

BOOK REVIEW



Title:	On Language, Education, Politics, and Identity – A Cross-Linguistics Perspectives
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The edited volume, “On Language, Education, Politics, and Identity – A Cross-Linguistics Perspectives”, affords a sweeping and multifaceted exploration into the interconnected fields of linguistics, identity formation, educational theory, media studies, and political science, with a geographic focus on Asia and Europe. The work features 26 scholarly articles by budding Indonesian scholars, offering fresh perspectives and igniting new discussions on the interplay between linguistics and disciplines like identity studies, media analysis, and political theory.

The anthology is neatly segmented into three distinct thematic clusters: (1) Language and Identity in Media, (2) Language Acquisition and Education, and (3) Language and Politics. In the initial segment, seven articles scrutinize the interplay between language and identity in the media, as manifested in a broad spectrum of popular cultures from Korea, Indonesia, and the Arabic-speaking world. Some intriguing findings were unveiled here. For instance, one study deduced a correlation between the psychological state of a singer and his/her adolescent experiences through an analysis of their lyrical content and interpersonal relationships. Moreover, another study also noted perceptible shifts in the utilization of interjections between the 20th and the 21st centuries. Notably, one of the studies revealed four distinct forms of imperative politeness in Arabic, encompassing request, vocative, invitation, and order.

The second segment of the book is devoted to ten articles concerning language acquisition, education, and pedagogy. Some of these findings correlated with existing theories, but they also broke new ground. For example, the Dutch society, as a finding in one of the studies, was portrayed as harmonious through the examination of illustrations and dialogues from the textbook series ‘Contact! For levels 1, 2, and 3’. This research intersected with the field of critical discourse analysis, which often examines the power relations and ideologies implicit in texts. Another interesting finding highlighted the impact of regional accent variation amongst Indonesian educators on students’ comprehension of word forms. Interestingly, this segment also uncovers that Indonesian students, in one of the studies, found reading comprehension

easier to master compared to other language skills, such as speaking, listening, or writing.

The final segment illuminates the crossroads between language and politics, incorporating nine articles that examine language policy, colonial discourses, pragmatics, and discourse analysis in relation to the dynamics of power and language. Some compelling findings discussed here include a study on Chancellor Helmut Kohl's speeches, which were often characterized by their directiveness, expressiveness, and straightforwardness, ostensibly aimed at garnering public sympathy. In contrast, Michelle Obama's speeches were found to employ persuasive devices such as logical reasoning and repetition instead. Evidently, through the elucidation of the aforementioned discoveries, this section furnishes its readers with an opportunity to critically examine various communicative strategies, notably within the sphere of politics.

In comparison to prior studies on academic book reviews, such as Nicolaisen's work (2002) on the structural and thematic composition of reviews, this critique mirrors typical evaluations, both in terms of praises and criticism. The reviewers acknowledge the value of the volume's broad insights, which aligns with what Nicolaisen identifies as the most common positive comment in book reviews - recognition of the book's scholarly contribution. More importantly, the reviewers recognize this book as a valuable and accessible resource for scholars, educators, and other interested readers. This perspective echoes the work of Kamler and Thomson (2013, pp. 176-189), who highlighted the importance of accessibility and potential for further research in academic books, and the need for such attributes to be identified in book reviews. The open-access nature of this book amplifies its potential reach, a critical feature which Thompson (2005) advocated for in the digital age of scholarship.

However, the book has some notable shortcomings. The relative inexperience of the contributing authors is evident in some instances of methodological incongruence. For instance, an author initially emphasized a quantitative approach with rigorous procedures. Later, the author shifted to a case study method without justification, applying statistical techniques unsuited for it. Such inconsistency confused the reviewers and potentially weakened the work's credibility. The issue of authorial inexperience, leading to instances of methodological inconsistency, has been similarly identified in earlier studies, including the analysis of Mårtensson et al. (2016), where the importance of consistent and rigorous methodology in academic writing was emphasized. These studies have demonstrated the potential for methodological lapses to undermine the overall quality of a book. Besides that, the book's linguistic precision in its writing could have been refined further. By "linguistic precision", the reviewers refer to both the precise use of linguistic terms related to areas like syntax, semantics, and morphology, and the general grammatical and stylistic correctness of language use. This also resonates with Basturkmen et al.'s (2014) insights about the paramount importance of linguistic precision in academic discourse. They asserted that the quality of the language used can affect the perceived credibility of the research, and hence, the impact of the book. Additionally, the ambitious undertaking of encompassing such a large array of topics across three themes can occasionally feel overwhelming. It correlates with Nodoushan and Montazeran's analysis (2012), where they discussed the difficulties reviewers could face when evaluating works that span multiple disciplines. The breadth and diversity of themes could indeed be seen as an asset, yet also, as noted in the review, impart a sense of being overrun with ideas on the reader.

In essence, “On Language, Education, Politics, and Identity – A Cross-Linguistics Perspectives” is a commendable work, offering a rich tapestry of insights spanning Asia and Europe from the perspectives of young Indonesian scholars. Its diverse and groundbreaking themes are its strength, but inconsistencies in methodology and linguistic precision somewhat mar its brilliance. These gaps could be attributed to the inexperience of its contributors. While invaluable for dedicated scholars and students in related fields, casual readers might find its vast content challenging. Nevertheless, it stands as a noteworthy contribution, showcasing the potential of emerging Indonesian scholars.

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