

In what ways are indonesian nationalism assignment



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In what ways are Indonesian nationalism and the development of the Indonesian language related to each other? You can choose to look at this from a combination of different historical, political and/or social perspectives. The Indonesian language had been used as an important symbol of unity during the expansion of the Indonesian nationalist movement.

As Indonesia is famous for its great diversity of more than 200 major ethnic groups (Vickers 2005: 1) and 600 languages (Papaw 2009: 1), it was hard for the people of Indonesia to find an element that they all shared as 'Indonesian'. The Indonesian language, or Bahasa Indonesia, the official national language of Indonesia, is a standardized version of Malay, and the choice of Malay as the national language to present the spoils of Indonesian has a variety of reasons.

The link between the Indonesian nationalism and Indonesian language will be discussed in this essay in a combination of political, social, and historical perspectives from 1900 to 1949, which will be separated into three eras: the rise of Indonesian nationalism during the Dutch colonization period 1900 to 1942, the Japanese colonization period from 1942 to 1945 when the desire of independence grew rapidly, and the Indonesian National Revolution period from 1945 to the final recognition of Indonesian independence by the United Nations in 1949.

The idea of uniting the East Indian Archipelagos as one nation did not appear till the middle of the twentieth century (Vickers 2005: 2), which explains why the choice of Malay as the national language has such

significant meaning to Indonesian nationalism due to the lack of common tradition or cultural identities among the diverse Indonesian ethnic groups.

The geographic boundaries of Indonesia nowadays were first set up by the Dutch as they combined the islands they conquered together as a single colony of the Netherlands East Indies', and it was also under Dutch colonization when the basic modernization was done in Indonesia (Vickers 2005: 2-3).

The Dutch also increased the importance of Malay as choosing it as administration language due to its historical position as the lingua franca of the archipelagos (Sneered 2003: 82-31 however Dutch language was still the language used for higher education and scientific texts, which meant Malay would not have the ability to serve as a modern enough language for the new social situations (Remington 1998: 94).

Efforts were done trying to modernize and standardize the Malay language, for example the Ball Pussycat (Publishing House), was a powerful force in spreading the standardized Malay with its numerous numbers of Malay publications that cover a wide range of topics that were 'modern, informative and educational' (Arlington 1998: 95-7). Moreover, Dutch gave Netherlands developed their own social groups, and only the societies that accept all ethnic groups can gain support, which started the consciousness of a common identity as 'Indonesian' and the desire of an independent and unitary new nation (Remington 1998: 100).

After having returned to Indonesia, educated Indonesian elites started to form political associations to resist the colonization, for instance the Part <https://assignbuster.com/in-what-ways-are-indonesian-nationalism-assignment/>

National Indonesia (Indonesian National Party)(Panders 1977: 301-3), that assembled the intellectuals and were the bellwether of the development of Indonesian nationalism. (Remington 1998: 100). According to Vickers(2005: 2-3), it was during this period that Indonesian people started to regard themselves as Indonesian which marks the beginning of Indonesian nationalism.

In 1928 in an event of significant importance in Indonesian history, The Second Indonesian Youth Congress, attended by ethnically diverse educated youths had occurred, and the standardized Malay language was chosen as the national language of the future nation with a new name: Indonesian. The famous the Oath of the Youth' were announced, and in the third oath: We the son of and daughters of Indonesia uphold the language of unity, the Indonesian language. ', the political importance of language, according to the

Indonesian nationalists, can be clearly shown(Remington 1998: 52, 101-3).

To sum up, the Dutch colonization period is when Indonesian nationalism and identity started to form, even though suppressed by the Dutch government. The Japanese occupation had a profound influence on Indonesian history as the Japanese government gave the Indonesian nationalists a chance to gain leadership, enabled the Indonesian to fight against the Dutch during the Indonesian National Revolution (Sat 1994: 7).

At the end of Japanese occupation, Indonesia had been prepared with indigenous defense force, consolidated Islam societies, and a growing number of politically active young people (Sat 1994: 7), which are important factors

for the success of Indonesian independence. However, this does not mean that the Japanese occupation period was a bed of roses, but instead a time full of suffering and misery (Sat 1994: 9).

Important changes occurred during this period, for instance, the Indonesian were freed from the Dutch colonial authorities, and the use of Dutch in education and administration were replaced with Indonesian as the Japanese's ultimate goal of using Japanese as the administration language was unrealistic at the time (Vickers 2005: 4). The language planning started in 1942 is particularly important in the development of Indonesian language as the translation of texts and invention of new terminologies had helped modernize Indonesian and make the language capable as a national language (Sneered 2003: 9; Listenable 1974, cited in Vickers 2005: 4).

However at the time, Indonesian was not a very common language among native Indonesian peasants since the language planning focused mainly on formal written texts instead of the everyday spoken language, as according to Sat (1994: 58), the nationalists Indonesian propaganda were not very effective as people could not understand the formal Indonesian used by the nationalists. But it is beyond question that the choice of Indonesian as their common language for administration had been certain among Indonesian nationalists.

On the other hand, the Indonesian nationalists falsely believed the Japanese propaganda Japanese's intention was to make sure that Indonesia was in a total war structure' to maximum the resources and benefits the Japanese can receive for their own war (Sat 1994: 9-10). Nevertheless, even though

pursuing totally different goal, the Indonesian nationalist and Japanese expansionist shared the same opposition toward Western imperialism, thus creating room for cooperation (Sat 1994: 36).

The Japanese gave local Indonesian opportunity to gain power due to two main reasons: firstly, it was believed that instead of letting nationalists hold secret gatherings by banning all political activities, delegation of certain rights can help Japanese authorities to gain full control of the nationalist movement, secondly, Java was regarded by the Japanese as a paramount strategic important spot. The Japanese wanted to make sure that they could gain full-support from the Indonesian for their own war (Sat 1994: 9-10, 50).

It was also during this time period that some of the more detailed characteristics of a concrete concept of Indonesia as a solid nation were brought up while nationalist were trying to develop new organizations. For instance, the nationalists tried to use the Indonesian flag, songs, and most importantly the name 'Indonesia' while forming their groups, though mostly unacceptable to the Japanese authorities (Sat 1994: 51).

To conclude, the development of both Indonesian nationalism and language grew at a significant pace during the Japanese colonization period, making these three years a turning point of the Indonesian society, setting the foundation of Indonesian strength that would later help support the Indonesian throughout the Indonesian National Revolution.

Right after the Japanese lost WW2, the Indonesian nationalists declared the independence of Indonesia and Bahasa Indonesian was declared as the national language (Vickers 2005: 85-6). It is worth noticing that the <https://assignbuster.com/in-what-ways-are-indonesian-nationalism-assignment/>

declaration of independence was written and read in Indonesian, once again marking the significance of the Indonesian language among the Indonesian nationalists. There are three main reasons why Indonesian was chosen and could easily be accepted by the Indonesian people as the national language.

Firstly, Indonesian language had been regarded by the Indonesian as ' a vehicle and symbol of the movement for political independence' (Lowlander 1990, cited in Papaw 2009: 1), secondly it's ethnically neutral status and UN-nativities meaner none of the prominent ethnic groups can receive advantages, and thirdly the sense of freedom and equality Indonesian provides as the language doesn't require different polite forms that mark the difference between ranks, gender, and status(Papaw 2009: 1).

As stated by Anderson (1999: 3), " Nationalism arises when, in a certain physical territory, the inhabitants begin to feel that they share a common destiny, a common future". The declaration of independence marked the success of Indonesian nationalism and Indonesian people were excited at the idea of their own nation. Nevertheless, the Dutch rejected to recognize the independence of Indonesia and for the following three chaotic years, the new nation was rife with arm conflicts, political negotiations and diplomatic actions (Vickers 2005: 85-8, Robs 2002: 36).

And due to the conflict tit Dutch, the Indonesian people realized the close relationship they all shared together and the desire of having their own nation and deciding their own fate struggle from 1945-1949, the nationalist not only achieved their goal as building a internationally recognized new nation but also started to build the national and cultural identity of

Indonesian, and the promotion of the Indonesian language was an essential part of this identity building and planning.

In conclusion, the development of the Indonesian language had a strong causal relationship with the growth of Indonesian nationalism. It was not only used as a common language for effective communication, but also used as a national symbol and pride of Indonesia. Having started as lingua franca along the East Indian Archipelagos, the characteristic of Malay being an out-group and UN-native language makes it an impartial choice as none of the major powerful ethnic groups can obtain advantages. Dating from the Dutch colonization period, Indonesian nationalism grew steadily even though being oppressed by the authorities and Indonesian have managed to build the framework of Indonesian national identity with standardized Malay being chosen as the Indonesian language for the future nation. This idea of a united nation as Indonesia developed firmer under the Japanese occupation, and the promotion of Indonesian became more frequent and the language had become more mature and modern with the translation of educational and scientific texts.

During the Indonesian National Revolution period from 1945 to 1949, the consolidation of Indonesian people marks the success of nationalism and led the birth of a new country. During this time the Indonesian language had been regarded as a symbol presenting the Indonesian spirit and had a significant status for unification of different ethnic groups. To sum up, the development of Indonesian nationalism and language have a crucial interrelationship, and had successfully been effective in uniting the nation and creating a strong national identity.

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