

International Journal of Language Education
Volume 6, Number 2, 2022, pp. 210-220
ISSN: 2548-8457 (Print) 2548-8465 (Online)
Doi: <https://doi.org/10.26858/ijole.v6i2.35072>

A Meta-Analysis of Language Policy on Bilingual Education in Indonesian Universities: Implication for Multicultural Education and Internationalization

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Received: 04 May 2021
Reviewed: 30 March 2022
Accepted: 29 June 2022
Published: 30 June 2022

Abstract

The study aims to portray the implementation of bilingual language policy and its implications for multiculturalism and internationalization of higher education. The meta-analysis research design enables the researchers in this study to search the available published public documents that are relevant for this study. The result of the study indicates that the implementation of language policy on bilingual education in higher education contexts facilitates the preservation of local and national identities, fosters multicultural pedagogical interaction, and supports the internationalization of universities. This study recommends further in-depth investigation in a multicultural setting with longitudinal approach.

Key words: portrait, Indonesia, Higher education, bilingualism, policy

Introduction

There is a growing body of literature that recognises the importance of language policy in across different contexts. Language policy is an important theme in the context of ideology, language management and language practices (Spolsky, 2004), in the field of sociology of language education (Fishman, 2016), in the context of political perspectives of language policy (McCarty & May, 2017), in the context of language education policy (Edwards & Corson, 1997), and in the context of bilingualism and bilingual education (Hornberger, 2008). Due to the various application of language policy, it is interesting to further investigate the language policy within higher education settings.

Globally, studies of language policy on higher education have been conducted in various different countries and continents. In European countries, many researchers have investigated issues of language policy and internationalization of tertiary institutions (Saarinen & Taalas, 2017; Soler-carbonell, Saarinen, & Kibbermann, 2017). Also, studies explored the role of language policy, bilingualism and higher education in African countries (Foley, 2004; Smit, 2019), and the examination of the of English and bilingual education in higher education in Asia Pacific countries such as in Vietnam (Nguyen, Walkinshaw, & Pham, 2017), in Brunei Darussalam university levels (Ishamina & Deterding, 2017) and in Cambodian higher education setting (Moore, 2017). These investigations have shown the importance of language policy and bilingualism within higher education.

Specifically in Indonesia, recent research on language policy and bilingual education have developed a fair bit. Dewi (2017) examined the lecturers' perceptions on English Medium Instruction (EMI) policy in Indonesian higher education. Walker, Liyanage, Madya, and Hidayati (2019) investigated the implication of bi/multilingual language policy in higher education. Also, Abduh and Rosmaladewi (2019) described the historical development of language policy, bilingualism and identity in Indonesian contexts. From these studies, none of them have mapped the structural themes and the essence of language policy in the context of bilingual education. As a consequence, there is a limited information found in academic publications in relation to main essential components of language policy on bilingual higher education.

To respond to the issue above, this research article aims to address the current knowledge gap of the essential components of language policy in Indonesian bilingual higher education. The research extends understanding of language policy discourses within Indonesian university settings and contributes to the global debates on language policy in higher education. This following section of this paper describe the conceptual framework to researching language policy, meta-analysis approach, findings, discussion and conclusion.

Conceptual framework of language policy on bilingual education

Language policy prevails the beliefs, underpinning values, and patterns to guide the language practices. It is in the form of rules, beliefs, documentation, speech, guidance, and principles that guide the practice of the languages. Spolsky (2004) defines a language policy consist of three elements: language practices, ideology, and efforts. The language practices refers to language patterns occurring among communities; ideology relates to the beliefs of language and its application, and efforts are the language planning, management and intervention. From this definition, language policy covers different aspects of language and language practices starting from abstract perspectives (language beliefs) to the concrete elements of the language (language use among communities).

Several prominent authors propose key components of language policy. Spolsky (2017) suggests three essential questions to investigate language policy: what is the policy? Why this policy? How is the policy implemented? and can the policy be improved?. The idea of language policy informs this study. Therefore, the basic idea of language is transformed in the context of bilingual language policy within higher education. The bilingual language policy conceptual framework is portrayed in Figure 1 below:

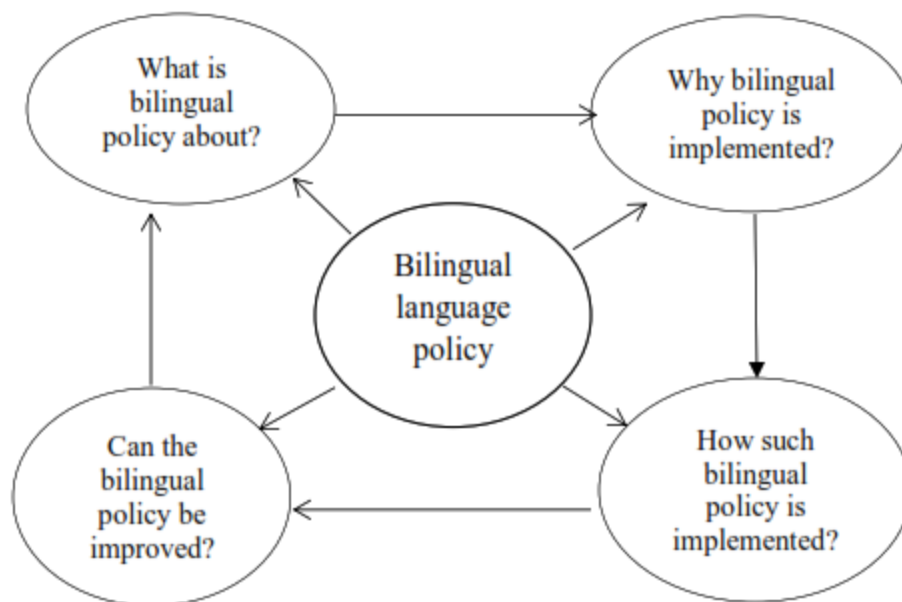


Figure 1: Framework for researching language policy on bilingual education

In terms of definition, language policy is related to the science of language choice and practice (Spolsky, 2004). From other perspective language perspective, language policy is related to a social resource and a decision-making process aimed at solving problems related to language (Yang & Wang, 2017). Therefore, bilingual policy is related to language choices for bilingual contexts and environment.

Previous studies of language policy on bilingual education

Despite there are large number of studies on policy on bilingual education, only several very relevant investigations are presented here.

Fishman (2016) conducted the ethnographic description of the language and bilingual policy in relation of sociology and education. Fishman states as the sociology of language and describes the early development of sociology of language. The research reveals the basic approaches of researching sociology of language and its contribution of the education and sociology. In terms of the basic approaches, two noticeable contributions from sociolinguistics for language policy and education are ethnographic approach and controlled experiment research design. In spite of two significant contributions, language policy and bilingualism from sociolinguistic perspectives encounter complexity and challenges.

Saarinen and Taalas (2017) examined the policy documents on motivations of language policy and internationalization. The policy analysis documents are from the six Nordic countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden. The research reveal that the major motivation for language policy for higher education is internationalization of universities in Nordic countries. Among the six countries, two categories of internationalization of language policy: relaxing language policy, for example in Finland, and tightening language policy, such as in Sweden and Iceland. The research recommends that language policy for internationalization is important to apply in Nordic countries since there is a high mobility and the need for language medium instruction in higher education.

Smit (2019) investigated the cases of the roles of language policy on bilingualism in university contexts. The research identifies several important models of language policy on higher

education: monolingual policy for inner cycle countries, bilingualism policy, trilingualism policy, and multilingualism policy. These forms of language policy aims to support the internationalization of higher education both local, regional and national levels. The most interesting theme among different language policy contexts is the insertion of English as the most important medium of instruction for higher education not only for inner cycle countries but also for non-inner cycle nations. The hegemony of English has been known as the language for educational market across the globe.

For Asian countries contexts including Indonesia, there are several important previous investigations. In Cambodia, Moore (2017) conducted a case study of assessment of English medium instruction in Cambodian higher education setting where two models of English medium instruction are implemented: Content Integrated Language Learning (CLIL) and Content Based teaching (CBT). Using interviews, focus group discussion and documents, the case study revealed that the assessment of language instruction in Cambodian contexts refers to the institutional norms rather than global scale assessment forms. The research recommends that deeper understanding of the assessment of language within cultural contexts is necessary for teachers and lecturers. In Vietnam, Nguyen et al. (2017) investigated the problems and issues of language policy in Vietnam higher education. The study indicates that there are several issues of language policy in Vietnam: policy issue, institutional issue, classroom problem, language input, and joint class program issues. This study recommends that these complexities of issues are resolved through a comprehensive language policy to cater all different demands and needs among policy makers, teachers, lecturers and researchers.

From the review of the related literature, it shows convincing previous research on language policy and bilingual higher education. Most studies apply case studies and ethnographic approaches. Despite these are credible previous studies, none of the previous investigations conduct a study using meta-analysis approach on language policy and bilingual higher education. Therefore, this research paper aims to discuss language policy on bilingual education in Indonesian university contexts using meta-analysis approach. The meta-analysis approach is the following section of the paper.

Research Method

Research design

Qualitative meta-analysis is an approach to conduct an in-depth analysis of secondary qualitative documents to portray a comprehensive account of a case or an issue (Timulak, 2009). Applying the meta-analysis suggestions, the secondary documents used in this study are published policies and papers on language policy, bilingualism, and bilingual education in Indonesian higher education.

Sample documents for meta-analysis

The published policies and papers are the documents limited in the last five years (2015-2019). The reason of choosing the five years scale documents is to probe the current policy that impacts on the language policy and implementation in higher education and to depict current debate themes of the language policy in Indonesian higher education. The resources discussed here are only reputable documents indexed in Scopus and Web of Science. The sample for meta-analysis is in table 1 below.

Category	Number of items	Authors and codes
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Journal article	11	(Abduh & Andrew, 2017 [A1]; Abduh & Rosmaladewi, 2018 [A2]; Bax, 2010 [A3]; Cahyani, de Courcy, & Barnett, 2018 [A4]; Dewi, 2007 [A5]; Hapsari, 2012 [A6]; Ho & Wong, 1997 [A7]; Kartika Ningsih, 2015 [A8]; Mukminin et al., 2018 [A9]; Nursanti, 2016 [A10]; Simbolon, 2018 [A11])
Book/book chapters	2	(Dewi, 2017 [A12];Widodo, 2016 [A13])
University documents	5	(Public University Strategic Planning, 2019 [A14]; Faculty of Natural Sciences UNM, 2016 [A15]; FMIPA UNM, 2009 [A16]; Physics Department FMIPA UNM, 2016 [A17];
Official government documents	3	(Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education, 2019 [A20]; Law of the Republic of Indonesia, Number 24, about Higher Education 2012 [A21]; Law of the Republic of Indonesia, Number 24, about National Educational System, 2003 [A22])

Procedures of meta-analysis

The public policy documents are gained through formal websites of the Ministry of Education and Culture. The published documents relating to language policy on bilingualism are gained through the search in Scopus and web of science sites. The key words for searching through google scholars are: “language policy”, “bilingualism”, “bilingual education”, and “Indonesian/Indonesia”, and “higher education/university/tertiary institution”. The process of searching follows the procedures in the following Figure 2.

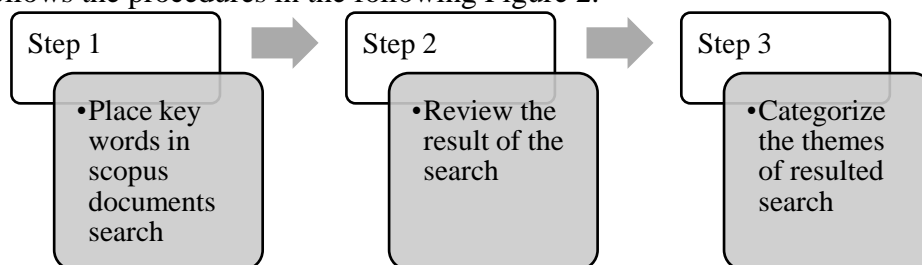


Figure 2: Procedures of meta-analysis

Findings

The findings of the study indicates that there are stages and interaction among stakeholders to implement bilingual class program in higher education contexts:

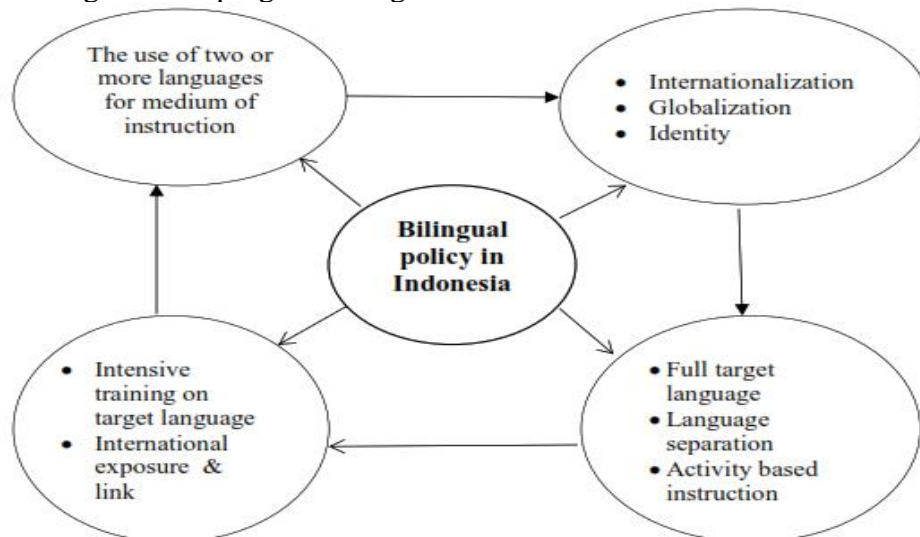


Figure 3: Language policy on bilingual education in Indonesian higher education

The aim of bilingual education is to equip the teachers' candidate competency for the internationalization of Indonesian universities. This aim of bilingual education is stated in the one of the university documents:

To produce teachers' candidate who will teach overseas especially in countries where teachers are need such as in Asian, Australian and African countries. (A16)

In addition, the second aim of bilingual education within the context internationalization of universities is to prepare teachers' candidates to face the globalization of Indonesian secondary education. The internationalization of secondary education is the process where high quality schools that are prepared to accept international students open their opportunities for bilingual instruction across the school curriculum and environment:

To produce teachers' candidate who will develop and teach in international standardized schools in Indonesia and overseas. (A16)

Also, the third aim of bilingual education policy is to train learners for the possession of global language competences where they can compete and collaborate with others both domestic and international scopes.

To produce high quality graduates who are ready to face global challenges and are ready to pursue further study overseas. (A16)

From these three aims, it indicates that bilingual education policy is implemented not only aiming for students but also for teachers' future development. The students who enrol in bilingual programs have the opportunities to develop their foreign language competences, familiarize themselves with the international curriculum framework, and expose themselves with the multicultural themes and issues. The multicultural themes such as providing services for students from different cultural backgrounds and respecting differences both inside and outside classroom contexts.

Reasons of applying bilingual education Indonesian university contexts are for internationalization, for learners' foreign language competencies and for the implementation of law:

The main reason for using foreign language as a medium of instruction is to improve learners' foreign language skills (A21)

The language for medium of instruction in higher education can be used national language and foreign languages (A22).

One of the fundamental aims for using foreign language as the medium of instruction is to foster the internationalization process of higher education (A20)

The internationalization of universities and the acquisition of global competence becomes the key reason of applying bilingual education within Indonesian higher education. To support the acquisition of global English skills, students studying in bilingual programs are required to submit their final projects prior to graduation in English:

They are required to write any assignment including thesis/ final project in both languages: English and Indonesian (A15).

From meta-analysis of published articles, the historical development of language policy and bilingualism is described in the policy documents:

Article codes	Themes
A1	The article discusses language policy, planning, bilingualism, identity and the influence of political factors in language policy
A2	Indonesian educations imagine themselves as a bilingual individual as parts of language policy documents
A9	Bilingual language policy and strategies of learning

These language policy documents indicate the importance of language identity, language planning and the acquisitions of foreign language. From A1, A2, and A3, they show the implementation of bilingual language policy within Indonesian higher education contexts is categorized as the preservation of local and national identity. The use of Indonesian language alongside English indicates the importance of the national language as an Indonesian citizen. The students considers the national languages as the same importance as the international language.

Language and bilingual policy in practice

The bilingual policy has been adopted at the university levels as part of the university language policy. For example, the use of English alongside with the Indonesian is used for medium of instruction in bilingual and international class programs in many Indonesian universities. The evidences of the use of bilingual language policy are below:

Article codes	Themes
A3	The english medium instruction is used along side with the mother tongue within several Asian countries including Indonesia. The comparision of using English bilingual instruction provides picture of bilingual education in the Asian countries.
A4	The role of code-switching for pedagogical and sociocultural function within the indonesian classroom contexts.
A5	The partial immersion of bilingual instruction in Indonesian higher education classroom contexts.
A6	The content integrated language learning as an approach for teaching content within English bilingual education. It also covers pedagogical challenges for teachers
A7	The use of genre pedagogical paradigm as one of the multilingual education approach in Indonesian classroom contexts.

From the evidence above, it shows that bilingual language policy can facilitate the pedagogical contents, multilingual and multicultural interactions, short and long-term multicultural engagement, and sociocultural functions. As the pedagogical means for teachers, educators can switch one language to another and use the translanguaging approach that can facilitate multilingual interaction in the classroom. The multilingual approach can open the opportunities for both educators and students to interact each other and learn other culture simultaneously. The socio-cultural lens of the bilingual language policy in the university contexts help students from different backgrounds to establish intercultural skills and knowledge that foster them to become competence interculturally.

Discussion: implication for multiculturalism and internationalism

In terms of multiculturalism, the implementation of bilingual language policy in higher education creates new avenues for developing multicultural competence. As Smit (2019) argued bilingual language policy aims to support the preservation and the development of diversity of languages adopted in educational contexts. It enables local languages and national language play important roles in the education contexts. This form of development can hinder the loss of local languages and reduce the hegemony of the global languages within educational contexts.

In the context of internationalization, the adoption of bilingual language policy in higher education contexts can facilitate the internationalization of the institutions, curriculum and academic programs. Fishman (2016) believed that bilingual language policy has both sociological and anthropological implications for universities. The sociological implication is that university can facility the socio-multicultural interactions among diverse students' backgrounds who study at bilingual programs. The anthropological implication is that students gain direct multicultural experiences during the study in bilingual programs. The internationalization of curriculum can facilitate the establishment of university consortium, joint double degree programs, students' mobility and research collaborative programs.

Conclusion

From this study, it appears that bilingual language policy implementation can foster the acquisition of international and global language competence, provide opportunities for developing intercultural competence, and promote the atmosphere of internationalization within higher education contexts. In addition, the implementation of bilingual language policy can maintain the local and national identities, and hinder the danger of the loss of national languages. Further in-depth investigation for bilingual language policy in action from multiple settings and from larger subjects are needed to develop a comprehensive understanding of bilingual language policy. Research with longitudinal approach is considered to be an important study to decipher the cultural essence of the language in education and the language of culture within higher educational contexts.

Declaration of conflict of interest

Authors declare no conflict of interest for study

Funding acknowledgement

This research is funded by Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Higher Education through Basic Research Scheme (Penelitian Dasar) with the contract number 2346/UN36.11/LP2M/2022. Thank you for the Directorate of Research, Technology, and Community Services and Rector of Universitas Negeri Makassar.

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