

The Sustainability of the Kadazandusun Language: Policy Entrepreneurs' Strategies and Actions

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Abstract

Beginning in 1970, language policy in Malaysia excluded the Kadazandusun language instruction. In 1990, there was an initiative to revive the Kadazandusun language from the political domain so that the objective of ensuring future generations would not forget their mother tongue could be achieved. Henceforth, Bahasa Kadazandusun (BKD) has been introduced in the Malaysian education system since the year 1997. This article explores the strategies and actions employed by policy entrepreneurs in the political domain to sustain the Kadazandusun language. The results show that the two strategies employed by the policy entrepreneurs are the publication and availability of Kadazandusun works and language in a variety of settings. On top of that, they undertook several actions such as collaboration with stakeholders, supporting and financing Kadazandusun language initiatives, lobbying, engagement with political parties, and advocacy for standardization. The two strategies and most actions stated are part of the policy process, except for the policy evaluation stage, while there are a couple of actions that are initiated outside of the policy cycle. Therefore, to sustain the Kadazandusun language, the role of policy entrepreneurs is important.

Keywords: Policy entrepreneur, language policy, Kadazandusun language, Sabah

INTRODUCTION

Received: 1 August 2024
Accepted: 1 September 2024
Published: 31 October 2024

Beginning in 1970, language policy in Malaysia excluded the Kadazandusun language instruction. The exclusion was due to converting the Native Voluntary schools to become national schools that followed the national education system in Malaysia (Barlocco, 2013). As a result, many Kadazandusun parents tend to converse in Malay with their children thus producing a new generation that is unable to speak in Kadazandusun.

In 1990 there was an initiative to revive the Kadazandusun language from the political domain. A Sabahan member of Parliament, Tan Sri Bernard Dompok, expressed the need for a subject called Bahasa Kadazandusun to be taught in schools. Subsequently, the subject was offered in 1997 to primary schools and in 2006 for secondary schools. Later, it was offered as a subject to be included in public examinations, i.e. PMR (Penilaian Menengah Rendah) and SPM (Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia) in 2009 and 2010 respectively. Upon such offers, the objective to ensure

future generations would not forget their mother tongue could be achieved (“Kadazandusun community in”, 2018).

Henceforth, Bahasa Kadazandusun (BKD) has been introduced in the Malaysian education system since 1997. Therefore, the objective of this research article is firstly to identify and discuss the strategies used by policy entrepreneurs in the political domain, that contributed to the revival and sustainability of the Kadazandusun language. Secondly, it is to explore their actions to ensure the sustainability of the Kadazandusun language.

Next, we examine existing literature on language planning for various languages, particularly focusing on indigenous languages in education and the specific case of language planning in Malaysia, including the development of the Kadazandusun language. Subsequently, it outlines the chosen methodology which includes an interview (Frankel, 2000) and document analysis (Bowen, 2009), presents the findings, and engages in a comprehensive discussion. Finally, this paper concludes by synthesizing the discussion and offering insights derived from the analysis.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Language Planning for other Languages

To understand the sustainability of the Kadazandusun language, one can refer to various language planning literature from other countries as well as within Malaysia. In Singapore, the language policy is evident in the area of media, the education system, and specific language campaigns. In the print and broadcast media, all four main languages – English, Mandarin, Tamil, and Malay have their spots in this domain albeit to a varying degree (Rappa & Wee, 2006, p. 77). English has the most air time and is in most printed newspapers while Mandarin is broadcasted in two channels. As for Malay and Tamil, they are given limited airtime due to their relatively small audience base. In the education system domain, Singaporeans are subjected to the bilingual language policy which subjects every student to learn English and their respective mother tongue. Singapore’s language policy is also done through various campaigns such as the ‘Speak Mandarin campaign’ and the ‘Speak Good English movement’ (Ng, 2011).

Before the formation of Malaysia, the Iban language was maintained through the efforts of the British. It is a language widely spoken in Sarawak. The Iban language has been taught in schools in Sarawak since the British colonial period, but challenges seem to seep in in terms of implementation and lack of reading materials (Chemalin Anak Osup, 2015). On 15 September 1958, the British government established the ‘Borneo Language Bureau’ (BLB) with the aim of compiling oral literature (Jimbun Tawai,

1998). The efforts of the BLB were successful in getting more than 60 novels written in Iban published (Jimbun Tawai, 1998).

However, the Iban language faced a significant challenge when the Borneo Language Bureau was taken over by the Dewan Bahasa Pustaka, resulting in the freezing of all publishing activities related to the Iban languages of Borneo (Chemalin Anak Osup, 2015). This situation led to a scarcity of reading materials in the Iban language. In the mid-80s, there was an initiative to sustain it. The 'Tun Jugah Foundation' has played a pivotal role in efforts to revitalize and preserve the Iban language. Established in 1985, the Tun Jugah Foundation (TJF) has undertaken extensive initiatives, including gathering, recording, translating, and explaining Iban folklore. These efforts aim to make Iban literature and the ethnic language more accessible to modern researchers and future generations of Iban speakers (Chemalin Anak Osup, 2015). Tun Jugah Foundation has pioneered the sustainability of the Iban language.

To sum up, it was historically employed as the official language of government, used in official letters, legal rulings, announcements, notices, and even within court proceedings (Smith, 2003). Furthermore, it served as a lingua franca, facilitating communication with diverse ethnic communities. Nowadays, the Iban language finds application across various domains. Institutions such as the church and Radio Malaysia Sarawak have shown a keen interest in promoting the use of the Iban language ('Perkembangan Bahasa Iban', 2013).

Language Policy in Malaysia is formulated by the federal government and is made official in The National Language Acts 1963/67. Malay is considered the official language of Malaysia, while English is considered the second language of Malaysia. However, with the different sociocultural and demographic backgrounds, East Malaysian states (Sabah and Sarawak) have their native languages, different from those in West Malaysia (Peninsular Malaysia). With the dominant usage of the Malay and English languages, there emerges an increasing identity consciousness to preserve their native language from deterioration.

In Malaysia, language policy emanates from the Razak Report which then became integral in the Mahathir Report, the New Education Policy, the New Development Policy (NDP), the New Economic Policy (NEP), and the National Cultural Policy; for example, Malay and English have been selected as Malaysia's official languages (Rappa & Wee, 2006, p. 26).

Language Planning for Indigenous Languages in Education

Language planning for nation-building has been the primary focus of most countries during post-colonial times. Most countries would adopt the dominant language of the majority people of the newly established nation-states as well as the English language. Every country has undergone a language planning process either through an explicit process, such as Malaysia (Rappa & Wee, 2006, p. 29) and Singapore (Rappa & Wee, 2006, p. 77), or an implicit process, such as the United States (Huebner, Davis & Bianco, 1999).

Language planning could ensure the sustainability of indigenous language education such as the Maori (Benton, 1988, 1989, 2015), Welsh (Edwards, 1984, 1993), and Hawaiian (Wilson, 1998; Brenzinger & Heinrich, 2013; Yamauchi, Ceppi, Lau-Smith, 1999). Much of the success of language planning is through acquisition planning which involves the implementation of language-in-education (Kaplan & Baldauf Jr, 2014). It is often the most essential resource to bring about language survival. For Maori, the language revitalization process started in school. It was initiated by Dr. C. E. Beeb who was the Director of Education before he left office in 1960. He laid the foundations for the Maori language to have a greater role in the school system (Benton, 1989). The education system was sought as the solution for the maintenance of the language. The language has also been revitalized in Maori radio stations.

For Welsh, Edwards (1993) elaborated that the first Welsh-medium school opened in 1939 in Aberystwyth. The Welsh-medium school has gained government recognition through the passing of the Education Act in 1988 as they have emphasized the crucial role of education in the extension and revitalization of the language. Apart from education, the language also exists in the domain of media. Welsh language programs not only attracted Welsh speakers but also non-Welsh speakers. The media has become the primary importance as learning and maintaining the language is not just for the sake of the language alone, but for varying experiences that are gained. This could also replace Welsh in the religious domain as religious practice has become rare in Wales. So, the media organization serves as an avenue for the language to flourish.

For the Hawaiian language, Larry Kimura is a prominent figure in the revival of the language (Brenzinger & Heinrich, 2013). The founders have introduced primary education in Hawaiian by approaching the state legislature to change the law while maneuvering around possible legal sanctions. In 1987, it was finally recognized in the public school system as streams in public English-medium schools. The Hawaiian language has been offered in tertiary institutions such as the one offered in the University of Hawai'i at Hilo in 1997. The success achieved by the immersion schools has resulted in more political support on the state and federal levels. The survival of the language largely depends on the expansion of a close-knit network within which

Hawaiian is utilized exclusively in all domains. For now, Hawaiian language revival is in the first phase whereby the number of families using the language has been constantly increasing.

For the Indigenous languages in Indonesia, the country faces the challenge of preserving its indigenous languages, with 11 out of 71 declared extinct, particularly in Maluku, North Maluku, and Papua. Efforts to revitalize these languages include integrating them into multilingual education, as seen with the Laha language, where a study developed materials and teaching methods to incorporate Laha alongside Indonesian and English in elementary schools (Bin Tahir et. al., 2019). For the Papuan Tabla language, community-based initiatives focusing on research, documentation, and family-centered learning have proven effective, demonstrating that community involvement is crucial (Iskandarsyah Siregar, 2022). Additionally, youth engagement and technology play a pivotal role in language revitalization, as studies show that involving young people as language activists, leveraging online platforms, using artificial intelligence can revitalize sustain indigenous languages (Kristian Adi Putra, 2018, Herlambang Gilang Setyo Nugroho et.al., 2022, Gazali et.al., 2023). These combined approaches such as educational integration, community involvement, policy decentralization, and youth-ed technology initiatives, offer a comprehensive model for preserving and revitalizing Indonesia's linguistic heritage.

Malaysia

The most significant language planning for indigenous language in Malaysia is in Sarawak. Back in the day, the Iban language was introduced as an examination subject in the Sarawak Junior Certificate, initially referred to as 'Asian language.' However, there arose a debate surrounding this terminology, leading to its change to 'Iban language' in 1963. Following this adjustment, the subject was incorporated into the school curriculum alongside other subjects (Chemalin Anak Usop, 2015).

While the Iban language had already been taught in teacher training colleges, it was not until 1988 that the Central Curriculum Committee formally included the subject in the national curriculum ('Perkembangan Bahasa Iban di Sarawak', 2013). The Director of Education Sarawak issued a circular letter (Circular JPN35/JP/1585/1987) on May 13, 1987, granting permission to teach this subject in primary schools and make it a KBSM subject. However, this was not a subject for the UPSR exam at that time, which was why textbooks had not been published yet. Despite this, courses were being held to support teachers in their teaching and learning efforts (Winnie Anak Antau & Khairul Azhar Jamaludin, 2023). The Malaysian Education Ministry undertakes the responsibility for implementing the Iban language in education, specifically the Curriculum Development Centre. The language is now being evaluated at various educational levels, including PT3, SPM, Diploma, and Bachelor's Degree programs at

Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS), and Institut Pendidikan Guru in Sarawak (Winnie Anak Antau & Khairul Azhar Jamaludin, 2023).

i. Development of the Kadazandusun language in Sabah

Sabah politics has always been characterized by the Kadazandusun leaders and the Kadazandusun community as a whole. After independence, The Sabah Alliance was formed which was led by Tun Fuad Stephens. The preservation of the language, together with an overall culture that is tied to the language, went through a dynamic process. According to Barlocco (2013), the preservation process was active in the 1950s before Malaysia was formed. Schools used the Kadazan and Dusun language, alongside English as the medium of instruction in schools initiated by Roman Catholic priests (Dayu Sansalu, 2014) which was set up for local Kadazandusun children.

However, the language went through a major setback in the 1970s when the Malayisation process took place during Tun Mustapha's administration as well as the implementation of the National Education Act. The said act was to have Malay as the medium of instruction in schools. From 1970, the policies dealing with language included the suspension of all Kadazan language (a particular dialect from the district of Penampang and Papar) teaching through the conversion of the Native Voluntary schools, which made part of the national education system (Barlocco, 2013). In the 1980s, the Kadazan culture then went through a cultural revival because there was a heightened realization of the endangered status of the Kadazan language.

Efforts to revive the Kadazandusun language (a term used to standardize the different Kadazan and Dusun dialects for formal learning in schools) were initiated in 1997, through electoral promise of the National Front or, in the Malay language, Barisan Nasional (BN); the BN government introduced Bahasa Kadazandusun as a complementary subject in schools (Barlocco, 2013). Before that, in November 1988, the then federal education minister, Anwar Ibrahim announced the teaching of Iban and "kadazan" in Malaysian schools. Hence, the standardized Kadazandusun was expected to be taught. However, questions arise after introducing the Kadazandusun language into Sabah schools whether it is too late to save it as many parents have chosen to speak Malay or English with their children (Reid, 1997).

In hindsight, Tun Fuad Stephens, serving as a community leader during that era, alongside other political figures, initiated efforts to preserve the Kadazan language in the 1950s. Before the enactment of the National Education Act, establishing local schools that used the Kadazan language as the medium of instruction did not encounter any challenges. Although Kadazan language medium schools ceased to exist after the implementation of the National Education Act, there was a growing realization of the

language's endangered status, which ignited a revival of efforts to safeguard and promote the Kadazan language.

For language planning, the government decides which languages should be fully utilized in public domains. However, collective awareness of some indigenous groups within the same nation-state seems to be demanding for their indigenous language to also be a part of the public sphere. How such demands can be realized is through the education system. Therefore, previously, language planning was a top-down endeavor but recently, it is more of a bottom-up approach in implementing language planning and policy, especially regarding indigenous languages that have been excluded in language planning and language policy early independently. This shows that whether it is a top-down or bottom-up approach, it indicates that some individuals and groups have advocated for the revitalization of the language. The efforts to revitalize the language can be categorized into different stages of the policy process.

ii. Sustaining the Kadazandusun Language through the Policy Process

Knill and Tosun (2020) and Hill (2021) stated that public policy analysis emphasizes the content of policies. Rather than focusing on institutions or processes, the research focus is on the analysis of a political system's outputs, i.e. the decisions, measures, programs, strategies, and courses of action adopted by the government or legislature. The most common approach is to distinguish different policy stages that can be incorporated into a process model: the well-known "policy cycle." This model depicts the policy process as a series of political activities, with the following phases: (1) problem definition and agenda-setting; (2) policy formulation and adoption; (3) implementation; and (4) evaluation (with the possibility of policy termination or revision).

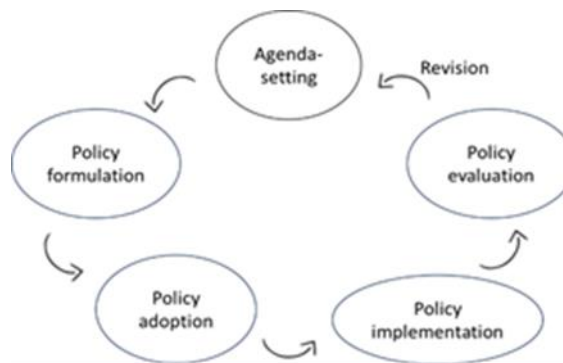


Figure 1: The Policy Process Model
Source: Adopted from Anderson et al. (2011))

One of the first academics to use the term "entrepreneur" regarding the public sector was John Kingdon (1984); in his book *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies*, he first used the term "policy entrepreneur." Mintrom (2020) explored policy entrepreneurs in terms of what they do, the reason they do it, and their contributions to the process of dynamic policy change. Research on policy entrepreneurs has been done in various sectors such as environmental policy change (Petridou et al., 2021), economic development (Schneider & Teske, 1992), education (Mintrom, 2000; Kang, 2007), foreign policy (Blavoukos & Bourantonis, 2012), social policy (Hammond, 2013), water governance (Brouwer, 2015), and circular economy (Droege et Al., 2022).

Policy entrepreneurs do not necessarily only consist of an individual, but they can consist of a group (Huteima & Meijerink, 2009), a politician, street-level bureaucrats (Arnold, 2015; Frisch-Aviram & Cohen, 2018), private citizens (Callaghan & Sylvester, 2021), and civil society (Gautam Prateek et al., 2022). The notion advanced by Kingdon (1984) and Mintrom (1997) is that policy entrepreneurs are more easily recognized by their actions than by the positions they occupy. They can also use narratives to influence policy change (Cartwright, 2017).

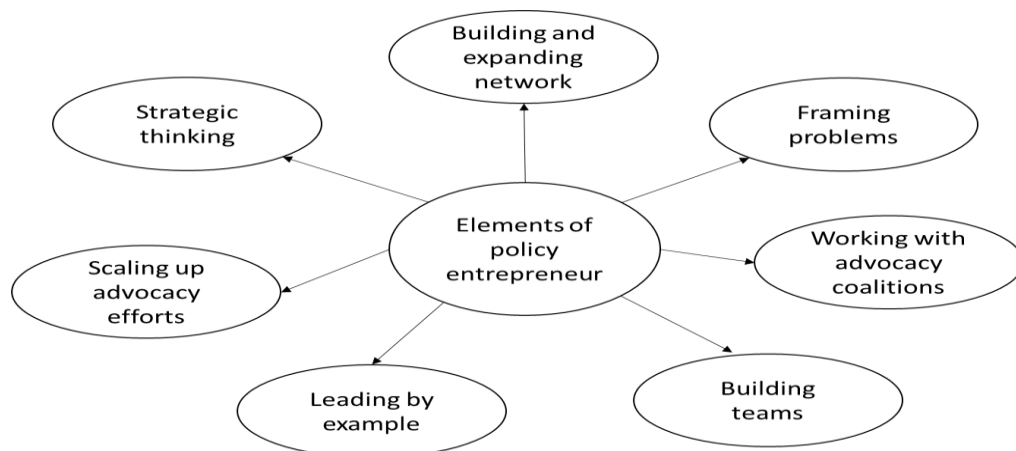


Figure 2: The elements of policy entrepreneur
Source: Adopted from Mintrom, 2020.

The seven elements constitute policy entrepreneurship which have been laid out by Mintrom (2020). These elements are also aligned with the actions or strategies that have been employed at any stage of the policy process. The first element, 'thinking strategically,' defines policy entrepreneurship as seizing 'windows of opportunity' when

political conditions, problem-solving needs, and policy solutions align. This element aligns with the agenda-setting stage. The second element, 'framing problems,' involves policy entrepreneurs shaping issues interactively by signalling crises, highlighting policy flaws, and garnering support beyond the problem's immediate scope. This can be aligned with the agenda-setting stage in the policy process as well.

The third element, 'building teams' is expanded to two variations which are 'building and expanding networks' and 'working with advocacy coalitions'. This element can be included in the policy formulation, adoption, and implementation stage. The fourth element, 'building and expanding networks,' relates to policy entrepreneurs engaging in relevant policy networks across multiple jurisdictions offering valuable talent and expertise to support projects. This can be considered as an expansion of the third element (building teams) and can be seen in the policy adoption and implementation stage. The fifth element is 'working with advocacy coalitions' which refers to members' common ideas on key policy issues that constitute the 'glue' that ties an advocacy coalition together. This can be included in the policy formulation, adoption, and implementation stages.

The sixth element, 'leading by example,' enhances policy change credibility. Overcoming decision-makers' risk aversion is crucial for a meaningful change. Policy entrepreneurs reduce perceived risk by engaging others to explain policy viability. This element can be included in agenda setting, policy formulation, and policy adoption. The seventh element is 'scaling-up advocacy efforts and supporting policy change' which frequently necessitates obtaining desirable changes in one jurisdiction before utilizing those changes as evidence to advocate changes in other jurisdictions. This is aligned with the policy implementation stage. The term 'elements' has been used by several researchers as 'strategies' (Navot & Cohen, 2015; Prateek et al., 2021).

METHODOLOGY

Interviews and document reviews were employed as data collection methods. The interview is a means of gauging the strategies and actions that the policy entrepreneurs have employed to sustain the Kadazandusun language in schools. The purpose of employing an interview is to allow the researcher to gain a deeper insight into what was the 'agenda' and how they went about the policy process as policy entrepreneurs (Frankel, 2000). The interview with Tan Sri Bernard Dompok was done on 9th of March 2023, while the interview with YB Datuk Seri Panglima Wilfred Madius Tangau was on 24th of April 2023. The interview questions are semi-structured and it took about one hour to interview them.

Since the data collection sources also consisted of documents and archival records such as books, newspapers, and parliament Hansards, document analysis was the approach to corroborate and extrapolate the data collected and form a conclusion for this study (Bowen, 2009).

Policy entrepreneurs who are explicitly involved in and have inquired about the Kadazandusun language sustainability, revitalization, and preservation are the following:

Tan Sri Bernard Dompok (Member of Parliament P. 174 Penampang 1986 – 1994)
YB Datuk Seri Panglima Wilfred Madius Tangau (Member of Parliament P. 149 Tuaran 1999 - present).

FINDINGS

Findings related to strategies and actions employed are presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1:
Summary of strategies and actions for Political Domain and Education

Domain	Strategies	Actions
Political	Publication and Availability of Kadazandusun works	- Collaboration with stakeholders - Supporting and financing Kadazandusun language initiatives
	Language preservation in a variety of settings	- Lobbying - Engagement with political parties - Advocacy for standardization - Supporting and financing Kadazandusun language initiatives

Strategies used by the policy entrepreneurs who was/is in the political domain

i. Language preservation in a variety of settings

According to the table, policy entrepreneurs in this domain stress the value of keeping the Kadazandusun language alive. Although the majority of Kadazandusun ethnic speak Malay well, they realize that efforts must be made to preserve the Kadazandusun language. To implement this technique, the language use must be encouraged in a variety of settings, including literature, the classroom, and internet forums.

ii. Publication and Availability of Kadazandusun work

Based on table 1, the strategy indicates that award-winning works by Kadazandusun authors are published as books. This plan intends to aid speakers of the language and offer school children reading resources to support language survival.

Actions taken by the policy entrepreneurs

i. Lobbying

Following the table, policy entrepreneurs were essential in promoting the survival of the Kadazandusun language. In the Federal Cabinet, Tan Sri Bernard Dompok, proposed and enlisted the help of powerful individuals, including Anwar Ibrahim and his successor, Tan Sri Dr. Sulaiman bin Daud, who both held the Minister of Education portfolio at the time. To secure a unanimous choice by the community regarding the standard dialect that should be used to teach Kadazandusun, the policy entrepreneurs extensively engaged with important stakeholders, such as organizations that represent the Kadazandusun community which are the Kadazandusun Cultural Association (KDCA) and the United Sabah Dusun Association (USDA).

ii. Engagement with political parties

In line with Table 1, the involvement of political parties and politicians in the formulation of the language policy is enacted. Political support for the language policy problem was gained thanks in part to the efforts of the UPKO Party Congress on 20th March 1995 and Tan Sri Bernard Dompok.

iii. Collaboration with stakeholders

Table 1 demonstrates that in addition to the KDCA and United Sabah Dusun Association (USDA), as policy entrepreneurs in the political domain, Tan Sri Bernard Dompok and Dato Seri Madius Tangau also worked with linguists and academics in higher education. The Kadazandusun Language Foundation (KLF), and cooperation with universities and institutes are the results of these partnerships. Universities (including UMS, UPSI, and IPGs) as well as the Kadazandusun Language Foundation (previously known as Kadazan Language Centre), and the KDCA all made substantial contributions to the advancement of the language policy agenda. This demonstrates the value of forming alliances and collaborations with parties with an interest in sustaining the Kadazandusun language. Apart from that, the goal of policy entrepreneurs is to participate in the processes of formulating policies while working with numerous stakeholders. They interact with local officials, participate in symposiums, and make sure that manifestos and policy discussions reflect their concerns and recommendations.

iv. Advocacy for standardization

Based on Table 1, efforts to standardize the Kadazandusun language and incorporate it into the education system are evident. For the Kadazan Dusun language to be taught in schools, Dato Seri Madius Tangau pushed for its standardization. Additionally, he advocated for the word "Kadazan Dusun" to be used to popularise and raise awareness of the language. He did this by writing to mainstream newspapers such as the Daily Express. This reflects the initiatives taken by policy entrepreneurs to develop prominence for the language and a standardized framework. Policy entrepreneurs and stakeholders, including Dato Seri Madius Tangau and the KCA, played a vital role in achieving this goal. The symposium organized by KCA resulted in the adoption of the Bundu-Liwan dialect as the standard Kadazandusun language to be taught in schools. The involvement of educational institutions such as IPGs and IPG Kent further exemplifies the commitment to language education.

v. Supporting and financing Kadazandusun language initiatives

Based on Table 1, initiatives about the Kadazan Dusun language received financial backing from both Tan Sri Bernard Dompok and Dato Seri Madius Tangau. They obtained funding from outside organizations such as the Canadian Student Organization and distributed resources for tasks including helping composers and vocalists as well as teaching, researching, and publishing. The importance of policy entrepreneurs in securing funding and maintaining the viability of language-related initiatives is highlighted by this. In order to encourage more Kadazan-Dusun authors to submit their works and write bestsellers, one tactic is to double the prize money for a book writing contest. This is intended to encourage author engagement and advance Kadazan-Dusun literature and language.

DISCUSSION

The discussion section is based on the findings stated in Table 1 and the findings will be discussed based on the policy process model.

Publication and Availability of Kadazandusun Works

The strategy aimed at increasing the publication and availability of the Kadazandusun literature revolves around a writing competition known as the 'Tan Sri Bernard Dompok Kadazandusun Language Literary Award.' Its primary objective is to foster contributions from writers to enrich the realm of the Kadazandusun literature. This strategy aligns seamlessly with how the Iban language, an indigenous language in Sarawak, expanded its literary collection through the Tun Jugah Foundation (Chemalin Anak Osup, 2015).

This strategy's overarching goal is to support speakers of the Kadazandusun language and provide the Kadazandusun community with ample reading materials, ultimately bolstering the language's survival. In his capacity as a policy entrepreneur, Tan Sri Bernard Dompok lent his endorsement to a novel writing competition that bore his name. This gesture underscores his commitment to supporting and funding initiatives aimed at preserving the Kadazandusun language as one of the actions. It stands as a tribute to his unwavering dedication in this regard, a recognition organized by the Kadazandusun Language Foundation (KLF).

The establishment of the 'Tan Sri Bernard Dompok Kadazandusun Language Literary Award' served as a testament to honour his tireless efforts. This accolade was conceived to acknowledge and inspire the writing talents of the Kadazandusun people within the realm of the Kadazandusun literature. Beyond the symbolic gesture, Tan Sri Bernard Dompok's association with KLF not only signifies his collaboration within advocacy coalitions, as highlighted by Mintrom (2020), but also underscores the ability of policy entrepreneurs at the micro-implementation level to respond to macro-level policies by creating and executing their initiatives, as described by Knill and Tosun (2020, p.155). Hence, this strategy seamlessly integrates into the policy implementation stage within the broader policy process model, marking a concerted effort to further sustain the Kadazandusun language.

Language preservation in a variety of settings

The strategy to preserve the Kadazandusun language was manifested in the actions of the policy entrepreneurs. This was done by Tan Sri Bernard Dompok and Datuk Seri Madius Tangau in a variety of settings and various actions. This strategy is consistent with previous studies that discussed how other countries have preserved their ethnic languages to make them visible in different settings, such as Singapore (Rappa & Wee, 2006, p. 77). In Singapore, language policies are evident in the media, the education system, and specific language campaigns. All four major languages—English, Mandarin, Tamil, and Malay—are represented in the print and broadcast media, although to varying degrees. This strategy is also evident in every stage of the public policy process (except for the policy evaluation stage because none of the policy entrepreneurs were directly involved in policy evaluation, at least in terms of rigorous scientific standards and procedures needed for policy evaluation). As such, their participation in the evaluation stage can be less common than in other stages of the policy-making process (Knill and Tosun, 2020) which will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

Lobbying and engagement with political parties

The action of lobbying was essential in preserving the Kadazandusun language. In the Federal Cabinet, Tan Sri Bernard Dompok proposed and approached powerful

individuals, who were Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and his successor, Tan Sri Dr. Sulaiman bin Daud, who both held the Minister of Education portfolio from 1986-1990 and 1991-1995 respectively. Tan Sri Bernard Dompok mentioned that he approached Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim when he was visiting Sabah and brought up the matter regarding having the Kadazandusun language subject taught in schools. While simultaneously engaging with his political party (PDS - Sabah Democratic Sabah, now known as UPKO), which was also part of the action manifested through the strategy of preserving the Kadazandusun language, he expressed the aspiration to have the Kadazandusun language taught in schools during the PDS Congress in 1995, the then-Prime Minister Tun Mahathir and Anwar Ibrahim, as the Deputy, were present. To achieve agenda setting, a public issue must be converted into an issue, or a concern requiring governmental attention (Anderson et al., 2011, p. 86). This was reflected when Tan Sri Bernard Dompok lobbied Anwar Ibrahim and Tan Sri Dr. Sulaiman Daud. Subsequently, Tan Sri Bernard Dompok brought it to the government's attention, thus elevating it to agenda setting and it became Barisan Nasional's (BN) electoral promise back in the 1995 general election (Barlocco, 2013).

Tan Sri Bernard Dompok's role as a Member of Parliament at that time also enabled him to become the policy entrepreneur in the agenda-setting process. As described by Knill and Tosun (2020), the most obvious agenda setters are elected public officials, such as the president, prime minister, or chancellor, ministers, and members of parliament, because their roles allow them to add specific items to the agenda. This also demonstrates how he as a policy entrepreneur seized 'windows of opportunity' to establish the Kadazandusun language in schools as an agenda. At this point, the policy entrepreneur's suggestion to have the Kadazandusun language taught in schools aligns with the current political climate and their desire to implement their preferred policy solution (Kingdon, 1994 [2011]). This is a similar action taken by the policy entrepreneurs of think tanks in Indonesia (Fatonie, 2020) on matters of village governance and water management in the European Union (Meijerink and Huitema, 2010).

Supporting and financing Kadazandusun language initiatives

Datuk Seri Panglima Madius Tangau had proposed government support and funding as one of the actions in preserving the Kadazandusun language. He inquired about the training of teachers who specialize in Kadazandusun teaching. This was evident in the parliament Hansard in 2013 in which he inquired about the recruitment of teachers. This is consistent with policy implementation (Figure 1) as he amplified the issue in parliament while the Kadazandusun language subject was already established for a few years in schools. This aspect in the policy implementation stage indicates the interactive and negotiation process taking place between Datuk Seri, who is seeking more recruitment for Kadazandusun language teachers, and the government (Hill, 2021).

On top of that, this shows that the parliamentary meeting is a tool for agenda-setting as this gave him the agenda-setting power (Knill and Tosun, 2020, p. 114). In 2012, a program under Institut Pendidikan Guru Kampus Kent was established to train Kadazandusun language teachers. His inquiry in parliament is so that there is sustainability in teacher recruitment. The successful implementation is that schools must possess sufficient Kadazandusun language teachers to be able to translate the policy objective which is to sustain the Kadazandusun language. A particular emphasis is placed on human capacity (Knill and Tosun, 2020, p. 169), which in this case refers to the recruitment of Kadazandusun language teachers.

Collaboration with stakeholders

On top of that, as part of the action of collaborating with stakeholders, they interacted with the Minister of Finance, Tengku Zafrul Aziz, and government officers from the Ministry of Education to ensure that policy discussions reflected their concerns and recommendations regarding the preservation and sustainability of the Kadazandusun language. Collaboration is a strategy consistent with most policy entrepreneurs from previous studies (Faling et al., 2018; Chung, 2020, Lahat et Al., 2023). Firstly, this is evidenced by the fact that Dato' Seri Madius Tangau approached the Minister of Finance in 2022 to request the allocation of the ethnic language program in the 2023 Budget. This shows that communicating concerns and recommendations makes these policy entrepreneurs interlocutors who construct the meaning of situations through discussion with others, rather than architects who establish a framework in advance of a discussion to convince others with rhetorical skills to adopt it (Mintrom, 2020, p. 15). This is the policy implementation stage as the suggestion to allocate a budget for ethnic language programs, which includes the Kadazandusun language and, among others, is a type of intervention that aims to increase the resources available for sustaining the Kadazandusun language. In this way, the process of sustaining the Kadazandusun language is stimulated (Hill, 2021). Collaboration is also an action similar to the revitalization of Indigenous languages in Indonesia such as for the Kailinese language (Gazali, 2023).

Additionally, another strategy to preserve the Kadazandusun language encompasses collaboration with stakeholders, which is a similar action to the previous two. It is a concept exemplified by the interaction between officers from the Ministry of Education and Tan Sri Bernard Dompok. This engagement took place as preparations were being made to introduce the teaching of the Kadazandusun language in schools back in the 1990s. This approach is in the policymaking process, where the executive plays a pivotal role (Knill and Tosun, 2020, p. 123). Notably, the involvement of Ministry of Education officials at this juncture highlights their role in the formulation of the Kadazandusun language subject in schools. Recognizing the intricate nature of the Kadazandusun language, Tan Sri Bernard Dompok recommended that these officers

consult with the Kadazan-Dusun Cultural Association (KDCA) and the United Sabah Dusun Association (USDA). The primary focus of these discussions was addressing the challenges associated with developing educational materials, given the linguistic diversity of the language, which encompasses various dialects spoken across Sabah, including those in Dusun, Murutic, and Paitanic.

This suggestion adheres to the customary actions taken during the policy formulation stage. The KDCA and USDA are characterized as interest groups by Knill and Tosun (2020) and possess vital insights into the potential impacts of proposed policies and the likely reactions of the members of the Kadazandusun community. Since KDCA and USDA effectively represent the voices of the Kadazandusun community, Tan Sri Bernard Dompok endorsed the notion of these officers engaging with these organizations and encouraged the establishment of a formal agreement concerning the official name of the language and the chosen dialect for educational materials. As a result of these discussions, a consensus was achieved, resulting in the language being officially named "Bahasa Kadazandusun," with the Bunduliwan dialect selected as the designated dialect for educational materials. This is reflected in the policy formulation, specifically in the policy adoption stage because KDCA and USDA's participation in the policy-making process not only enables them to offer pertinent information on which dialect to use, but also guarantees policy acceptability through their participants (Knill and Tosun, 2020, p. 133).

Most importantly, Tan Sri Bernard Dompok's position as a Member of Parliament facilitated his connections with Ministry of Education officials, underscoring the significance of internal ties in effecting change. As a policy entrepreneur, active participation in government networks within and around their respective jurisdictions is essential for driving meaningful changes (Mintrom, 2020, p. 17).

As part of the strategy to sustain and preserve the Kadazandusun language, Tan Sri Bernard Dompok and Dato Seri Panglima Madius Tangau established connections with linguists and academics from universities and institutes, leading the action to collaborate with stakeholders mainly organizations like UMS, UPSI, and IPGs as well as relationships with the Kadazandusun Language Foundation. This is consistent with Mintrom's (2020) element of policy entrepreneurship which is 'building and expanding networks' that relate to policy entrepreneurs engaging in relevant policy networks offering valuable talent and expertise to support projects related to revitalizing the Kadazandusun language. Their involvement with educational institutions such as Malaysia Sabah University (UMS), Sultan Idris Education University (UPSI), and Teacher Training Institute (IPG) and non-governmental organizations such as Kadazandusun Language Foundation (KLF) in the process of implementing the teaching of the Kadazandusun language is part of the policy implementation stage as described by Knill and Tosun (2020, p. 150). In this stage, policy implementation is primarily

carried out by different levels of bureaucracy. In this case, UMS, UPSI, and IPG are part of the bureaucracy under the Higher Education Ministry and Education Ministry (for IPG) to train future Kadazandusun language teachers. Additionally, collaborating with autonomous organizations such as KLF is based on the assumption that they will improve overall implementation performance and efficiency as KLF deals with publication. Furthermore, KLF primarily deals with the linguistic aspects of the preservation of the Kadazandusun language as well as assisting in training teachers and university lecturers in the Kadazandusun linguistics. In this case, the implementation consists of collaborative efforts and focuses attention on the relationships between organizations. Such efforts are similar to the Iban language whereby the Tun Jugah Foundation has undertaken extensive initiatives, including gathering, recording, translating, and explaining Iban folklore (Chemalin Anak Usop, 2015) and the language is now being offered at UPSI, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS), and IPG in Sarawak (Winnie Anak Antau & Khairul Azhar Jamaludin, 2023).

Advocacy for standardization

External to the policy process, the policy entrepreneurs' actions to standardize the Kadazandusun language and incorporate it into the education system are evident. Dato Seri Madius Tangau strongly supported the Kadazandusun language's standardization and promotion. He did this by advocating for the term "Kadazandusun" to be adopted to popularise the term used to refer to the language instead of just 'Kadazan' or just 'Dusun', which he accomplished by writing to major media. This is consistent with Cartwright's (2017) research on using narratives by policy entrepreneurs in driving change. Media coverage is one of the ways to set the foundation for a change; therefore, the actions undertaken by the policy entrepreneur were one of the ways to initiate the standardization of the Kadazandusun language.

Supporting and financing Kadazandusun language initiatives

Another action made outside of the policy process to sustain and preserve the Kadazandusun language is that Dato Seri Madius Tangau has actively supported composers and vocalists in preserving the Kadazandusun language. Leveraging his networking skills, he successfully engaged local Kadazandusun singers, ensuring that both Sabah's composers and vocalists were financially secure and adequately protected. He has ensured that they have secured what is referred to as a collective management organization (CMO), enabling them to collectively collect royalties for their songs and music. This move is a vital component of the broader initiative to sustain the Kadazandusun language within the local creative industry. By cultivating these networks and fostering collaboration, individuals like Dato Seri Madius Tangau enhance their capacity to navigate local policy contexts and build crucial support for their initiatives (Mintrom, 2020, p. 16)—such as the preservation of the Kadazandusun

language. His engagement with local singers and composers served the dual purpose of safeguarding their interests and gaining insight into their perspectives, motivations, and concerns, all of which were essential for garnering their support.

With this effort, Dato Seri Madius Tangau can comprehend the particular requirements and interests of the community involved in language preservation efforts because of his interactions with local Kadazandusun singers. He learns about the difficulties vocalists and composers encounter while trying to use and promote the Kadazandusun language in their artistic creations through his direct interactions with them. This knowledge informs the process of developing the agenda by emphasizing the areas such as financial support and resource access, where support and intervention are most urgently needed. Apart from that, these insights can help shape the formulation of initiatives and policies that sustain the preservation of the Kadazandusun language. He can assist policymakers in creating focused interventions that effectively address the difficulties experienced by artists in promoting the language, hence improving the sustainability of language preservation efforts.

Outside of the official policy-making process, his initiatives as a policy entrepreneur demonstrate proactive and community-focused approaches to the language preservation. He exhibits a comprehensive commitment to preserving the Kadazandusun language by pushing for standardization and offering real assistance to language efforts. Furthermore, his aptitude for navigating local contexts and creating networks emphasises how crucial human connections are to fostering grassroots change and gaining traction for linguistic revitalization initiatives.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the sustainability of the Kadazandusun language has been a multi-faceted endeavor involving a range of strategies and actions taken by policy entrepreneurs from the political domain in the policy process. However, the policy evaluation stage is an exception due to the absence of any involvement or utilization of the rigorous scientific methods and criteria required for formal policy evaluation. The strategies involved were publication and availability of Kadazandusun work and language preservation in a variety of settings. As for the actions, they were collaboration with stakeholders, supporting and financing Kadazandusun language initiatives, lobbying, engagement with political parties, and advocacy for standardization. The policy entrepreneurs have also undertaken the initiative to preserve the Kadazandusun language outside of the policy process mainly to standardize the term 'Kadazandusun' through the media. Apart from that, outside of the policy process, with Dato Seri Madius Tangau's networking skills, he also approached individuals in the creative industry to preserve the language. In essence, the sustainability of the Kadazandusun language has been a comprehensive and dynamic effort, driven by dedicated individuals who have

strategically employed a range of actions and collaborations. The strategies undertaken and actions employed highlight the significance of collaborative efforts taken by policy entrepreneurs to sustain and preserve the Kadazandusun language.

Acknowledgments

We thank Datuk Seri Panglima Wilfred Madius Tangau and Tan Sri Datuk Seri Panglima Bernard Giluk Dompok for agreeing to be interviewed.

Funding Details

The authors state no funding is involved.

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest associated with this publication.

DOI

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