



THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF NATIONAL NARRATIVES

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Abstract: *Both a means of communication and a marker of national identity, language shapes national narratives. This study examines how language creates, spreads, and perpetuates national narratives, establishing a sense of belonging, uniting various communities, and legitimizing political ideas. The paper examines historical and present examples of how national languages and linguistic policies promote unity and suppress minority voices. Nationalism, propaganda, and cultural symbolism show how language becomes a battlefield for contending ideologies in the link between language, power, and nation building. Language can both include and exclude and it can shape a nation's memories, according to the research. This paper shows that linguistic choices shape national narratives and how nations see themselves and others.*

Keywords: *National narratives, language, nationalism, propaganda, and cultural symbolism.*

Introduction: Language is a strong instrument that changes how people see themselves and their role in society. Language shapes national identity and narratives during nation building. These tales, generally based on historical, cultural, and political principles, build national unity and cohesion. Political leaders and intellectuals have used language to create national tales that reinforce shared heritage, purpose, and destiny. ¹National languages and linguistic policy show how language and identity interact. Language choices represent power, inclusion, and exclusion, from promoting a standard language to suppressing regional dialects and minority languages. National narratives, generally in the majority language, explain historical events, cultural values, and the nation's worldwide role.² Language's significance in nation building is complicated. It can unite a population under a single narrative or marginalize those who do not speak the prevailing language or whose linguistic identity undermines the nation's monolithic image. Critically examining how language promotes unity, legitimizes political authority, and sometimes controls or marginalizes alternative perspectives is necessary to understand how language shapes national narratives. This paper examines

¹ Paauw S. (2009), One land, one nation, one language: an analysis of Indonesia's national language policy, working papers in "Language Science", Vol. 5, No. 1.

² Errington, J.J. (1986), Continuity and change in Indonesian language development,"Journal of Asian Studies", Vol.45, No.2.



how language shapes national narratives. Based on historical and geopolitical examples, it will examine how language has been used to unite nations and compel ideological conformity or repress opposition. This study emphasizes the importance of language in constructing nations' self-narratives and how they shape the nation.³

There are four categories that can be used to classify language function: cognitive, instrumental, integrative, and cultural. Cognitive function is related to the intellectual growth of learners, instrumental function is related to the use of language for material objectives, and cultural function is related to the enjoyment and knowledge of different cultures. Language can also be utilized as a political and social aspect in the process of constructing, unifying, and maintaining a nation, as well as a fundamental component of national identity. This is in addition to the fact that language can already be employed in these capacities. The function of language in connection to social and political issues is the subject of discussion in this article. In the process of doing this duty, it demonstrates numerous fascinating properties of three distinct languages. The first of these is the Indonesian language, which is a neutral language that was adopted in Indonesia primarily for uniting the community in a nation that was only being built. The second is the Hebrew language, which has been revived to serve as a primary point of reference for the Jewish people. It has also been made an official language of Israel and has become an essential component of the nation's identity.⁴ Last but not least, there is the Polish language, which is an example of a language that has persisted in spite of the absence of the Polish state and has also developed into a vital component of uniting the Polish society. Although it is used in a political sense, national identity is also considered as a tool of domestic policy enabling the creation and preservation of a consolidated society. It entails allegiance toward a country or state. Every government depends on public opinion, but creating this feeling of devotion is not without difficulties, particularly in multi-ethnic countries, exactly because of the possibility of losing the social stability (Ortmann, 2009: 26).⁵ It has been pointed out by Steve Fenton that ethnic groups are not just collections of individuals who share a culture and a common ancestor. For the purpose of bolstering a sense of community, a sense of "groupness," and a sense of a common destiny, the concepts of origin and culture are rather stimulated and utilized as a reference (Fenton, 2007: 20).⁶ Assuming that the groupings are, in some sense, socially built, it is essential to provide an indication of the alternative responses to the question of who is responsible for the design.

³ Simpson A. (2007a), Indonesia, in. A. Simpson (ed.), *Language and national identity in Asia*, Oxford.

⁴ Hoffman J. M. (2004), *In the Beginning: A Short History of the Hebrew Language*, New York.

⁵ Naban, P.W.J. (1991), Language in education: case of Indonesia, "International Review of Education", Vol. 37, No.1.

⁶ Sutton P. (1991), Educational language planning and linguistic identity, "International Review of Education", Vol. 37, No. 1.



CONCLUSION:

Language shapes national narratives, forges community bonds, and legitimizes political beliefs. This study analyzes how language makes, transmits, and perpetuates national narratives, fostering belonging, community, and political legitimacy. Historical and current examples of national languages and linguistic policies foster unity and suppress minority voices are examined. Nationalism, propaganda, and cultural symbolism demonstrate how language, power, and nation-building pit beliefs against each other. Language may exclude and include, shaping a nation's memory. Language roles include cognitive, instrumental, integrative, and cultural. Language plays a political and social role in building, unifying, and maintaining a nation and defining its identity. Indonesian, Hebrew, and Polish have survived without a state and become fundamental to polish society. National identity is also a domestic policy tool for maintaining a unified society. In addition to sharing a culture and ancestor, ethnic groups use origin and culture to foster a sense of community, groupness, and common destiny.

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