

Pengaruh Pembelajaran Bilingual Terhadap Mahasiswa Program Studi Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar (PGSD)

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ABSTRACT

Pembelajaran bilingual kini menjadi salah satu tren signifikan dalam pendidikan tinggi, terutama pada Program Studi Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar (PGSD). Artikel ini menelaah dampak penerapan bilingual terhadap kompetensi akademik, keterampilan pedagogis, serta perkembangan kognitif mahasiswa PGSD dengan merujuk pada teori pemerolehan bahasa, kajian literatur terbaru, dan hasil penelitian empiris empat tahun terakhir. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa praktik bilingual mampu memperkuat komunikasi akademik, meningkatkan literasi digital, serta mempersiapkan mahasiswa untuk mengajar di kelas SD yang semakin beragam bahasa. Meski demikian, hambatan berupa kecemasan berbahasa, tingginya beban kognitif, dan minimnya dukungan lingkungan akademik masih menjadi tantangan. Kajian ini juga menawarkan rekomendasi strategi implementasi pembelajaran bilingual yang lebih efektif bagi program PGSD.

Bilingual learning has emerged as a significant trend in higher education, particularly within the Elementary School Teacher Education (PGSD) program. This article examines the impact of bilingual instruction on students' academic competence, pedagogical skills, and cognitive development, drawing on language acquisition theory, recent literature, and empirical studies from the past four years. Findings indicate that bilingual practices strengthen academic communication, enhance digital literacy, and better prepare students to teach in increasingly multilingual elementary classrooms. Nevertheless, challenges such as language anxiety, cognitive load, and limited academic support remain obstacles. This study also provides recommendations for effective strategies in implementing bilingual learning within PGSD programs.



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INTRODUCTION

Bilingual learning, which is the use of two languages alternately or simultaneously in the learning process, is now a strategic requirement in teacher education, especially in the Primary School Teacher Education Study Program (PGSD). In the era of globalization, English proficiency not only serves as a means of cross-cultural communication, but also as a gateway to accessing international literature, enriching modern pedagogical competencies, and preparing prospective teachers for increasingly multilingual and multicultural elementary school classrooms. Thus, bilingualism is no longer just an additional skill, but an important foundation for the professional development of future teachers.

Theoretically, García and Wei (2022) emphasize that bilingual learning is not only oriented towards mastering two languages, but also forming new ways of thinking through translanguaging. Translanguaging allows students to utilize their entire language repertoire to understand academic concepts more deeply. For PGSD students, this practice broadens their perspective in interpreting pedagogical theory and connecting it to real-world classroom practice. In line with this, Krashen (2022),

through his second language acquisition theory, asserts that exposure to meaningful language (comprehensible input) accelerates the mastery of academic concepts. Meanwhile, Bialystok (2021) shows that bilingualism improves executive functions such as attention control, thinking flexibility, and problem-solving skills. These functions are very relevant for PGSD students when they analyze learning problems, design lesson plans (RPP), and develop creative teaching media. Research by Alawiyah and Hidayat (2023) also confirms that today's teachers are required to have global literacy in order to access international research and English-language digital resources.

The urgency of bilingual learning for PGSD students is becoming increasingly apparent as they are required to read international journals as sources of the latest theories, use English-language digital media such as Canva, Liveworksheets, Quizziz, and ClassDojo, and design global literacy-based learning. Additionally, they must be prepared to teach in increasingly multicultural schools, where students come from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Therefore, the implementation of bilingual education in PGSD programs is no longer merely an option, but an unavoidable necessity.

However, the implementation of bilingual learning also faces a number of challenges. Students often experience language anxiety when they have to use English in an academic context, which can hinder their active participation and confidence. A high cognitive load also arises when students have to process information in two languages at once, especially for those who do not have a strong foundation in English. In addition, the lack of academic support, such as the scarcity of lecturers who are fluent in English or limited bilingual learning resources, becomes a structural obstacle that slows down the effectiveness of the program.

To overcome these challenges, a number of strategies can be implemented. Bilingual implementation should be carried out gradually, starting with simple academic terms and progressing to complex discussions. A translanguaging-based approach can be used so that students feel more inclusive and less burdened by anxiety. Strengthening digital literacy is also important, by training students to use English-language international platforms so that they become accustomed to the global context. In addition, PGSD programs can establish international collaborations with foreign universities to provide English-language learning resources, seminars, or guest lectures. Support for the academic environment must also be strengthened through language training for lecturers and the provision of bilingual literature in campus libraries.

METHOD

This study uses a systematic literature review approach combined with in-depth thematic analysis. This approach was chosen because it provides a comprehensive overview of research developments related to bilingual learning in the context of elementary school teacher education (PGSD). Through the systematization of searching, selection, and analysis, this study not only identifies major trends and findings, but also highlights research gaps that still need to be followed up. Thematic analysis is then used to organize the data in a more structured manner, so that each theme that emerges can be linked to relevant language acquisition and pedagogical theories.

The data collection stage was carried out by searching 57 scientific articles from various credible academic databases, namely Scopus, ERIC, SINTA 2–4, and Google Scholar. These databases were selected to ensure a broad scope of research, both from international and national literature. The search period was set between 2021 and 2024, so that the results of the study reflect the latest developments in the field of bilingual learning. The articles searched included various types of research, ranging from experiments, case studies, surveys, meta-analyses, to ethnographic qualitative research. This variety of research types allowed for a richer analysis, as each approach provided a different perspective on the impact of bilingual learning. For example, experimental research highlights the direct effects of bilingualism on student competence, surveys provide a quantitative picture of student perceptions, case studies and ethnography describe the real experiences of students in a multilingual classroom context, while meta-analysis presents a broader and more comprehensive synthesis of research results.

The literature selection process was conducted using strict inclusion and exclusion criteria. Included articles discussed bilingual education among teacher education students, examined cognitive, academic, and pedagogical impacts, and were published in peer-reviewed journals. Conversely, bilingual studies focusing on elementary or secondary school students, as well as opinion articles without methodology, were excluded from the analysis. Of the 57 articles searched, 28 articles met the criteria

of relevance and quality, so they were selected for further analysis. The selection process was carried out through stages of screening the titles, abstracts, and content of the articles, so that only studies that were truly relevant to the focus of the study were retained.

Data analysis was conducted using the Miles, Huberman & Saldaña (2020) model, which consists of three main stages. First, data reduction was carried out by grouping information into broad themes, namely academic, cognitive, affective, and pedagogical aspects. This reduction process aimed to filter complex data into more focused categories, thereby facilitating the identification of patterns and relationships between variables. Second, data presentation was carried out through tables of findings, diagrams of relationships between variables, and a matrix of the influence of bilingualism on PGSD student competence. This visual presentation helps clarify the relationship between bilingualism and the academic, cognitive, and pedagogical development of students. Third, conclusions are drawn by linking the research findings with relevant language acquisition and pedagogy theories, so that the analysis results not only describe the benefits and challenges of bilingual learning, but also provide practical recommendations for implementation in PGSD programs.

To maintain validity and reliability, this study applied the principle of source triangulation, which is comparing findings from various types of research to ensure consistency. In addition, peer debriefing was conducted with colleagues to test data interpretation, as well as an audit trail in the form of systematic recording of the entire collection and analysis process so that it could be traced back. With this step, the research seeks to ensure that the analysis results have a strong academic basis and are accountable.

However, this study has limitations. First, limited access to paid articles meant that some studies could not be included in the analysis. Second, the focus on the 2021–2024 time frame meant that previous studies that may have been relevant were not analyzed. Third, although an in-depth thematic analysis was conducted, the interpretation still depends on the quality of the available research reports. These limitations are important notes for further research in order to expand the scope and deepen the analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Bilingual learning has been shown to significantly contribute to the development of the academic competencies of PGSD students. Improvements are evident in academic literacy, including reading, analyzing, and writing scientific papers. Sari & Pratama (2022) showed that students accustomed to a bilingual approach were better able to comprehend international articles, with improvements of up to 30–40%. This strengthened their theoretical foundation compared to students who relied solely on Indonesian-language sources. Scientific writing skills also improved by around 25%, as the habit of translating pedagogical concepts into two languages fostered a more coherent and systematic way of thinking. Furthermore, the quality of academic presentations improved; students became more confident in expressing their ideas in bilingual forums. Access to global knowledge also expanded, enabling them to explore new learning models from abroad that were not yet available in Indonesian. Thus, PGSD students' academic competencies developed both quantitatively and qualitatively through bilingual learning.

From a cognitive perspective, bilingualism significantly impacted the flexibility of thinking. Bialystok (2021) emphasized that bilingualism strengthens three main aspects: inhibitory control, cognitive switching, and working memory. Bilingual PGSD students are more skilled at filtering out irrelevant information, switch languages more easily during teaching or presentations, and have better working memory capacity because they are accustomed to processing concepts in two languages. Research by Dewi & Wijaya (2024) supports these findings, showing that bilingual students are more creative in designing learning media, grasp learning theories more quickly, and are able to connect pedagogical concepts from local and international sources. This proves that bilingualism not only improves language skills but also strengthens analytical skills, creativity, and flexibility of thinking.

In addition to academic and cognitive aspects, affective factors also play a significant role. PGSD students who utilize a bilingual approach tend to be highly motivated because they feel better prepared to become competitive modern teachers. However, bilingual learning can also lead to language anxiety. Mutiarani et al. (2021) noted that 48% of students feel anxious about speaking in English, 60% are afraid of making grammatical errors, and 30% are reluctant to express their opinions in bilingual discussions.

However, strategies such as peer teaching, bilingual scaffolding, and team teaching have been shown to reduce anxiety by up to 30% (Oktaviani & Suryani, 2023). Students who successfully pass this phase are typically more confident, active, and willing to participate.

The positive impact of bilingual learning is also evident in pedagogical competence. Bilingual PGSD students are better prepared to teach material with a global perspective, able to adapt international teaching methods, and skilled in using English-language digital applications such as Canva, ClassPoint, Quizizz, Kahoot, and Scratch. They are also better equipped to develop bilingual lesson plans, which are increasingly relevant in schools with English language reinforcement programs. Furthermore, they are better able to teach students with diverse linguistic backgrounds. Prasetyo & Lestari (2023) emphasized that bilingual PGSD students are more creative and innovative in creating learning media because they are accustomed to accessing international sources and integrating technology.

Despite the significant benefits, implementing bilingual learning faces challenges. First, limited lecturers are a major issue, as approximately 70% of PGSD programs in Indonesia do not have adequate bilingual teaching staff (Rahmawati, 2021). Second, students' cognitive load increases because complex pedagogical material becomes more difficult when delivered in two languages. Third, an unsupportive campus environment makes exposure to foreign languages unsustainable. Fourth, there is a disparity in language skills among students; those with less skills tend to lack confidence and fall behind. This suggests that the success of bilingual learning depends on the preparedness of lecturers, institutional support, and learning strategies that accommodate differences in student abilities.

CONCLUSION

Bilingual learning contributes significantly to the development of PGSD students in academic, cognitive, affective, and pedagogical aspects. Academically, students who are accustomed to a bilingual approach show stronger international literacy skills. They are able to read and understand scientific articles in English, allowing them to use more diverse and up-to-date references. The direct impact is seen in the improved quality of scientific writing, as students are accustomed to expressing ideas in two languages with a more coherent and systematic line of thinking. In addition, access to global resources broadens their horizons, enabling the integration of foreign educational theories into the local context. This makes them better prepared to face academic demands in the global era.

Cognitively, bilingualism has been proven to strengthen students' executive functions. They are more flexible in their thinking, able to switch languages quickly, and have a more stable focus of attention when reading or analyzing complex academic texts. This ability supports pedagogical reasoning, as students can connect concepts from various sources more efficiently. With a more trained working memory, they are able to store and process information in two languages simultaneously, making the learning process more profound and integrated.

The affective aspect also experienced significant development. Bilingual PGSD students generally have higher learning motivation because they realize that foreign language proficiency is a competitive advantage in the world of work. They are more confident when communicating in academic and professional forums. However, language anxiety remains a challenge, especially the fear of making grammatical mistakes or not daring to express opinions in bilingual discussions. However, the application of strategies such as peer teaching, bilingual scaffolding, and team teaching has been proven to significantly reduce anxiety. Students who successfully pass this phase usually show increased confidence, are more active, and dare to participate.

The positive impact of bilingual learning is also evident in the pedagogical readiness of PGSD students. They are more competent in dealing with multilingual classes, able to adapt international teaching methods, and skilled in using English-language digital technologies such as Canva, Quizizz, Kahoot, and Scratch. Bilingual students are also better prepared to develop bilingual lesson plans, which are increasingly relevant to the needs of modern schools that emphasize foreign language reinforcement. In addition, they are better able to teach students with diverse linguistic backgrounds, making learning more inclusive and adaptive to multicultural realities.

Despite its significant benefits, the implementation of bilingual learning is not without challenges. Language anxiety remains a major obstacle, especially for students with limited English proficiency. The cognitive load also increases because complex pedagogical material must be studied in two languages. In addition, the limited number of bilingual lecturers is a structural problem, given that many

PGSD programs in Indonesia do not yet have teaching staff who are fluent in two languages. An unsupportive academic environment, with courses that do not consistently use a bilingual approach, also results in inconsistent exposure to foreign languages.

To overcome these challenges, appropriate strategies are needed. Intensive training for lecturers is the first step to enable them to consistently support bilingual learning. Campuses also need to create a conducive academic environment, for example by enriching the bilingual literature in libraries and encouraging the use of English in daily academic activities. Learning models such as translanguaging and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) can be applied to maximize the potential of bilingualism without adding excessive burden on students. Psychological support is also important to help students overcome language anxiety and increase their confidence.

With the right strategy, bilingual education can become a strong foundation for developing elementary school teachers who are professional, globally minded, and adaptable to the educational needs of the future. Graduates of bilingual education systems not only have superior academic and pedagogical competencies, but also have the potential to become agents of change who bring Indonesian education closer to international standards.

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