



The Effectiveness of Bilingual Learning for Students in the Era of Globalization

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Abstract

Bilingual learning is one of the strategies of higher education in facing the demands of globalization, particularly in improving foreign language proficiency and preparing students to compete internationally. This study aims to assess the effectiveness of implementing bilingual learning in higher education and identify factors influencing its success. The research method used is a literature review by analyzing various relevant scientific articles published within the last five years (2020–2025). Data sources were obtained through searches in academic databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, SINTA, and Garuda using keywords related to bilingual learning and higher education. The study results indicate that bilingual learning generally has a positive impact on improving students' language skills, broadening their academic horizons, and preparing them for the global workplace. However, its effectiveness is greatly influenced by lecturer competence, student preparedness, the availability of teaching materials, and a supportive academic environment. The main obstacles identified include differences in language proficiency levels, limited English proficiency among teachers, and low motivation among some students. Therefore, implementing bilingual learning requires a well-planned strategy, ongoing lecturer training, and the development of institutional policies that support optimal program implementation.

Keywords: *Bilingual Learning, Higher Education, Globalization, Language Competence, Students.*

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid pace of globalization demands that universities ensure their graduates possess competencies capable of competing internationally. One key skill of concern is foreign language proficiency, particularly English, which now plays a dominant role in scientific publications, academic communication, and international collaboration. To meet this demand, many higher education institutions have begun adopting a bilingual learning system, which uses two languages, generally Indonesian and English, as the medium of instruction in academic activities.

The implementation of bilingual learning in higher education is believed to expand students' access to global literature sources, enrich academic perspectives, and strengthen international communication skills, which are crucial in today's digital age (Widodo & Suryadi, 2022). In various countries, including Indonesia, bilingual education continues to develop as a strategy to improve educational quality and strengthen global competitiveness. The implementation of bilingual programs is one strategic step in this effort.

However, implementing bilingual programs in higher education is not without its challenges. The government needs to ensure the availability of competent bilingual teaching staff, which is not easy in practice. Furthermore, substantial funding is required to sustain these programs. Bilingual classes and their students often receive more exclusive academic facilities and services, such as access to the Cambridge international curriculum, which also poses its own challenges. Thus, implementing international classes in higher education is a complex undertaking.

This study aims to assess the effectiveness of bilingual education implementation in university settings, including understanding the concept of bilingualism, its impact on cognitive abilities, and its implementation in learning activities. This study seeks to identify forms of international programs integrated into language teaching and other academic activities. Furthermore, this study aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the differences between the ideal goals of bilingual education and the reality of its implementation in the field. This study also focuses on the benefits students gain after participating in international class programs for several years and examines their implementation through direct student experience.

Thus, the implementation of bilingual learning still faces many obstacles. Several studies have shown that differences in language abilities among students, limited lecturers trained in bilingual teaching, inadequate teaching materials, and students' comfort level in participating in dual-language lectures remain major challenges in many Indonesian universities (Rahmawati, 2023; Hasanah & Hidayat, 2021). This situation raises questions about the effectiveness of bilingual learning, the factors that influence its success, and its impact on students' academic quality and global competency. Based on these issues, this study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of bilingual learning in higher education in the era of globalization, identify supporting and inhibiting factors, and analyze its impact on language abilities, course material comprehension, and student readiness to face international competition.

Theoretically, the results of this study are expected to enrich scientific studies on bilingual education in higher education and serve as a basis for developing bilingual-based learning strategies. Practically, the findings of this study are expected to assist higher education institutions in formulating more optimal bilingual learning policies, improving the quality of lecturers in bilingual teaching, providing appropriate teaching materials, and supporting students in adapting to learning systems relevant to global demands.

METHODS

This study uses a literature review approach to analyze the effectiveness of bilingual learning among university students in the era of globalization. The research data were obtained from relevant scientific articles published within the last five years (2020– 2025). This approach allows the researchers to gain a comprehensive overview of previous studies without conducting direct field research. The articles used as sources were selected based on several criteria. First, the articles discuss bilingual learning or bilingual education for university students or the higher education level. Second, the articles were published in peer-reviewed scientific journals and were available in either Indonesian or English. Third, articles that are relevant to the context of globalization and the effectiveness of bilingual learning were prioritized.

The literature search was carried out using main keywords such as “bilingual learning,” “effectiveness of bilingual learning,” “higher education,” “university students,” and “globalization.” These keywords were combined to facilitate searches in journal databases such

as Google Scholar, Scopus, Sinta, and Garuda. After the initial search, the relevant articles were screened based on their titles, abstracts, and full texts to ensure suitability with the research topic.

The data from the selected articles were then analyzed descriptively and synthesized narratively. In this way, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of the practices, challenges, and outcomes of bilingual learning in higher education settings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Effectiveness Of Bilingual Learning On Students' Language Proficiency

Advancements in the modern era have significantly influenced language practices in educational settings, where Indonesian is no longer the sole language used (Zumaruddin et al., 2024). The rise of technology, increased access to information, and expanding international interactions have elevated the importance of English in education. English now functions not only as a global communication tool but also as the primary language for academic literature, international research, and the latest knowledge resources. This scenario requires students to attain adequate English proficiency in order to access scientific developments, comprehend international references, and prepare for a job market that increasingly values global competence. However, reality shows that not all students possess sufficient English skills to compete on an international level (Kamaliah et al., 2025). This disparity in ability causes some students to struggle with understanding materials presented in English, including reading texts, basic terminology, or lectures delivered in a foreign language. Consequently, many students still lack confidence when reading, writing, or responding to questions in English.

This situation highlights the necessity of implementing a teaching model that integrates the use of both Indonesian and English within university courses. Bilingual education is considered a promising approach to address these challenges while providing solutions to the various obstacles students face. The concept of bilingualism refers to an individual's ability to communicate effectively in two or more languages. According to the great dictionary of the Indonesian Language, this term describes a person's competence to operate two languages accurately and appropriately within different contexts (dual- language proficiency) (PUTRI et al., 2023). The simultaneous use of two languages in both social and academic settings in Indonesia shapes students' language patterns. This often gives rise to interference phenomena, where elements of one language are incorporated into another, affecting pronunciation, word choice, word formation, and sentence structures (Rakhmat & Qohar, 2024).

The effectiveness of learning is significantly influenced by the presence of bilingual classes in higher education. Most students perceive that language learning not only expands their vocabulary but also enhances fluency and stimulates active language skills, making future application of the language easier and more sustainable. For students pursuing advanced studies, bilingual classroom experiences enable mastery of specialized academic terminology, leading to a deeper understanding of information. Meanwhile, for those entering fast-paced career paths, bilingual proficiency is considered beneficial for adapting to multinational work environments, facilitating communication with diverse partners, and increasing opportunities for promotion to more strategic and fulfilling positions (Jannah, 2024).

Factors Affecting The Success of Bilingual Education

In the context of higher education, the effectiveness of bilingual learning programs cannot be separated from the various dynamics that arise during the educational process. Students' proficiency in two languages is not the sole determinant of success, as the quality of bilingual education is shaped by the involvement of multiple factors influencing language

development. As (Nurlaila, 2020), explained in her study, the success of bilingual learning is affected by several aspects, which can be categorized into four main areas: factors originating from the students themselves, the role and competence of instructors, the learning environment, and the surrounding social context. Furthermore, relevant research by (RIFKY et al., 2024) provides an additional perspective, emphasizing that gender also impacts bilingual learning outcomes, as male and female students may demonstrate different patterns in language use. In addition, variables such as the speakers' age range, financial situation, educational background, ethnocultural identity, and interaction partners significantly contribute to the overall effectiveness of bilingual education.

Consistent with these findings, other research provides additional insights into the factors that influence the success of bilingual education. According to a study by (Sinta Wati & Rosalina, 2023), students' success in using two languages is influenced not only by individual aspects but also by language contact among speakers and the social closeness developed through daily interactions. Interaction between students from different regional backgrounds encourages diverse language use, while the level of familiarity in conversational settings allows students to adjust their language choices to communicate more effectively. Two international studies have identified several important factors for successful bilingual learning. Research by (Soruç et al., 2024) indicates that language proficiency is a primary factor, while learning motivation supports academic achievement. Other non-linguistic factors, such as learning strategies, anxiety, and self-regulation, also play a role, although their impact is not always consistent. In contrast, (Wu et al., 2025) emphasize the role of learning strategies, learning styles, and cultural background, where the socio-cultural context mediates the effectiveness of these factors. Therefore, the success of bilingual education results from the complex interaction between individual capacities and the learning environment.

The Relevance And Challenges Of Bilingual Education In The Era Of Globalization

Amid the forces of globalization, English has become a cornerstone of modern education. As a tool for international communication, proficiency in English is essential for every individual (Jannah, 2024). Language mastery plays a critical role in shaping a generation capable of thriving in the digital era. With advancements in information and communication technology, language serves as a foundation for expressing ideas, interacting with others, and accessing diverse sources of information (Rumodar et al., 2024). Students are guided to develop their skills through appropriate and adaptive learning strategies. One approach that has proven effective in supporting this development is the use of bilingual methods, which not only enhance educational standards but also prepare students to think and communicate effectively in two languages (Kamila et al., 2025).

However, implementing bilingual education is not without challenges. According to (Aprila as cited in Zumaruddin et al., 2024), the execution of a bilingual curriculum requires specific competencies from instructors. Educators are expected not only to be proficient in the languages but also to apply appropriate teaching strategies that create a supportive learning environment for students. In addition, students are expected to adapt to the use of two languages in academic activities. This situation can present particular challenges, especially for those who are not yet accustomed to using a foreign language in the learning environment (Zumaruddin et al., 2024).

Students enrolled in bilingual programs also face additional challenges related to language adaptation and academic proficiency, particularly for those who are not yet accustomed to using a foreign language. Differences in language competence among students create gaps in classroom interactions, requiring instructors to implement flexible and adaptive

teaching strategies (Akbar et al., 2025). Moreover, psychological pressures and motivation significantly influence students' ability to think and express themselves in two languages. Therefore, a supportive learning environment and appropriate motivational strategies are essential to enhance the effectiveness of bilingual education.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the literature analysis, it can be concluded that bilingual education in higher education plays a strategic role in improving students' language skills and meeting the needs of globally oriented academic work. This program has the potential to improve students' abilities in facing the challenges of the global workplace and enhance cross-cultural communication. However, the effectiveness of bilingual education is not influenced by various factors, such as lecturer competence, student readiness, the availability of appropriate educational materials, and a supportive academic environment. Problems such as language ability gaps, limited lecturer training, and lack of learning motivation remain important factors in the implementation of bilingual education. Therefore, educational institutions, educators, and students need to work together to develop a bilingual education system gradually through adaptive policies, professional training, and provision of facilities.

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