

# LANGUAGE USE FOR CHILDREN IN MIXED MARRIAGE FAMILY

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## ***Abstrak***

*Banyaknya pernikahan pasangan yang berbeda latar belakang, bahasa dan budaya membuat ketertarikan untuk mengangkatnya sebagai bahan penulisan jurnal ini. Jurnal ini difokuskan pada analisis strategi pengajaran orang tua kepada anak – anaknya dalam hal penggunaan bahasa, khususnya penggunaan bahasa sehari - hari. Data diperoleh melalui metode penelitian lapangan dan kemudian dianalisis secara kualitatif. Teori yang digunakan adalah teori dari Romaine, teori nomor 1, yaitu strategi one person – one language untuk menjadikan anak – anak dari pasangan pernikahan campuran ini mampu menguasai dua bahasa atau lebih. Strategi yang digunakan orang tua dalam teori dari Romaine adalah orang tua menggunakan bahasa mereka masing-masing kepada anak-anak sejak mereka kecil. .*

*Kata Kunci : bahasa, pernikahan campuran dan penggunaan bahasa*

## **1. Background of the study**

Children usually want to participate in a conversation with their parents or the other member of family or their friends. Eventhough the children can not speak very well, they will try hard to express what they want to say like using body language or crying. The children will say only what they have acquired. Even sometime they do not know exactly how to say the word to convey what they mean, they will try to apply what they have just heard. In fact, children are constructive learners in learning language. Language acquisition is very similar to the process of children use in acquiring first and second language.

There are many mixed marriage between different nationalities or different ethnics which involve different language background. In this case, the most

interesting thing in mixed marriage between Indonesian people and people of different nationalities is that this marriage involves two different language or more. They are vernacular languages, foreign language and Indonesia language. Vernacular language is the language which spoken by the people from the same ethnic group, foreign language is the language which is not spoken by its native speaker and Indonesia as the national language. It would produce different kinds of language based on the different environment.

The differences in language background of parents will influence their children in acquiring language. The children who have bilingual background are capable of adopting more than one languages. It depends on how their parents transmit their language to their children. There are two kinds of option related to the parents bilingual children transmitting their language to children, the first one is to transmit one language and then transmit the other language and the second one is to transmit both of their languages to the children from birth. The way bilingual children become bilingual also depend on the language of the community where they live and the way parents to maintain the language use which they transmit to the children.

## **2. Problems of the Study**

Based on the background above, the problems is:

What strategy was used by the parents to transmit their language to the children?

## **3. Aim of the Study**

The aim of this study is:

To find out what the strategy used by the parents to transmit their language to the children.

#### 4. Research Method

The collected data were analyzed based on the theory of Romaine's theory no. 1, that is one person – one language strategy to raise their children bilingual. The data were analyzed through the qualitative method and analyzed based on the activities, observing, comprehending and judging the data.

#### 5. Analysis

Romaine ( 1995: 183 ), following Harding and Riley (1986:8) has classified the main types of early childhood bilingualism, which have been studied into five categories, depending on factors such as the native language of the parents, the language of the community at large and the parent strategy. Romaine included a sixth type that it is necessary to be important thing in raising the children bilingually. The types as Romaine proposed as follows:

1. *Type 1* : *One person – one language*  
Strategy : The parents each speaks their own language to the child from birth.
2. *Type 2* : *Non – Dominant Home Language / One Language one environment*  
Strategy : Both parents speak the non – dominant language of the community.
3. *Type 3* : *Non-dominant Home Language without community support*  
Strategy : The parents speak their own language to children.
4. *Type 4* : *Double Non – dominant Home Language without community support.*  
Strategy : The parents each speak their own language to the child from birth.

5. *Type 5* : *Non-native parents*  
Strategy : one of the parents always addresses the child in a language which is not his/her native language
6. *Type 6* : *Mixed-language*  
Strategy : Parents code-switch and mix language.

Two families were taken as the respondents and it shows that their bilingualism case in term of raised their children language were matched with the type 1 of strategies of bilingualism theory proposed by Romaine, that is “One person – one language”. It means that the parents had different native language, in which each had the same degree competence in using other language. In this case, both of those two families spoke with their own language.

The first family, Mr. John Dodd’s family used English and Indonesia in their daily communication with the child. Mr. John Dodd always speak in English with her daughter, because his ability to speak Indonesian language is limited and Corinne’s mother used to talk with her with Indonesian language because she did not want her child confuse if she speaks half Indonesian language and half English. The second family, Mr. Rifki Ishak’s family used Balinese and English for their daily communication, Mrs. Juwita Rhedina can speak Balinese language too even only a few words. When Aisha talked with her father she used Balinese language and when she talked with her mother, she used English.

The children would adopt Indonesian language as Indonesia is national language; therefore, everyone can speak it and the children will be easier to learn Indonesian language from their school and the environment. During the interview conducted, it was found that the parents had plan to bring their children to be bilingual, that is why the parents spoke their own language in any occasions in their daily life to their children even though the parents did not know about the theory in term of how to raise their children language but they want to bring their children to be bilinguals by using “one person – one language” method which is the best strategy

of raising children bilingualism in order to avoid mixing languages. It seems that those families was successful in applying this strategy and the result was that their children could spoke more than one languages.

Mr. John Dodd's daughter can speak English and Indonesian language fluently. And Mr. Rifki Ishak's child can speak Balinese, English and Indonesian language well. Their children knows what languages that they should use when they speak the other people and they know how to use that language without mixing it with other languages, so the people who talked to them could understand the conversations.

## **6. Conclusion**

The results show that the parents succeed in applying the strategy from Romaine, which is one person - one language strategy to raise their children bilingual. In which strategy applied by the parents were constantly speak their own respective language to the children since birth.

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