

Differences of Language Mastery and Personality Between Monolingualism Children and Bilingual Children

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Abstract:

Background: Indonesia has its national language and most people in Indonesia can or should speak Indonesian and most parents teach their children to speak Indonesian. Some parents believed that one must speak Indonesian to be an Indonesian and it is the gateway to be a part of Indonesian society. In other words, by speaking Indonesian, someone could communicate well and ease them in interact to one and another. However, in Indonesia, there are a lot of people which Indonesian is not their first language for example, some people who still using their traditional language as their one and only language or their first language. As parents who are raised from a traditional language speaker will have their children speak their traditional language too and it will make the children as well as the parents are the bilingual speakers. For instance we can see the advantages of bilingualism (in this case traditional language and Indonesian) such as various in speaking the language like, they can still carry on their traditional language and they can interact with Indonesian language. The aim of this study was to find out whether there was differences of language mastery and personality between monolingualism children and bilingual children

Materials and Methods: This research was qualitative research. The subjects of this research were 2 people. Interview was administrated as the instrument of this research.

Results: The result showed that there was no significance different in language mastery and the personality between monolingual and bilingual children

Conclusion: This suggests that environment plays big important role in language acquisition.

Key Word: Language Mastery, Personality, Monolingualism Children and Bilingual Children

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I. Introduction

Indonesia has its national language and most people in Indonesia can or should speak Indonesian and most parents teach their children to speak Indonesian. Some parents believed that one must speak Indonesian to be an Indonesian and it is the gateway to be a part of Indonesian society. In other words, by speaking Indonesian, someone could communicate well and ease them in interact to one and another. However, in Indonesia, there are a lot of people which Indonesian is not their first language for example, some people who still using their traditional language as their one and only language or their first language. As parents who are raised from a traditional language speaker will have their children speak their traditional language too and it will make the children as well as the parents are the bilingual speakers. For instance we can see the advantages of bilingualism (in this case traditional language and Indonesian) such as various in speaking the language like, they can still carry on their traditional language and they can interact with Indonesian language.

There are vary languages in Indonesia. Commonly, people, in Indonesia, live in a heterogenous environment where there are many people from many background living in one area. This phenomena makes people could acquire more than 2 language. But, there are also who can acquire only one language.

Mother tongue is the first language. This is the language that is firstly acquired by someone. While, second language is the language that is acquired after the first language in which the second language is not used as often as first language. Moreover, Genesee, F., Paradis, J., and Grago, M. B. Believe that second language learners can become bilingual at any point in development, there is some consensus that second language learners are those who learn their second language after 3 years old.

Steinberg, Blinder and Chan (1984) claim that the bilingualists have better understanding in language mastery than the monolingualists because they acquire or learn two language due to their last investigation. Meanwhile, Brown (1980) complains that bilingual perhaps having big trouble because if their first language is so different with their second language, probably they will bring their L1 habit to their L2 learning.

Considering the issue that has been discussed above the writer is curious to find out the difference of language mastery and the personality between monolingual and bilingual children. This research provides about the bilingual and monolingual personality and social developments.

II. Literature Review

Bilingualism, defined as possessing two languages, has always been a controversial issue in society. During the early 1900s, bilingualism was considered an unwelcome topic among American professionals and politicians. Educators render bilingualism responsible for immigrant children's failure in school subject matter. Employers believe that immigrants, due to their low competence in English, did not fit the requirements needed to become part of the United States workforce. Psychologists regard bilingualism as a handicap to cognitive development; it is assumed that bilingualism is a barrier affecting verbal intelligence (Vygotsky, 1978).

As Quoted in Wikipedia, I find that Monoglossism (Greek *μόνος* monos, "alone, solitary", + *γλῶττα* glotta, "tongue, language") or, more commonly, monolingualism or unilingualism, is the condition of being able to speak only a single language, as opposed to multilingualism. In a different context, "unilingualism" may refer to a language policy which enforces an official or national language over others.

Language plays a major role in thinking. It serves as a mediator for the connection of thoughts and ideas. The higher-order thought that results from the merge of these several individual thoughts allows a thinker to explore new areas of ideas (Anderson, 1995). The role of language is more than a passive host for the enhancement of thinking. It plays an active role in the production of metacognitive thinking. It creates a state of alertness for the thinker to check his or her productive thoughts. Thus, a lack of language proficiency can limit a thinker's awareness of contemplating new ideas that can emanate from his previous thoughts or monitor his thinking process. Pearson and Cummins (1981) also entertain the cognitive advantages of bi-lingual proficiency. He asserts that bilingual individuals who reach a minimum level of language proficiency in both first and second languages are capable to demonstrate great thinking skills.

One important issue in studying bilingualism is that bilinguals have better meta-linguistic awareness (Fromkin, Rodin, & Hymes, 2003). According to Fromkin, et al. (2003), meta-linguistic awareness refers to a speaker's conscious awareness about language and the use of language. This is in contrast with linguistic knowledge, which is knowledge of language and is unconscious. Moreover, bilingual children have an earlier understanding of the arbitrary relationship between an object and its name. Also, they have sufficient metalinguistic awareness to speak the contextually appropriate language. Whether they enjoy some cognitive or educational benefit from being bilingual seems to depend a great deal on extralinguistic factors such as social and economic situation and the relative prestige of the two languages (Fromkin, et al. 2003, p.378).

In recent decades, the investigation of the strategies used by successful monolingual and bilingual learners have been the core of many studies (Garcia, 1999; Steinberg, Blinder & Chan, 1984). Since a bilingual acquires two languages simultaneously, she/he seems to have a better understanding of a language in another language compared to a monolingual (Jiménez, García, & Pearson, 1995, p. 90).

Most of the studies in this area have focused on the comparison between bilinguals and monolinguals in different views. Therefore the major goal of this study is to compare language mastery of these two groups in terms of power and speed tests and also from their personalities.

Language mastery or Language competency also has various definitions. McNamara (1967), for example, proposes that a bilingual possesses a minimal competence in one of four language skills (i.e., listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing) and in a language other than the mother tongue. Simultaneous bilinguals and second language learners may or may not be fully competent in each of their languages. Many Bilinguals can speak two languages fluently but have difficulty writing in their second language.

Personality and social aspect of the speakers also influenced by the bilingualism and monolingualism. Dewaele (2008) argues that he feels more the emotion of the bilingualists because they can understand the culture of their mother tongue and their second language. Although he adds that this could be different in every place because different people may have different personality. Bilingualism and monolingualism also affect the personality and also the social aspect of the speakers and also language mastery.

III. Material And Methods

This research was qualitative research. The participants of this study were one monolingual (Javanese) and one bilingual (Balinese). The monolingualist is Restu (5yrs 7mths 20dys). The bilingualist is Dipa (5yrs 1mth). The researcher collected the data by observing the children and interviewing their family in order to get an advance data. First, the researcher observed the monolingualist and watch his activity. Since the monolingualist is very active and he always rejects the interview section, the researcher interviewed his sister, Risma (19yrs) to get the information of Restu. And for the bilingualist, the researcher did a note taking toward his activity and interviewed his aunt in order to get the accurate information for the research. The interviewers were asked the same questions. The researcher analyze the data by using descriptive analysis. The researcher analyse the data by describing the result based on experts' theory.

IV. Result

The observation was conducted on December 2nd, 2018. Here are the result of the observation section:

The monolingualist is Restu (5yrs 7mths). He is a pure Javanese speakers with no influences of any language including Indonesia although his family and his neighbor are able to speak Bahasa. Restu is staying in his family house in Siswo Bangun, Seputih Bnyak, Lampung Tengah. Restu can produce the utterance in Javanese language quite well although he can not speak very fluent like his friend who is older than him.

The bilingualist is Dipa (5yrs 1mth). His father and mother are a Balinese, and he lives in Balinese environment. He speaks Balinese fluently and he speaks Indonesia only a bit and with Balinese accent. Dipa can produce the utterance in Balinese language quite well although he can not speak very fluent like his friend who is older than him. While when someone speaks in Indonesian language, he tends to respond it in a short utterance.

The interview was conducted on December 2nd, 2018. Here are the transcribe of the interviewing section.

<p>Q. A with the Interviewers.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. what is the name of the child?2. How old is the child?3. What are the activities of the child?4. How does the child carry him self? <p>First response Risma .(Monolingualist, Restu)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. what is the name of the child? His name is Restu2. How old is the child? he is about 6 years old3. What are the activities of the child? He likes playing football, playing kites, run here and there talking to me and the whole families, he likes to play with his friends4. How does the child carry him self? He is an active person, it is rare of him to hear others suggestion but he is actually a good person. <p>Second response Komang (bilingualist, Dipa)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. what is the name of the child? He is called by Dipa2. How old is the child? He is about 5 years old3. What are the activities of the child? He tends to be a silent person, he tends to be a good listener.4. How does the child carry him self? He is a good person, he likes to be listen what his friends talk about and he is kind an introvert.

V. Discussion

Drawing the analysis of the findings, the discussion of the research are:

As stated before, this research attempted to investigate whether there is any difference of language mastery and the personality between the monolingual and bilingual speakers. The result obtained from the analyzing the subjects are:

Speech Production in Monolingual and Bilingual speakers:

De Houwer (1990) says that the misconception of teacher and parents in thought that learning two languages will affect developmental milestones of speech and language in the bilingual. In this research, the children both monolingual and multilingual produced the same number or intensity of utterance. Moreover, the both of the children speak in their language (Javanese or Balinese) very well.

Restu as the first subject, could communicate well in Javanese language. He was interacting with his friend. There was no important problem found by him while he communicated with his friend who spoke the same language as him. As the researcher observed the subject, he also could understand the utterance that was uttered by his friend well. There was no mis understanding while communicating.

Meanwhile, Dipa as the second subject also could communicate well. Dipa is the bilingualist. He acquired two languages which were Indonesian and Balinese. He spoke Balinese as his first language while he used Indonesian as his second language. It seemed he could speak Balinese language fluently but his Indonesian language was not as fluent as Balinese.

When communicating in Balinese language, Dipa found no problem. He could reply his friend utterance very well with no misunderstanding. Meanwhile, when someone talked to him by using Indonesian, he tended to answer by using his gesture and he rarely replied with Bahasa Indonesia.

It seems there is no impact either of acquiring more than one language or acquiring only one language. This concept is proved by this research where the bilingualist and monolingualist are not so different in developing milestones in vary area.

Personality of the Speakers:

Ozanska (2012) says that “i like not me when i speak my second language” Ozanska tries to deliver that when he speaks with his second language, he is feeling like a different person when switching languages and it makes him more nervous while he is speaking. This concept is like the bilingualist of this research subject (Dipa), he tended to be a silent person rather than spoke in Indonesian. Although he knew the meaning or the topic of the conversation, he tried to be silent as long as he could or replied by using his body movement. Due to this, the researcher got the information from his aunt, and the observed data, it showed that Dipa is kind of Introvert person, he likes to be alone and he tries to be an independent and a good listener.

The monolingualist shows more confidence in speaking. According to the source, it shows that Restu (the monolingualist) is an active child although his acquisition in L1 is rather slow but he had big confidence in playing with his friend although his friends sometimes used their traditional language (Javanese). Restu, although having problem in his L1 acquisition, but he has big confidence, he is kind of extrovert person. He likes to play outside, and he is a fast talker.

Speaker Emotional:

Dewale (2008) claims that the bilingualist is kind of a lover person, means that the bilingualist has more Emotional weight response than the monolingualists because they (bilingualist) can understand both the mother tongue and second language. It is proved when the interviewer says that Dipa (bilingualist) has more emotion weight such as he is care to his friends problem in school, he likes to share his problem and he likes to hear his friends problem and in his class he likes to share his food with his friends. Moreover, Dipa tends to feel offended by his friend jokes. In other hand, Restu shows the same result, but with his active, he tends to be seen as a talker although sometime he tries to be as a hearer. Restu is not kind of a offended person because he thinks that every joke is just a jokes.

VI. Conclusion

According to the result above, the researcher conclude that the bilingualist and monolingualist are not so different in language mastery and the personality. The monolingualist shows more confidence in speaking than the multilingualist. Bilingualist has more Emotional weight response than the monolingualists because they (bilingualist) can understand both the mother tongue and second language. We have to note that the experience of both bilingual and monolingual can be different across culture and also one individual to another.

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