

Contrastive Analysis of Indonesian and Sundanese Verbs in Sundanese-Indonesian Bilingual Children's Speech

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the differences and similarities of verbs in Indonesian and Sundanese as used by Sundanese-Indonesian bilingual children. This research is motivated by the phenomenon of alternating use of two languages by children in daily community activities. In this study, a qualitative descriptive method was applied through an observational approach through the techniques of listening, seeing, engaged, and taking notes. From the results of the study, it can be seen that children tend to use Indonesian verbs in formal contexts such as at school, while Sundanese verbs are more dominant in family or local community interactions. There were also morphological differences, such as in the basic form and affix, as well as the phenomenon of code mixing and code switching in their speech. These findings suggest that language choice is influenced by social context and emotional proximity. This research is important for the preservation of regional languages and the development of bilingual teaching materials that are relevant to the socio-linguistic environment of children.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Several previous studies have explored aspects of contrastive linguistic analysis and bilingual language acquisition. Melati (2023) conducted a micro linguistic contrastive analysis of reduplication processes in Indonesian and Sundanese, identifying differences in reduplication types such as *dwilingga*, *dwipurwa*, and *dwimadya*. Meanwhile, Hia et al. (2025) analyzed bilingual language development in early childhood, focusing on how children acquire language in families that speak both regional languages and Indonesian, highlighting the influence of environment and parental role. Furthermore, Lathifah and Riansi (2024) examined morphological and sociolinguistic aspects of personal pronouns in English and the Pandeglang Banten dialect, emphasizing the role of age and social context in language use. However, these studies have not yet explored verb usage specifically in the context of bilingual children's spontaneous speech. This study seeks to fill that gap by analyzing how Sundanese-Indonesian bilingual children use and alternate verbs in their daily interactions.

Regional languages have a significant role in the nation's culture because they are passed down from generation to generation and are the main way of communicating in the local area. Even though formal schools use Indonesian, Indonesians also learn this national language unofficially in their daily lives. As a result, many Indonesians have become bilingual, namely able to use the regional language as the main language and Indonesian as the national language. One of the regional languages that is widely spoken and has an important role is Sundanese.

Among its many uses, Sundanese serves as a representation of local identity, a means of communication in the family and community, a language of instruction in elementary schools, and a mass communication medium as well as the promotion of local culture. In the context of the development and expansion of the Indonesian language, the function of regional languages cannot be ignored. Regional languages have a significant impact on the evolution of vocabulary, structure, and oral culture in national languages. Therefore, the maintenance, preservation, and promotion of regional languages is part of a strategic plan to strengthen the Indonesian language and foster a greater sense of national identity.

This research is motivated by the fact that children involve switching between Indonesian and Sundanese in their daily lives. Their speech is an interesting material to be studied linguistically, especially in the verb aspect. The researcher is interested in studying and comparing the forms and functions of verbs in the two languages through a contrastive analysis approach. This approach is considered appropriate because it aims to identify similarities and structural differences between the two languages. According to Tarigan (1997), contrastive analysis aims to compare two languages to identify potential language errors and help in the preparation of teaching materials more efficiently. James (1998) emphasizes that there are two main stages in contrastive analysis, namely description and comparison, which allow for systematic structural assessment.

In practice, many Sundanese-Indonesian bilingual children experience interference or mixing of language systems, especially in the use of verbs and derivative forms such as reduplication. Reduplication itself is an important morphological process that produces complex words through the repetition of basic forms. According to Melati (2023), several forms of reduplication are known in Sundanese such as *dwilingga*, *dwipurwa*, *dwimadya*, and *trilingga*, which do not all have direct equivalents in Indonesian. Therefore, contrastive analysis is important to uncover the differences and equality of meaning in the use of verbs and the reformation of the two languages.

According to Saryono and Soedjito (2020:3), vocabulary refers to the collection of words that exist in a language. The Indonesian Dictionary Sentence Edition records 127. 036 vocabulary. The relationship between Indonesian and regional languages and foreign languages can enrich vocabulary in Indonesian. Both types of languages contribute to the development of our national language. Meanwhile, Guntur (2011:3) stated that basic vocabulary is words that tend to remain fixed and are rarely taken from other languages.

Vocabulary in Indonesian covers various areas of daily life. In the family realm, there are words such as parents (father and mother), children, siblings such as brothers and sisters, and other family members such as grandmothers, uncles, aunts, daughters-in-law, and in-laws. In addition, the names of parts of the human body are also important vocabulary, such as head, hair, eyes, ears, nose, mouth, lips, teeth, tongue, chin, shoulders, hands, fingers, chest, abdomen, waist, thighs, feet, calves, soles of feet, back, blood, and breath. Pronouns and pointers are also often used, including I, you, he, us, us, them, as well as pointer words like this, that, here, there, and there. In terms of numbers, the Indonesian language knows basic numbers such as one to ten, the number of dozens such as eleven and twelve, the number of tens such as twenty, as well as the number of hundreds, thousands, and millions, such as one hundred, two hundred, thousand, two thousand, a million, and two million. Basic working vocabulary that is often used in daily life includes eating, drinking, sleeping, waking, talking, seeing, hearing, walking, working, taking, catching, and running. Meanwhile, basic adjectives describing a condition or feeling include happy, sad, hungry, full, healthy, sick, clean, dirty, far, near, fast, slow, big, small, many, little, light, dark, day, night, diligent, lazy, rich, poor, old, young, alive, and dead. No less important, general vocabulary related to natural objects and living things also often appear, such as earth, water, fire, air, sky, moon, stars, sun, animals, and plants.

Although previous studies have examined morphological features (such as reduplication), language development in bilingual families, and sociolinguistic elements like personal pronouns, none of them focused on the verb usage patterns in spontaneous speech among bilingual Sundanese-Indonesian children. This study differs by specifically analyzing the contrastive use of Indonesian and Sundanese verbs in natural daily interactions, highlighting how social context influences code-switching and morphological variations. This approach provides a new perspective on how bilingual children navigate two linguistic systems in real-life situations.

Despite its limitations, this research continues to make important contributions to regional linguistic studies and second language education. This discovery can be used as a starting point by students, teachers, or scholars interested in learning more about Sundanese and Indonesian in the context of bilingualism. This research also shows the importance of preserving native languages through practical and scientific approaches. In addition, this analysis helps in efforts to improve the quality of language teaching, especially in the development of bilingual teaching materials that are tailored to the needs and linguistic social environment of the Indonesian people.

Taking all of this into account, this study aims to compare and contrast the structure of verbs in Sundanese and Indonesian and identify any trends in the way Sundanese-Indonesian bilingual children use certain verb forms in their natural speech. The purpose of this research is to support the preservation of the Sundanese language and make it easier for young people to learn and understand their regional languages.

2. METHODS

This study method is research that uses a descriptive method based on a qualitative approach. The implementation of the research will be carried out in May 2025. The object of this study consisted of young children and came from families who communicated using Sundanese and Indonesian. The selection of objects was carried out by the purposive sampling method, the children met certain criteria selected by the researcher as subjects who met the criteria of bilingualism in the context of their family. Data collection was carried out using the basic listening technique, namely through direct observation of children's speech in natural situations. The follow-up technique used is the captive engagement, where the role of the researcher is not limited to passive

observation alone, but also involved in conversations to obtain language data in more depth. The recording technique is also used by researchers as supporting researchers, namely recording children's speech that is relevant to the focus of the research. With direct involvement in the children's social environment, the researcher sought to understand how they use Sundanese and Indonesian both in family interactions and in communication with the same age group.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on observations of the interaction of Sundanese-Indonesian bilingual children, it was found that various verbs used in the two languages were grouped into daily activities, expressing emotions, and instruction. Children tend to use Indonesian verbs in formal situations, such as at school and with peers from diverse ethnic backgrounds. On the other hand, Sundanese verbs are more often used in the family environment and local communities, especially in communication with parents or grandparents who have lived in the area for a long time.

Morphological differences are also seen, for example the verbs "makan" in Indonesian and "emam" in Sundanese, as well as the form of commands that are not similar according to the level of politeness. In terms of everyday conversation, bilingual children often mix two languages, either through code switching or code mixing. This study revealed that language and verb choice is influenced by social context, communication situations, and emotional closeness, in accordance with the theory of the division of language functions in bilingual societies (Fishman, 1972). This finding is important for the preservation of the Sundanese language and the development of regional language teaching materials, especially in the Banten area located in Pandeglang Regency which is relevant to the lives of today's children.

Based on the results of the study, it was found that the pattern of language function use varied depending on the situation or domain of certain language use. This is in line with Fishman's (1972) view of bilingualism in society, which states that the use of language by bilingual speakers is greatly influenced by the context and interlocutor. From a morphological perspective, there are significant differences between verbs in Indonesian and Sundanese, both in their basic form and in the way they are added. For example, the verb "eat" in Indonesian is equivalent to "Emam" in Sundanese which is in the Banten area of Pandeglang Regency. However, when giving instructions, Indonesian uses "makanlah" while Sundanese uses "emam atuh" or "emam heula".

These results support the opinion of Tarigan (1988) that comparative analysis can reveal potential disruptions when learning a second language. Children who are fluent in two languages tend to mix verbs if they don't find the right equivalent in a speaking situation. These findings are crucial for preserving local languages. By analyzing usage patterns and changes in verb vocabulary, researchers can contribute to teaching Sundanese language that is more relevant to the younger generation.

Table 1. The Difference Between Indonesian and Sundanese in Bilingual Children

Indonesia	Sundanese
Play	<i>Ulin</i>
Eat	<i>Emam</i>
Run	<i>Lumpat</i>
Drink	<i>Nginum</i>
Meals	<i>Babacakan</i>
Bite	<i>Ngegel</i>
Hide	<i>Nyumput</i>
Bathe	<i>Ibak</i>
Sit	<i>Calik</i>
Sleep	<i>Sare</i>

Data 1 word 'main'

Indonesian Language
*"Let's **play** Football"*

Sundanese
*"Hayu **ulin** sepak bola"*

Data 2 words 'eat'

Indonesian Language
*"He was **eating** fried rice"*

Sundanese

“Manehna keur **emam** sangu goreng”

Data 3 words 'run'

Indonesian Language
*"The kid **ran** very fast"*

Sundanese
*"Budak eta **lumpat** meuni gancangna"*

Data of 4 words 'drink'

Indonesian Language
*"I want to **drink** water"*

Sundanese
*"Abdi hayang **nginum** cai"*

Data on the 5 words 'eating'

Indonesian Language
*"We are **having dinner** with our family"*

Sundanese
*"Urang keur **babakan** jeung kaluarga"*

Data 6 words 'biting'

Indonesian Language
*"The cat likes to **bite**"*

Sundanese
*"Kucing eta resep **ngegel**"*

Data 7 words 'play'

Indonesian Language
*"Children hide while **playing** hide and seek"*

Sundanese
*"Barudak nyumput keur **ulin** ucing sumput"*

Data 8 words 'bath'

Indonesian Language
*"Every morning I **take a shower** before school"*

Sundanese
*"Unggal isuk abdi **ibak** sateuacan sakola"*

Data of 9 words 'sit'

Indonesian Language
*"Please **sit** here"*

Sundanese
*"Mangga **calik** di dieu"*

Data 10 words 'sleep'

Indonesian Language
*"I've been **sleeping** since last night"*

Sundanese
*"Abdi teh geus **sare** ti peuting kamari"*

In the results of observations of the speech of Sundanese-Indonesian bilingual children, it appears that they use verbs in both languages alternately depending on the situation and the interlocutor. For example, the

word 'main' in Indonesian is usually used when playing with friends at school, while when at home or with family, they prefer the word 'ulin'. Although the meaning of the two words is the same, namely 'play', the social context greatly influences the choice of words used by them. The same thing also happens with the use of the word 'eating'. In Indonesian, children call it 'makan', but in a family environment that is thicker with local nuances, they call it 'emam'. The use of 'emam' is also inseparable from hereditary habits and forms of communication that are considered more familiar and relaxed. In fact, when giving orders, parents or grandparents often use expressions such as 'emam atuh' or 'emam heula', which feel softer and friendlier than 'makanlah' in Indonesian.

Then, for verbs such as 'run', children use the word 'lumpat' when they are playing in the home or village environment. This word feels more natural in everyday conversation in Sundanese. Meanwhile, they use the word 'run' when they are in the school environment or when telling stories to teachers or friends with different language origins. For simple activities such as drinking, children use the word 'nginum' in Sundanese. Although the meaning is the same, the structure of this word shows a morphological difference between Indonesian and Sundanese. The "nga-" affix in 'nginum' is a typical Sundanese form not found in Indonesian, and children often mix up the form when speaking quickly or spontaneously. One of the interesting forms is 'makan-makan' in Indonesian and 'babacakan' in Sundanese. These two words refer to eating together in a relaxed or festive atmosphere. The difference is, if the word 'eating' is formed from the repetition of basic words, the word 'babacakan' actually shows a more complex morphological process with a combination of affixes and reduplication. Children usually use this form according to who they are talking to.

Next there is the verb 'menggigit', we often see children like to bite, both their food and toys. This action is usually made unknowingly. In Sundanese, this activity is called 'ngegel'. The next activity is to hide. Which of course is very well known, especially when children play hide and seek or *ucing sumput* which is often done in villages. They love to find a place to hide so that their friends don't see them. In Sundanese, we call it *nyumput*. Then, there is one very important activity, namely bathing. Activities in the form of bathing for children are not only cleansing the body, but also a fun time, especially if they bathe together in the river. They are often difficult to take a bath with because they prefer to play. In Sundanese, 'bath' is known as *ibak*. After that, there is the verb 'sitting', the activity of sitting together often occurs in the context of educational and social interactions, such as when studying or eating together. 'Sitting' becomes a time to share stories and learn from parents or teachers. In Sundanese, 'sitting' is called 'calik'. Lastly, what is also often said is 'sleep'. After a long day of activities and play, children usually sleep soundly, sometimes in bale-bales or on a simple mattress at home. 'Sleep' is a time for them to rest and recharge. In Sundanese, sleep is called 'sare'.

4. CONCLUSION

This study shows that bilingual Sundanese-Indonesian children use Indonesian and Sundanese verbs alternately according to the social context and interlocutor. In formal situations such as at school, they tend to use Indonesian verbs. On the other hand, in the family environment or local community, they use more Sundanese verbs. There are also clear morphological differences between the two languages, including in the basic form of verbs, affixes, and reduplications. These findings confirm that language choices by bilingual children are not only influenced by language skills, but also by emotional closeness, social norms, and language functions in society. Therefore, the results of this research are important to support the preservation of the Sundanese language and the development of bilingual teaching materials that are in accordance with the linguistic reality of children in the field.

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