

# Why vernacular language planning matters for preserving Acehese languages?

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## ABSTRACT

Language planning policy is essential for language preservation, yet research rarely addresses vernacular or local languages specifically. This study examines how vernacular language planning policies can contribute to the preservation and revitalization of local languages, focusing on the case of Aceh, a province in Indonesia with a rich variety of local languages requiring preservation efforts. The study's primary goal is to identify an effective framework for vernacular language planning in Aceh that can serve as a practical reference for language policymakers, planners, and researchers in Indonesia and beyond. Utilizing a systematic review method, this research analyzes literature on language vitality, endangerment, revitalization, and planning policy. Key findings reveal a newly developed vernacular language planning framework tailored to the current vitality status of Acehese languages, offering a suitable model for their preservation and revitalization. This framework has the potential to serve as a foundational tool for efforts to sustain and revive Acehese and other vernacular languages more broadly.

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## **1. Introduction**

Indonesia is renowned for its multilingual and multicultural richness, positioning it as a country with an extensive variety of linguistic heritage. This diversity underscores the importance of maintaining, preserving, and revitalizing Indonesia's vernacular languages, particularly given the urgent need to prevent language extinction and decline. Currently, around 7,000 languages are spoken worldwide, with projections indicating that at least half may vanish by the end of this century (Austin & Sallabank, 2011).

This global trend also affects Indonesia, which, as a vast nation, hosts over 700 local languages that face endangerment or decline in the coming decades due to factors like language shift, limited domains of use, intergenerational transmission issues, and other sociolinguistic pressures. According to Ethnologue, Indonesia is home to 724 officially recognized languages, of which 710 are still spoken, while 14 have already become extinct. This includes 704 indigenous languages and six non-indigenous ones, with 80 languages at risk of extinction, 82 developing, 170 vigorous, 361 facing challenges, 17 used institutionally, and ten newly emerging languages are also documented (Eberhard et al., 2023b).

While many countries have only one or two official languages, most of their linguistic diversity comprises vernacular languages that are seldom used in domains such as government, media, or education. This limited use in formal domains accelerates the decline of these vernacular languages, underscoring the critical need for focused preservation efforts.

As stated by a scholar, most nations only have one or a very small number of official languages that are used in government, media, and education; as a result, the majority of the world's languages are extremely regional and are not widely used outside of speech communities (Hinton et al., 2018a).

In addition, the phrase “vernacular language” actually refers to a language that is spoken by all members of society, except the written domain (Ding, 2016). In this case, whenever a language is not used in written language it can be sure that there will be no written documents that can be used as the historical records and other forms of language documents such as grammars, dictionaries, writing systems, and other linguistic documentations of the language. This situation is happening in most of the vernacular, local, and regional languages of the world.

In the regional context, Aceh is one of the provinces in Indonesia. To the data realized by Ethnologue, the Acehnese language has code number ISO 639 (ace), the alternate name Acehnese, Achehnese, Achinese, Atjehnese, Basa Acèh. According to census data for 2010 it has a total population of 2,840,000 and an ethnic population of 3,370,000. This language is mainly spoken at least in 10 districts such as; Aceh Barat, Aceh Barat Daya, Aceh Besar, Aceh Jaya, Aceh Selatan, Aceh Singkil, Aceh Tamiang,

Aceh Timur, Aceh Utara, Bireuen, Kota Langsa, Kota Lhokseumawe, Nagan Raya, Pidie, and Pidie Jaya regencies, on Weh and neighboring islands. The most important thing that needs to be known about the language is the status of the Acehese language which is currently in the status of 6b (Threatened). In terms of the domain's use of the language, it is still used in mixed domains such as home, community, work, and education. Aceh or Bahasa Acèh is classified as one of the Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Malayo-Chamic, Chamic, and Acehese (Eberhard et al., 2023b).

However, we are not going to discuss the Acehese language only, since there are several vernacular languages in Aceh province. We are going to discuss the case of Acehese vernacular languages as a whole and try to answer the research questions of this literature review study namely; 1) what is their current Acehese vernacular language vitality status? 2) what is the most significant factor affecting the Acehese vernacular languages vitality status? 3) what is the most suitable framework of Acehese vernacular languages planning-policy? And 4) why is vernacular language planning-policy important for vernacular language preservation? These are short research questions that are going to be answered in this literature review study.

Additionally, about those research questions, some objectives of this study have been formulated; 1) to find out the current Acehese vernacular language vitality status; 2) to find out the most factor affecting the Acehese vernacular language vitality status; 3) to find out the most suitable framework of Acehese vernacular languages planning-policy; and 4) to find out the importance of vernacular language planning-policy in vernacular language preservation.

In the case of local or vernacular language planning policy, it is rarely discussed or focused on by researchers. Therefore, this study is trying to focus on the discourse of how vernacular language planning policy can play its role in maintaining and revitalizing the local or vernacular languages, especially in the case of Aceh which is one of the provinces in Indonesia which there are some local or vernacular languages to be maintained and revitalized.

## **2. Literature review**

In this literature review section, there will be a discussion on language, language vitality and endangerment, language vitality endangerment assessment scales, language revitalization, and the last is language planning policy.

### *2.1. Language vitality and endangerment*

According to the UNESCO Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Languages (2003), the vitality status of a language refers to the degree of health and vitality of the language community, including the number of speakers, the age distribution of speakers, the use of language in various domains, and attitudes toward language. Language vitality has generally been discussed using terminology like language endangerment, endangered languages, language loss, or language death (Mufwene, 2017). When we discuss a

language's vitality, we are referring to its state, including whether it is stable, secure, endangered, or at risk of extinction, loss, or death. It can be further seen through the works of other researchers, like Mohamed and Hashim (2012); Bello (2013); Dwyer (2011); Tehan and Markowski (2017); Obiero (2010); Septiana et al. (2020), and Anderbeck (2015).

However, the discussion on language shift, language change, language endangerment, and language death, or language loss, are becoming long-standing debates among sociolinguists, linguists, language planners, educators, and others who have focused on language change and death (Lewis & Simons, 2010).

In addition, the work of sociolinguists Michael Krauss (1992) and Joshua Fishman (1991) served as the theoretical inspiration for the debate on language vitality. Fishman established the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) as one of the measures to assess the viability of a language in his important work "Reversing Language Shift" (Fishman, 1991). Since it was created, Fishman's 8-level Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) has been the recognized and most frequently used evaluation framework for language endangerment. The majority of those who do language revitalization have used it as their theoretical foundation Lewis and Simons (2010).

Later, Krauss (1992) concluded in his book "The World's Languages in Crisis" that languages that are no longer taught to children as their mother tongue are not only endangered but are already on the verge of extinction unless the trend is drastically reversed, much like organisms that are unable to reproduce. We will refer to these tongues as moribund" (Krauss, 1992).

Finally, the works of Fishman (1991) and Krauss (1992) have inspired the works of scholars such as Lewis and Simons (2010), Crystal (2000), UNESCO Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Languages (2003), Grenoble and Whaley (2006), Ewing (2014), Campbell and Belew (2018), and many other works of scholars in terms of language vitality and endangerment.

## *2.2. Types of language vitality endangerment assessment scales*

In terms of language vitality endangerment assessment scales, researchers have therefore created a variety of measurement tools for measuring the status of a language's vitality, such as language endangerment scales, to circumvent the issues. The Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS), which was created and first made public by Joshua Fishman cited in Lewis and Simons (2010), is an example of one of these language vitality assessment instruments or language endangerment assessments. Fishman's GIDS, Ethnologue, and UNESCO's framework were then combined to create the Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS) Lewis and Simons (2010). The linguistic endangerment/vitality category in EGIDS has 13 levels.

Additionally, a document had been proposed to the International Expert Meeting on UNESCO Programme Safeguarding of Endangered Languages by the UNESCO Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Languages. Paris, March 10–12, 2003, which included

nine factors for the evaluation and measurement of the level of endangerment of the world's languages (UNESCO, 2003). Those three types of language vitality endangerment assessment scales can be seen in the discussions:

### *2.2.1. Graded intergenerational disruption scale fishman (1991)*

The graded intergenerational disruption scale was initially developed by Fishman (1991). The scale consists of 8 levels of scales. The first (1<sup>st</sup>) level is that the language is used in education, work, mass media, and government at the nationwide level; the second (2<sup>nd</sup>) level is that the language is used for local and regional mass media and governmental services; the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) level is that the language is used for local and regional work by both insiders and outsiders; the fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) level is that the literacy in the language is transmitted through education; the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) level is that the language is used orally by all generations and is effectively used in written form throughout the community. The sixth (6<sup>th</sup>) level is that the language is used orally by all generations and is being learned by children as their first language; the seventh (7<sup>th</sup>) level is that the child-bearing generation knows the language well enough to use it with their elders but is not transmitting it to their children; the eighth (8<sup>th</sup>) level is that the only remaining speakers of the language are members of the grandparent generation (Dwyer, 2011).

In addition to the GIDS scales above, it is important to know that the key focus of Fishman's GIDS to preserve or maintain a language is through the factor of intergenerational language transmission. As Joshua Fishman (1991) emphasizes, the effectiveness of language maintenance in a society depends on the success of language transmission in the home, which is Stage 6 in his well-known Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) (Christmas, 2016). Then, whenever children do not learn the language from their parents the process of language transmission will be disrupted (Lewis & Simons, 2010).

### *2.2.2. The UNESCO language vitality endangerment factors*

In this case, the UNESCO Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Languages has formulated 9 factors to be assessed through the language vitality assessment tools namely; 1) Intergenerational Language Transmission; 2) Absolute Number of Speakers (real numbers) 3) Proportion of Speakers within the Total Population; 4) Shifts in Domains of Language Use; 5) Response to New Domains and Media; 6) Availability of Materials for Language Education and Literacy; 7) Governmental and Institutional Language Attitudes and Policies, Including Official Status and Use; 8) Community Members' Attitudes towards Their Own Language and; 9) Type and Quality of Documentation. See the following figure for language vitality endangerment in nine assessment factors by the UNESCO Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Languages, (UNESCO, 2003).

### 2.2.3. Expanded graded intergenerational disruption scale EGIDS

Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scales (EGIDS) are further developed by (Lewis & Simons, 2010) as the result of the harmonization of Fishman's GIDS for its foundational and seminal role in the discourse on language endangerment and with the highly influential and practical roles of the UNESCO atlas and the Ethnologue. This EGIDS scale consisted of 13 levels of endangerment categories the first level is level (0) and it is labeled as an international language which means that the language is used internationally for a broad range of functions, then the second is level (1) and it is labeled as a national language which means that the language is used in education, work, mass media, government at the nationwide. The third level is level (2) and it is labeled as a regional language which means that the language is used for local and regional mass media and governmental services. The fourth level is level (3) and it is labeled as trade language which means that the language is used for local and regional work by both insiders and outsiders. The fifth level is level (4) and it is labeled as educational language which means that the literacy in the language is being transmitted through a system of public education. The sixth level is level (5) and it is labeled as written language which means that the language is used orally by all generations and is effectively used in written form in parts of the community. The seventh level is in level (6a) and it is labeled as a vigorous language which means that the language is used orally by all generations and is being learned by children as their first language. Starting the level (0-6a) the vitality status of the language is considered as a *safe* language. The eighth level is in level (6b) and it is labeled as threatened which means that the language is used orally by all generations but only some of the child-bearing generations are transmitting it to their children.

The vitality status of the (6b) level is considered *vulnerable*. The ninth level is level (7) and it is labeled as shifting language which means that the child-bearing generation knows the language well enough to use it among themselves but none are transmitting it to their children. And the vitality status is considered *endangered*. The tenth level is in level (8a) and it is labeled as *moribund* which means that the only remaining active speakers of the language are members of the grandparent generation. And the vitality status of the language is considered *severely endangered*. The eleventh language is in level (8b) and it is labeled as *nearly extinct* which means that the only remaining speakers of the language are members of the grandparent generation or older who have little opportunity to use the language. The vitality status of the language is considered *critically endangered*. The twelfth level is in level (9) and it is labeled as *dormant* which means that the language serves as a reminder of heritage identity for an ethnic community. No one has more than symbolic proficiency. The thirteen level is on level (10) and it is labeled as *extinct* which means that no one retains a sense of ethnic identity associated with the language, even for symbolic purposes. The vitality status of both levels (9) and (10) is considered *extinct* (Lewis & Simons, 2010).

### *2.3. Language revitalization*

The discussion of language preservation, and language maintenance is something related to the discussion on language revitalization efforts of programs. Due to the increasing dangers to the world's linguistic, cultural, and biological diversity during the past 10 years, the emerging area of language endangerment and language revitalization has attracted more attention on a global scale (Florey, 2010). The phrase "language revitalization" is now used most frequently to describe initiatives aimed at increasing the use of an endangered or inactive language in the speech community and/or in people's daily lives (Hinton et al., 2018a).

In addition, the term "language revitalization" describes the creation of initiatives that lead to the reinstatement of a language that has lost its status as the primary means of communication in the speech community and its widespread usage in all spheres of society (Hinton & Hale, 2013). Another scholar has defined language revitalization (LR) as the process of reviving a language that has been decreasing in use or has completely disappeared (Hinton et al., 2018a).

Moreover, language revitalization work is fundamentally interdisciplinary and sometimes politically motivated, with long-term cultural and social objectives that go beyond the immediate goal of increasing speaker numbers (Pine & Turin, 2017). In this case, the expression that was created by Joshua Fishman (1991), commonly referred to as the founder of language revitalization, in his renowned publication on the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (Hinton et al., 2018b).

Further, it can be acknowledged that the focus of Fishman (1991) is actually on the stage of intergenerational transmission within the family. In his article titled "Reversing Language Shift: Successes, Failures, Doubts, and Dilemmas", at this stage, Joshua Fishman places a strong focus on the family's crucial role in language maintenance and the language transmission of a vulnerable language from one generation to the next. Fishman argues that the family is more important for the survival of tiny, endangered languages than any other single component, including education, which is sometimes grossly overvalued in contemporary countries (Jahr, 1993).

Additionally, as defined by a scholar the phrase "language revitalization" is currently used most frequently to refer to initiatives intended to increase the use of an endangered or inactive language in the speech community and/or in people's daily lives. (Hinton et al., 2018b). Then it is further developed that the idea behind the phrase "language revitalization" is that we are discussing endangered languages, where a speech group is moving toward monolingualism in an approaching language (Hinton et al., 2018b).

Fishman (1991) is the one who came up with the eight stages for reversing language shift (RLS). However, the RLS idea by Fisman (1991) has been modified by Hinton and Hale (2013) into the following 9 phases of a language revitalization program; Step 1) Planning and language evaluation. The purpose of this exercise is to learn more about the local linguistic environment, including the number of speakers, their ages, and

other factors; Step 2) If there are no speakers of the language, rebuild it using the materials at hand and create a language teaching strategy; Whenever there are just senior citizens using the language: Keep a record of the language spoken by aging speakers; Step 4) Create an adult second-language learning program; Developing new cultural norms or upgrading existing ones to support and promote the use of the endangered language at home and in public; Step 6) Creating comprehensive second-language curricula for kids in schools, and if feasible, teaching in the endangered language; Step 7) Make the language spoken at home the main language of communication so that it becomes the young children's first language. Create parenting support groups and workshops to help them in the transition period; Step 8) Involves expanding the use of the indigenous language into broader local domains, such as community government, the media, local commerce, and so forth; Step 9) involves expanding the language domains outside of the local community and into the general population. In this case, steps 8 and 9 should be taken to promote the use of the indigenous language in wider local contexts, such as community government, the media, local commerce, and so forth (Hinton & Hale, 2013).

Finally, the subjects of applied linguistics, linguistic anthropology, sociology, education, psychology, anthropology, political science, and other subjects are all incorporated into the very multidisciplinary topic of language maintenance and revitalization (Hinton et al., 2018b).

#### *2.4. Language planning-policy*

Any underlying theory that tries to explain or anticipate events connected to language planning must also be rather broad because the subject of language planning involves such a wide spectrum of linguistic phenomena (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997). That is why the discussion on language planning policy will involve all of the linguistic aspects within the language itself or things that relate to the sociolinguistic aspects.

In line with the definition above, Ricento (2006) defines that language planning policy must be viewed as both an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary activity to effectively integrate and apply the conceptual and methodological tools borrowed from various disciplines to real-world problems and challenges involving language which are embedded in all facets of society and social life research.

Additionally, language planning has taken its position as a language problem solver. Whenever there is a problem in terms of language or unexpected linguistic conditions then the language planning will be in charge of providing a solution. As defined by a scholar, "Language Planning is called for wherever there are language problems. If a linguistic situation for any reason is felt to be unsatisfactory, there is room for a program of language planning" (Haugen, 1966, p.52 as cited in Cooper, 1989).

Further, according to Neustupny (1994, p.50), "Any act of language planning should start with the consideration of language problems as they appear in discourse, and the planning should not be considered complete until the removal of the problems is



implemented in discourse” (Neustupny, 1994, p.50, as cited in Ndimande-hlongwa, 2010).

In this case, Cooper (1989) has identified that there are three main approaches in language planning, namely: status planning, corpus planning, and acquisition planning. Further discussion can be seen in the following sub-headings.

#### *2.4.1. Status planning*

The elements of language planning known as status planning are those that largely reflect social issues and concerns and are, thus, unrelated to the language(s) being planned. The model’s two status issues are language implementation and language choice (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997). In addition, the discussion of status planning focuses on the language domains or the use of language itself on various domains in societal functions (Cooper, 1989).

Further, Stewart’s (1968) has identified in his research that at least 10 language functions which are used as the targets of status planning namely: 1) as an official language function; 2) as a provincial or regional official language; 3) as a language which is functioned in wider communication domains; 4) as international medium of communication; 5) capital function or as a major medium of communication in the vicinity of the national capital; 6) group function or as a medium of communication among the members of a single cultural or ethnic group, such as a tribe, settled group of foreign immigrants, etc.; 7) Educational function or as a medium of primary or secondary education, either regionally or nationally; 8) school subject or the language which is commonly taught as a subject in secondary and/or higher education; 9) literary function or the use of a language primarily for literary or scholarly purposes; 10) religious function or the use of a language primarily in connection with the ritual of a particular religion (Cooper, 1989).

Apart from those 10 language functions, Stewart (1968) also has added that the status planning decisions will be affected by the control of the language of mass media and official working language. In this case, whenever the governments control the media, they also will decide which languages are used to communicate in the media (Cooper, 1989). From those language functions identified by Stewart (1968), it has been clear that the role of government in controlling the use of language in media and official working language has become extremely important in implementing national language planning and policy.

In the case of Indonesian national politics of language, it has been clearly stated that the function of regional or vernacular languages is to support the existence of a national language. Therefore, language conflict in terms of domains of use and function does not happen in Indonesia, unlike other bilingual and multilingual countries that have similar interests in maintaining the usages of vernacular languages on one hand, and on the other hand, they have to maintain the national or official language.

Therefore, it is important to bridge these two interests so that they will not affect each other's interests. Indeed, it is not an easy task for language planners to solve these issues. For instance, cases of language conflict in a part of the world (see, e.g., Haugen, 1966; Chróst, 2003; Schmid, 2001; Levine, 2008; Shimizu and Bradley, 2014; and Omoniyi, 2010).

#### *2.4.2. Corpus planning*

The development of dictionaries and lexical items, the design of writing and spelling systems (orthographic), and other language codification strategies are examples of activities that might be included in the topic of corpus planning, which has the position of the second major type of language planning (Fishman, 2006).

However, it should be made clear that language planning is a part of the overall social change (social planning) process, whether as a cause or as an effect and regardless of whether corpus planning is used to start social change or to continue social change that has already started, these two activities (corpus and status planning) should occur simultaneously (Fishman, 2006).

In general, corpus planning is essential for “developing languages” that additionally seek to interface (i.e., to promote communication between its speakers and writers and the modern world), whether for commercial, tourism, political, or educational goals (Fishman, 2006). In addition, a corpus can be spoken or written. For instance, the media produces a written corpus and provides language data (Ndimande-along, 2010).

Therefore, corpus planning can be summarized as any linguistic activities such as developing dictionaries; and lexical items, designing orthographic systems (writing and spelling systems), and other codifications activities to qualify and standardize a language.

#### *2.4.3. Acquisition planning*

Acquisition planning is concerned with language users and how they build the communicative repertoires necessary to access possibilities in society, while, in contrast to corpus planning, which is concerned with language form, and status planning is concerned with language functions (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997).

Additionally, language acquisition planning " also refers to organized efforts to promote the learning of language" (Cooper, 1989). Therefore, learning is the process of improving and developing the capacity of language users to acquire a language which involves the process of teaching and learning activities whether it happens in educational domains, family domains, or other language domains. As described by a scholar “the variety of language users and the distribution of literacy are both important considerations in acquisition planning (AP)” (Hogan-Brun et al., 2013).

In other words, acquisition planning (AP) will be implemented in language acquisition policy (LAP) which is also commonly known as language education policy (Spolsky, 2004). Apart from the family domain therefore the school can serve as one of the focal points in language acquisition or education policies (Spolsky, 2004).

#### *2.4.4. Family language policy (FLP)*

As summarized by Fogle and King (2013, p. 1), family language policy reference Spolsky (2004) to "gain insights into family language ideologies which is something related to how family members think about language, while on the aspect of language practices which is something to do with what they do with language, and language management in this case, the things which relate to what they try to do with language" as cited in Christmas (2016).

The implementation of family language policy (FLP) on Chinese heritage language maintenance, identity construction, and the sequential outcomes the language competency in Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand has been the subject of a recent study (Ji, 2023) the results of which have shown that the development of children's language competence had a positive impact which finally resulted on shaping their identity construction.

Additionally, Lu Liu has performed another study in the area of family language policy with a focus on Chinese immigrant families in the United States. The United States West Coast is where this study was conducted. It aims to take a close anthropological look at the family language policies that guide the daily language practices of a 1.5-generation Chinese immigrant household. The methodology used in this study is driven by Sapolsky's three-part framework of language policy, which is made up of language practices, language ideology, and language management. The research's conclusions show that parents' beliefs about their native tongue have a significant impact on the family's linguistic practices, which are manifested as a "natural" desire to speak Mandarin Chinese at home to preserve their racial identity (Siiner et al., 2018).

Therefore, the study of family language policy focuses on the role that language beliefs play in these decision-making processes, how these beliefs are situated within a larger sociocultural system, and how the beliefs and their context manifest themselves in family language practices Okita (2002, p. 3) as cited in Christmas (2016).

#### *2.4.5. Language management*

A theory of language policy aims to explain the decisions made by individual speakers in light of the rule-governed patterns accepted by the speech community (or communities) they are a part of. Some of these decisions were made as a result of *management*, demonstrating the deliberate and explicit attempts made by language managers to control the decisions (Spolsky, 2009).

In general, there are three important components in language policy, namely; 1) language practice; 2) language beliefs or ideology; and 3) language management (Spolsky, 2004). Language practice on the other hand is observable behaviors and decisions, or what people do. While language beliefs or ideology is something related to the values or statuses assigned to named languages, varieties, and features. And language management can either be the explicit and observable effort by someone or some group that has or claims authority over the participants in the domain to modify their practices

or beliefs (Spolsky, 2009). Therefore, as part of the language policy component, language management can be used to identify language problems that occur in any domain of language use and modify them.

The identification of language problems by everyday speakers in the course of communication is the starting point of language management theory Nekvapil (2007) as cited in Spolsky (2009). According to Neustupny, Jernudd, and Nekvapil, structured language management spans from the micro (family) to the macro (nation-state) level and begins with the person (they refer to this as "simple language management") (Spolsky, 2009).

A domain, according to Fishman's definition, can be identified by its participants, location, and topic (Spolsky, 2009). Additionally, every language management domain has its participants who act as the manager. In the case of the family language management domain, it is the parents, the children, and other family members that will act as the manager. In the case of school domains, it is the teachers, principals, and any other educator components who will become the managers of language management.

Therefore it could be summarized that the discussion of language management will involve any social domain of language use such as language management in family domains, language management of school or educational domains, language management of public linguistic space, language management in the workplace, language management for advertising, language management in business domains, language management in media such as; social media, radio broadcast, television, newspapers, magazines, and other forms of media, and managing speech and linguistic communities. Therefore, every manager will have his/her role to identify the language problems, and then modify and find alternative solutions to improve the condition.

### **3. Method**

This study utilizes a literature review approach. A research literature review is a systematic, transparent, and replicable process for identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing a body of previous work produced by researchers, academics, and practitioners (Fink, 2014). Accordingly, this study employs a systematic review method. As defined by Petticrew and Roberts (2006), a systematic review is "a method of making sense of large bodies of information and a means of contributing to answers to questions about what works and what does not" (Petticrew and Roberts, 2006 as cited in Fink, 2014). In this case, there are six essential stages which are undertaken in this systematic review method that have been taken in this literature review research namely: 1) defining the research question; 2) designing the plan; 3) searching for the literature; 4) applying exclusion and inclusion criteria; 5) Applying quality assessment; and 6) Synthesizing.

Additionally, the literature review can also be an instrumental case study, which means it is made to look at a specific example to gain an understanding of a phenomenon or problem or to come to a general conclusion (Onwuegbuzie & Frels, 2016). Therefore,

the current condition of the Acehnese vernacular languages has been taken as a case study of this literature review study.

Finally, language endangerment, language vitality, language revitalization, and language planning policy are four interrelated theoretical and conceptual perspectives and analytical lenses that are used in this study to describe the current situation and status of the Acehnese vernacular language. Then apply it to a subset of the study literature, which serves as the encouragement for a critical analysis of the research topic to find and develop the best vernacular language planning policy which finally can be applied to support the vernacular language preservation and revitalization program.

#### 4. Findings and discussion

From the discussion of the literature review, some findings are going to be discussed in this section. Initially, the discussion will be the findings on Acehnese vernacular language vitality status. Secondly, the findings from Indonesian language planning policy about vernacular, regional, or local languages. And lastly, there will be a discussion on alternative solutions to overcome those findings.

##### 4.1. The research findings on the current Acehnese vernacular language vitality status

Some findings that have been found from this study can be seen in the following:

1. *“The continuous use of Acehnese by parents is problematic, though, as the majority of parents no longer converse in it with their kids at home”* (Idaryani & Fidyati, 2022).
2. Acehnese language according to Ethnologue has the vitality status of **“endangered”** which means that *“It is no longer the norm that children learn and use this language”* (Eberhard et. al., 2023a).
3. *“The Devayan language’s vitality status is in the stable group, however, it is **declining**”* (Candrasari, 2017).
4. *“The Gayo language vitality status is classified as **“Threatened”** at level 6b which also means that “The language is used orally by all generations, but only some of the child-bearing generations are transmitting it to their children”* (Syahputera et al., 2019).
5. The first finding in the study of the attitudes of Acehnese parents towards their vernacular language is that *“The Indonesian language was considered by the majority of the parents in Acehnese families as the first most important language to be acquired by their children followed by Acehnese language and English, respectively”*, and the second finding of the study has shown that *“the participants of the research mostly agreed that Acehnese was important for their children in the future even though the language was not introduced as the first language to them in their homes”* (Yusuf et al., 2022).

From the research findings on the current Acehnese vernacular language vitality status above, it could be identified that; 1) most of the Acehnese vernacular language vitality status are at the level of **“endangered”** or **“threatened”**; 2) two main factors affecting the Acehnese vernacular language vitality status namely: a. **“intergenerational**

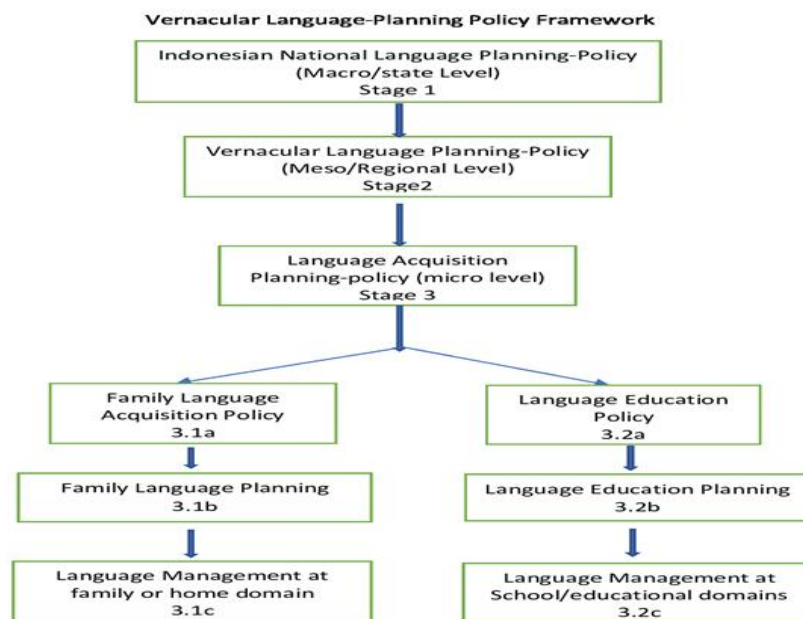
language transmission” which means that most parents do not transmit their first language, mother tongue, or vernacular languages to their children; and b. the attitudes of Acehnese parents towards the Acehnese vernacular languages. In this case, it is related to the beliefs and ideology of the language.

In this case, those findings are considered as the Acehnese vernacular language problems. If it can be referred to Rubin and Jernudd (1971b, p.xvi) on the definition of language planning. “Language planning is focused *on problem-solving* and is characterized by the formulation and evaluation of alternatives for solving language problems *to find the best (or optimal, most efficient)* decision. In all cases it is future-oriented; that is, the outcomes of policies and strategies must be specified in advance of action taken” as cited in Spolsky (2012, p. 16).

From the definition of language planning above, it can be inferred that there are four main principles of language planning namely; 1) to discover the best or most effective, efficient solution to a problem; 2) to formulate and assess the alternative solutions; 3) to determine the goals, the strategies and the results of the language planning-policies; and 4) to make sure that it is future oriented language planning-policy program.

Referring to the objective of this study, this study is going to explore and design an alternative solution to the Acehnese vernacular language problems.

Therefore, based on the facts and the previous discussion of the literature review, the following conceptual framework on Acehnese vernacular language planning policy will be the new finding or the novelty of this study. The framework can be seen in the following figure 2.



**Figure 2.** Vernacular language planning-policy framework

#### *4.1.1. Indonesian national language planning-policy (Macro/state level)*

From the vernacular language planning-policy framework, it can be seen that on the top level, it is, of course, the national language planning, since every policy arising at the regional or micro level should synchronize with the macro or state level to avoid conflict between national interest and regional interest. In this case, they are Kaplan and Baldauf (1997, p. 117) who have made a distinction between smaller organizations, or micro level, and larger organizations, or national and above as macro level. Additionally, they refer to intermediate levels like local government as "meso". However, anything in Ireland below the national level is referred to as "micro" by Mac Giolla Chri'ost (2006) as cited in Spolsky (2009).

Regarding the Indonesian language politics, policy, and planning, it can be said that they have once again shown how, on a larger scale, Indonesia has provided room and flexibility for the growth and preservation of regional languages inside the country (see, Sugiyono, 2022). Therefore, there are no problems for vernacular, regional, or local languages to maintain and preserve their languages.

#### *4.1.2. Vernacular language planning-policy (Meso/regional level)*

Then, the next stage starts with vernacular language planning policy on the intermediate, regional, or meso level. At this stage the vernacular language planning policy will accommodate the whole language problems happening at the regional level, which then formulate the next strategies, planning to overcome the issues.

#### *4.1.3. Language acquisition planning-policy (Micro level)*

Language acquisition planning policy will be applied, since as it can be seen from the findings of the Acehnese vernacular language vitality status, the main problem is the "intergenerational language transmission. The process of transmission of language from parents, or from one generation to the next generation can be achieved not only from the process of language transmission in the family domain, but it is also part of learning or acquiring a language that can be achieved through language acquisition planning. Essentially, language acquisition planning "refers to organized efforts to promote the learning of language" (Cooper, 1989).

#### *4.1.4. Family language acquisition policy*

Then, the strategies for the implementation of the language acquisition planning stage will be implemented through the family language acquisition policy and the language education policy at the micro level (smaller organization) such as the regional/provincial ministry of education. However, in reality, acquisition planning is the process of strengthening and expanding language users' ability to acquire a language through teaching and learning activities, whether they take place in family, educational, or other language domains (Hogan-Brun et al., 2013).

#### *4.1.5. Language education policy*

At this stage, language education policy is also referred to as language acquisition policy (Spolsky, 2004). Further, the process of learning or acquiring a language can be obtained at School, since it is one of the language education domains. It has become the key domain for language learning or education policy, aside from the family domains (Spolsky, 2004).

#### *4.1.6. Family language planning and language education planning*

The second last stage of the framework is family language planning and language education planning. In family language planning, the process of language transmission and the process of language learning or language acquisition also happens within the home or family domains. Language education planning is primarily implemented in educational domains such as schools or other formal or informal educational institutions. Additionally, language policy can be better understood by looking at the family, as it is a crucial domain to study because decisions about the language or languages that children should improve their speaking are made from the family domains (Spolsky, 2004).

#### *4.1.7. Language management at family and educational domains*

The final stage is language management in the family or home domain is the smallest unit of language planning policy. What has been clearly defined by Neustupny, Jernudd, and Nekvapil is that structured language management spans from the micro (family) to the macro (nation-state) level, whereas simple language management begins with the individual (Spolsky, 2009).

Individual here refers to the participants in the family domains such as parents, children, and any other family members. They act as the managers themselves to manage the language planning. Language management at schools or educational domains is managed by the participants in the educational domains such as teachers, heads of schools, principals, or directors. It is their role to manage how language acquisition planning policy can be achieved in the educational domains. Since, one of the most effective tools for language management is unquestionably the language policy that a school system adopts (Spolsky, 2009).

This framework is formulated based on the current findings of Acehnese vernacular language status and the theories and concepts in the field of language revitalization, language vitality and endangerment, and language planning policies proposed by various scholars in the discussion of the literature review.

## **5. Conclusion**

The results and discussion indicate that Acehnese language vitality is largely classified as "endangered" or "threatened," addressing the study's first research question. Additionally, the study reveals two critical issues: "intergenerational language transmission" and "Acehnese parents' attitudes toward vernacular languages," which are



heavily influenced by the perceived prestige of the national language for advancing their children's careers. These language attitudes directly impact vernacular language vitality and provide answers to research questions one and two. The primary finding of this literature review is a framework for vernacular language-planning policy, which addresses the study's third research question. It also addresses the fourth research question, confirming that vernacular language planning policies can support the preservation and maintenance of these languages. As Haugen (1966) stated, "Language planning is called for wherever there are language problems" as cited in Cooper (1989). This framework provides a foundational model for Acehnese vernacular language planning and may serve as a conceptual framework for similar policies elsewhere. It also offers an alternative approach to addressing language issues tailored to the current status of Acehnese vernacular vitality and applicable to similar cases in other regions. Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of language planning policy, especially in vernacular language planning. For researchers, language planners, practitioners, and stakeholders, this framework provides guidelines for designing action plans and strategies in vernacular language policy. Feedback and suggestions for further improvement of this framework are welcome.

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