INDONESIAN GOVERNMENT'S ROLES IN DEVELOPING MANDARIN TO IMPROVE BUSINESS, TOURISM, AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

[1]BRITANUGRAH CRYSANTHIA MAHADEWI, [2]CHERYL VANIA BR SITUMEANG

[1,2]Department of Social and Political Science, Airlangga University, Indonesia
E-mail: [1]britanugrah@gmail.com, [2]cherylvania14@gmail.com

Abstract - In the globalization era, which syncs with technology development, China has become one of the developed countries with massive power, peculiarly in the trading industry. This development affects how Mandarin becomes the second international language. As one of the attempts to develop the country, Indonesian government needs to consider the urgency of language education so the communication traffic can be well created. In this study, the authors used a qualitative method with the previous studies and secondary data from the Indonesian government's database as the reference, particularly Mandarin. Previous policies in the second presidential administration affected the development of Mandarin in Indonesia. It banned Chinese and its whole culture including its language utilization in some periodical time. As a country that is dependent on China in many transactional sectors, Indonesia should escalate its awareness of the use of Mandarin in order to create better communication towards China. So later on, the transaction could be done better for the country's development.

Keywords - China, Indonesia, Language, Mandarin

I. INTRODUCTION

China is a country with significant influence for Indonesia in various fields. It is proved in the data that China has the highest import number in Indonesia since 1995, which was worth up to US$40.8 billion [14]. Until 2020, this bilateral cooperation in the business, tourism and technology transfer between China and Indonesia has been going on for 70 years. Evidently, Indonesia is dependent on China in various sectors such as economic and business to invest in infrastructure development plans [1]. Some of the infrastructures were Jakarta-Bandung high-speed railway (2016-2019), Manado-Bitung toll road (2015-2017) and Steam Power Plant (2015-2017) [1].

According to the data from OEC [14], China has occupied the highest number of imports in technology goods such as telephones ($1.95 billion), broadcasting equipment ($1.57 billion) and computers ($1.95 billion). China also planned to take part in Indonesia's tourism sector, it was precedently stated in Tourism and Investment Forum 2020. The plan was to invest in the Toba Lake tourist attraction establishment in North Sumatra. This investment occupied the second place with 32% growth value [2]. Therefore, this data showed Indonesia's dependence on China in business, tourism and technology transfer.Although the second presidential policy used to ban China and its whole culture, now the Indonesian government started to realize the stupendous influence of China in Indonesia. Seeing these facts, the governments now began to take roles in responding to free competition in the era of globalization. They realized that by developing Mandarin language education, it can help them to create better communications toward China.In fact, there are only around 1500 Mandarin teaching staff in Indonesia. Most of them were only in the trilingual schools [18]. This number shows a lack of human resources in developing the utilization of Mandarin. The segmented access to the language education was one of the causes native Indonesian were not aware yet of the Mandarin urges.Besides the exiguous number of human resources in Indonesia's Mandarin development, it became apparent that there is an unsolved socio-cultural issue as the main reason. This dynamic of Mandarin existence and how the governments play roles in developing Mandarin interest the authors to study further.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to historical studies, the negative sentiment among Native Indonesian and Chinese ethnic groups started in the 17th century when Indonesia was colonized by the Netherlands. The Dutch invaders divided Indonesian into several categories: European as the highest race, Chinese as the second and Native Indonesian as the lowest [3 & 5].Owing to that, the Chinese dominated the banking sector and created various business monopoly models [20]. These things were supported by the Dutch, they even created policies appointed Chinese to collect the tax and run the colonial business [6]. As the result, the Chinese ethnic became an exclusive community. Therefore, this discrepancy caused a negative stereotype towards Chinese in Indonesia, such as arrogance, exclusiveness, separateness by living in a real estate area and the unwillingness to be involved in any societal activities. Moreover, Indonesia has been under President Suharto's New Order regime for around 32 years. Thie regime banned Chinese language, public display of characters and cultural

expressions anywhere in Indonesia, allegedly for national unity [17]. It transpired that the sentiment was the same even after years. In Indonesia's second presidential era, Soeharto saw this negative as an opportunity to take advantage from both sides by exploiting the clash between native Indonesian and Chinese.Hoon [8] and Purdey [16] stated that the policy that was made during the regime period, had impacted on most contemporary Chinese Indonesians to go to a come-down. The turning point was when the students of Indonesia protested to demand Suharto's resignation; this tragic event caused much chaos on a large scale, such as the destruction of property and the rape of ethnic Chinese women. Setijadi [17] states that since then, the number of Chinese language courses and programs at Indonesian schools and universities have steadily increased, particularly in areas with a high number of Chinese ethnic populations. Furthermore, after three decades of assimilation, a lot of Chinese Indonesians started to "reconnect" to their identity as Chinese ethnic by learning the Mandarin language. Their awareness of Chinese economic potential was also increasing. Consequently, many of them proposed to their children to master Mandarin for their future careers. This historical fact has reflected the development of foreign language education in Indonesia, especially Mandarin. Thus, language education in Indonesia has been lacking due to the previous government's regulations.May 1998 is a powerful historical marker in China and its development in Indonesia either in social or political context. This incident created an unwelcoming stigma about China in Indonesia. A recent study by Indonesia National Survey Project in 2017 highlighted that Chinese in Indonesia are still viewed negatively especially in their economic privilege and exclusiveness terms. Moreover, some conservative groups were suspected as the perpetrator who had intensified the negative perceptions [11].The stereotype of Chinese Indonesian have more privileges in economic context and their exclusive behavior has made Chinese Indonesians as the targets of the public's frustration and anger [17]. Even though Indonesian's stigma towards Chinese in Indonesia is now getting better since Chinese Indonesians now were able to contribute to the nation's politics. The results of the previous studies have proved that old stereotypes of Chinese ethnic still persist and are perhaps stronger than before.Indonesian governments have shown their awareness of the urges of Mandarin in today's world, it is proven by the number of Indonesian universities providing Mandarin language education. The authors used Universitas Indonesia as the best institution in Indonesia as the sample. As reported in webometrics.info, Universitas Indonesia occupied the 603 numeral rank as the world's best university [21]. However, only a minority of Indonesians were interested in taking the Chinese literature major (sastra China in Bahasa), especially Mandarin majors. LTMPT, as the administrator of Indonesian university examination, reported that in 2021 the number of students who are interested in studying Mandarin is a quarter of English majors [12]. PDDikti also reported that there were only 0.01 % institutions of Mandarin majors in Indonesia, to be specific 60 out of 4538 institutions. Compared to Chinese literature majors, there were only 30 universities that provided Mandarin majors. Moreover, Universitas Indonesia, as the best university in Indonesia, has ceased its operation of Mandarin majors [15]. Another role of the governments was to hold various socializations in the form of seminars regarding Mandarin urges. One of the workshops was held by BPKBM that entitled "The Role of Principals in the Management of Mandarin Learning in Schools" (Peran Kepala Sekolah dalam Pengelolaan Pembelajaran Bahasa Mandarin di Sekolah) which was held in Jakarta in 2010[19]. The seminar was administered for principals of Indonesian schools to improve their knowledge about Mandarin.BKPBM branches are established in all major provinces in Indonesia. One of the branches which is active in creating Mandarin programs is BKPBM Aceh. In 2021, BKPBM Aceh facilitated scholarships for some of their students to universities in China [10]. Seeing these facts, the governments took part by adding more awardees for the scholarships [13].In addition to Mandarin, according to the data from Kemdikbud, Indonesian ministry of education, English was still an elective subject in the current elementary school curriculum. It might be affecting the development of English as the international language in Indonesia. Since most Indonesians are not yet aware of the urges of English, making English as an elective subject is not effective in escalating the use of the foreign language in the nation. Particularly for the substantial languages.Besides, only 113 schools in Indonesia provide Mandarin in their current curriculum. It was only applied by international or trilingual language schools in Indonesia [9]. The number was only 0.025% of the whole number of schools in Indonesia. To be specific, 113 out of 438.682 school units. The number shows that education in Mandarin was still very segmented [4].

III. METHODOLOGY

In this study, the authors used a qualitative approach method. Since the authors wanted to find out about the development of language education in Indonesia, this phenomenon could not be separated from the historical events of Indonesia itself. Thus, the authors also used historical research to find out the causes of Indonesia's language education these days as the effect of its historical stories. This approach used previous studies, journals, observations, and immersions to analyze and interpret data from visual and textual materials and even oral history [22].Besides, the authors used statistical secondary

data from Indonesian government's database as the reference of how the curriculum is these days, especially in the language educational context. Indonesian government's role used as the research object by collecting data about the urgency of Mandarin in the Indonesian Business, Tourism, and Technology Transfer context.

IV. DISCUSSION

Indonesia's dependency on China in multiple sectors seems to oblige the government to move faster in increasing the awareness of Mandarin in Indonesia. However, the governments can never work on this alone, people's willingness to learn Mandarin in order to develop the language is also needed. Nonetheless, the socio-cultural issue has been the root cause of atrocious sentiment among native Indonesians about Mandarin.One of the unresolved socio-cultural issues in the relationship between ethnic Chinese and native Indonesian is the assimilation in national integration context [7]. Before Suharto ruled the country, Indonesian sentiments towards Chinese had worsened. The term non-native is used by Native Indonesian to address Chinese ethnic in Indonesia. This what makes it difficult to assimilate Native Indonesian and Chinese ethnic, even if Suharto's regime had been abolished by Gusdur as the third president of Indonesia.This assimilation issue is caused by the domination of Chinese in various aspects, particularly in the economic field. News on media which was controlled by Suharto aggravated these negative sentiments and it led to the assumption that Indonesian government policy was influenced by Chinese. The sentiment in some way blinded the native from the fact that Indonesia is depended on China in business development fields, technology transfer and tourism. This created the lack of Mandarin urges in Indonesia.In spite of this, the Indonesian government did not remain silent. Evidently, they tried to play an active role in developing Mandarin such as establishing Mandarin majors in several universities, arranging public webinars to socialize Mandarin and creating an organization to coordinate Mandarin education named Badan Koordinasi Pendidikan Bahasa Mandarin (BKPBM).Based on the data above, the authors found 4 (four) weaknesses in the Indonesian government's role in developing the language. First, there was a lack in the awareness of Mandarin major's establishment in Indonesian universities. Also, the capacity of the major was still limited. Therefore, there was a sparse number of Indonesians who took the major. The authors suggest that the governments could establish more of the majors with increased capacity.In addition to the previous point, the second weakness is the government's demand in socializing the Mandarin urges. The sparse number above should be a mass evaluation by the government. Referring to the literature review, the last socialization held by the governments was more than a decade ago [19]. Consequently, the awareness of Mandarin was not appropriately raised.There should be better regular socialization to help solve the issue. It is important to give more access for native Indonesian not only to learn Mandarin, but also to learn other foreign languages and make it less segmented. Yet, according to the literature review above, in Indonesian recent school curriculum English was being a selective subject. This means that the access for native Indonesians to foreign language education, peculiarly Mandarin, was still extremely segmented. The solution suggested for this issue is by doing a regular socialization towards schools. Thus, students would be more aware of the Mandarin urges.Another issue that causes a lack of native Indonesian's interest in taking Mandarin majors is the insufficiency of job prospects in the professional sectors. This insufficiency in some way provoked doubts for native Indonesian to take Mandarin majors. Therefore, the authors found the third weakness in the government's roles. It is the lack of government participation in creating job prospects for Mandarin language bachelors. Owing to that, the authors suggest that the governments need to emphasize the job prospects for Mandarin bachelor, such as teaching staff, since the number of Mandarin professionals would surely affect Indonesian schools to provide Mandarin subjects.The last weakness of the government's role is that as the one who is responsible for the BKPBM there was a poor internal coordination from governments. To be specific, the most prominent educational activities of Mandarin from BKPBM was only in DKI Jakarta and Aceh. Thereby, the governments should pay better attention equally since BKPBM aimed to be a main forum in developing Mandarin.To sum up, Indonesian government's roles in developing Mandarin to improve business, tourism and technology transfer were relatively low. It still needs a lot of improvements to raise native's awareness of Mandarin. Thereby, the governments need to perceive China's accretion of economic numbers as the motivation to raise national utilization of Mandarin so the transactional communication could be done better.

REFERENCES

[1] Andika, M. T., & Aisyah, N. A. (2017). Analisis Politik Luar Negeri Indonesia-China di Era Presiden Joko Widodo: Benturan Kepentingan Ekonomi dan Kedaulatan? Indonesian Perspective, 2(2), 161-179.

[2] Badan Koordinasi Penanaman Modal. (2019), Ini Negara Dengan Investasi Pariwisata Terbanyak di Indonesia, [Online]. Available at: https://www.investindonesia.go.id/id/artikel-investasi/detail/ini-negara-dengan-investasi-pariwisata-terbanyak-di-indonesia [Accessed November 10, 2022]

[3] Chua, C. (2004). Defining Indonesian Chineseness Under the New Order. Journal of Contemporary Asia, 34(4), 465-479.

[4] Data Pokok Pendidikan. (2022). Data Sekolah Nasional – Dapodikdasmen, [Online]. Available at:

https://dapo.kemdikbud.go.id/sp [Accessed November 8, 2022]
[5] Elson, R. E. (2005). Constructing the nation: Ethnicity, race, modernity and citizenship in early Indonesian thought. Asian Ethnicity, 6(3), 145-160. doi: 10.1080/14631360500226556
[6] Giblin, S. (2003). Civil society groups overcoming stereotypes? Chinese Indonesian civil society groups in post-Suharto Indonesia. Asian Ethnicity, 4(3), 353-368. doi: 10.1080/1343900032000117196
[7] Hasbullah. (2013). Pola Hubungan Etnik Cina dengan Masyarakat Pribumi di Bengkalis. Toleransi, 5(1), 23-32.
[8] Hoon, C.-Y. (2008). Chinese Identity in Post-Suharto Indonesia: Culture, Politics and Media. Sussex Academic Press.
[9] International Schools Database. (2022). List of International Schools in Indonesia - 113 schools, [Online]. Available at: https://www.international-schools-database.com/country/indonesia [Accessed November 10, 2022]
[10] Kumparan. (2018). Aceh Punya Prodi Bahasa Mandarin Pada 2021 [Online]. Available at: https://kumparan.com/kumparannews/aceh-punya-prodi-bahasa-mandarin-pada-2021-1537171294636635720/3 [Accessed November 10, 2022]
[11] Kuntjara, E., & Hoon, C.-Y. (2020). Reassessing Chinese Indonesian stereotypes: two decades after Reformasi. South East Asia Research, 5.
[12] LTMPT. (2022). DAFTAR PRODI SBMPTN, [Online]. Available at: https://sidata-ptn.ltmpt.ac.id/ptn_sb.php?ptn=321 [Accessed November 8, 2022]
[13] Media Aceh. (2019). BKPBM Tawarkan Kuota Beasiswa Kuliah di China Untuk Aceh [Online]. Available at: https://mediaaceh.co/2019/07/22/bkpbm-tawarkan-kuota-beasiswa-kuliah-di-china-untuk-aceh/ [Accessed November 10, 2022]
[14] OEC. (2020). Observatory for Economic Complexity, [Online]. Available at: https://oec.world/en/profile/bilateral-country/chn/partner/idn [Accessed November 9, 2022]
[15] Pangkalan Data Pendidikan Tinggi. (2022). Perguruan Tinggi, [Online]. Available at: https://pddikti.kemdikbud.go.id/search/Bahasa%20mandarin [Accessed November 8, 2022]
[16] Purdey, J. (2006). Anti-Chinese Violence in Indonesia, 1996–1999. Singapore University Press.
[17] Setijadi, C. (2017). Chinese Indonesians in the Eyes of the Pribumi Public. Perspective, 11.
[18] Sutami, H. (2016). Fungsi dan Kedudukan Bahasa Mandarin di Indonesia. Kajian Budaya, 212-239. doi:10.17510/paradigma.v2i2.28
[19] Tribun News. (2010). Pemerintah Tekankan Pentingnya Bahasa Mandarin di Sekolah [Online]. Available at: https://www.tribunnews.com/nasional/2010/05/22/pemerintah-tekankan-pentingnya-bahasa-mandarin-di-sekolah [Accessed November 10,2022]
[20] Turner, S., & Allen, P. (2007). Chinese Indonesians in a rapidly changing nation: Pressures of ethnicity and identity. Asia Pacific Viewpoint, 48(1), 112-127. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-8373.2007.00334.x
[21] Webometrics. (2022). Indonesia | Ranking Web of Universities: Webometrics ranks 30000 institutions [Online]. Available at: https://www.webometrics.info/en/asia/indonesia%20 [Accessed November 10, 2022]
[22] Zohrabi, M. (2013). Mixed Method Research: Instruments, Validity, Reliability, and Reporting Findings. Theory and Practice in Language Studies 3(2). 10.4304/tpls.3.2.254-262

★★★