

Language Policy and Planning in Multilingual Countries:

A case in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh

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Abstract—The widely spread of English creates the shift and consequence to cope with the growth of development, globalized world, potential economic opportunity, and technological advancement. This paper tries to see between the language policies and planning in multilingual nations such as India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. Furthermore, this paper tries to look at how these countries arrange the ideas and implementation among their national, English and local languages in their countries. This paper summarizes and presents the articles derived from 2005-2018 dealing with language policy and planning in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. Specifically, this paper tries to (1) discuss Three Language Formula as Endeavor to Bridge Language Polemics in India, (2) describe the selection of English, Bangla and Urdu at Language Policy and Planning Level in Bangladesh and Pakistan (3) explore the implication of the Language Policy and Planning occurred in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh in Indonesian context. This paper ends up with the recommendation for Indonesian context.

Keywords—*language policy and planning; multilingual countries*

I. INTRODUCTION

The undisputable role of nowadays development raises the globalization around the world as people need to be connected everywhere and anytime. As a consequence of this, a means of communication is required to assist people relating to each other and building links. This trend triggers English nowadays widely spread to be a means of communication among people around the world as pointed out by Chowdhury and Kabir that “English is now widely accepted as having immense potential for individuals and societies” [1]. As what has been declared among the South East Asian communities that English is utilized as working language among nations within different culture, background, and language [2]. Indeed, these nations comprise English in their education policies as growing demands in reality that world today is globally linked and connected [1]. Moreover, one of considerable impacts of globalization is the growing movement in education system to employ English widely spread of English creates the shift and consequence of English as one of the language in language policy and planning level.

India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh are fruitful and varied in religions, languages, and cultures. These nations require a linked language in which facilitate to communicate and further to empower unity in huge diversity. However, the growing trend of English in globalized world poses several challenges. Firstly, widely spread of English creates anxiety toward the extinction of local languages. Next, when English is determined as medium of instruction in national educational system, the people mainly children go to an education system where the language implemented is not familiar with their daily language used; it is dissimilar with their cultural context; different teaching method that does not reflect on how they acquire knowledge from their societies, the measurement strongly lays on content curriculum and the available textbook hardly shows relationship with the children’s real life [3].

As the background elaborated in this section, this paper tries to elaborate language policy and planning in multilingual countries such as India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. Furthermore, this paper aims at (1) discussing Three Language Formula as Endeavour to Bridge Language Polemics in India, (2) describing the selection of English, Bangla and Urdu at Language Policy and Planning Level in Bangladesh and Pakistan (3) exploring the implication of the Language Policy and Planning occurred in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh in Indonesian context.

II. METHODOLOGY

This paper gathers the secondary data deriving from journal articles, government web pages, reports, books. The <https://www.tandfonline.com> and <https://www.springer.com> are deployed as search engine in collecting the secondary data in the form of journal articles primarily on language policy and planning level in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. Some keywords were selected in order to gain appropriate journal articles which matched to the topic of the paper. The keywords were *language policy in India, Bangladesh, Pakistan; language policy in multilingual context, medium of instruction in multilingual setting*. These keywords were helpful to specify the selections of articles.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Three Language Formula as an Endeavor to Bridge Language Polemics in India

As declared by Imam [4]; MacKenzie [3]; Erling, Adinolfi, Hultgren, Buckler, and Mukorera [5]; Groff [6] India is rich diverse and complex multilingual country within Hindi as its official language, English as a united language, 22 official languages and more than hundreds of additional languages identified among its 35 states and union territories, and 25 dissimilar forms of writing system. Since the diverse backgrounds and languages used in India, there is consideration from Constitution of India to select both India and English as the official languages among states and government communities while distinctive states deploy their own local languages [7]. In the same vein of this statement, India deploys Hindi at national level and aiming to be the lingua franca in India where there are many vernacular languages such as Konkani, Dogri, Tulu to name some [8].

However, the issue about globalization impacts to the high demand of English as well as its widely used in India arising from various clarifications. Documented by Dua [9] and Phillipson [10], English comes to India as the imposition of British colonial and rule hence its practice as a colonial inheritance. Another view proposed by Bénéï [11] and Friedman [12], emphasizes that modernization in technology, communication advancement, globally financial movements, and growing economic prospects have been considerable features in globalization era thus promote more Indians to learn and employ English. Contrasting from preceding justifications, King argued that the previous Indian Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru selected English as politics and policy choices initiated the reason of English broadly used in India nowadays [13]. While Kachru clarified that English subsequently persists its status since it enables to deliberate social position and economics chances for its users; this claim supported many speakers learning English as one of their alternative improvement [14].

As argued by Nault the reasons of widely spread of English and its persistence in India does not fully rest on the what have been proposed by some authors in the previous paragraph, yet it more lies on the motions of an internal aspect rather than the external movement [15]. Moreover, Nault stated that the issues concerning with ethnic political tensions during the late colonial era and early postcolonial period primarily the controversies between the Hindi-speaking North and Dravidian-speaking South direct to the denial of Hindi and approval of English as the official language among Indians in the South region [15]. As a consequence of this political conflict, the state cancelled its earliest blueprint to exclude English as an official language in the late 1960s.

While the rise of World War II has impacted to India for preparing its independence by arranging constituent for the new nation which shed a light on the outline of language policy focuses on the selection of which language is used in educational system, administration, and law courts and should be India differed into linguistics districts as well as multilingualism that causes India prefers to reform a language

policy that supports its various languages [15]. As the respect to these issues, the central government in 1950s offered a resolution in the form of Three Language Formula (TLF) as an effort to appreciate the non-Hindi speakers in the South region that they may encounter burden competed to their counterparts of Hindi speakers in the North if Hindi elected as the sole official language [15]. At the same time, the high demand of English occurring in India insisted the authority of the school system constructed the Three Language Formula [16]. As the same tone with earlier statements, Bhattacharya expressed that one of the major significant national language in education policies occurred in India was the construction of Three Language Formula (TLF) [17].

The three language formula itself was drawn in 1956 which proposes educational system in contemporary India language mainly in South Indian by applying Hindi and English (especially for schools positioned in the “Hindi Belt” which belongs to Hindi-dominant area of India, chiefly the north and central districts); while Hindi, English, and regional language concentrates for schools outside of Hindi-belt. In accordance to TLF, when three languages come altogether to be learnt, there will no linguistic group carry greater language education obligation than another and there is no one who notice a decrease in status of their vernacular language. As proposed by TLF, children throughout India are trained to use the local language, (included their first language, if it is dissimilar), Hindi or additional Indian language and English or extra contemporary European language. In line with this statement, Three Language Formula was intended to empower children in India to be competent at least three languages before entering secondary education [5]. The appearance of TLF during 1950s to 1960s is an original attempt to address the language polemics between the Hindi speaking North and non-Hindi speaking South. The summary of TLF can be seen in Table 1.

TABLE I. THE SUMMARY OF THREE LANGUAGE FORMULA [18-20]

No	Grade	Media
1	1 – 4	Only one language is recommended which should be the mother tongue. In case of a non-standardized mother tongue it should be the regional standard language.
2	5 -7	The study of two languages is obligatory. The second language may be either the official language of the Union (Hindi) or the co-official language (English).
3	8 – 10	The study of three languages is obligatory. These can be the regional standard, Hindi and English in the non-Hindi-speaking states. In the Hindi-speaking states these usually are Hindi, English and either a modern Indian language (MIL) or a classical Indian language like Sanskrit or Arabic.
4	9 – 12	No language is obligatory. This decision is left to the schools.

However, some critics were addressed to the Three Language Formula mainly from the non-Hindi communities. The critic was firstly addressed to Hindi located in Hindi region that more often used Sanskrit rather than Dravidian as the additional language since Hindi has already included numerous words and concepts in Sanskrit. Further weakness of TLF was rested on the non-Hindi speakers who might to learn up to four languages. This condition was unlike with their

counterparts of Hindi speakers who only required mastering one more additional language or two verbal communications in total. These arguments delivered to implication that the heavier responsibility in understanding more languages lying on the southern areas. On the other hand, in fact, Hindi speakers were assisted by the language policy arrangement in which Hindi was selected as the official language in India.

B. The Selection of English, Bangla and Urdu at Language Policy and Planning Level in Bangladesh and Pakistan

English has considerable status in Bangladesh as global language since its role as a language heritage from the former British colonies [21]. Since the British colonial rule has been over in 1947, the latest region of Bangladesh become one of the two domains of territory of Pakistan then later on was established as East Pakistan [21]. Consequently, the change of the formation offered a different status and legality of the colonial language. English in this period was functioned as the connected language between East and West Pakistan, which was parted by languages, cultures, and hostile Indian regionals.

As the main of fact, the two areas were linked by religion called Islam, which was the foundation for the state establishment, yet religion as nation founding aspect was regarded insufficient by Pakistani as its diverse linguistic, cultural, and geographic non-proximity between East and West Pakistan. For that reason, as another supplement to religion, a universal language was significantly selected for crafting unity among numerous communities of people. However, there were two conflicting concepts about which language should be used as unity language between Pakistani and West Pakistani. It was initiated by the argument from Pakistani leader that claimed Urdu as a rational choice for some reasons; firstly, Urdu indicated as a language of Islamic characteristic since its minority status which less than 5% of the total population of Pakistani used Urdu so the existence of Urdu as linked language was considered not to give any benefit or impairment among the large people in the region [21]. The selection of Urdu is not surprising since the local boards were concerned towards European models that proposed one language for one nation formula [22]. Conversely, the presence of Urdu as state language was not accepted well in East Pakistan thus it impacted to demonstration competing against the conception. The most happened heroic and tragic language movement in Bangladesh arose in 1952 centered in Dhaka University. The university students of Dhaka protested the burden of Urdu as state language and neglected the existence of Bangla as the identity of East Pakistan. During the demonstration some students of Dhaka University were killed. This tragedy, further initiated as the symbol of powerful language-based nationality which brought both Bangla as one of the state language of Pakistan and directed to massive separation of East Pakistan as independent country called Bangladesh in 1971. After the commencement of its independence in 1971, Bangladesh was becoming a new country [1]. However, due to the trend of the belief so-called advancement and globalized world, Bangladesh has been serious in supporting English language that enabling their society in coping with the whole world [4]. As the respect to aforementioned issue, Educational language policy and planning in Bangladesh are recommended in

combinations between English and Bangla to raise both entire literacy in Bangla and survive in globalized world by integrating English in the form of science, technology, and sociocultural development to reach Bangladesh national advantages [4].

The descriptions of language policy and planning in Bangladesh are presented in Table 2.

TABLE II. THE LANGUAGE POLICY AND PLANNING IN BANGLADESH [1,4]

Language Policy in Bangladesh regarded with the position of English and English education	Language Planning in Bangladesh
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1974 Bangladesh Education Commission: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English serves as foreign language beginning in Class 6; • General emphasis on English language. 2. 1976 English Teaching Taskforce Commission: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English is given both of Class 3 and 6; • subject to availability of English teachers 3. 1988 Bangladesh National Education Commission: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade 3 suggested as recommended starting point for English education; • Grade 6 suggested as uniform starting point for English education 4. 1991 National Curriculum Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English education introduced in Class 3; • English introduced as compulsory subject in Class 1 (1992) 5. 2000 National Education Policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English set as medium of instruction for kindergartens Curriculum and all text material used in kindergarten translated into English; • Introduction of English as extra subject from Class 1 and 2 and as compulsory subject from Class 3; • Along with Bengali, English could be medium of instruction from the secondary level (Class 7); • Emphasis on English as medium of instruction at the tertiary level 6. 2003 National Education Commission; Reemphasis on English learning from the primary level; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One objective of primary education to acquaint learners to English language skills as a foreign language Emphasis on rebuilding overall English curriculum; 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An intense Bangla medium education system which is fully financed by government is the fundamental strength for universal literacy in Bangla and the construction of globalized English competence. Indeed, the enhancements of national literacy in Bangla are greatly influenced by mother tongue based instruction mainly in primary level. 2. Inadequate hours of English classes and inexperienced teachers have brought to some considerations for presenting larger, improved quality and upper standard English classes. 3. Some considerations should take into account for English classes that enhance the constructions of Bangla nation-building identity: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. English classes not given in English medium schooling, but rather than in Bangla medium schooling as the primary concern; English may not obtained as foreign or global culture that may be threatened the local culture yet it is included in educational context of state culture. English is better viewed as a way of survival skills not as the way of life so adjusting others knowledge not the nations' and turning into others goals not Bangladeshi's target. Language is always dealing with culture the main point is which culture should be the main focus in Bangladeshi educational system.

Table 2. Cont.

Language Policy in Bangladesh regarded with the position of English and English education	Language Planning in Bangladesh
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasis on organizing foreign training for trainers of PTI and NAPE and local training for all secondary school teachers to improve English education; • Emphasis on introducing a six-month English language course at the tertiary level <p>7. 2010 National Education Policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English recognized as essential tool to building knowledge-based society; • Emphasis on English writing and speaking from the very beginning of primary education; English to be set as compulsory subject adopted in all streams from the secondary level; • English as medium of instruction could be introduced from the secondary level; • Emphasis on appointing adequate number of English teachers at secondary level English to be a compulsory subject in all colleges and universities; • English (along with Bengali) to be the mediums of instruction at the tertiary level Emphasis on the need to translate books written in English to Bengali 	<p>b. The English curriculum should more reflect on local cultural models than British or American styles thus it empowers students to critically adopt its national form of English language countries themselves.</p> <p>c. English is standardized by its local boards not by other authorities such as London or American linguistics patterns. The elderly imperial status and British assessment should not be used any longer to determine Bangladesh educational quality.</p> <p>d. The growth Bangladeshi style of English which is adjusted from Bangla national characteristics should be supported by the local authorities.</p>

The language policy and planning of Pakistan is displayed in Table 3.

TABLE III. THE LANGUAGE POLICY AND PLANNING IN PAKISTAN [23,24]

Descriptions
<p>A provision introduced in 1973 in the constitution, on the official language policy and planning, states:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) The national language of Pakistan is Urdu, and arrangements shall be made for it to be used for official and other purposes within 15 years from the commencing day (1973). (2) Subject to clause (1), the English language may be used for official purposes until arrangements are made for its replacement by Urdu. (3) Without prejudice to the status of the national language, a provincial assembly may by law prescribe measures for the teaching, promotion, and use of a provincial language in addition to the national language.

C. The Implication of the Language Policy and Planning Occurred in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh in Indonesian Context

Seeing the language policy and planning from other countries might bring some values that able to impress the Indonesian context in spite of several differences within the countries. To begin with, the Three Language Formula deriving from India was intended to bridge the language polemics between South and North Hindi. In this blueprint, trilingual combinations of languages were proposed. In the earlier level of school age (grade 1-4), mother tongue based education was

offered. In this period, children were obligated in mastering their own mother tongue/ regional language. The use of mother tongue based education is considered contributing to better further language acquisition.

The involvement of mother tongue and regional language into language policy and planning reflected from India and Bangladesh could give immersion to our context where Indonesian has numerous and diverse vernacular languages around the region. As reported in Jawa Pos, Indonesia vernacular language came to extinction. This because there are limited speakers of the language, there is no supported educational system for the vernacular language, the young stay in silent when having dialogue by using vernacular language. Taking lesson from other countries may lead the authorities to save Indonesian vernacular language as the respect of local potential and to empower the generation for nationality.

IV. CONCLUSION

Language policy and planning in India then so-called Trilingual Language Formula arose as a respect to rich and diverse in the form of languages, cultures, and background occurring in India. This formula was addressed in the name of unity in diversity and respected Hindi as the linked language, English as an attempt to cope with the growth of development; globalized world; potential economic opportunity; technological advancement, indeed appreciating numerous regional languages as local potential. The three language combinations were expected to bridge the language disagreement between the Hindi speaking South and non-Hindi speaking North.

Giving different perspective as what occurring in India, Bangladesh face a heroic and tragic moment to fight for their mother tongue called Bangla. The most monumental language movement in Bangladesh gave precious lesson to save and being proud of own nation. More than that, this language movement brought Bangladesh to its independence from Pakistan. This independence led to the selection of Bangla and English in language policy and planning level in Bangladesh. The formulation of Bangla and English in language policy and planning in Bangladesh was one effort from local boards to build Bangla nationalism.

Perceiving various language policy and planning from diverse nations guide to an understanding the journey, process, belief, idea, implementation, and goal for the nations. By seeing these features in different context might be beneficial to be connected in Indonesian context. This is expected to arrange and offer better blueprint in language policy and planning which is advantageous for our nation interest and building strong nationality.

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