

MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION POLICY PRACTICES IN AN ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

This article explores multilingual education policy practices in an Islamic Boarding School context and how they translated multilingual language policy into their class. Researches on multilingual education policies have been widely conducted in public schools in many countries, but in Indonesia, the topic is relatively under-researched. Indonesia has an educational model born from local wisdom and applies multilingualism for student competence, namely Islamic boarding schools. This case exploratory study takes data from 3 teachers from various subjects such as (English, Religion, Biology) at an Islamic boarding school at the same level as senior high school. Thematic analysis is applied to analyze the phenomenon that occurs regarding the multilingual education policy practices. This study reveals that teachers as agents in multilingual education policies run classes based on beliefs and abilities. Data was collected by interviewing teachers as practitioners in implementing multilingual education policies. The implication of this research is to provide a reference for education practitioners in adjusting to the implementation of multilingual education.

Keywords: Language Policy, Multilingual Education, Teaching practices

INTRODUCTION

Recent decades have seen a steady growth of diverse students in linguistics with their cultural diversity and recognized multilingualism as the "new linguistic dispensation" (Aronin & Singleton, 2012, p. 42). This increases the pressure on teachers who are bound by school policies that adopt multilingual policies to implement pedagogical practices that utilize and promote multilingualism so that "multilingual turns" in the educational process can be carried out (May 2014, 2019). The patterns of multilingualism in the scope of education cannot be separated from the influence of LPP (language Policy and Planning) on school linguistics and how they implement language policies that are considered beneficial for their students. However, understanding language policy and planning (LPP) has traditionally focused on government-level activities at the expense of local actors and their role in language decision-making (Baldauf, 2006; Liddicoat & Baldauf, 2008). Regional actors are only seen as implementing policies that are lowered from the macro-level to the local level, and the scope of their decision-making is only related to how they implement policies that have been instructed from the macro-level (Johnson, 2009; Wiley & Garcia, 2016). At the micro-level, schools can be a place to make policy because, in the context of LPP, various actors can interpret it in the policy environment, not only done without critical thinking (Ball et al., 2012). For the school environment, teachers become actors or implementers who directly deal with policy targets as reported by the school administrator, for the case of English teachers who were given complete autonomy in the development of English lessons as long as the targets were mastery of the material and communicative use of language (Widodo, 2017). Every teacher builds language policies in the classroom based on their experiences and beliefs and then puts them into practice. Christian E. Z et al. (2017) presents two foreign language teachers and explore translating language policies for their classes. This finding confirms the teacher's role as an agency capable of creating classroom language policies.

The implementation of language policy within the scope of the school cannot be separated from the active contribution of teachers who have a role as agents. The practice of multilingual language is considered more complex and requires full support from the teacher as implementer in the classroom and school environment. The active contribution of teachers in shaping work and conditions in the field to seek a good and meaningful education is a form of professional Agency in agency discourse (Biesta et al., 2015). Teacher beliefs about learners and learning, curriculum, and self strongly influence teachers' pedagogical choices and classroom practices (Borg, 2006). Recent research has investigated teacher beliefs and knowledge about multilingualism (e.g., Alisaari et al., 2019; Cenoz & Santos, 2020; Gorter & Arocena, 2020; Rodríguez-Izquierdo et al., 2020; Sevinç et al., 2022). In general, teachers have a positive response to multilingualism (Alisaari et al., 2019; Haukås, 2016), but there are also some studies showing that teachers are reluctant to include languages other than the language of instruction (Bailey & Marsden, 2017; Doiz & Lasagabaster, 2017; Young, 2014). This finding can raise the assumption that the teachers'

practices in the classroom have an essential portion for the success of the multilingual language policy

Research on Multilingual education policy practices is generally conducted outside Indonesia. For example, Lorenz et al. (2021) investigated the impact of professional development on teacher beliefs and practices in linguistically heterogeneous EAL classrooms in Norway. The longitudinal findings suggest that although the teachers developed positive beliefs about multilingualism and multilingually-oriented education, they tended to persist in monolingual teaching practices, did not acknowledge linguistic and cultural diversity in the classroom, and failed to employ multilingual teaching strategies systematically. Repo (2020) investigated teachers' narrative discourses about their meetings with multilingual students. The teachers selected were Finlandia junior high school teachers who worked in schools that contained the spirit of multilingual education. These studies focus on multilingual practice abroad, while multilingual practices in Indonesia need to be studied further, especially in Islamic boarding schools.

This study will explore multilingual education policy practices in Islamic boarding schools. This study will take a sample of three teachers of different subjects (religion, biology, English) with gender one male and two female. The research questions lead to, 1) what language policies are implemented in schools and 2) how do they translate those language policies into the classroom.

METHODOLOGY

This current study was conducted in Indonesia to explore multilingual education policy practices in an Islamic Boarding School in Indonesia. A formal institution, Islamic senior high school, a Multilingual education policy in Surakarta. This school has a lot of programs, and one of them is a boarding school program. This program conducts a multilingual educational policy that school agencies trust to improve student quality.

A descriptive case study was considered appropriate for this study. A case study is an empirical investigation in real-life contexts to investigate contemporary phenomena, especially when there is no clear evidence of the phenomenon and context (Yin, 2003). Data was collected by interviewing three teachers as executors of multilingual policies and observing how they translated multilingual policies in the classroom. The interview process was in Bahasa Indonesian to minimize the language barrier and ease the participant in answering the question and providing elaboration. For the interview, the question was adopted from a pre-development instrument which is based on the Language Planning and Policy Theoretical Framework that includes Language Practice (ecology), Language Belief (ideology), Language Management (Planning) (Spolsky, 2004) which is translated in the form of a semi-structured interview.

Thematic analysis was chosen to analyze the role of the Agency in multilingual education policies. Barkhuizen et al. (2013) described thematic analysis in qualitative data analysis manuals discussed in detail. The participants' stories were coded and categorized based on the theme. The coding focused on the critical meaning of participants' narratives, to which the researcher had to pay attention to making understandable signs to represent every experience. The next step of the analysis was coding. The process involved identifying narratives and assigning a codeword or phrase that precisely describes the meaning of narratives.

Table 1. Profile of the Participants

NO	Participant (Pseudonym)	Andi	Della	Anisa
1	Designation	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher
2	Subject taught	Religion	Biology	English and Tahfidzul Qur'an
3	Gender	Male	Female	Female

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Findings

This section explains the results of multilingual education policy practices by giving them a questionnaire and then confirming it with direct interviews to get explorative results.

Language planning and policies implemented at the school

This research took place in a formal institution at the high school level in Surakarta. This school has many programs; one is an Islamic boarding school. This school provides dormitories to students in particular programs so that after school, they don't go home but live in dormitories with other friends. This program implements a multilingual education policy that the school trusts to improve the quality of students. To analyze the language phenomenon in the research location, the researcher uses a Theoretical Framework for Language Policy and Planning, which includes Language Practice (ecology), Language Belief (ideology), Language Management (Planning) (Spolsky, 2004).

Language Practice (ecology) is directed at the language behavior commonly used in the school community or the community in the school environment. The community around the school uses Javanese and Indonesian as languages for daily communication. However, even so, the linguistic profile around the school does not affect the language policy that will be implemented in the school environment. Schools have the authority to design language policies that are considered helpful for students without any intervention from the language profile of the community around the school. LPP is not always related to decisions from the government and is on a macro scale, on a

smaller scale that usually occurs in a school context, but they are also quite active in developing language policies (Wright, 2008) to develop resources in their environment. In the context of this study, language belief (ideology) is their belief in the composition of the language chosen to be applied in their environment. According to Della, the ideal and chosen multilingual policy should be projected for the student's development. The policy selected for LPP is to use Indonesian as the national language, Javanese as the regional language, English as a foreign language representing the international community, and Arabic as the language of the Al Quran because Pesantren or Islamic Boarding School represent Muslims.

.....In our opinion, these languages (Indonesian, Javanese, Arabic, and English) are more common to use, for example, from high school level, if you want to continue studying abroad, you usually need to be equipped with Arabic and English language skills. especially English because it is more commonly used as an international language..... Arabic is the language of the Al-Quran; our school is a school-based on Islam, so Arabic is essential. maybe we can keep up with the times with Arabic, but we also must not forget our identity as a Muslim. (**Anisa**)

Our school follows a mandatory curriculum such as Indonesian language lessons and English lessons, so it is not difficult to adopt it as a language policy in the school environment. Our school is a madrasa, so Arabic is a paramount concern. The Javanese language is also included in local content because our school is on the island of Java, so knowledge related to the Javanese language must also be given to students (**Andi**)

With the decision of policymakers to adopt multilingualism with English, Indonesian, Arabic, and Javanese, the implementation of the policy requires the support of the entire school community, both teachers and students. In addition to teaching and learning activities, students are bound by a 24-hour policy because they are placed in dormitories. Student activities in dormitories are also a unique aspect for this school because after they get enough general insight at school, they also get more intensive religious knowledge in the dormitory but without forgetting the multilingual policy that has been implemented. Islamic Boarding schools, called pesantren in Indonesia, have different characteristics from education abroad. This educational model upholds religious values seriously and obediently. Besides, in the context of pesantren, teachers are mandated to act as parents (Puad, L. M. A. Z., & Ashton, K, 2020). Lukens-Bull (2001) states that the relationship between teachers and students in Islamic boarding schools is like "father-son." Every parent who leaves their child to study at the Islamic boarding school tends to trust the school manager. Every parent always provides full support for all the policies set by the school management for their child. Besides the

relationship with the teacher, the closeness of the students is also slightly different. Because they get 24 hours together, their relationships will be stronger than the typical school, which does not stay at the dormitory.

Teacher practices in the multilingual education policy at the school

There are 3 participants in this study: teachers of religion, biology, and English. All of them act as policy implementers in the schools where they teach. Teachers have a critical role in implementing multilingual language policies as executors or implementers facing policy targets (students). Besides their responsibility to deliver subject matter as their expertise, they are responsible for supporting the agreed language policy, which will always be inherent in learning activities with students.

"As an implementer in learning "(Andi)

"Act as implementers and encourage students in the application of multilingualism in learning in the classroom and the school environment "(Della)

"As a teacher, I act as an executor in encouraging and controlling students to use language not only in class but outside the classroom, as long as it is still in the school environment." (Anisa)

Billet (2004) states that schools that act as teachers' workplaces provide opportunities for teachers to change practice precisely according to their competence. Indirectly, teachers are given full authority to manage and develop their students in the classroom as long as it aligns with the country's mission. Active teacher involvement will encourage teacher change in the work context and is seen as a core component of learning (Tynjälä, 2013). Professional development has been hailed as the key method to help practitioners develop knowledge, skills, and practices (Peleman et al., 2018) and may, therefore, also contribute to the development of multilingual approaches.

".....I speak Arabic more, I might also be more dominant there, although in my learning I slipped a little English to translate some vocabulary in Arabic into English" (Andi)

"Maybe I prefer to mix in the use of language in class, so what I use is English and Indonesian when teaching, but the material I teach is dominantly using English. So, I understand the condition of the students. Besides trying to understand the material presented, they also have to understand the language used in explaining the material itself,

so I mixed it to make it easier for them to understand the material presented." (Della)

*'.....So there is Indonesian, English and Arabic, although the portion can be said to be unbalanced, at least there are three languages.....'
(Anita)*

Teachers as policy implementers cannot be separated from the role of Agency in schools, and Professional Agency is practiced when teachers or society influence, make choices, and even take attitudes by influencing their work and professional identity (Eteläpelto et al., 2013). Mister Andi, Miss Della, and Miss Anisa showed a good effort in realizing a professional agency and executing the multilingual policy applied in their schools into the classroom. Although using multilingualism cannot be said in the implementation, they combine several languages in teaching. The language used depends on their respective abilities. When Indonesian and Javanese are relatively straightforward, every teacher is capable and proficient at using it, but in selecting foreign languages for using, whether Arabic or English, they have their tendencies that are in line with their learning references. For example, Andi is a religion teacher who prefers to use Arabic. He combines multilingualism with Arabic more often than English because the lessons he teaches got many references from Arabic, and Della, as a biology teacher, gets many references in English. but in the case of Anisa as an English teacher and also a tahfidz teacher, he is better at combining two foreign languages in his class because all foreign languages are still a reference to their lessons

Teachers must always learn to realize a multilingual language policy and then apply it to the classroom and school environment. In this case, teacher professional development is needed to support the policies that have been implemented. Professional development has been hailed as the critical method to help practitioners develop knowledge, skills, and practices (Peleman et al., 2018) and may, therefore, also contribute to the development of multilingual approaches. Professional development can be defined as those processes and activities designed to enhance the professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes of teachers on an individual level so that they might, in turn, improve the learning of students (Guskey, 2002). Participants in this study have an excellent understanding to realize multilingual policy. This can be seen from their awareness to learn another language they teach

When teaching, we should try to include the agreed language in the multilingual policy, even though I am an English teacher, but I will try to relate it to Arabic, English, and Javanese. The simplest example is translating words into these languages. (Anita)

we are trying to create a language zone for all school members, even some teachers do not master all languages and are more dominant in

specific languages; therefore, between internal teachers, there needs to be awareness to set an example for students always to learn (Andi)

They hope their efforts can help the students implement their multilingual education policies. Although in the implementation of the policy, many obstacles must be solved for students and even teachers to adapt habits and practice language skills. In their role as policy implementers, patience and a sense of responsibility are needed in carrying out their functions as agents. A multilingual policy might be considered something new to students, but it may not be. We can't say every student is brilliant or not, and there need to be treated depending on their ability. Do not apply language policy rigidly but must adapt to the situation faced by students; therefore, teachers are allowed to ask what is best for themselves (Tollefson, 2015) and then decide what to take in their class.

CONCLUSION

This article explores multilingual education policy in Islamic boarding schools and how teachers translate policy to their classes. This study took a sample of 3 teachers who teach different subjects, namely English, Biology, and Religion. In this study, the teacher acts as a policy implementer and is responsible for implementing multilingual policies with students. The language selected in multilingual policy is Indonesian, Arabic, English, and Javanese. The selection of the language used in the composition of the multilingual policy represents the school's goal to complete the competence for their students. Indonesian and Javanese represent policies from the macro and meso levels, while English and Arabic are chosen for student empowerment. English as an international language and Arabic as holy book language for Muslims (Al Quran) as the identity of schools that adopt Islamic boarding schools.

This study also found how the teacher agency translates policies according to their respective abilities. Fourth, languages chosen as multilingual policies are not used thoroughly in learning. Javanese and Indonesian also receive less serious attention because they are easier to learn because the surrounding community uses them. Teachers combine languages according to the references they use for their subjects, such as a religion teacher who uses Arabic more often than English and vice versa for biology teachers. Teachers also design activities to fulfill their role as agencies in multilingual policies; they bring a native speaker to their class and create an activity for students to practice multiple languages. In this study, some weaknesses can be corrected for further research. The researcher only discusses the teacher agency with 3 participants. In the future, the focus of research can be directed to policymakers and involve more teachers and students for further exploration.

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