Incidental English Learning and Linguicism: ACase Study of an Indonesian Child of a Multilingual Family[1]

Anna Marietta da Silva
Atma Jaya Catholic University of Indonesia
anna.silva@atmajaya.ac.id

ABSTRACT

The incidental learning of English among Indonesian children from exposure to home television movies has been a common phenomenon within the last two decades. A lot of young Indonesian children speak English fluently before entering schools because of their frequent TV viewing. This is seen as a great advantage for the children's education and future. Nevertheless, in the context of Indonesian schools, when a student is fluent in English but not in Indonesian,he or she may face some serious problems. This study investigates the case ofan Indonesian child from a linguistic point of view based on Hulstijn's incidental learning and Skutnabb-Kangas' (2015) linguicism. The goal of this study is to try to identify the possible causes of the child's English acquisition as a mother tongue regardless of the use of Indonesian as the main home language and the pedagogical implications as well as the effects on the child because she could not speak Indonesian. A series of semi-structured interviews and a document analysis were used. The analysis reveals how the child suffered from unfairness. Pedagogical recommendations relevant to the findings are provided.

Keywords: family language policy - incidental acquisition – linguicism - multilingual

RESUMEN

La obtención incidental del inglés entre los niños indonesios de las películas de televisión ha sido un fenómeno común en las últimas dos décadas. Muchos niños indonesios criados en familias que hablan indonesio principalmente hablan inglés con fluidez antes de ingresar a la escuela debido a que ven televisión con frecuencia. Esto se considera una gran ventaja para la educación y el futuro de los niños. Sin embargo, en el contexto de las escuelas indonesias, cuando un alumno domina el inglés pero no el indonesio, puede enfrentarse a algunos problemas graves. Este estudio investiga el caso mencionado anteriormente de un niño indonesio desde puntos de vista lingüísticos y legales basados en la obtención incidental del lenguaje de Hulstijn (2013) y el lingüismo de Skutnabb-Kangas (2015). El objetivo de este estudio es identificar la causa de la obtención del inglés por parte del niño como lengua materna, independientemente del uso del indonesio como lengua materna principal y las implicaciones pedagógicas, así como los efectos en el niño debido a su incapacidad para hablar indonesio. Se utilizó una serie de entrevistas semiestructuradas y un análisis de documentos. El análisis revela cómo el niño sufrió discriminación. Se proporcionan recomendaciones pedagógicas relevantes a los hallazgos.

Palabras clave*: política lingüística familiar - obtención incidental – lingüismo - multilingüe*

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Introduction

In big cities in Indonesia, there seems to be an increase in the number of Indonesian young children speaking English fluently (as if it was their first language) (Chen & Lie, 2018). The circumstances can be designed intentionally by the parents as an investment to become economically successful global citizens (Bonafix & Manara, 2016; Prayitno & Lie, 2018; Curtis, 2015) and secure a high position in society (Lamb & Coleman, 2008). Another reason is the natural circumstance surrounding the children's upbringing, such as the parent(s)' status, as international students in English speaking countries (Fai'ezah, 2010; Zacharias, 2010), which leads to the children's acquisition of English that stays after their return to Indonesia. In line with that is the advancement of technology that results in the easier access to English movies on cable television and a variety of Internet-based video channels (Lie, 2017). The acquisition of English may happen through extensive viewing of television movies at home (Curtis, 2015; Webb,

2015). In addition, there seems to be an increasing phenomenon of international migration and inter-nation marriages in Southeast Asia, along with foreign business investments (Jones & Shen, 2008; Toyota, 2008) in Indonesia. Such marriages may have a direct consequence, for instance, the presence of bilingual or multilingual families in which English may function as the home language along with other language(s).

I found the case of Jane (pseudonym), a girl at the age of 6 (when I started the study), born of a multilingual family: the father is Indonesian and the mother is Russian. At first, the family's language policy was multilingual. The father (Karl, pseudonym) and the mother (Kate, pseudonym) had made an agreement that the former would use English and the latter Russian, and the extended family, e.g., the grandmother (Mary, pseudonym) would use Indonesian when interacting with the children. The parents also believed that the children would acquire Indonesian language from the home environment and school (the parents sent their children to a private Indonesian school near their house). The primary motivation for choosing English was due to its prestige as a foreign language in Indonesia, not many people (around them) speak the language fluently, and to meet the key requirements for becoming financially successful and secure (Bonafix & Manara, 2016). Meanwhile, they decided that Russian was the second home language. The family expected that the children would be multilingual, an important self-qualification or asset in a borderless world. Nevertheless, in reality, the family used Indonesian mostly, which was mixed with English and a limited use of Russian. Hence, there was a change in the family's language policy because of some particular reasons that will be explained in the results and discussion section.

Unexpectedly, my data revealed that with the dominant use of Indonesian in the family, Jane's mother tongue is English. One of the definitions of a mother-tongue is "one's native language by other speakers" (Skutnabb-Kangas T. , 1984, p. 18). Interestingly, contrary to Jane, her older sister (henceforth, Jill-pseudonym) and brother (henceforth, Jack-pseudonym) only spoke Indonesian; they could not speak English as fluently as Jane could. Prior to this research, Jane had been studying in a private Indonesian school (hereinafter referred to as School Y) and struggling very hard to understand all the subject content given in Indonesian language ever since she was in kindergarten. Unfortunately, the school did not provide a special preparatory program for Jane, who is now in the fourth grade in another private Indonesian school (School Z). When the study began in January 2017, Jane was facing the possibility of failing the first grade, which she did in mid-2017. After Jane repeated the first grade, School Y decided that she had to repeat the second grade in 2019 should she want to remain studying there.

The present study aims at exploring the possible causes of Jane's English incidental learning as well as the pedagogical consequences she had to take. Two research questions guided this study:

(1) What made Jane learn English incidentally?

(2) What are the likely effects of Jane's incidental English learning at school?

It is expected that the study will offer insights into the incidental learning of English and linguicism at school. The study is also an attempt to contribute to the ongoing discussion of bilingualism.

Literature Review

In the next paragraphs, I will present a brief review of incidental English language learning and acquisition through TV shows and linguicism relevant to Jane's case.

Incidental Language Learning and Acquisition through TV Shows

Incidental learning has been defined as "the acquisition of a word or expression without the conscious intention to commit the element to memory" (Hulstijn, 2013, p. 2632). Likewise, Leow and Zamora (2017) pointed out the "absence of any deliberate intention" to refer to incidental second or foreign language learning. One of the first scholars researching the possibility of learning a language incidentally was Jenkins (1933, as cited in Leow & Zamora, 2017), who believed that when one learns a language incidentally, he or she has no plan or intention to remember the language. The notion is based on the belief that one can "pick up" a language because of the frequent or high amount of contact with the language. The term should be differentiated from intentional learning, in which there are conscious efforts to do a series of learning activities like memorizing, doing both oral and written iterative practices, and joining language proficiency tests (Hulstijn, 2013). Most of the research focused on this sub-field consisted of experimental studies done in laboratories.

Other studies used the term incidental acquisition and investigated whether or not watching particular television shows lends support to L1 or L2 vocabulary acquisition. Given the limited space, only several studies will be discussed here. Rice, Huston, Truglio, and Wright (1990) did a two-year experimental study on three

hundred and twenty-six children aged three to seven years old in Kansas to find out the relationship between viewing the *Sesame Street* television program at home and the subjects' vocabulary acquisition of English and found a positive correlation between the two. In addition, the subjects could acquire English vocabulary with limited parental intervention.

Similarly, Linebarger and Walker (2005) revealed a positive relationship between particular television shows and children's language outcomes. Researching fifty-one younger infants and toddlers who began watching television at around nine months of age, they discovered that exposure to TV shows such as *Blue's Clues, Dora the Explorer, Arthur, Clifford,* and *Dragon Tales* could result in a growth of vocabulary because of the content. While in the first two "onscreen characters speak directly to the child, actively elicit participation, label objects, and provide opportunities to respond", the latter three have "strong narratives, are visually appealing and contain opportunities to hear vocabulary words and their definitions, see the visual representations of the vocabulary words, and see the interactions between characters modelled" (Linebarger & Walker, 2005, p. 639). That can indicate some evidence of how particular television shows are especially created to invite the young viewers into dialogs, engaging them with the imaginary characters, and to be their language teachers as well. Consequently, there was an increase in the subjects' vocabulary.

Supporting the previous studies, Poštič (2015) confirmed the fact that movies could facilitate English language acquisition. In his research, having realized that some of his Lithuanian university students had an American English accent, Poštič conducted some interviews on the students and found that all of the interviewees were exposed to cartoon films on *Cartoon Network* during their childhoods for minimally two hours in the afternoon every day and during weekends. The interviewees highlighted that there were specific film series they used to watch regularly. All of those series showed colorful pictures and contained "exaggerated actions and slapstick humor popular in American comedies" (Poštič, 2015, p. 192). English acquisition seemed to be related to the memorized verbal expressions produced by specific characters of the movies (Curtis, 2015) they watched, which caused them to learn information about the American culture as well. Interestingly, most of the interviewees had not been to any English-speaking countries.

Correspondingly, in a case study of a four-year old Serbian native-speaker girl, Prosic-Santovac (2017) found that regular exposure to *Peppa Pig* cartoons and guided activities with and without its toys for a period of eighteen months had a positive effect on the child's English vocabulary acquisition. The girl showed an overt development in the acquisition of words related to foods, buildings, workers, adjectives, and countries. In addition, the subject was able to produce direct and indirect questions in English; several linking words (*and, but, because*); comparative forms; modal verbs; imperative, short, and long answers; as well as present progressive and present perfect tenses accurately. Finally, the girl's intonation and pronunciation were native-like; it was very close to the cartoon's main character. She was also capable of doing natural code-switching from Serbian to English, and vice versa. For instance, she spoke Serbian to Serbian speakers and switched to English to those she knew could speak English or was in situations when she wanted to use the language.

The potential of vocabulary learning through viewing television shows has also been investigated consistently in corpus-driven studies. For instance, Rodgers and Webb (2011) claimed that watching television programs can lead to incidental first and second language vocabulary learning among children. The implication of their study was that viewers would have a greater potential for learning words incidentally when they watched different episodes of a TV series because of the sense of the relationship in which the words are used. The researchers also pointed out that viewers would potentially learn not only many words but also their contextual meanings. Rodgers (2018) also emphasized the important role of images on television in learning words incidentally because viewers are provided with both verbal and visual input at the same time. He particularly indicated a greater role of documentary than narrative television programs in the viewers' incidental vocabulary learning. In a similar vein, Puimége and Peters (2019) suggested that the extramural activities, including TV viewing, of young Dutch children before they entered schools played a significant role in their English vocabulary knowledge. Even though the setting of the studies was the acquisition of English as the first or second language, it has been suggested that exposure to English television movies to very young children (infants, toddlers, babies) has been able to lead to (incidental) English learning or acquisition at a very young age.

Linguicism at School

Discrimination is a reality. Racism, sexism, and classism are only a few real-life examples of how human beings' rights are not always recognized and respected (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2015). The thought behind those *-isms* is the bigoted views of the superiority of one's race, sex, or class over others. Likewise, discrimination because of the superiority of one language over the other(s) exists and is termed *linguicism* by Skutnabb-Kangas (1988). As can be seen in the following definition, linguicism covers several spectrums: "ideologies, structures, and practices which are used to legitimate, effectuate, regulate, and reproduce an unequal division of power and resources (both material and immaterial) between groups which are defined on the basis of language" (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1988, p. 13).

Linguicism involves a mistaken view of human beings because they are put in unequal positions because of the language(s) they speak or do not speak (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2015). The unequal view is practiced until it becomes rooted in a community, and is finally seen as common and accepted as a norm. For example, if a community speaks only one language and believes that the use or learning of another language(s) is unnecessary and thus can be disregarded in such a way that the other language(s) can be forgotten or lost, linguicism becomes the ideology of the community. Linguicism is thus realized systematically through the educational system.

Skutnabb-Kangas (2015, p. 2) pointed out that the act of neglecting the other language(s) is done through "glorification, stigmatization, and rationalization" by the dominant language speakers (henceforth, DLS). The first refers to the situation where the DLS declare that the dominant language is superior because of its ability to explain everything, its huge number of speakers, and the opportunities the language gives to its speakers. The second includes a systematic act by the DLS that comprises spreading and maintaining negative views about the speakers of other language(s) as deficient (the other language(s) are seen as worse than the dominant language). The third is making, facilitating, controlling, and directing the community to believe that the dominant language is better than other languages because of its ability to provide good things that other language(s) do not.

The specific context of the definition of linguicism above is the preservation of the minority language(s). For example, linguicism took place in several public schools in Tucson, Arizona, the Rio Grande Valley, South Texas, and Simunurwa, Colombia. English is the dominant language in the first two and Spanish in the third. In the first two places, Spanish and Mexican are the "other languages" and Ika is the other language for the third case (Murillo & Smith, 2011). The true stories narrated by the Spanish, Mexican, and Ika speakers who were students in those schools then indicated life-long effects of childhood discrimination against speakers of languages other than English because of the community and authority's poor understanding of bilingualism, multilingualism, and pluralism. The research subjects described the physical, mental, and verbal punishments (from soft to harsh) that they received from the authorities (teachers, schools, church) because they spoke either Spanish, Mexican, or Ika, or because they were the native speakers of the languages. Similarly, students with foreign backgrounds in Swedish public high schools suffered discrimination in their grades for the written essays because of their language backgrounds (Hinnerich, Höglin, & Johannesson, 2015).

Linguicism, however, does not only center on minority languages. Placed in a broader context, it can also include the majority language(s) depending on the position of the language in the context, as Skutnabb-Kangas (2015) suggested: "linguicism can apply to (a) which language(s) one uses; (b) how one uses them; and (c) which language(s) one does not use/know or one is not competent in, all according to the norms of those who (arrogate to themselves the power to) judge others by their languages" (p. 1).

For instance, English is the dominant language in the communities that live in inner or outer circles, but it is not in the expanding circle (Kachru, 1986). Thus, in the last context, English (together with the local languages) can be seen as the other language(s). Although English carries positive images worldwide, in some situations those images can be disregarded by the dominant language speakers. Take the case of Jane as an example. Although she speaks English fluently, at School Y her English ability is paradoxically her deficiency because the school thinks that she is not competent in Indonesian, the national language, and the medium of instruction in the school. As the data will show, School Y sees her as a student incapable of continuing her studies there because of her inability to use Indonesian language regardless of her fluent spoken English.

It should be noted that the effects of linguicism on children should never be underestimated. The direct effects of linguicism are devastating, i.e., the violation and loss of one's linguistic rights which can have long-lasting effects for the victims. Murillo and Smith (2011) reported that the traumatic experiences of Spanish speakers in a primary school in Tucson, Arizona, and Rio Grande Valley, Texas, made them feel inferiority toward their own mother tongue (Spanish) and decided to consciously forget the language, learn English, and use it at home, school,

and work. They also decided to raise their children in English. As a result, their children grew up with very limited or without any attachment to the parents' mother tongue, making them have a "far distance" with the old members of the family who spoke Spanish.

Methodology

A common method to investigate a child's language learning or acquisition is through longitudinal observations of recorded scenes of the child under study. While language learning implies a conscious attempt of knowing about language, language acquisition suggests a sub-conscious knowledge of a language for the purpose of communication (Krashen, 1982). However, another method can also be useful when the critical period has passed, as was adopted by Poštič (2015), who used interviews for his research subjects about their past experiences of English acquisition. The study adapted Poštič's (2015) data collection method, i.e. using interviews for the caregivers, not the child. The subject of this study was Jane, a 6-year-old girl born of an Indonesian father and a Russian mother, who was also a student of a private primary school in West Jakarta. The method has its limitation as it is impossible to record the entire process of language learning within a particular period and it may be very challenging to decide which language is learned first and next, or which language is the child's mother tongue, as in the case of a bilingual or multilingual family context.

Skutnabb-Kangas (1984, p. 18) introduced several definitions of a mother tongue which are classified into four categories, i.e., (1) origin, (2) identification, (3) competence, and (4) function. A mother tongue in the first category refers to which language is first learned by a speaker. The second category refers to which language is identified with a speaker (internal judgment) or which language is identified as one's native language by other speakers (external judgment). In the third category, the mother tongue is which language a speaker knows best. Finally, the fourth class refers to which language(s) a speaker uses most of the time. It should be noted that one's mother tongue can be more than one language. The second definition of a mother tongue, i.e. "the language(s) one is identified by as a native speaker of by others" (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1984, p. 18) is used in this study based on the fact that Jane was viewed by her family and teacher as having English as her mother tongue. The present study also borrows the term *incidental learning* as opposed to intentional learning (Hulstijn, 2013). It is believed that children's incidental language learning can take place through various media, such as television and the Internet in addition to the oral conversations of a particular speech community.

The term native speaker, however, may not be easy to define and therefore has been debated for decades (see for example Coulmas, 1981; Davies, 2003; Love & Ansaldo, 2010) Bloomfield (1933, as cited in Davies, 2003). This debate pointed out the relationship between the first language a person speaks and being a native speaker of that language. Thus, a native speaker can refer to a person who is "born and brought up from birth to speak a given language, for preference in a family where the parents or other adults had the same experience with the same language" (Love & Ansaldo, 2010, p. 589). Similarly, Davies mentions that the concept of native speakers relates to being the owner and controller of the language as well as having the "insider knowledge about 'their' language" (2003, p. 1). Therefore, nativity of a speaker has been relied upon by linguists (Coulmas, 1981) and in most situations, language learners (Cook, 2008; Davies, 2003). Nevertheless, such definition has been questioned because language is complex; hence as can be viewed from several aspects, namely the first language that a person speaks in their family, the subconscious knowledge of the language, and the identity of a speech community (Cook, 2008). Hence, in the case of Jane, It is possible that she learned English first in her family and has subconscious knowledge of English given the fact that she was highly exposed to English (as will be presented in the findings).

To answer the first and second research questions about Jane's incidental English learning and her inability to speak Indonesian and the consequences she experienced in the school setting, a series of semi-structured face-to-face interviews of Jane's caregivers, i.e., the mother (Kate) and father (Karl) living in the same house and Jane's grand-mother (Mary) living in the house closest to Jane's house were conducted by the author from January to October 2017. Prior to the interviews, the researcher obtained consent from Kate, Karl, and Mary. Several follow-up interviews were conducted via WhatsApp chats in July and December 2019 and January 2020 with Karl and Kate. The interviews became the primary data for this study. The interview questions to Jane's family focused on the language policy and practices by the caregivers in the family to the children and the consequences Jane experienced at school. The interviews were transcribed and coded using open coding techniques (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The interview data was analyzed within the framework of incidental language learning (Hulstijn, 2013)

through television movies (Rodgers & Webb, 2011; Prosic-Santovac, 2017) and linguicism (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2015; Skutnabb-Kangas, 1988). The secondary data of this study was Jane's report card, IQ test score, as well as video and audio recordings of Jane speaking English.

Results and Discussion

In this section, I present the data as well as its analysis to answer the two research questions.

What Made Jane Learn English Incidentally?

As was noted in the introductory section, Jane's mother tongue is not Indonesian, but English, which is different from Jill's (Jane's older sister) and Jack's (Jane's older brother) first language, Indonesian. In that regard, there seem to be several factors that can be taken into account. First, there was a different family situation after each of the children were born, which may have influenced the language exposure each child got. Previous research has found that the language exposure a child receives at home may influence the child's language performance (Grosjean & Li, 2013; Thordardottir, 2011). In Jill's context (she is the oldest child in the family), Kate had to take care of only one child, i.e., Jill. A house assistant helped Kate for two years since Jill was 8 months old. According to Kate, Jill's first language was Indonesian because of the heavy exposure to Indonesian from Kate and the assistant. Kate admitted that she first used Russian language with Jill until she was 8 months old. Yet, the presence of the Indonesian house assistant afterwards caused an extreme change of language use in the family. As the babysitter could not speak English, Kate decided to learn and use Indonesian most of the time (Excerpt 1). The decision was sometimes complained about by Karl.

Excerpt 1.

Kate: . . . *jadi karena saya harus belajar Bahasa Indonesia . . . sampai kadang-kadang si Karl bilang kamu jangan Bahasa Indonesia lah, Bahasa Inggris [ke anak-anak]. Saya lebih senang Bahasa Indonesia, saya bilang gitu.*

(. . . because I had to learn Indonesian . . . that made Karl sometimes tell me not to use Indonesian, but English [to the children]. I preferred Indonesian, I told him.)

Her decision may exemplify an adult's motivation to learn a second language, i.e., to be able to communicate with the Indonesian target interlocutors, which made her become an autonomous Indonesian language learner employing her own learning strategies (Csizér & Kormos, 2013). Generally, motivation is "a condition of an organism that includes a subjective sense (not necessarily conscious) of desiring some change in self and/or environment (Lamb, Csizér, Henry, & Ryan, 2019). Since then, Indonesian was the primary language in the house (previously, Karl and Kate communicated in English). The house assistant, who worked for the family for around three years, used to retell children's folktales and sing children's songs in Indonesian to Jill. Another exposure to Indonesian was through a children's film series titled *Dora the Explorer* in Indonesian language. Then, Jack was born when Jill was one and a half years old.

During that period, Kate was still learning Indonesian language. Consequently, she used more Indonesian than Russian or English with the children. Although Karl always used English with the two children, slowly the family began to use a mixture of Indonesian and English. Russian was used only when Kate sang lullabies to Jill, did storytelling, read story books, talked to the children, or got angry. Kate confessed that she really wanted to be able to speak in Indonesian because she needed the language to communicate with the house assistant, Mary, the extended family, the neighbors, and (later) the teachers at the children's school. Karl however, insisted on using English with his children because of the role of English as the language of business.

During Jane's upbringing, there was an important change. She was born when Jill was 6 and Jack was 4.5 years old. At that time, Kate had to take care of a newborn baby and two other children who were students then. Jill was in the first grade and Jack enrolled in a kindergarten in one private school located about two kilometers from their house. Karl had to take the children to school and Kate picked them up every day. She also ran the house errands and helped the children with their homework. Kate was very busy with her children, a fact that was confirmed by Mary.

As Kate was busy doing the house errands and picking up the children from school, from around four months old (when she could sit firmly), Jane started to get regular exposure to English. She was seated on a carpet in front of the family TV from 9 AM until 12 PM every day, so that she could watch Disney Channel films from *Indovision* (a TV cable provider in Indonesia at that time), such as *Mickey Mouse, Elmo, Sofia & Friends, Teletubbies, Oggi & the Cockroaches,* and *Fin and Djek.* All of the films were in English. Kate also put toys around her. She did not turn off the TV even though the films were over or Jane was busy playing with her toys; she even maximized the TV volume. The main reason was simple; she wanted Jane to stay calm so that she could finish doing her chores (Excerpt 2). As Poštič (2015) noted, children's television movies may enable parents to 'watch' their children while the parents do their work at home. This was also supported by Mary, who looked after Jane when her mother picked up the older siblings from school.

Excerpt 2.

Kate: . . . *tivi nyala, karna kan waktu itu saya harus kerjain apa [pekerjaan rumah tangga] . . . waktu itu nggak ada pembantu . . . tivi itu tolong kita juga. Jadi kita besarin [volumenya], jadi anaknya [Jane] sibuk [menonton tivi] nggak kemana-mana. Jadi kita bisa kerja juga. Gitu, dari jam 9 pagi udah [disetel tivinya] . . .*

(. . . I turned on the TV, because I had to do the housework as we did not have any helper. . . . The TV helped us. So, I increased the volume so that Jane was busy watching TV and would not wander around. That enabled me to do the housework. That was it. I switched on the TV from 9 AM . . .)

In the afternoon after taking a nap, Jane watched other Disney Channel movies from around 5 until 6 PM. On average, Jane was exposed to English for around four hours a day. Hence, the exposure to *Disney Channel* films can play a crucial role in Jane's incidental English learning. Although within the first half year Jane was mostly exposed to Indonesian (Kate was then able to speak Indonesian with her family and the older siblings talked in Indonesian with Jane), slowly she began to talk in English. Her English pronunciation and intonation were also native like (cf. Prosic-Santovac, 2017) (Excerpt 3), which can be evidence that TV shows can provide an authentic use of English (Peters & Webb, 2018). Indeed, from the age of three to five (before she went to kindergarten), Jane could only speak English, which is in line with what Rice, Huston, Truglio, and Wright (1990) confirmed as the period when a child's oral language capabilities develop precipitously. Interviews with Kate, Mary, and Karl confirmed the fact that Jane was regularly exposed to English films on the Disney Channel, which was the second reason behind Jane's incidental English learning.

Excerpt 3.

Kate: . . . *pas dia [Jane] dari 2 tahun dia bisa bicara kayak Minnie [Mouse] atau Mickey Mouse . . . pas dia masuk TK guru[TKnya] bilang . . . kadang-kadang bahasa kamu kayak Mickey Mouse ya? . . . or she [Jane] want[ed] to be Sofia, she acting[ed] . . . [like] Sofia. Ok. She [was] like Sofia and [Jane] ganti suaranya juga.*

(. . . When Jane was two years old, she could imitate the way Minnie Mouse or Mickey Mouse talks . . . when she was in KG, her teacher told her . . . sometimes you talk like Mickey Mouse, don't you? . . . or when she wanted to become Sofia, she would act and sound like Sofia. Ok. She was like Sofia. She also changed her voice.)

Interestingly, Kate observed and concluded that Jane tended to listen more than watch the TV shows (Excerpt 4) because she was busy playing with her toys in front of the TV, but songs could make her stop playing and direct her attention to the TV again. For Kate, it is important that Jane stayed calm and did not wander around, especially when the mother was not at home. So, when Kate had to get Jill and Jack from school, she asked for Mary's help to watch Jane and reminded her the TV should not be turned off.

Excerpt 4.

Kate: . . . *iya, [Jane] lebih dengar, lebih mendengarkan [tivi programs]. Jadi dia nonton tu nggak terlalu apa [banyak menonton tivi] . . . karna sibuk [bermain dengan] mainan[nya] itu . . . jadi kalau ada [yang] nyanyi-nyanyi [di tivi], langsung dia nonton. Saya perhatikan dia lebih banyak dengar daripada nonton . . . karna [ketika] main kan saya bisa lihat kan mainannya tu [di]main[kan] atau tidak. Jadi dia tu lebih banyak dengar . . .*

(. . . Yes, Jane listened more to [the television programs]. So, she did not watch TV too much . . . because she was [busy playing] with her toys . . . so when there were people singing, she changed her focus to the songs on the TV; she watched them. I observed that she did more listening than watching TV . . . because I could see it when she was playing with her toys. She listened to the TV more . . .)

The family, however, never meant to make Jane acquire English as her mother tongue and not Indonesian, although Karl wanted the three children to be multilingual (able to speak Indonesian, English, and Russian). Kate, in particular, who was with the three children most of the time, wondered why Jane's mother tongue was English and Jill's and Jack's was Indonesian (Excerpt 5) because they all watched English movies every day. She added that Jane's older siblings cannot speak fluent English.

Excerpt 5.

Kate: *Makanya kan kalo saya pikir kalo di rumah kita tivi selalu [mempertontonkan film berbahasa] Inggris maka saya juga bingung kenapa yang dua itu [Jill dan Jack] nggak dapat [berbicara Bahasa Inggris] sama sekali . . . kalo Jane, [bahasa Inggris] kayak mother tongue itu. Nomor satu English nomor dua Indonesia, tapi Jill sama Jack sampe sekarang Inggris nggak bagus.*

(That made me wonder why even though we always had English movies on TV, Jill and Jack could not speak English at all . . . as for Jane, English seems to be her mother tongue. English is her first language, and Indonesian is her second language, but Jill and Jack do not speak English well up to now.)

Mary, the grandmother, was also surprised with Jane's fluency in English (Excerpt 6). She confessed that although Kate used Indonesian at home, only Jane spoke English, not her siblings. Moreover, she believed that Jane's fluency in English was because of the cartoons, all of which used English, and which she watched more than other programs. In Mary's point of view, Jane was 'suddenly' able to speak English after watching a lot of cartoon movies in English before she started school.

Excerpt 6.

Mary: *Waktu masih kecil itu kan dia [Jane] masih belum sekolah lebih banyak nonton kartun . . . pokoknya semua kartun yang Bahasa Inggris . . . sedangkan . . . mamanya ini kan pakai Bahasa Indonesia . . . ternyata anaknya ini lebih pake Bahasa Inggris . . . saya sendiri juga heran, padahal dulu kakak-kakaknya nggak seperti itu . . . kenapa kok anak ini kok malah banyak Bahasa Inggrisnya, karena itu, karena kartun tiba-tiba dia bisa ngomong lancar pake Bahasa Inggris.*

(When Jane was a toddler, when she had not entered the school, she spent more time to watch cartoon movies . . . all cartoons in English . . . while . . . her mother used Indonesian . . . it turned out that Jane was able to use English much better than Indonesian . . . I was wondering why, because her siblings were not like her . . . I wonder why Jane spoke more English. I think that's because of the cartoon movies, because suddenly she could speak fluent English.)

The fact that Jane's mother tongue was not Indonesian but English then became a big problem and was a big concern for the family, especially Kate, who mainly communicated with the Jane's teacher (Excerpt 7). She was surprised and stressed because Jane used English all the time at school (Kindergarten). The fact that Jane kept on speaking English also surprised the home room teacher.

Excerpt 7.

Kate: . . . *I'm shock[ed], I'm stress[ed], Bahasa Inggris terus nih. [Jane spoke to her KG teacher] I want [to] pee. I want [to] drink. I want [to] eat. I want this, I want this. Guru juga agak ini [kaget], [dia tanya ke saya] kok [Jane pakai] Bahasa Inggris terus, Bu. . . .*

(. . . I was shocked. I was stressed because Jane used English all the time. [Jane said to her teacher] I want to pee. I want to drink. I want to eat. I want this. I want this. The teacher was surprised, too, [so she asked me] why does Jane use English all the time?)

At home, because Jane spoke English all the time, the parents always translated their Indonesian utterances into English when they spoke to Jane. As Indonesian is the primary language in the house, Jane's older siblings repeatedly asked her to use Indonesian with them and their visiting friends. They even sometimes scolded her (they did not want to talk and play with her) if she used English. They wanted their youngest sibling to be like them, able to speak (not just listen to) in Indonesian language. Yet, interestingly, the dominant use of Indonesian in the family did not hinder Jane from acquiring English as her mother tongue.

Given the high exposure to Disney Channel films, Jane was the only one who was fluent in English. The high exposure to the television programs which Jane watched every day seems to support Rodgers and Webb's (2011) claim on the potential incidental language learning from watching particular television series and Rodgers' (2018) claim of the relationship between television images and the prospective learning of unfamiliar words in English as experienced by Jane. The findings also support research by Poštič (2015) and Prosic-Santovac (2017): cartoon movies shown on TV can be the main source of English incidental learning because of the circumstance at home "where television use is pervasive, part of a routine, and available during regular periods of time" (Linebarger & Walker, 2005, p. 638) and the programs that provide "content [that] should be appealing to children themselves" (Prosic-Santovac, 2017, p. 583), as well as oral input available in the dialogs between the characters in television movies (Curtis, 2015) that were extensively heard by Jane (Webb, 2015) before she entered school. Karl and Kate admitted that they did not want Jane to be able to be fluent English and not in Indonesian because they had planned to send her to a national school. In other words, Jane's fluency in English was a consequence of the incidental learning from TV movies and it was unexpected because they preferred that Jane speak both Indonesian and English fluently.

What Are the Likely Effects of Jane's Incidental English Learning at School?

Jane's incidental learning of English, which was seen first by the family as extraordinary and unusual, turned out to be problematic. Because Jane was sent to the same national school as her siblings (School Y) despite the fact that she spoke only English and could not speak Indonesian at all, there were unpredictable consequences. First, she did not completely understand her teachers and friends and the latter two did not understand her either. The monolingual situation made it hard for Jane to communicate with everyone at school. Consequently, there were some communication problems. For instance, Jane was not able to do all the classroom tasks properly. In addition, she did not have many friends at school because she did not understand what her classmates said to her, and neither did they comprehend her. The teacher was often impatient with her, too (Excerpt 8).

Excerpt 8.

Kate: . . . *pas dia [Jane] masuk TK, dia agak stress . . . nggak punya teman . . . sampai dia nangis . . . . [Jane bilang] they don't want to play with me. I have no friend. My teacher is bad you know? She is always angry, angry, angry with me.*

(When Jane entered KG, she was a bit stressful . . . she did not have any friends . . . that made her cry . . . [Jane said] they don't want to play with me. I have no friends. My teacher is bad you know? She is always angry, angry, angry with me.)

As Skutnabb-Kangas (2015) pointed out, monolingualism (the situation in which being able to speak and write in Indonesian is a must) in School Y is a condition that is seen as normal for all students, including for Jane who could not speak Indonesian and had to learn the language (it should be noted that School Y did not provide a bilingual teacher to help Jane learn Indonesian through English). Such a circumstance, according to Skutnabb-

Kangas, exemplifies structural linguicism because School Y put Jane in a situation where she had to learn the dominant language at the cost of the English language she had first acquired. That can be seen from the advice given by Lea (a pseudonym), the psychologist working in the school, who invited Kate to talk about Jane (Excerpt 9).

Excerpt 9.

Kate: . . . *Mulai dari hari ini Bu Lea mau melihat Jane selama ini dua bulan perkembangan[nya] . . . masalahnya kalau [Jane] mulai bicara [dalam] Bahasa Indonesia selesai bicara Bahasa Inggris. Atau . . . [ketika Jane] mulai [bicara dalam] Bahasa Inggris selesai [bicara dalam] Bahasa Indonesia. Nah dari situ Bu Lea bilang tolong hindari[kan] dia dari YouTube atau semua [tontonan] [ber]Bahasa Inggris yang [film] kartun . . . Pokoknya . . . dia harus menonton, mendengar semua [dalam] Bahasa Indonesia. Supaya dia lebih bisa mengerti [menggunakan Bahasa Indonesia]*.

(. . . Starting today, Ms. Lea would like to observe [Jane's] development . . . the problem is when she starts to speak [in] Indonesian, she ends it in English. Or . . . . [when] she starts to talk in English, she finishes it in Indonesian. Therefore, Ms. Lea would like to ask me to keep Jane away from YouTube or all [shows] in English, including the English cartoon [movies] . . . the point is . . . Jane has to watch and hear everything [in] Indonesian so that she will understand [using Indonesian language].

Second, Jane felt depressed at school, particularly when she was in the first grade. When she entered the first grade, she was shocked. The way the teacher taught her was different from that at kindergarten. The learning material was also different and much more difficult for her. Hence, every time she came home from school, she looked tired and unhappy (Excerpt 10). In addition, she always got a zero for her school work during the initial semester. Because of that, Kate made Jane study in the afternoon after she took a nap. At first, it was interesting for Jane, but along the way, as there were more lessons, it became more difficult for her. She became more stressed because most of the time she could not finish her school work, e.g., the exercises or note-taking and she had to continue doing the school work at home (guided by Kate), not to mention the homework assigned by the teacher.

Excerpt 10.

Kate: . . . *Pas dia masuk semester 1 [Jane] agak kaget [with the lessons] . . . pulang sekolah udah gak bisa apa-apa. [Jane] Cuma [bisa] makan dan tidur. Tidur sampai jam 5, [lalu] bangun, kita mulai baca-baca [bahan pelajaran] sedikit. Pertama itu interesting, tapi makin banyak [bahan] pelajaran . . . dia makin stress karena dia . . . kaget.*

(. . . When Jane was in the first semester of the first grade, [she] was surprised with the lessons . . . [she] could not do anything when she got home . . . She could only eat and sleep. [She] slept until five in the afternoon, and [then] she got up and we read her [lessons] a little. At first, it was interesting, but the more [lessons] she got, the more stressed she became).

Third, Jane lost much of her leisure at home because she had to join *peltam* (an acronym for *pelajaran tambahan*, literally translated as *additional lessons*), a school extra-curricular weekly activity in which the teacher repeats the lesson given during school hours and gives additional activities to specific students who are asked to join the program. Besides joining *peltam*, since she was in kindergarten, Jane also joined *bimbel* (an acronym for *bimbingan belajar*, literally translated as *study guidance*) that gives the participants a reinforcement of the school lessons and is not organized by the school. The *peltam* and *bimbel* were held in the afternoon on different days. The decision to join the two came after the homeroom teacher's advice.

Regardless of Jane's hard effort to learn both Indonesian and the subject content in Indonesian at the same time at school, at home, as well as through peltam and bimbel, her scores at school only improved slowly. Consequently, she was considered to be unable to achieve the learning objectives set by School Y. However, the low scores may not be related to Jane's intelligence, but rather her Indonesian language inability. In general, intelligence is "a construct reflecting individual differences in cognitive abilities underlying various skills and

behaviors such as educational and occupational success" (Hindes, Schoenberg, & Saklofske, 2011). The homeroom teacher told Kate that she knew Jane's problem was not her intelligence. The teacher's statement was in line with Jane's Intelligent Quotient (IQ) score of 101 by a licensed training and consulting agency "Lines" (pseudonym) on April 27, 2017, and the psychologist's examination (Excerpt 9).

Finally, and most importantly, despite her extra and hard effort, Jane received an unfair treatment by School Y. She was viewed as having inadequate ability because of the language she did not speak. She was also stigmatized as a weak student (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2015) because of the low scores in almost all her lessons (except English). The worst thing that happened to Jane was that School Y made her fail her first and second grades based solely on the fact that the average scores for three subjects (Indonesian, Religion, and Civics) were below the minimal scores set by the school (termed as *KKM* or *Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal* in the Indonesian education system). Furthermore, School Y made Karl and Kate decide to move Jane to another school because they wanted Jane to move to the third grade. The parents then moved her to School Z, which is far from their house.

The above-mentioned evidence may indicate that the School Y board neglected Jane's intellectual potential (based on her IQ test score). The school seemed to ignore the homeroom teacher's as well as the school psychologist's statements that Jane's problem was not her intelligence but the fact that she had to learn Indonesian at the same time as learning the subject content at school. The school may miss an important fact: they did not give Jane what she deserved as a student of the school, i.e., the assistance she needed to solve her language problem. For instance, the school could have provided a bilingual teacher (who can speak Indonesian and English) to help Jane make a transition from English to Indonesian or allowed her to use English to learn Indonesian and other subject-content. What Jane experienced was also shared by the children speaking minority languages in US primary schools who received "punishments" because of their bilingual or multilingual backgrounds (Murillo & Smith, 2011) or because of their foreign background (Hinnerich, Höglin, & Johannesson, 2015). Interestingly, in Jane's case, English is not a minority language. It is a foreign language that has no official status, but it has gained a prestigious role in Indonesian society (Lie, 2017).

Jane's case can show that the incidental learning of English at home amidst the other home languages may take place through regular exposure to television programs including children's shows, which can indicate comprehensible input during the learning process (Krashen, 1982). That lends support to the claim that television programs, particularly children's movies with attractive colorful moving images as well as interactive dialogs and songs can be a valuable source for learning a language incidentally (Rodgers, 2018; Prosic-Santovac, 2017). The study also found that the subject's incidental learning of English which was not parallel to that of Indonesian language, the language instruction at her school, made her suffer from unfairness by the school.

Conclusion

The above findings lead to two conclusions. First, for children, television shows can prove to be a powerful source for acquiring a language, be it the first or second language(s) and its culture even when they are least expected to be an effective language learning source for very young children. Yet, more research is necessary to gain a complete understanding of the phenomenon of incidental English language acquisition for Indonesian children which is still under investigation. Second, while in many schools an ability to speak fluent English is commonly appreciated and has been made a requirement to attend private educational institutions, School Y did not value Jane's spoken English fluency as her personal asset. To the school, her fluent English was invisible (Dobinson & Mercieca, 2020) and was seen as a hindrance to the learning of other subjects and achieving the set standard scores. School Y seemed to have a superficial view on learning, in which learning is not a process, but an outcome manifested in the standard scores.

The study has several pedagogical recommendations related to Jane's case. School Y and other schools should establish and implement several policies concerning a student like Jane. First, it should provide a bilingual teacher once it decides to admit her/him. The school should not forbid the use of English because children learn best in the language they know. The school needs to embrace all the competencies that students bring to the classroom, including all the languages they speak before they attend school as an asset, not a barrier to the formal learning at school. In the context of English learning, Colombo, Tigert, and Leider (2019) suggested the notion of an *emergent bilingual learner* for English learners with all their language competencies acquired or learned at home, which may also fit in the case of Jane. In learning Indonesian as her second language in an Indonesian school, she

should be positioned as an emergent bilingual learner as well, particularly because her right to an education is stipulated in the laws.

Second, the school and the teachers should act as agents of change who are prepared to adjust to the rapid changes happening around them, including making adjustments when teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students in dynamic contexts of teaching and learning which may be unexpected and unlearned during the teacher's education program (Wong, Athanases, & Banes, 2020). The two parties, schools and teachers, need to put themselves in the student's position when learning a second language (for Jane's case, Indonesian language) and be ready with resources or methods to facilitate learning.

Third, teacher training programs should provide special training for in-service teachers to learn to teach students who do not speak Indonesian language (cf. Liggett, 2008), so that they can have a wider perspective and reflective experiences in their teaching methods and practices. Liggert's study has demonstrated that being in the place of non-Spanish speakers in front of the Spanish-speaking students, the pre-service teachers were able to feel what it was like struggling to understand and be understood by the students.

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