Introduction

With the rapid growth of schools which offer English to the very young learner, what language is used as a medium of instruction is debatable especially at present (Edelenbos, Johnstone, & Kuanek, 2007). In many Indonesian communities young learners, without any prior knowledge of English, are enrolled in English pre-schools. The abrupt change from first language (mother tongue) to English instruction has created a challenging environment for both learner and teacher. Parents and care givers of these learners often put pressure on their children’s teachers by expecting their children to be fluent in English by the time they enter primary school. Meanwhile, this can create confusion for the students who are in the process of learning their first language at this age. Carrigan (2009) says students can interact effortlessly with family and friends at home, but in the new environment with new standards of conduct and communication using L2, loneliness or isolation may hinder their attempts to participate in normal school functions. He further says that the anxiety levels of English language learners can interfere with the teaching and learning progress.

In contrast, there has been another concern about language loss which may happen if the proficiency level in the first language is not maintained while acquiring the additional language (L2). Driscoll & Nagel (2002) in Carrigan (2009) agree this problem may result in the replacement of L1 with L2 which is called subtractive multilingualism. Yang (2000) concludes, if learners are taught exclusively in English and it replaces L1 completely, negative consequences are likely to occur, such as the lacking of confidence, social isolation, as well as the potential loss of identity and the feeling of belonging to a community.

Unlike adults, Harmer (1997) in Peace (2008) mentions that young learners learn a second language normally because they are being “told to” by either school systems (as in required English study) or their parents. This kind of student needs great effort on the part of
teachers to enhance learning English in a way that facilitates input and output. Thus, educators’ perspectives towards L1 and bilingual policy are often found to be strong motivators for language use. Pearson (2007) believes that negative attitudes of parents, teachers, and others in the community will detract from the value and use of the language, whereas positive attitudes will add to the value and use. The research studies have shown the beneficial effects of teachers’ positive perceptions towards bilingualism itself and the important role the teachers play in children’s bilingual language development. Silin and Schwartz (2003) research for example indicates that teachers are important to study because they are the change agents in the classrooms. Therefore this study will investigate the early young learner classroom setting and will describe the pre-school teacher’s view of bilingual policies, by answering the following question: What are the teacher’s perceptions toward bilingual policies in teaching English for the early learner?

By conducting this research, hopefully this can give a better insight on teacher’s view of the implementation of bilingual policies in Salatiga in the pre-school classroom.

**Bilingualism and its Education System and Policies**

A classic definition of bilingual education is provided by Andersson & Boyer (1970) as cited in Pacific Policy Research Center (2010):

Bilingual education is instruction in two languages and the use of those two languages as mediums of instructions for any part, or all, of the school curriculum (Andersson, Boyer, & Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 1970).

Thus, a definition is important, according Cummins & Hornberger, (2008) because “it immediately excludes programs where a second language (L2) is taught as a subject only”. They believe that bilingual program must provide both content and delivery in two languages, although bilingual programs can be somewhat various in how the languages get distributed across the curriculum. Baker and Jones (1998) in Pacific Policy Research Center (2010) state
“if there is a useful demarcation, then bilingual education may be said to start when more than one language is used to teach content (e.g. Science, mathematics, Social Sciences, or Humanities) rather than just being taught as a subject by itself”. However, there are numerous other factors that influence program choices, speaking in which Nisbet (2009) in Ball (2011) mentions that it is including political agendas, costs, teacher training, standardized testing regimes, and so forth.

According to Ball (2011), there are many common program models which are trying to approach bilingual education as described in table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother tongue-based Instruction</td>
<td>The learning program is delivered entirely in children’ L1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual education (a.k.a. ‘two-way bilingual education’)</td>
<td>Use of two languages as media of instruction. Also known as ‘dual language instruction,’ in which minority and majority language children are taught in both minority and majority languages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother tongue-based bilingual education (a.k.a. ‘developmental bilingualism’)</td>
<td>L1 is used as the primary medium of instructions for the whole of primary school while L2 is introduced as a subject of study in itself to prepare students for eventual transition to some academic subjects in L2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multilingual Education</td>
<td>Formal use of more than two languages in the curriculum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional bi/multilingual education (also called ‘bridging’)</td>
<td>The objective is a planned transition from one language of instruction to another. ‘Short cut’ or ‘early exit’ is a term given to programs that involve an abrupt transition to L2 instruction after only 2 or 3 years in school. ‘Late transition’ or ‘late exit’ refers to a switch to L2 instruction after a child has become fully fluent academically in L1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance bi/multilingual education</td>
<td>After L2 has been introduced, both (or all) chosen languages are media of instruction. L1 instruction continues, often as a subject of study, to ensure ongoing support for children to become academically proficient in L1. This is also called ‘additive bilingual education’ because one or more languages are added but do not displace L1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immersion for foreign language instruction</td>
<td>The entire education program is provided in a language that is new to the child.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submersion (a.k.a. Sink or Swim)</td>
<td>Where speakers of non-dominant languages have no choice but to receive education in languages they do not understand, the approach is commonly known as ‘submersion’ or ‘sink or swim’ (e.g., dominant language learning at the expense of L1). This approach promotes subtractive bilingualism; that is, L2 learning at the expense of L1.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As we can see from the table, most program models center largely on the degree to which the child’s L1 should be used in instruction of the curriculum. Whether it is entirely using the child’s L1 (mother tongue based Instruction), or a degree of use between the child’s L1 and L2 in giving instruction (Two way bilingual education), or more than two languages are introduced in the curriculum (Multilingual Education).

There are certain programs such as ‘Submersion’ where the children are expected to receive academic instruction based in the second language. This causes the child to be totally immersed in a language of instruction that is unknown to them. Some refer to this approach as ‘sink or swim’ because the children are mostly likely sunk in a new language as the instruction.

However, there are other programs that give priority to help children become totally fluent and literate in L1 first before shifting to L2. For instance, ‘Transition’ or ‘Bridging’ model which use L1 as the initial medium of instruction. Later, these programs gradually introducing some increasing amounts of instruction in L2, until L1 is phased out entirely.

Yet one model called ‘Maintenance’ bi/multilingual programs allows children to receive formal instruction in L1 so that it continues to develop even after they are fully immersed in L2 as the medium of instruction.

For all that, when it comes to bilingual policy, what kind of bilingual program will be used in the curriculum can be various. As some scholars note, the approach that educators say they are using often does not match what they are actually doing (Thomas and Collier, 2002). Benson (2009) thinks that some approaches cannot be referred as a proper bilingual education, for example, ‘Immersion’ because it completely ignores the children’ first language.
Bilingual learning to Early Learners

In recent years the number of early age children entering pre-school with a home language other than their L1 has considerably increased. Considering what Mehito (2009) stated that language is not only constructed socially, but it also has a ‘biocognitive’ and ‘neurocognitive’ basis. He further explains, despite the fact that young minds are particularly adept at learning; learning and changes in the brain resulted from learning, occur throughout the person’s life.

A professional discussion in the neurosciences is showing signs of an increased shift, from speaking about ‘critical periods’ when a child can learn a new skill or develop a new ability, to a discussion of a ‘sensitive period’ and the ability of people to learn throughout their lives (Howard-Jones, 2007: 8; OECD, 2007: 166) in Mehito (2009).

Other scholars like Hakuta et al. (2003: 37), for example, point out that second-language proficiency does in fact decline along with increasing age of initial exposure. Although some other studies believe that language learning is not restricted to a critical period; that late learning language people can still achieve a relatively high degree of fluency in at least two languages, it is becoming apparent that even in the initial stage of L2 learning changes occur in the brain, as stated in this following explanation:

Preliminary results from three studies indicate that classroom-based L2 instruction can result in changes in the brain’s electrical activity, in the location of this activity within the brain, and in the structure of the learners’ brains. These changes can occur during the earliest stages of L2 acquisition (Osterhout et al., 2008: 510).

Another studies done by Bialystok and Shapero (2005: 595) found that bilingual children were more successful than monolinguals in seeing other meanings in various situations. Goetz (2003:1) also notes that bilingual children show an earlier understanding that monolingual children can have false beliefs. Thus, a bilingual child has earlier access to a
wider range of interpretations of information than a monolingual child, and thus holds the potential of greater cognitive flexibility.

While experience shows that young children can learn more than one language in their early years, some other research shows that an early start does not really guarantee the eventual language fluency or permanent recall of the language. For instance, research in Spain found that, despite the same amount of instruction, bilingual students who started learning English as a second language later performed better than bilingual students who started earlier, though younger learners showed more positive attitudes towards learning English (Cenoz, 2003).

Young learners eventually caught up when they were older and could draw upon their literacy skills and metacognitive development as effective school learners. From these and similar findings, Lightbown (2008) concludes that when it comes to learning a foreign language(s), both age and intensity matter. A later age – when children are both fluent and literate in their home language—combined with more hours of exposure and formal instruction, support foreign language acquisition better than starting “drip-feed” courses earlier.

With the increasing importance of English as a global language and a vehicle of prosperity in trade, many parents want their children to learn English from an early age. However, unfortunately, research support for additive forms of bilingual education has too often been misunderstood, unwittingly or deliberately, as support for ‘short-cut’ transition programs that require children to deal with the academic curriculum in the new language before they have developed academic proficiency in their first language (Benson, 2009; Thomas & Collier, 2002).
Thus, UNESCO (2006, p. 159) suggests that the transition to a language of instruction other than the child’s L1 should not be required of students before age 6 to 8 years. Many studies have found that children in mother tongue based bilingual education (a.k.a. development) and two-way bilingual programs achieve greater proficiency in the majority language than children in transitional bilingual programs or majority-language only program (e.g. Lindholm, 2001; Thomas & Collier, 2002, Ball, 2011). These findings clearly provide more evidence that, continued development of L1 in mother tongue based bilingual program scaffolds the development of competency, especially literacy, in L2, as Cummins (2003) hypothesized.

For some young learners, L2 instruction in an early childhood program may be limited to playful activities involving few words, songs or games in L2 as a small part of the program, while for others L2 may be the medium through which the program is delivered. Lightbown (2008) explains that young children’s L2 acquisition is better acquired in informal program settings and in daily routines than in formal instructional settings. They further explain that young children (under about the age of 8 years) do not learn a second language in the same way that older children and adults learn a second language. The way children learn the second language learning will vary depending on how much they have developed literacy in their first language. Individual character’s differences among infants and young children tend to be great and it is important for early childhood practitioners to observe and informally assess each child because it can be significant for their language learning.

**Bilingual Policies in Indonesia**

At a policy level, many Asian countries see education in more than one language as an instrument of social policy (promoting social unity and racial harmony) and as a vehicle for developing characteristics such as respect and empathy that the governments want to see in
their young people (Nisbet, 2009 in Ball, 2010). Though, a young scholar like Tsui (2009) clearly states it is essential to keep in mind that learning a foreign language is about a way of being in the world, not about getting the next deal done.

Indonesia is a country of linguistic richness and diversity which has finally declared Indonesian Language as the lingua franca of Indonesia in the 1928 Youth Pledge, long before the declaration of independence in 1945. It is also the compulsory language of educational instruction at all levels of education in Indonesia to bridge the problem that most of the Indonesian population speaks languages other than Indonesian language as their mother tongue.

A clear mandate related to English bilingual education projects emerged with the establishment of the 2003 Act No 20 of the National Education System chapter XIV, article 50 (3) which states “The central government and or the local government establishes at least one unit in each educational level to be developed as an international standard class”. As a follow up to the government act, some researchs about the use of English in teaching science and mathematics were conducted in 2004. Also, several pilot schools, so called International Standard School (Sekolah Bertaraf Internasional/ SBI), were established (Bax, 2010). Implementing The Minister of National Education decree No 23/2006, which states that an international standard class should be based on ICT assisted learning and English is used as the language of instruction for math and science. These laws are established on the ground of cultural capital belief and the global market issues which urge people to increase their competitive values by mastering subjects such as Science, Math, and Computer in English.
English Bilingual Education Challenges in Indonesia

Although getting support from government policy, there are at least four problems appeared in implementing bilingual education in Indonesia. First, dealing with the unprepared teaching staff who delivers the content subject in English (Zaenuri, 2007; Fatmawati, 2011; Perkasa, 2011). Hapsari (2012) believes that Indonesian teachers who teach specific subjects in English as the language of instruction in the classroom should have both appropriate language proficiency and register mastery in order to deliver the content of the subject properly. Supported by Coyle, Hood & Marsh (2010), she believes that a teacher who teaches a specific subject e.g. Mathematic, should have mastered in “language of learning” (such as: adjacent, column), “language for learning” (such as: divide, times, estimate), and “language through learning” (the language to negotiate the meaning in the learning process, such as: share, altogether, join). Cummins (1979) as cited in Baker (2011) found that it takes at least two years to master everyday conversational language while it could take five to seven years to develop the more advanced language abilities to deal with the curriculum.

Second, problems arise considering the status of English as a foreign language (EFL) in Indonesia. The official language in Indonesia is Indonesian language but on the other hand, people in Indonesia use their regional languages which are very diverse and rich for daily conversation. Therefore, before the establishment of the 2003 Act No 20, English only has a place as a subject in the curriculum and is not widely used in society. As a result the implementation of bilingual policy faces challenges in communication and cognition aspects. In a class for example, the regional languages or Indonesian language may be used as the language of instruction to teach English and after class everyone speaks their regional or national language again. Then, after the first three years of primary school, students are expected to be fluent in English. So, the students might have learned all the vocabulary and
grammar but there weren’t enough opportunities around them outside of class to implement what they have learned.

Third, what normally matters in implementing English in a bilingual education project in Indonesia is, the tasks are often adapted from materials which are based on Singaporean, Australian or Cambridge curriculum (Gower, 2002). In adapting the material, teachers often forget that students in Indonesia are in a different context in the exposure to English than the student in Singapore or Australia. The students in these countries, where the Cambridge curriculum is intended for, use English as their first or second language. Therefore, most students in Indonesia might find the tasks not doable. Gajo (2007) argues that these students have too much cognitive input from language and content without developing the ability to link the content and language.

The fourth issue is that the tasks in international standard class are still in Indonesian (Zaenuri, 2007; Bax, 2010). This creates mismatching between what the students have learned in the classrooms, in which English is used as the language of instruction, with what is examined in the assessment. Thus, it will create confusion about how to present their cognitive input in different discourse competence. Hapsari (2012) believes that adapting curriculum from abroad without considering the students’ ability and appropriate teachers’ training will lead to failure in developing the students’ cognitive/academic language proficiency (CALP).

Despite of these facts, there has been a rapid growing demand in big cities to teach English at an early age such as from the lower grades of primary schools and even from kindergarten or pre-school. As mentioned earlier, Bialystok and Shapero (2005) have pointed out that ‘bilingual children were more successful than monolinguals in seeing other meanings in the images’. As a result then, a bilingual holds the potential of greater cognitive flexibility.
This also suggests that being bilingual can help foster learning in all school subjects. It also implies that policy makers should consider various ways of fostering early bilingualism, by supporting home language development for those who are already bilingual, and by offering more early provision of bilingual education (Mehito, 2009).

**Context**

The purpose of this study is to get a clearer picture of what teachers perceive the implementation of bilingual policies in teaching English to early young learners. This study were conducted in four pre-schools in Salatiga; Bethany School, Little Steps, Satya Wacana Children Center (SWCC) and Apple Kids. Those schools were chosen because they use two languages to their students.

**Participants**

The subjects of this study were twelve teachers who teach in two languages for preschoolers at four bilingual pre-schools in Salatiga; Bethany School, Little Steps, Satya Wacana Children Centre (SWCC) and Apple Kids. The teachers were selected based on the theory which says that sampling in qualitative research usually relies on small numbers with the aim of studying in depth and detail (Tuckett, 2004 in Setiawan, 2013). Thus, the researcher chooses the teachers due to the length of their bilingual teaching experience for early learners, teachers who teach early young learners only and also their availability to be interviewed. There is no minimum requirement for the length of experience. The researcher asked the teacher’s length of experience was just out of curiosity to see if it is somehow relating to the way they teach. To maintain the confidentiality, the teachers’ names remain anonymous in this study. Table 2 provides demographic data on the teachers involved in this study.
Table 2. Demographic of Teachers in the Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age (years old)</th>
<th>Education Background</th>
<th>Experience (years)</th>
<th>Level of Students’ Age (years old)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Little Steps</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>ED</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.5 – 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>ED</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.5 - 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>K</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>TC</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3 – 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apple Kids</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>ED</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 – 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satya Wacana Children Center</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>ED</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5 – 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>ED</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4 - 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>ED</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4 - 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>TC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3 - 3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethany School</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>LD</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2 – 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>TC</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5 - 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>TC</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4 - 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>ED</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2 – 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: ED – English Department; TC – Teacher College/Department; LD – Literature Department

Most of the teachers who were interviewed saying that they teach toddlers stage or playgroup age which is around 1.5 – 4 years old. Only four teachers in two schools teach 4-6 years old students. It is also found that almost all teachers have teaching background, mostly are in English and Indonesian. Even though there is no requirement to differentiate the gender of the participants, but it is intriguing finding that most of these teachers are also female. There was only one male teacher out of 12 participants.

Data Collection Instruments

The type of interview employed in this study was a semi-structured interview which consists of 10 (ten) questions. This study used semi-structured interview because it allowed the researcher to question the participants for additional information in response to interesting or important answers that came out unexpectedly from the planned questions. All questions were intended to learn the teacher’s perception on bilingual policies in teaching English to early young learners.
Data collection procedure

For a week at the beginning, there was a piloting interview to check whether or not the questions were understandable. There were two teachers interviewed at the piloting interview and the results from piloting interview were used to revise the questions for the next real interview. After that, the real interviews were conducted after being revised. All the teacher participants are named alphabetically and classified according to the schools where they teach at. The interview process itself took 4 weeks because the researcher had to adjust with the teacher’s schedule. The length of each interview was various as presented in table 3.

Table 3. The Length of Interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Duration of the Interview (minutes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Little Steps</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>17:23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J</td>
<td>19:12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>K</td>
<td>22:02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apple Kids</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>15:57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satya Wacana Children Center</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>24:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E</td>
<td>23:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>14:57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
<td>16:23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethany School</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>19:12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>16:07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I</td>
<td>20:23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L</td>
<td>18:13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the table above, we can see the longest interview took 24:3 (24 minutes) and the shortest one took around 14:57 (15 minutes). The gap in between only takes 10 minutes.

Data Analysis Procedure

The interview results were transcribed, categorized, interpreted, and then classified to answer the research questions. All interview results were analyzed in steps. First, after transcribing the interview, the researcher put the result of the interview into categories. The category system used was the emerging category system. In other words, the researcher established the category system during and after data collection process. Second, the results from the interviews were presented in a condensed body of information and interpretation.
And finally, the results of teachers’ perceptions about bilingual policies in teaching English for early learners were classified into several emerging themes.

**Result and Findings**

**Teachers’ positive perceptions regarding bilingual policy in teaching English to early learners**

All participants were asked to express their perceptions of the policy to teach two languages to students at very young age. The data revealed that almost all of them found it beneficial to teach children the languages while they were young. For instance, Teacher C, F and H mentioned how learning more than one language could help enriching the students’ language skills. They said:

“Keuntungannya kembali ke anak, bisa belajar berkomunikasi selain dari mother tongue…Menurut saya, anak usia 2-6 tahun, kemampuan berbahasa lagi tinggitingginya, jadi tidak ada masalah kalau mereka belajar lebih dari satu bahasa. Kalau di kelas saya, mereka lebih sering menggunakan Bahasa Inggris untuk melakukan perintah sederhana. Semakin sering bahasa dipakai, semakin cepat berkembang.”

(Guru F)

“The benefit goes back to the child, he is able to communicate using language other than mother tongue….Personally, I think the language-learning ability for children around 2-6 years old is at its ‘golden age’. So it is not a problem if they learn more than one language. In my class they use English to give simple instructions more often. More often they use the language, the faster their language skill’s develops”

(teacher F)

It is found that many of these teachers perceive that the younger the student start learning a language, the better. There have been some scholars who agree with this, such as Hakuta et al. (2003: 37) in Mehito (2009) who points out that ‘second-language proficiency does in fact decline with increasing age of initial exposure’. So it explains that there is a time what Howard-Jones called as ‘critical periods’ when a child can learn a new skill or develop a new ability or what Teacher F referred as ‘golden age’ throughout these children’ lives.

Teacher H explains further why being able to speak in more than one language is beneficial. She explained:
“Anak yang bisa lebih dari satu bahasa biasanya lebih komunikatif, suka berbicara, dan bercerita, kemampuan bahasanya menonjol.” (Guru H)
“A child who can speak more than one language normally will tend to be more communicative, like to tell stories and his language ability stands out” (teacher H)

This finding supports what Goetz (2003) says that a bilingual child has earlier access to a wider range of interpretations of information than a monolingual child, and thus holds the potential of greater cognitive flexibility. Another benefit found in this study is that learning English besides Indonesian language can help boosting the children’ confidence. Like Teacher A said:

“Anak-anak jadi pede pakai bahasa Inggris di rumah, meskipun belajar pelan-pelan. Biasanya maminya ntar yang jadi murid, sementara anak-anak pada imitate guru.” (Guru A)
“Children will be confident using English at home, although they are slowly learning it. Normally their mothers became the students while the children were imitating their teachers.” (Teacher A)

This finding is contrast with what Carrigan (2009) concerns that the anxiety levels of English language learner can interfere with the teaching and learning progress. Over more, not only it is beneficial for the children, teacher E stated that teachers also feel confidence if their students know some vocabularies in English. She said:

“Meskipun usia lebih muda, dia berbicara inggris bagus, semakin dini diekspos dengan Bahasa Inggris dan difollow up oleh ortu, maka si anak cepat berkembang. Ada rasa ‘pede’ kalo mereka tahu vocab.” (Guru E)
“Even though the students are way younger, they speak good English. The sooner they are exposed to the use of English, and it is followed up by the parents, then the faster these children develop their language skills. I feel confidence if they know some vocabularies.” (Teacher E)

When both students and teachers feel confidence in speaking the language, then teaching and learning progress can flow easier. This confirms what Pearson (2007) believes that positive attitudes will add to the value and use of the language. The high spirit of confidence will stimulate them to utter more words so it helps the language learning process.
Language learning process is obviously not an instant process that happens over a night, thus, there are many concerns arise in bilingual education world. One of the concerns is that children will face language confusion as they learn more than one language at such an early age. Being asked about this, one of the teachers stated that she has no worries at all about this. Teacher F said:

“kebingungan bahasa tidak pernah terjadi, mereka (anak-anak) rasa penasarannya tinggi.” (Guru F)

“Language confusion never happens by far, because their (the children) curiosity gets the better of them.” (Teacher F)

Concern like Yang (2000) mentioned earlier about the potential loss of identity and language confusion apparently is not happening in Teacher F’s school.

**Teachers’ negative perceptions regarding bilingual policy in teaching English to early learners**

However, there are some different findings found. Some of the teachers expressed some thoughts about the implementation of bilingual policy in their class. For example, teacher I strongly stated what he thinks about bilingual policy concerning the age of the students being exposed from the additional language. He stated:

“Kalau menurut saya, kurang setuju ya, penggunaan bilingual, jadi saya lebih baik mereka menggunakan satu bahasa, bahasa ibu yang digunakan, umpamanya kalau bahasa Jawa, ya bahasa Jawa; kalau bahasa Indonesia, ya bahasa Indonesia. Kalau menurut saya pribadi, karena anak-anak ini masih dalam masa perkembangan bahasa, jadi ketika mereka harus memahami beberapa bahasa sekaligus, saya takutnya fondasi atau pemahaman bahasa mereka akan kurang, jadi lemah seperti itu..” (Guru I)

“In my opinion, I don’t really agree with bilingual policy. For me, it is better if the children just use one language which is mother tongue. For example, if they want to use Javanese language, then use Javanese language only; if they want to use Indonesian language, then use Indonesian language only. Because personally I think, these children are still in developing phase of their language skills, so if they have to understand several languages all at once, I am afraid their foundation or understanding of the language is not enough, or weak.” (teacher I)

Teacher I’s perception actually goes along with what UNESCO (2006, p. 159) suggests that the transition to a language of instruction other than the child’s L1 should not be required of
students before age 6 to 8 years. And apparently not just Teacher I agreed with that, Teacher L confirmed that teacher I’s concern is actually really happening in her classroom, as she stated:

“Jangankan dalam bahasa Inggris, kadang dalam bahasa Indonesia, anak-anak juga belum bisa langsung mengerti apa yang diminta….” (Guru L)
“Sometime these children still don’t understand the instructions directly in Indonesian language, let alone in English.” (Teacher L)

Unlike what happened in Teacher F’s school where there is no language confusion and loss as Yang (2000) concerned happening there, Teacher B stated her concerns about language loss as she said:

“Ada kalanya khawatir mereka (anak-anak) akan melupakan bahasa Indonesia…”
(Guru B)
“There are times when we are worried that the children will forget their Indonesian language” (teacher B)

Like sound similar to what Driscoll & Nagel (2002) in Carrigan (2009) mention that maybe happening as a result of the replacement of L1 with L2. In another school, Teacher G explains her perception further why children should develop their mother tongue first before learning other languages. She said:

“Saya justru lebih suka kalau si anak belajar bahasa lokal terlebih dahulu, kemudian bahasa Indonesia, itu menolong dia agar dia bisa bertahan hidup di lingkungannya.”
“I actually prefer if children learn their local language first then Indonesian language because this can help them to survive in their environment”

This concern actually is understandable, considering the status of English as a foreign language (EFL) in Indonesia. So, the students might have learned all the vocabulary and grammar but there weren’t enough opportunities around them outside of class to implement what they have learned. Agreeing with this, when it comes to teaching, there are a lot of other details that need to consider as well in order helping the students to become a successful learner. Some teachers perceive these details as a challenge in teaching bilingual, for instance, the character of the children as well as the children’ family background. As Teacher B said:
“Mengajar dwibahasa itu complicated. Kita juga harus mengerti pribadi si anak dan background keluarga juga menentukan.” (Guru B)  
“teaching bilingual is rather complicated. We (teachers) must understand the characters of the children as well as their families’ background.” (teacher B)

One teacher who teaches toddlers admitted her concerns about parents’ involvement in helping teachers to teach the children two languages. She said:

“Untuk toddler, satu minggu cuma 3 kali pertemuan, belum tentu di rumah bahasa Inggris mereka diulang lagi. Kalau di rumah tidak ada pengulangan ya percuma aja..” (Guru L)  
“For toddlers, our sessions are just three times a week. I cannot really guarantee they will be using English again. If there is no follow up to use English at home, then everything has been taught at school is pointless.” (Teacher L)

All teachers wish a mutual teamwork between parents and teachers in order to help the students to become fully bilingual speakers. They wish that parents could help teachers to review the materials had been taught at schools, at least the vocabularies wise. But sometime this is a bit challenging as some parents don’t have enough basic in English to help the children working on their homework.

Teachers’ perception about language choice in Bilingual Policy

According to the bilingual teachers in this study, all the schools choose English and Indonesian. Most of them perceived that their schools are just trying to fulfill the demand of public. For instance, teacher I clearly mentioned his perception regarding the bilingual policy’s choice. He said:

“Semuanya ingin Bahasa Inggris dan Bahasa Indonesia, otomatis kedua bahasa itu yang harus sering digunakan” (Guru I)  
“Everyone wants to use English and Indonesians Language, surely then these two languages must be used more often” (Teacher I)

With the increasing importance of English as a global language and a vehicle of prosperity in trade, many parents want their children to learn English from an early age. Early age is normally age when children develop their first language proficiency with its linguistic awareness and cognitive ability. So, many schools and parents believe that their children can
learn other languages while they are still developing their first language proficiency at early age. This goes along what Benson (2009) says that not few schools try to offer this ‘short-cut’ transition program that require children to deal with the academic curriculum in the new language before they have developed academic proficiency in their first language.

While other teachers (D, E, F, H and J) mentioned that learning English and Indonesian Language will be helpful and required before students enter the next level of school after pre-school or kindergarten; elementary school. This perception is best represented by teacher E who stated:

“Kalau masuk SD juga tuntutannya sudah harus punya dasar, anak-anak nanti tidak kaget dengan bahasa inggris” (Guru E)

“There is a demand when students enroll for elementary school is that they have to at least have a basic knowledge of English, so they won’t be shocked with English later.” (Teacher E)

We can see how public’s demand influences the bilingual schools existence. Because there is demand from the society and situation around, many schools offer their bilingual programs. If there is no demand, then there is no bilingual school.

The teachers’ opinion about the percentage of language use and its application in classroom

Based on the teachers’ answers, it indicates that each school at least uses one of approach mentioned by Ball (2011) earlier. Teachers were asked to give their perception of how many percentages of English and Indonesian applied in their classroom according to them. The answers were various, though some of them show a clear sign of the use of language decreased or increased gradually as the age of students are changing. This is not the actual percentage of language use according to the school policies but we can see the percentage comparison of the language use according to teachers’ perceptions presented in this following table:
Table 4. The Percentage of Language Use Based on the Schools’ Bilingual Policies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Level of Students’ Age (years old)</th>
<th>The use of English (%)</th>
<th>The use of Indonesian (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Little Steps</td>
<td>1.5 - 2.5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 - 4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apple Kids</td>
<td>2 – 3</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWCC</td>
<td>2 - 3</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 - 4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 - 5</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 - 6</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethany</td>
<td>1.5 - 2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 - 3</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3 - 4</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 - 5</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 - 7</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the table we can see that some schools like Bethany School and SWCC have been applying what Ball called as “Maintenance Bilingual Education” as the instruction in L1 still continues, often as the subject of the study, to ensure ongoing support for children to become academically proficient in L1 while L2 has been introduced. This is also called ‘additive bilingual education’ because L2 is added but do not displace L1.

However, at Little Steps, as we can see, there is quiet a gap between the percentage of the language use switched from age 2-4 years old to age 4-6 years old. This system matches what Ball indicates as ‘Transitional Bilingual Education’ also known as ‘Bridging’. As they prefer the children to become fully fluent academically in L1 first before switching to L2 instructions. That is why we can find there is quiet a gap of language use in between those ages.

While the situation at Apple Kids, we can notice that it is very much mother tongue-based bilingual education or what is called ‘developmental bilingualism’ as L1 is used as the primary medium of instruction (70%) for the whole of primary school while L2 is introduced as a subject of study in itself to prepare students for eventual transition to some academic subjects in L2.
Looking at the various range of the percentage of language use applied in 4 different schools, one teacher’s view that the mother tongue-based bilingualism is better. She states:

“Saya setuju untuk penggunaan Bahasa Inggris lebih rendah daripada Bahasa Indonesia, karena Bahasa Indonesia adalah bahasa ibu. Jadi tetap menggunakan dua bahasa, instruksi dengan bahasa Inggris dulu, kemudian ada bahasa Indonesia sebagai terjemahan” (Guru G)

“I agree that we use less English than Indonesian because Indonesian language is the mother tongue. So, we still use two languages, normally with English instruction first and then there will be translation in Indonesian Language.” (Teacher G)

Though, some of them agree to use both languages, however, the percentage use of those languages should be adjusted with the children’ ability. She states:

“Saya pribadi setuju pemakaian persentase, namanya saja dwibahasa, tidak sepenuhnya satu bahasa, pemakaianinya berimbang disesuaikan dengan kemampuan anak, dimana mereka masih belajar kosakata” (Guru E)

“I personally agree with the percentage of the language use, it is indeed using two languages, it means the use of the languages should be balance adjusted to the children’ ability because they are still learning vocabularies” (Teacher E)

Researchers like Nicolas and Lightbown (2008) had explained that young children’ L2 acquisition is better acquired in informal program settings and in daily routines than in formal instructional settings. So, what Teacher E stated is understandable because young children (under about the age of 8 years) do not learn a second language in the same way that older children and adults learn a second language. That is why children’s second language learning should be vary depending on how much they have developed literacy in their first language. Individual characters’ differences among infants and young children tend to vary, such as introvert, extrovert, ambivert, etc. So, it is important for early childhood practitioners to observe and informally assess each child if they want to successfully help their students to learn the language.

Discussion and Conclusion

The result of this study shows that all teachers involved in this study have a supportive perception towards bilingual policy implementation in their schools. Finding
showed that bilingual teachers with 5-10 years of experience held more positive perceptions of their students than did teachers with less teaching experience. These teachers believe that their students are able to learn more than one language at such a young age. It is possible that extensive experience working with the students has provided these teachers the opportunity to witness that (a) the environment surrounds the students does influence the language learning process (b) a certain instructional approaches are effective (c) there is so many potentials can be explored from students at the young age. However, some teachers with less experience teaching years view that students who reach a certain level of native language proficiency tend to develop meta-linguistic awareness and cognitive ability better.

All teachers believe there should be levels of English and Indonesian Language proficiency in teaching bilinguals according to the students’ age. This finding was validated by the fact that in this study, bilingual teachers were more supportive of bilingual education and therefore, held higher personal teaching effort. This study also confirms that teachers’ level of confidence in their responsibility for positive and negative outcomes of their students is strongly related to their perceptions of these (Karabenick & Noda, 2004; Walker et al., 2004) and it will influence their students’ level of confidence.

However, even though these teachers are being supportive towards bilingual policy implementation, they mention some struggles that they are facing every single day such as (a) lack of the source of materials that are more up to date (b) lack of English speaking skill (c) there is no synchronized communication between teachers and parents (d) lack of teaching skill (like how to make the students stay engaged in class, how to deliver the materials based on the context that can be easily understood by the students.

Two limitations of this study are that it was conducted over a short period of time with a small number of teacher-participants. These were particularly important when
comparing how teachers’ perceptions towards bilingual policy in teaching English to early learners. Hence, I would recommend that this study be replicated and conducted using observation research in a longer longitudinal. Also, if a larger group of teachers had participated in this study, different results or more salient outcomes might have been found.

**Pedagogical Implementation**

It is important for learners, teachers and administrators to understand that every language is equally valuable. Teaching young learner in one language itself already require a lot of works, not to mention adding one more additional language. In order to teach more than one language, there is a lot of materials and training needed. When it comes to teaching, we should not focus only to the students, but also the teachers as they are the one who are doing all the teaching. So, it is believed to be helpful if the schools are aware of teachers’ needs in order to fulfill the students’ needs by providing special training regarding to bilingual teaching to the teachers every now and then. Teachers might need some kind of seminars so they can be more updated with the newest teaching methods and might be they could share to each other.

Another suggestion is referring to the parents of the children. It might be useful if there is a parents’ meeting held by the school so there will be coordination and clear communication between teacher, students and parents’ needs. Parents can be more helpful if they are enlightened about how can the participated to support their children becoming a successful bilingual student.
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