

ANALYZING THE STRUCTURE OF THE USE OF INDONESIAN AND ENGLISH IN THE CONTEXT OF LEARNING IN CLASS VII PRIVATE CATHOLIC SMP TRISAKTI 1 MEDAN

Ester Tarigan¹, Jernyta Sihite², Febriola Paula Sihombing³

^{1,2,3}Universitas Katolik Santo Thomas, Medan, Indonesia

1estertarigan52@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to analyze the structure and use of Indonesian and English in the learning of grade VII of Trisakti 1 Catholic Private Junior High School Medan. With a qualitative descriptive approach, this study involved two language teachers, namely an Indonesian teacher and an English teacher, who taught students in grade VII. The results showed that differences in language structure, such as tenses in English and sentence structure in Indonesian, affected the way students understood the subject matter. In addition, the use of everyday language by students is also important in learning. A tailored approach is needed to enable students to understand both languages well in language learning. This study shows how important training and an integrated approach between the two languages is in the educational process.

Keywords: Language Structure, Language Use, Learning, Middle School, Indonesian, English.

INTRODUCTION

Language is the main communication tool in the learning process, and it is important to understand how the structure and use of language affect the effectiveness of student learning. In Indonesia, Indonesian is the national language and the main language of instruction in schools, while English is taught as a foreign language that students must master. This condition creates challenges in the learning process, especially in understanding the differences in the structure of the two languages. To overcome this, it is necessary to develop four language skills in students, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Language error analysis is an important procedure used by researchers and teachers in improving the quality of language learning. This procedure includes collecting samples, identifying errors in the sample, explaining the errors found, classifying them based on the reasons, and assessing the seriousness of the errors (Ellis in Tarigan & Tarigan, 2011: 170). By analyzing language errors, it is hoped that it can provide many benefits, especially in teaching Indonesian. This process allows educators to understand and identify mistakes that students often make, so they can provide constructive feedback to improve their language skills.

This research was conducted at Tri Sakti 1 Medan Catholic Private Middle School with a focus on class VII students. Researchers took several samples of student observation reports for analysis to find out common language errors. Errors that are often found include errors in spelling, diction, sentence structure and paragraphs. Identification of these errors can be used as a basis for improving the quality of language teaching, especially in developing students' writing skills. Thus, language error analysis becomes very important in increasing the effectiveness of Indonesian language teaching.

At Tri Sakti 1 Medan Catholic Private Middle School, class VII is an important phase in students' language skills learning because at this level they begin to learn English as a second language. This research aims to identify errors made by students in writing Indonesian and English, especially in language aspects and the frequency with which these errors occur. The objectives of this research include identifying the main differences in the

structure of Indonesian and English, analyzing the impact of differences in language structure on the learning of class VII students, and proposing effective learning strategies to facilitate mastery of the two languages. Thus, it is hoped that this research can make a positive contribution to the development of more effective language teaching methods in the school environment.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research employs a qualitative descriptive method with a semi-structured participatory observation approach, aiming to explore how Indonesian and English are used in the learning process among class VII students at the Trisakti 1 Catholic Private Middle School, Medan. Observations are conducted during teaching and learning activities, focusing on the interaction between teachers and students, particularly the dynamics of using both languages. This includes analyzing how teachers use code-switching techniques to clarify material, provide instructions, and engage students in discussions, as well as how students navigate between the two languages during classroom activities.

An essential aspect of this research is the analysis of code-switching patterns that occur when transitioning from Indonesian to English or vice versa. Code-switching is a common linguistic strategy, especially in bilingual learning environments, to facilitate understanding and promote active participation. For example, teachers often use Indonesian to explain complex concepts and switch to English during practical exercises or when introducing new vocabulary. This dual-language approach aims to bridge gaps in comprehension while gradually improving students' English proficiency.

In addition to observations, the study also examines teaching documents, such as Learning Implementation Plans (RPP), teaching materials, and student assignment results. By analyzing these documents, the research seeks to identify how the curriculum integrates Indonesian and English, whether the balance between the two languages aligns with educational objectives, and how effectively this integration supports students' learning outcomes. For instance, teaching materials often emphasize bilingual instructions, aiming to encourage students to apply both languages in contextually appropriate ways.

Preliminary findings indicate that the use of Indonesian dominates classroom interactions, especially when teachers need to explain abstract concepts or provide detailed explanations in subjects such as mathematics and science. However, in English language lessons, the use of English increases significantly, particularly in segments involving grammar practice, vocabulary building, and conversational exercises. Despite this, challenges remain, as students often struggle with transitioning from passive comprehension of English to active usage, especially in spoken interactions.

To address these challenges, teachers adopt various strategies, such as scaffolding techniques, where they initially explain concepts in Indonesian and gradually incorporate English terms and phrases. This method helps students build confidence and familiarity with English while maintaining a solid understanding of the subject matter. Furthermore, group discussions and role-playing exercises are employed to encourage students to use English more actively, fostering a more immersive bilingual environment.

Document analysis reveals that while RPPs and teaching materials emphasize the integration of both languages, their practical application often leans heavily on Indonesian. This suggests a need for further development of materials and methods that provide a more balanced approach. For instance, including more interactive English-based activities in RPPs and assignments could help enhance students' engagement and language skills.

Overall, the research highlights the importance of a structured and deliberate approach to bilingual education. It underscores the potential of code-switching as an effective pedagogical tool while identifying areas where implementation can be improved. By refining teaching strategies and resources, educators can create a more dynamic and supportive learning environment, enabling students to master both Indonesian and English effectively. This approach not only prepares students for academic success but also equips them with valuable language skills for global communication and future opportunities.

DISCUSSION

Observation results show that teachers at Tri Sakti 1 Medan Catholic Private Middle School predominantly use Indonesian to explain material that is complex or requires in-depth understanding, especially in subjects such as mathematics and science. In contrast, in English lessons, teachers use English more, especially when teaching grammar, comprehension and practical conversation. The use of English also occurs more often in practice or discussion sessions that involve students actively practicing their language skills.

This research was conducted on class VII students during the odd semester of the 2024/2025 academic year. The research subjects consisted of 60 students, evenly divided between classes VII-A and VII-B. Various instruments were used to support the research, such as written tests that measure students' ability to understand language structures, oral tests to demonstrate their ability to speak English, questionnaires to determine students' attitudes towards the use of language in learning, and classroom observations to record daily interactions between teachers and students.

The research implementation included several stages, including instrument preparation, carrying out tests and questionnaires for three weeks, class observations for four weeks, and data analysis using descriptive statistics and qualitative analysis. Research data shows that students have a better understanding of Indonesian than English. In the Indonesian language test, the average student achieved 85% in the use of simple sentences, while in the English test, the average student only achieved 70% in the same aspect.

The results of the English oral test show that only 60% of students are able to use English in simple conversations. This shows that even though students have the ability to understand written English, they still face difficulties in speaking practice. The questionnaire also revealed that 90% of students felt comfortable using Indonesian in learning, while 75% of students felt that English was difficult and needed more practice.

Apart from the recommendations already mentioned, a systematic approach is needed to integrate Indonesian and English learning in the classroom. This approach may include developing a curriculum that allows students to understand the relationship between the two languages, especially in terms of sentence structure, grammar, and vocabulary. Teachers can utilize a comparative approach, namely showing the basic similarities and differences between Indonesian and English, so that students can more easily understand the unique characteristics of the two languages.

Increasing teacher competency is also an important factor in implementing this recommendation. Teachers need to receive further training to master interactive and innovative teaching strategies. Such training may include the use of educational technology, such as digital-based learning applications, which give students the opportunity to practice the language independently outside of class hours. Apart from that, mentoring by mentors or facilitators who are experts in the field of language teaching can also help teachers in designing more effective learning methods (Prayuda, Juliana, et al., 2023).

On the other hand, learning Indonesian also requires special attention, especially in the aspect of writing skills. Teachers need to provide intensive training that focuses on the use of spelling, choice of diction, and correct sentence structure. Composing narrative texts, expositions, or reports is an important exercise that can help students understand various writing genres. The use of structured feedback in correcting writing assignments is also key to helping students understand their mistakes and improve their writing skills gradually.

So that both languages can be taught equally, the role of school management in providing adequate resources is also very important. The availability of textbooks, additional teaching materials, as well as learning facilities such as language laboratories and audiovisual equipment can support the learning process of both languages more optimally. Through these steps, it is hoped that students' mastery of Indonesian and English can increase significantly, so that they are better prepared to face academic and professional challenges in the future.

In conclusion, this research shows the need for improvements in language teaching at junior high school level, especially in developing student competence in Indonesian and English. By adopting balanced, innovative and practice-based learning strategies, it is hoped that students can master both languages well, which will ultimately support their success in academics and everyday life. Implementing the suggestions given requires strong collaboration between teachers, students and school officials to create a supportive and effective learning environment.

Student participation also needs to be increased by providing more opportunities to interact in English outside the classroom. Programs such as language clubs, speech competitions, or debates in English can be effective means of increasing students' confidence in using the language. This program not only provides opportunities for speaking practice, but also trains critical thinking and argumentation skills, which is beneficial for the development of their overall academic skills.

Based on these results, the recommendations proposed include increasing the frequency of use of English in oral activities in class, such as group discussions and daily conversation simulations. In addition, more contextual and interactive learning materials, such as videos or simulations, can increase students' interest and understanding of English. This research emphasizes the importance of a balanced approach in teaching Indonesian and English, as well as innovative learning methods to overcome student difficulties, especially in mastering English.

In practice, language learning at Trisakti 1 Medan Catholic Private Middle School combines various teaching methods to support effective learning. In class VII, Indonesian teachers tend to use interactive lecture methods, where students are encouraged to ask and answer questions related to the material being taught. Meanwhile, in teaching English, task-based learning methods are often used to provide opportunities for students to practice speaking, listening, reading and writing in English (Prayuda, Sinaga, et al., 2023).

The use of learning media such as videos, images and audio is also very helpful in introducing English to students. With this media, students can more easily understand the vocabulary and grammar that are introduced. In learning Indonesian, the use of literary texts such as short stories, poetry and news articles helps students hone their reading and writing skills well.

Apart from that, regular evaluations are also carried out to measure students' progress in mastering both languages. At Trisakti 1 Medan Catholic Private Middle School, evaluation does not only focus on writing skills, but also includes speaking and listening skills, especially in learning English. This is done to ensure that students not only understand theory, but are also able to apply the language in everyday communication contexts.

CONCLUSION

The structure of using Indonesian and English in learning in class VII of the Trisakti 1 Catholic Private Middle School, Medan, emphasizes the importance of implementing an effective and comprehensive approach to facilitate a balanced understanding of both languages. In the context of language education, teachers play an important role in ensuring students not only learn grammatical rules, but are also able to use both languages in a variety of communicative situations, both spoken and written. To achieve this goal, a combination of traditional and innovative learning methods is needed that can accommodate students' diverse learning styles.

The use of traditional methods, such as direct instruction, can help in strengthening the basics of grammar and vocabulary. Meanwhile, innovative approaches, such as project-based learning, digital technology and interactive learning, are able to encourage students' active participation and provide practical experience in language. With this variety of methods, teachers can create a dynamic learning environment, where students feel encouraged to learn more actively and independently.

Apart from that, teachers need to provide input that can be understood (comprehensible input) that is appropriate to the level of ability and cognitive development

of students. This includes using language that is appropriate to the context of students' daily lives, so that they can more easily understand and apply it. By introducing material gradually, starting from simple to more complex, students will be more confident in using both languages actively.

A conducive learning environment is also very important in the language learning process. Teachers need to create a supportive classroom atmosphere, where students feel safe to make mistakes and learn from these experiences. Positive reinforcement and constructive feedback are key in building student motivation to continue to develop in language mastery. Apart from that, interaction between students through discussions, language games, and conversation simulations can also improve language skills significantly.

Overall, with a combination of effective learning methods, appropriate input, and a supportive learning environment, Indonesian and English language teaching in class VII of Trisakti 1 Medan Catholic Private Middle School can run optimally. This will provide a strong foundation for students to master both languages and apply them in everyday life, both in academic and social environments.

REFERENCES

- Chaer, A. (2009). Indonesian Grammar. Jakarta: PT Rineka Cipta.
- Brown, H.D. (2007). Principles of Language Learning and Teaching. New York: Pearson Education.
- Harmer, J. (2001). The Practice of English Language Teaching. London: Longman.
- Sugiyono. (2015). Educational Research Methods (Quantitative, Qualitative and R&D Approaches). Bandung: Alfabeta.
- Prayuda, M. S., Juliana, J., Ambarwati, N. F., & ... (2023). Students' Writing Error in Parts of Speech: A Case Study of EFL Students. *Jurnal Educatio FKIP* <https://www.ejournal.unma.ac.id/index.php/educatio/article/view/4419>
- Tarigan, H. G. (1990). Teaching Language Error Analysis. Bandung: Space.
- Nurgiyantoro, B. (2018). Children's Literature: An Introduction to Understanding the World of Children. Gadjah Mada University Press.
- Satori, D., & Komariah, A. (2017). Qualitative Research Methodology.
- Aulia, N., Sarinah, & Juanda. (2023). Analysis of the Independent Curriculum and the 2013 Curriculum.
- Hanifah, B. M., Amany, M., Dyaahulhaq, S. F., & Hanifah, D. P. (2023). Analysis of the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum.
- Prayuda, M. S., Sinaga, D. R., & Gultom, C. R. (2023). ENGLISH CONVERSATION TRAINING FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN KISARAN. *PEDAMAS (PENGABDIAN* <https://pekatpkm.my.id/index.php/JP/article/view/53>