

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Bilingualism is a common phenomenon found in every country in the world. Over a billion people in the world speak more than one language fluently. The needs of learning languages come from many aspects, such as education, community, economy, and business (Dulay et al., 1982). This statement is agreed by Ray (2021), by elaborating on the idea and stating that learning a language also allows the speakers or learners to learn about the cultures of that language. Therefore, learning different languages derives the ability to understand different cultures. In India, for example, they are needed to be capable of speaking at least three languages to engage fully with their community and social affairs. Otherwise, those who do not keep up with society's need to adapt and acquire more than a language would be left behind (Ray, 2021; Wijana, 2018).

Furthermore, the need to learn more than one language is not only happened in big countries; in small countries, such as Netherlands and Israel, most children must study at least one foreign language. Most adults in the Netherlands speak German, French, and English other than Dutch. This multilingualism merely functions in society (Edwards, 2002; Wright, 2010).

In Indonesia, the situation of which it comes with thousands of islands, from *Sabang* to *Merauke*, separated by seas, drive a unique demographic of Indonesia with various variations, including hundreds of different cultures, religions, living habits, and language comprehension. The Indonesians acquire the local languages and other national and foreign languages. Therefore, it is common to see that Indonesian can speak more than one language to be considered bilingual or multilingual (Noprival et al., 2021). Due to this, Indonesia is considered a multilingual country (Sugiharto, 2015; Raja et al., 2022). *Bahasa Indonesia* is the official national language (Siregar, 2022). In addition to *Bahasa Indonesia* as the national language, there are also 718 indigenous languages spread across all islands of Indonesia (Kemdikbud, 2022 & Kompas.com, 2022), and foreign

languages are introduced at schools (Albantani & Madkur, 2018 & Susanty et al., 2021; Rini, 2014), such as English, Arabian, Japanese, Mandarin. The interesting part of this richness of languages is when it comes to local language learning. Indonesians only study some of the indigenous languages at school. One specific local language is commonly spoken in a certain area and taught in schools only specifically in that area. For example, *Sumbawanese* will only be taught formally at schools on Sumba Island. Even though there is a high possibility of *Sumbawanese* people coming to another island in Indonesia, such as Java Island, and speaking *Sumbawanese* there, the language will not be taught formally at schools in Java. Instead, the *Sumbawanese* shall be taught the *Javanese* language in schools in Java so they would study even more language. That is also applied to other local languages. Therefore, Indonesians are very rich in acquiring different languages.

Comishen et al. (2019) believe that the ability of people to become bilingual or multilingual is mostly affected by the environment in which they were forced or must use more than one language to communicate in their community; Indonesia is no exception. The most beneficial language environment is a language used naturally for communication (Dulay et al., 1982; Feder et al., 2022). The term study and acquire a language is used based on their learning system, where the study is more about the conscious process. Acquiring a language is an unconscious process emphasizing understanding the meaning under a certain context, attitudes, and behaviours (Lumentut & Lengkoan, 2021). Acquiring language is what adults do in a social situation; for example, when someone must move to France to work, then it is a must to adapt and acquire the language. They can also study and learn it in formal education by taking courses.

On the other hand, acquiring language is also what children do first when they have been exposed to languages since birth. Their first or mother tongue in Indonesia usually comes from their indigenous language, and *Bahasa Indonesia* is their second language (Suryawan, 2018). However, in some situations, *Bahasa Indonesia* becomes the first language, while the second language can be indigenous or foreign, such as English, Japanese, or Chinese.

(Albantani & Madkur, 2018). Meanwhile, foreign languages are usually learned at schools.

The phenomenon of multilingual and bilingual, yet not unfamiliar objects, is still very interesting to be observed up to this date. It can be seen from some research conducted regarding both multilingualism (Cenoz, 2013; Grin & Vaillancourt, 1997; Pankendorf et al., 2021; Pupynina & Aralova, 2021) and bilingualism in many countries (Adnyani et al., 2018; Hamers et al., 2000). Furthermore, for years, numerous research has seen language contact in multilingual and bilingual societies (Adnyani et al., 2018; Bosma & Blom, 2019; Chan, 2021; Rubin & Toribio, 1996; Vogelzang et al., 2022). Many of those studies also focus on children's bilingualism or how children become bilingual within their environment (Gonzalez-Barrero & Nadig, 2021; Shamsieva, 2021). However, those studies usually investigate Indo-European language pairings (Ball et al., 2022; DeHower, 1990; Jasińska et al., 2017; Kupiec, 1993; Meisel, 1989; Montanari et al., 2019; Peace-Hughes et al., 2021; Sharaan et al., 2021; van Dijk, 2022). However, the focus of those studies is mostly on the language-mixing phenomenon of speech production, such as intra-sentential and inter-sentential switching of the two languages studied (Lindholm & Padilla, 1978; Poeste et al., 2019; Purniawati, 2019; Sugiantara, 2018). Another focus of the studies was on the impact of parents in raising bilinguals (Koronkiewicz, 2018; Nakamura, 2019), or some also specifically seeing the relationship between parents' impact on bilingualism and autistic children (Hampton et al., 2017; Sharaan et al., 2022).

In line with the study of bilingualism worldwide, some studies also look at the development of child bilingualism in Indonesia. However, the language pairing is between Indonesia and again, Indo-European languages, such as Indonesian – Italian (Soriente, 2004; Soriente, 2007; Soriente, 2011; Soriente, 2013) and Indonesia – Germany (Adnyani & Pastika, 2016; Adnyani et al., 2017; Adnyani et al., 2018). On the other hand, some researchers studied the language mixing between indigenous languages in Indonesia with one foreign language from a mixed-marriage phenomenon, such as Balinese-Japanese (Zuraida et al., 2020) and Javanese – Chinese (Darheni, 2018). Although a study

had conducted about language mixing happened in tourism by tour guides in Bali (Gunasari et al., 2020) and language mixing happened in a simultaneous child in speaking Bahasa Indonesia and Balinese language (Wimayanti et al., 2022), yet, looking at the diversity of the linguistic environment in Indonesia, there have been very few studies that focus on children's bilingualism the language exposure is among the national language and indigenous pairings, more specifically at the syntactic and the lexicon development of child learning Indonesian and Balinese.

Meanwhile, children are the community asset, and language is the identity used to show their characteristics to advance the nation (Belenyi & Flora, 2022). Language skills need to be developed since they need more to guarantee their quality in showing their dignity to the world. Therefore, how a child becomes bilingual with their local language needs to be conducted. The study on how Indonesian – Balinese children acquire both languages is limited (Adnyani et al., 2022; Adnani et al., 2020). Examining how a child acquires national and indigenous languages is necessary. As Chiblow & Meighan (2022) implied that it is very important to maintain indigenous languages so they will not become extinct. Especially today, globalization has a huge impact on the change of children's language choices used in daily conversations, where they pair the national language with the English language rather than the indigenous language they have as their mother language (Sahril, 2018; Siregar, 2021). It derives the extinction of the indigenous language becomes clearer and closer to happening, specifically in Bali; the possibility of the Balinese language to be extinct can be higher for the sake of globalization where the mother tongue language that is Balinese, is rarely given the room to be used compared to Indonesian as the national or English as the international language (Sukanadi et al., 2022). Bali, as one of the most famous destinations in the world, has caused many domestic and international tourists to come to Bali frequently all year (Subadra, 2019). It has been becoming the reason for the importance of studying English for our children to compete with tourism needs (Mantra et al., 2020). Besides, the rapid development of technology, especially social media, makes it unavoidable for children to study English more than needed to study an

indigenous language since it is considered a minority language (Cunliffe, 2019). It could affect the use of the mother tongue language. Based on Weinberg & Korne (2016) and Nonaka (2014), bilinguals tend not to use their mother tongue since their mother tongue's prestige is lower compared to the other language or languages.

Some recent studies show a decrease in the use of the indigenous language, *Balinese*, in children in Bali to Indonesian and English (Mustika, 2018; Sosiawan et al., 2021). The effect is that once the children think that their mother tongue has less prestige than the majority language, they eventually will believe there is no need to speak the mother tongue and stop using it (Gibbs, 2002). Furthermore, the parent's choice to take their children to an international school than a public rather than a public school which emphasizes the use of the English language more than the indigenous languages, certainly impacts the ability of languages children use). Therefore, even when the Balinese is kept by Balinese nowadays, it is only partially pure (Suweta, 2020). It is usually mixed with other languages, code-switching or code-mixing, to provide understanding. Balinese shall mix the elements of Balinese with Indonesian and vice versa. These phenomena contribute to the mutually supporting vocabulary in both languages (Suweta, 2020).

Though language mixing of Indonesian-Balinese has been studied previously, there are few studies focusing on children's lexicon and syntactic development in learning these two languages. Therefore, in this current study, the development of children's lexical and syntax exposed to two languages from birth will be examined. The children are exposed to Indonesian as the national language and Balinese as the indigenous language. Although some research shows that bilingualism is a phenomenon of the cause of language death of a minority language (Atifnigar et al., 2021; Vogl, 2019), it is also seen as a way to prevent language extinction (Atifnigar et al., 2021; Sharipov, 2022; Siregar, 2022). Other researchers see this as an opportunity to help the young generation avoid the phenomenon of language death (Langslow, 2002). In this case, the researcher sees this as an opportunity to see whether bilingualism happens in a family and could help the young generation of Balinese to be able to conserve

the Balinese language as a minority language. Besides, the study used child-friendly experimental techniques to observe such development and how long language processing mechanisms are in children.

The novelty of this study is that it offers a theoretical contribution to the acquisition of two languages simultaneously, with Indonesian serving as the national language and Balinese as the local language, especially in the 21st century era. This study is anticipated to provide evidence in favour of the hypothesis that young children can acquire bilingualism very early in their language development, that each language can develop independently, and that syntax mixing between the two languages is possible.

1.2 Problems Identification

Previous studies have shown the development of children's language acquisition to become bilinguals in various language pairings. The pairings are between Indo-European and or Indonesian – Indo-European languages. Meanwhile, no studies have examined the development of children's language acquisition of national and indigenous pairings, specifically Indonesian-Balinese languages. Therefore, it is crucial to understand how the development of children's languages acquisition between national and indigenous language, to see whether bilingualism can help in the preservation of regional languages in Indonesia, specifically Balinese.

1.3 Limitation of Problems

This study describes the development of Indonesian-Balinese children in terms of their lexicon, syntactic development, and the language mixing that occurs in the child's conversation. Thus, the limitation of this study is that it needs to find out if the same phenomenon occurs in the different language pairings of the national Indonesian language with other indigenous languages in Indonesia.

1.4 Research Questions

1. How is the development of the child's lexicon in Indonesian and Balinese?

2. How is the syntactic development of the child in Indonesian – Balinese languages?

1.5 Purposes of Study

The study aims to discover the lexicon and syntactic development that occurs in the language practice of bilingual children in the Indonesian-Balinese language. Therefore, the results of this study could be used as the reference for the upcoming study related to children's language development in lexicon and syntactic aspects between national and indigenous languages.

1.6 Significances of Study

The significances of the study are to provide data and an explanation of the development of children's bilingual ability in using two languages, in this case, the national language of Indonesia and the indigenous language, that is Balinese, which can be the knowledge of the students and teachers in learning language development of children. Besides, the other researchers can develop the study by studying which languages are used in the event contexts or situations or with different language pairings.

