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Educational Management Strategies for Enhancing English Proficiency through Bilingual Programs in Schools

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ABSTRACT. This research aims to uncover schools' efforts in enhancing English language proficiency, revealing exemplary programs and their implications for students. The study utilizes a descriptive qualitative approach, employing data collection techniques such as observation, documentation, and in-depth interviews. Furthermore, data analysis techniques were applied from the beginning to the conclusion of the research. The research findings indicate that the school's efforts to enhance students' English language skills are evident within the school environment, manifested through announcements, school radio, instructions, and displays in various school areas entirely in English. Additionally, the school encourages its students to use English when acting as Masters of Ceremony. These school efforts are supported by exemplary programs such as using English-language math, science, and ICT textbooks, religious lectures, Hadith readings, ESL, "I Speak English" pins, international exposure, and book report presentations. Implementing these exemplary programs has positively impacted students, elevating the school's reputation with achievements at the city and international levels.

Keywords: English language proficiency, exemplary programs, school efforts



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INTRODUCTION

Language is the primary means of verbal communication used by a social being. Language is a basic human skill that facilitates communication with their environment, especially with other humans (Jimeno, 2024). Language is key in ensuring access to services and fostering social networks later in life (Temple et al., 2022). In establishing communication at the international level, the use of English is very important. It is supported by a statement that language is a window of communication, especially using foreign languages (Khasanah, 2022). Proficiency in English allows individuals to access vast knowledge, resources, and opportunities for higher education, research, and career advancement (Rana & Shaikh, 2024). Another opinion says that mastery of English can improve careers and values that make a person feel valued in the international workforce (Ameliya et al., 2023). English has entered various natural sectors of social life, be it in the education, business, work, politics and tourism sectors (Thariq et al., 2021). Therefore, it is necessary to habituate the use of English in everyday life to support insights and careers at the international level. In honing English language skills, formal educational institutions have a major role in the habituation of the use of English.



When individuals have full intelligence, then each individual has cognitive differences spread across nine intelligences, where each intelligence has developmental characteristics. Development is a change towards a more advanced, mature direction (Ni'mah, 2016). One of the eight types of multiple intelligences is verbal-linguistic intelligence. Education experts recognize verbal-linguistic intelligence because it is directly related to students' understanding of how to use and use language (Kelelufna et al., 2021). This intelligence is highly valued today, as people tend to judge others based on their ability to speak and write (Lwin, 2013). Apart from measuring one's intelligence, linguistic mastery of English also has a basic function as a means of communication between members of society. Therefore, to establish good communication, humans must be skilled in language. Seeing the importance of language as a human communication tool, languages other than the mother tongue also require mastery, namely, international languages such as English, urgently demanded (Sudiyarta, 2005). English language skills are an obligation in the era of globalization because it is the main capital of communication at the international level.

The first foreign language to be taught in Indonesia was English, and until now, it has been included in the national compulsory lessons. This policy has received a positive response from the community, especially from schools that feel they can and can organize English language learning. Bilingual school means using two languages in education. Indonesian and English are most commonly used in daily activities in bilingual schools in Indonesia (Aulia Annisa, 2020). Many educational institutions in Indonesia have adopted the Bilingual system. SMP Global Islamic School is an educational institution that implements bilingualism in Yogyakarta. Using two languages is an added value in this school, so students are expected to have leadership competencies to become future leaders and global players with international insight, especially English.

A major problem in implementing educational management strategies to improve English language skills through bilingual school programs is the need for more effective implementation. Many schools in Indonesia need help integrating English into various subjects and other school activities, mainly due to insufficient resources and support. Several factors, such as the selection of appropriate teaching methods, time management, and support from parents and the community, are key to the success of this program (Khauzanah et al., 2023). In addition, the changing educational paradigm that requires adaptation of teachers and students is also a significant obstacle. Therefore, a comprehensive management strategy is needed to overcome these barriers.

This research continues the previous "Management of bilingual school programs at the Islamic elementary school level". The study discusses several programs to improve English language skills, starting with the formation of a bilingual team, the addition of conversation lessons, vocabulary memorization tasks, conversation deposits, habituation to communicate in English to program evaluation, including classroom supervision, performance supervision, and formative and summative evaluations for students (Muawanah, 2023). Researchers see that the management applied in this study needs to be narrower in scope because it highlights learning management, human resources, and program management to learning evaluation, so the discussion presented is less in-depth. In the paper that researchers want to make, researchers will focus more on the indepth form of school management in improving English language skills by focusing on the programs implemented. Focusing more on the program is expected to get the results of an in-depth discussion of the problems in this study.

The problems raised in this study include: Firstly, how is the process of improving learners' English language skills? Second, there are excellent programs for improving linguistic skills. Third, to what extent do the implications of the bilingual program at SMP GIS Yogyakarta contribute to improving students' English language skills? With the various issues raised, this research aims to find out and analyze the process of improving English language skills and its implementation through bilingual programs at school. Furthermore, the researcher hopes that this paper can be a reference for future writers and a consideration for developing bilingual programs in educational institutions.

METHOD

The method used in this research is qualitative with a descriptive analysis approach (Sugiyono, 2014). The study sought to reveal the efforts of the improvement process through the school's flagship programs in improving English linguistic skills and the implications of the programs for learners. The study aims to reveal, describe and analyze events and their implications, as is common in all qualitative research. This study took place at SMP Global Islamic School using

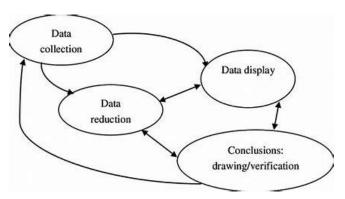


Figure 1: Milles and Huberman Data Analysis Method

primary data sources, namely data obtained by researchers directly with respondents, namely the principal and Islamic teachers. In addition to primary data, the author took additional data, such as online journals, as secondary data supporting primary data.

Data was collected using three techniques, namely: 1) Observation. Observations were made to discover the activities that learners participated in in the school's efforts to improve English linguistic intelligence up close and in person. 2) Structured interview. The things that were interviewed included various school efforts in improving English linguistic intelligence and how the implications for students. The interviewees were the school principal and religious teachers/Islamic teachers. 3) Documentation study. This section searches journals and books related to bilingualism and its implications for students.

The data analysis method in this research follows the framework proposed by Miles and Huberman (2014), which involves summarizing, presenting, reducing data, and drawing or verifying conclusions. Data gathered from observations, interviews, and documentation are first summarized and presented as field data and literature. The findings are then verified to develop comprehensive research conclusions. This process aims to obtain deeper insights into the studied issues. The data analysis process is further illustrated in the Figure 1.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The national and specialty curricula are the basis for running education at SMP GIS (Global Islamic School). As for the distinctive curriculum of GIS, Junior High School has a program based on 4 pillars of education, which are contained in the academic, Islamic, global and leadership fields. From the direct narrative of the principal of GIS Junior High School, it is stated that "when talking about the development of English language skills, of course it will not be separated from one of the pillars, namely globalisation, even though the four pillars actually intersect with each other". If observed at a glance, the content of English linguistic education emphasizes the pillar of globality, but other pillars also contribute to improving English linguistics.

The school's efforts in improving learners' English language skills can be felt in the school environment through announcements, school radio, instructions, and displays in various school rooms fully in English. In addition, the school also encourages its learners, if they become MC (Master of Ceremony), to use English. The efforts made by the school in developing the potential of English language skills aim to prepare students to become global players or global citizens who, indirectly, must be able to speak English. The school's efforts in realizing the goals of GIS Junior High School are to create excellent programs that characterize the school. The linguistic skills improvement program is contained in the four pillars of GIS Junior High School. However, the

excellent English linguistic development program focuses more on the Islamic and global pillars. The flagship programs are:

Islamic Studies

Muhadharah. Muhadharah is a lecture training program for Global Islamic School 3 Yogyakarta Junior High students. This program takes place every two weeks on Friday mornings from 07:30 to 08:00 AM, specifically during the first and third weeks of the month. In addition to being assigned as preachers, students serve as MCs, hosts, and Quran reciters. The Islamic teacher consistently emphasizes, "Students appointed for this activity are required to use English, even if mixed with some Indonesian." Before the event, students are encouraged to practice individually to improve their communication skills in English.

Hadith recitation. Every Tuesday and Thursday, after completing the ba'diah zuhur prayer, students can recite hadith with an English introduction. A direct statement from the Islamic teacher that "Every student has been scheduled systematically so that all students will get their turn to develop their potential for public speaking using English". Learners are encouraged to have the courage to speak in public about selected hadith.

Globalisation

ESL (English as a Second Language). ESL (English as a Second Language) Programme is an English language learning program with Native Speakers (UK, Australia, US). The ESL program is part of the GIS globalization pillar, one of which is mastering English. This learning includes mastery in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. This program is conducted once a week with 1 hour of class time. With this program, students are expected to be able to speak English actively like a foreign speaker.

Pin "I Speak English". The "I Speak English" pin is an English language improvement program used in learning activities and outside of class hours. All students, teachers and staff wear the "I Speak English" pin on Tuesdays and Thursdays, which indicates that communication on that day is fully in English when interacting with Global Islamic School residents.

International Exposure. International Exposure has two program branches, namely homestay and Sister Schools. The first homestay program is where teachers and students visit countries that actively speak English, such as Australia. However, due to the pandemic transition, GIS Junior High School chose the closest countries, such as Malaysia and Singapore. The Homestay program has been carried out in stages for the previous 16 days, but for now, it is still 5 days. The second program is Sister School, which is carried out between countries such as Japan, the Philippines, and Guatemala, where students exchange stories and information using English.

Book Report Presentation. Book Report Presentation is one of the literacy programs implemented at the end of semester 2. Students present, review and analyze literary works. Students must choose one form of reading material, such as novels or short stories. The principal added that the reading book must be in English and have a minimum thickness of 100 pages, provided that the teacher concerned has given permission to read it.

Through the programs implemented, several aspects of English linguistic intelligence are expected to develop in students. For more simplicity, see the table below.

Table 1. Results of English Linguistic Ability Development of the Speciality Programme

| No. | Pillars of GIS Junior High School Distinctiveness | English Linguistic Skills Development Programme | Developing English Linguistic Skills |
|-----|--|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1. | Academic | Use of English | Reading, developing vocabulary. |
| | | language maths, science | |
| | | and ICT textbooks | |

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|----|-----------------|------------------------|--|
| 2. | Islamic Studies | Muhadharah | Developing vocabulary, Storytelling, Recording (tape |
| | | | recorder), discussing, practising speaking, and writing words. |
| | | Recitation of hadith | Read biographies, develop vocabulary, tell stories, report on |
| | | | books, and practise speaking. |
| 3. | Globalisation | ESL (English as a | Brainstorming, developing vocabulary, storytelling, tape |
| | | Second Language) | recording, discussion, speaking practice, word writing. |
| | | Pin "I Speak English" | Develop vocabulary, tell stories, discuss, practise speaking. |
| | | International Exposure | Brainstorming, developing vocabulary, storytelling, tape |
| | | | recording, discussion, speaking practice. |
| | | Book Report | Read biographies, develop vocabulary, research, tell stories, |
| | | Presentation | report on books, practise speaking, write journals. |

Implementing bilingualism in the school environment has a tremendous impact on students as they can actively use foreign languages at school. The principal said, "GIS Junior High School has a special programme to prepare students for competitions called GCC (GIS Champion Club). This programme specifically fosters students who are talented in mathematics, Indonesian, English, science, social studies, and Tahfidz. From the GCC programme, English lessons often get achievements, starting from English competitions at the Yogyakarta special region or international level". Apart from that, students also achieve in other branches when participating in speech and storytelling competitions. During field observations, researchers found that student achievements will be displayed in the reception lobby and uploaded to the school's social media account as a form of appreciation.

Discussion

The term bilingual in education may be familiar to modern society, but we need to know what bilingual education is. A person's ability to speak two languages in formal and non-formal contexts is called bilingual or bilingual (Fitranti, 2021; Schwartz & Minkov, 2023). Many schools use Indonesian and English as bilingual programs to interact with the education system; the person can communicate and show his/her feelings and thoughts in another language or situation where speakers can speak more than one language (Slaughter, 2007; Widodo, 2016; Sari et al., 2019; Sulistiyo et al., 2020; Surotun et al., 2022). Bilingual education is education that uses two languages (Leung, 2005; Berens et al., 2013; Klein et al., 2014). The first language is used daily, and the second is a foreign language, where learners achieve proficiency in applying their new language. However, the first language is not eliminated, so it is still applied at certain times (Mukni'ah, 2021). Bilingual programs are usually implemented in renowned private schools or modern boarding schools. One of the leading private schools in Yogyakarta that adopts bilingual education in its education program is GIS Junior High School.

The activities that are important and must be considered in order to implement foreign language or bilingual learning in schools include staffing, teacher recruitment, teacher certification, staff development, and curriculum development (Henderson, 2017; Mellom et al., 2018; Nugraheni, 2019; Figueras-Daniel & Li, 2021). Implementing a bilingual program must consider the curriculum and the qualifications of the available teachers. SMP GIS Yogyakarta has been quite selective regarding staffing, teacher recruitment, and staff certification. When teaching and non-teaching staff want to work at the school, they must attach a certificate of English language ability and a certificate of supporting English language skills. In selecting staff and educators, an exclusive interview is usually conducted using English to verify the ability to work later. For curriculum implementation, SMP GIS Yogyakarta has implemented it through its unique curriculum in the form of 4 pillars: academics, Islamicity, globalization and leadership.

Various efforts have been made to improve English language skills in schools, especially at the secondary level. These efforts generally involve learning measures proven effective through previous research. They can also be new methods or strategies yet to be tested for success (Marzuki, Samnia, 2021). English language learners need strategies to master language skills both actively and

passively (receptive). Various methods can be used to gain proficiency in English language skills, both in terms of passive and active skills (Dąbrowska & Street, 2006; Street & Dąbrowska, 2010; Boonkit, 2010; Woodrich, 2015). Mastery of active and passive English allows one to understand the messages conveyed by others and convey messages clearly and effectively to others (Tavil, 2010; Hyland, 2013).

Based on the theoretical study the researchers included above, school efforts to improve student's English language skills at SMP GIS Yogyakarta can be identified by using announcements, school radio, instructions, and displays in various school rooms that fully use English. In addition, the school also encourages its students to use English if they become MC (*Master of Ceremony*). Active and passive skills in reading, writing, listening and speaking are highly emphasized at SMP GIS Yogyakarta. These basic skills will be the benchmark for students' mastery of English. According to the 2013 curriculum, the government must also achieve educational goals in learning English. In the current curriculum, the educational goal of English subjects is to improve oral and written communication skills. Communication skills must be attention to practice to improve the experience; English requires much practice to improve four language skills: listening, speaking, writing, and reading (Surani & Chaerudin, 2019). The second is raising awareness of the importance of English as a foreign language to help learn and understand the relationship between language and culture and broaden cultural horizons (Wati & Oka, 2021). With sufficient English vocabulary, learners will more easily master the four language skills needed to achieve educational goals.

In his research, Yaumi suggested twenty methods to help learners improve their verbal-linguistic intelligence. The strategies are brainstorming, reading biographies, publishing, researching/library, making lists, creative writing, reading newspapers, making reports, making humor, developing vocabulary, storytelling, writing journals, recording (tape recorder), reporting books, playing (reciprocating) rhymes, debating/discussing, keeping a diary, practicing speaking, writing words, writing letters (Yaumi, 2015). With the strategies that have been implemented, learners will get used to using English. Speaking English has a positive and significant effect on learning English; this can be interpreted as the more often speaking English is practiced and becomes a habit, the better the students' English learning achievement is (Irawan, 2016). A positive influence must be realized to support students' learning achievement in the future.

Good linguistic ability allows a person to process good sentences. Linguistic intelligence is a person's ability to express their thoughts in the form of words and the use of language (Faruq & Alnashr, 2018). A person with verbal-linguistic intelligence is also good at auditory abilities and can learn through listening (Samad Umarella, 2019). Verbal linguistic intelligence involves abilities related to language development. Broadly speaking, someone who masters English linguistic ability can be seen from 4 basic abilities: listening, speaking, reading and writing (Mukni'ah, 2021). The ability that the school wants to achieve in improving English linguistic ability is realized in school programs from 4 main pillars, namely academic, Islamic, global, and leadership. However, the main pillar, the flagship program of GIS Junior High School, is the Islamic and global program.

Bilingual programs, especially English, are very important to be implemented by several educational units because English is considered an international language that must be learned as early as possible to create a habit (Pransiska, 2020). The program to improve English language skills can be found in the 4 pillars of the distinctiveness of SMP GIS Yogyakarta. However, only the academic, Islamic, and global pillars best represent the bilingual program that improves English language skills. Specifically, the realization of the bilingual program to improve English language skills is: (1) the academic pillar is implemented through the use of English language maths, science and ICT textbooks to stimulate habituation to using English; (2) the Islamic pillar contained in muhadharah activities and hadith recitation trains students to dare to come forward to deliver da'wah material in English; (3) the pillar of globalization, the ESL (English as a Second Language) program, the "I Speak English" Pin, International Exposure and Book Report Presentation encourage learners to participate in activities to improve their English linguistic skills.

Mastery of English is one factor determining the quality of human resources today. To realize this, the government has made it compulsory to teach English. This policy is enforced starting from the secondary level (junior high school and senior high school) to the high level, namely university (Dauyah & Yulinar, 2018). By mastering English, students open up opportunities to achieve achievements that will be useful in supporting a good career.

In addition to improving learners' English language skills, the benefits of the bilingual program also include positive impacts on learners' cognitive aspects, intelligence, and social behavior (Pransiska, 2020). The bilingual program improves children's English language skills and provides a positive impact that provides other benefits to learners. This linguistic ability gives more value to students who want to explore knowledge at an international level. It also provides opportunities in global forums and opportunities to participate in competitions and Olympiads in English. Some educational institutions make bilingual programs, especially those focusing on English, very important because English is considered an international language and needs to be learned as early as possible (Pransiska, 2018). Students at GIS Junior High School have proven to be able to make achievements in English in the form of Olympiads at the city and international levels. The achievements manifest that GIS Junior High School has improved the English linguistic abilities of its students.

Students are expected to be able to compete in this globalization era with the provisions obtained at school. Entering the era of globalization, better known as the free market, requires everyone to prepare reliable resources, especially in communication. In this case, the role of English is needed both in mastering communication technology and interacting directly. As a means of global communication, English must be actively mastered orally and in writing.

CONCLUSION

The study highlights the significant role of SMP GIS 3's programs in enhancing students' English language skills through various initiatives such as using English in announcements, school radio, classroom instructions, and textbooks for subjects like mathematics, science, and ICT. Activities like muhadharah, hadith recitation, ESL, "I Speak English" pins, and international exposure improve students' listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills within an academic, Islamic, global, and leadership framework. These efforts have positively impacted the school's reputation, leading to student achievements at national and international levels. However, the study has limitations, focusing solely on the school's role in language improvement and its flagship programs. Future research should explore how efforts at home and within the community further support English linguistic development and the broader impact of these programs on academic and non-academic student achievements.

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