. This bilingual class has been implemented since 2015 as part of the school's innovation in responding to the challenges of educational globalization and in improving the quality of

⁶ M Faiz, Hairun Nisak, Latifatus Saleha, *Applied strategies for Implementing Bilingual Programs in Madrasahs to Building Public Confidence*, (Bussioness and Applied Management Journal, 2(1), p. 8

⁷ Ibid

foreign language learning, especially English. In this class, English is taught not only as a stand-alone subject but also within a learning environment that uses two languages. The interesting phenomenon in the existence of this bilingual class lies in how the process of teaching English takes place in a dual-language setting something that does not occur in the regular classes. In this context, teachers are required to apply appropriate teaching strategies and face various challenges throughout the teaching and learning process. Therefore, appropriate teaching strategies are needed to foster the habit of using a foreign language from an early age and to support the optimal development of children's language skills.

Implementing English language teaching in elementary school requires strategies that align with children's cognitive development. At this stage, children learn best through interactive and engaging approaches. In a study by Wulandari et. al (2022), showed that teacher applied eight strategies in teaching English at the elementary school level, such as listen and repeat, listen and do, question and answer, in-pair, cooperative learning, and games. These strategies are designed to actively engage students in the learning process and align with the cognitive development of elementary aged children.⁸ Through interactive and enjoyable approaches, English learning becomes more effective and engaging for students. Moreover, the study conducted by Yansyah et al. (2023) highlight the importance of

⁸ Ni L. P. T. Wulandari et al., *Strategies Implemented in Teaching English for Young Learners in Primary School*, (Singaraja: Ganesha University of Education, Indonesia, 2020), p. 229

creativity in selecting bilingual teaching methods and media for young learners. Big book storytelling, supported by flashcards and big books, helps introduce literacy and character education in both Bahasa Indonesia and English. During storytelling, teachers should actively engage students by asking questions, encouraging repetition, and acting out activities.⁹ However, the implementation of teaching strategies in bilingual classrooms also faces various challenges.¹⁰

One of the main challenges is no experience in teaching bilingual class, curriculum, subject, less of proper training, and various students' previous background and proficiency level. Therefore, the strategies to overcome the challenges were classified into two major themes. Internal motivation consisted of four key aspects: the teacher's self-initiative in organizing additional classes, the application of appropriate teaching techniques, the use of translanguaging strategies to bridge language gaps, and maintaining effective communication with parents. On the other hand, external motivation was categorized into two elements: the implementation of bilingual class policies along with training provide by institutions and collaborations with school principals.¹¹ Professional development programs focusing on bilingual teaching strategies are essential to enhance learning

⁹ Yansyah et al., *Incorporating Character Education And Bilingual Literacy Into Early Childhood Classroom: Practical Ideas*, (Jember: UMJember Proceeding Series, 2023), p. 335

¹⁰ Linda M. Espinosa, *Challenges and Benefits of Early Bilingualism in the United States' Context*, (New York: Global Education Review, 2015), p. 40

¹¹ Suci U. Armand, Isti S. S. Gandana, *Teaching a Bilingual Class for Lower Primary Level: Challenges and Strategies*, (Jakarta: UHAMKA International Conference on ELT and CALL (UICELL, 2023), p. 344

and improve educational outcomes. With proper training, the quality of teaching in bilingual elementary can significantly improve, positively impacting children's language skills from a young age.

The skills of educators to teach English to young students in bilingual schools plays a crucial role. A good and professional teacher must be able to perform various roles in the classroom, such as controller, organizer, assessor, and tutor. However, in teaching english, a teacher must not only perform these roles but also create an engaging classroom environment, love their profession, prossess extensive knowledge, and be able to entertain students.¹² Teachers must understand their students' characteristics, as children are at a developmental stage where their brains are highly actice and responsive to learning, making it an ideal time to absorb new informations. According to Linse & Nunan, McKay, and Philp et al., as cited in Oktavia et al. (2022), children aged 2 to 13 are in their critical period for language learning. Therefore, this critical period should be utilized as affectively as possible, especially for teaching English as a foreign language to children. Their succes in learning also greatly depends on how the teacher teaches them using the right approaches that suits their characteristic. With a fresh brain, the learning process becomes more effective.¹³

¹² Novi D. Purnama, *An Investigation Of Teachers's Role As Facilitators In Teaching Writing In The Classroom (A Case Study of Lectures in a Cirebon Private University)*, (Cirebon: Academic Journal Perspective: Education, Language, and Literature, 2018), p. 364

¹³ Diana Oktaviani et al., *Challenges and Strategies Used by English Teachers in Teaching English Language Skills to Young Learners*, (Inggris: Academy Publication, 2022), p. 385

Several studies have also conducted research to investigate the implementation of what teachers do in teaching English, especially in bilingual school. The study by Mulyadi, (2021), the research entitled “Teaching English To Young Learners”, this study found that the success of teaching English to young learners is influenced by several factors, such as teaching methods, classroom and environmental management, and material design. These factors are essential for creating effective learning. Additionally, after understanding the main theories of how children acquire language, teachers can observe students' social activities to determine the best approach for teaching English.¹⁴ The research by Muniroh et. al (2023) entitled “Implementation Of Bilingual Learning In Early Children In Kindergarten Muhammad Shodiq Sumberduren” the study found that the bilingual program at TK Muhammad Shodiq Sumberduren is designed to enhance children's speaking skills in two languages by emphasizing practical application and utilizing direct strategies or methods adapted to their developmental stages.¹⁵ The reserach by Amalia and Marzuki, (2023), research entitled “The Implementation of Bilingual Class Program in Islamic Elementary School” this study explains that the school implements bilingual education using the partial immersion model, which involves the use of two languages, namely Indonesia and English. Indonesian is

¹⁴ Aghita Mulyadi, *Teaching English To Young Learners*, (Palembang: Prosiding Seminar Nasional Program Pascasarjana Universitas PGRI Palembang, 2021), p. 154

¹⁵ Muniroh, Mamluatun Ni'mah, Terza T. DP *Implementation Of Bilingual Learning In Early Children In Kindergarten Muhammad Shodiq Sumberduren*, (Bandung: Golden Age : Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, 2023), p. 37

maintained as the primary language, while English is used to support students' academic readiness, particularly in preparing for higher levels of education. In addition, the implementation of the bilingual program covers various aspects of the school, ranging from school management to program evaluation.¹⁶

The next research by Wally, (2023), research entitled "Exploring Teachers' Technique In Teaching English Of Bilingual Class At Smp Negeri 1 Kota Ternate" this study found that in the implementation of the learning process in bilingual classes, it was identified that the teacher primarily utilized three techniques: panel discussion, question-and-answer, and assignments. Among these, the panel discussion technique was used most frequently, as it was considered highly effective and well-suited to the topics being taught in class.¹⁷ Other research by Andayani, et. al. (2024), entitled "Implementation Of Bilingual Learning: Perspectives, Challenges, And Obstacles" the results indicated that both lecturers and cadets had positive views on bilingual learning; however, improvements were necessary for more effective implementation. Challenges included a lack of motivation to speak English and confusion about its application in aviation and the program's objectives. Additionally, obstacles such as limited

¹⁶ Ila Amalia and Abdul G. Marzuki, *The Implementation of Bilingual Class Program in Islamic Elementary School*, (Padang: Al-Ta'lim Journal, 2023), p. 74

¹⁷ Ratih V. A. Wally, Naniek Jusnita, Fitria W. Sari, *Exploring Teachers' Technique In Teaching English Of Bilingual Class At Smp Negeri 1 Kota Ternate*, (Ternate: Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Universitas Khairun, 2023), p. 7

learning materials, inadequate infrastructure, attitude, ability, and English proficiency were identified as barriers to successful bilingual learning.¹⁸

The gap in previous research shows that most studies have generally discussed the implementation of bilingual education for young learners without specifically highlighting how English is taught in bilingual classrooms. This study aims to fill that gap by focusing more specifically on English language teaching at Al Azhar Islamic Elementary School in Kediri. The main focus of this research is to examine the teaching strategies used and the challenges faced by teachers in teaching in a bilingual classroom. Therefore, this teaching is important to investigate in order to gain a deeper understanding of how English language instruction is carried out in bilingual classes, particularly within the context of Islamic elementary schools. Furthermore, this study specifically focuses on the experience of one teacher in delivering instruction in a bilingual class at Al Azhar Islamic Elementary School in Kediri.

Based on previous studies, it can be concluded that there is still a lack of specific research focusing on how English is taught in bilingual classrooms, especially in Islamic elementary school settings. Therefore, the researcher chose the title **"Teaching English in a Bilingual Class at Al Azhar Islamic Elementary School Kediri"** to explore the phenomenon of English teaching practices, particularly focusing on the strategies used by

¹⁸ Thursina Andayani, M. S. Pesillete, Wulan W. Rahayu, *Implementation Of Bilingual Learning: Perspectives, Challenges, And Obstacles*, (Palembang: DIDASCEIN: Journal of English Education, 2024), p. 89

the teacher and the challenges faced during the teaching and learning process in the bilingual class at Al Azhar Islamic Elementary School Kediri.

B. Formulation of the Research Questions

Based on the background of the study, the researcher can state the problem as follows:

1. What teaching strategies are employed by the teacher in teaching English in the bilingual class at Al Azhar islamic elementary school Kediri?
2. What challenges are faced by the teacher in implementing the teaching strategies?

C. Objective of the Research

Based on the formulation of the research questions, the researcher plans to attain specific objectives through the study as outlined:

1. To know the teaching strategies employed by the teacher in teaching English in the bilingual class at Al Azhar islamic elementary school Kediri.
2. To know the challenges faced by the teacher in implementing the teaching strategies during the English learning process.

D. Significance of the Research

The value of doing this study stems from the researcher's belief that the results would be valuable to:

1. For Teachers: This result of this research may help teachers evaluate and improve the effectiveness of the teaching strategies they use in

teaching English to elementary school students, especially in bilingual classes.

2. For Schools and Educational Institutions: The result of this findings may help school administrators understand the practical challenges faced by teachers and support them in creating a more conducive learning environment for English learning.
3. For Future Reseachers: This result of this research can be used as a reference and comparison for further research on similar topics, especially in the area of English teaching in bilingual school.

E. Scope and Limitation

This study focuses on the teaching strategies used by the English teacher in the bilingual class at Al Azhar Islamic Elementary School Kediri. Specifically, it aims to explore the classroom practices employed by the teacher to deliver English instruction in a bilingual setting. In addition to teaching strategies, this study also investigates the challenges faced by the teacher during the English teaching and learning process. This study is limited to one English teacher teaching in a bilingual class at Al Azhar Islamic Elementary School Kediri. It focuses on the teacher's strategies and challenges in conducting English instruction within a bilingual environment at the elementary school level. The data were collected through in-depth interviews and classroom observations, providing detailed and qualitative insights into the teacher's experiences and teaching practices.

F. Definition of Key Terms

1. Bilingual Class

A bilingual class is defined as a learning environment where two languages Bahasa Indonesia and English are systematically used in the teaching and learning process. The goal of a bilingual class is to enable students to understand academic content while simultaneously developing English language proficiency.

2. Teaching Strategies

Teaching strategies refer to the methods or approaches used by the teacher to deliver English learning materials to students in an effective and engaging way. In this research, the focus is on the specific strategies applied by the English teacher at Al Azhar Bilingual Kindergarten Kediri, during classroom activities.

3. Challenges

Challenges refer to the difficulties or obstacles faced by the teacher in implementing the teaching strategies. These may include classroom management issues, students' behavior, limited resources, or other factors that affect the teaching and learning process.

4. Young Learners

Refers to children in the early stages of formal education, specifically elementary school students aged around 6 to 12 years old. In this study, it refers to the students of Al Azhar Islamic Elementary School, Kediri.

5. Al Azhar Islamic Elementary School

Al Azhar Islamic Elementary School refers to the specific educational institution located in Kediri where the research is conducted, focusing on islamic-based education and bilingual curriculum.