

Rethinking Globalization, Reclaiming the Local: A Post-Colonial Perspective of English Language Education in Indonesia

Setiono Sugiharto

Introduction

The Indonesian government's obsession with the Western intellectual tradition in the national education system has become a cause of concerns among both local scholars and teaching practitioners. This raises at least four important questions: (1) Has the shift of orientation to educational philosophy taken place in the context of globalization?, (2) What have actually been the motives which trigger the shift?, (3) How can such motives be critically examined and problematized?, and (4) What strategies can be devised to counter possible impositions of ideological constructs implicated in the discourse of globalization in education? These inquiries are highly germane, and therefore needs to be addressed, for the current globalized world creates a "new world order", which may eventually lead to ideological contestations and even clashes. To answer these inquiries with a greater depth, we need to borrow important constructs such as identity, hybridity, and culture, to name just a few, emanating from a revolutionary outlook that can help unmask ulterior agendas masqueraded under the notion of globalization in education.

It needs, however, to be stated from the outset that such a revolutionary vantage point generated mainly from current rethinking of an

intellectual movement like post-colonialism in the context of language education in particular and education in general has not yet had exerted any significant influence on the educational practices in Indonesia. Despite the burgeoning literature which celebrates the rise of post-colonialism in both language education and education in general¹, the valuable insights provided from the previous studies on post-colonial theory have not been well-informing, at least in the Indonesian context.

In other words, the Indonesian educational landscapes are far from experiencing the so-called "post-colonial turn". With the current strong hegemonic role of the center country like the U.S. in almost all life domains such as politics, economy, and culture in Indonesia, not to mention education, the perspective of post-colonialism is necessary for not only revealing this hegemony, but also for interrogating and subverting it. As the central premise of post-colonialism is to deconstruct the *status quo*, to critique the domination of power of the colonial discourse and to transform this discourse into other form of discourses so as to create hybrid discourses, the insights derived from post-colonial theory can indeed shed light into how educational practices in Indonesia are run under the presence of Western intellectual domination and into the possibility of appropriating and even resisting this domination in the light of the local perspectives of education. Apart from such an understanding, it is also important to grasp the idea that post-colonial theory is concerned with the transformation, the taking over, the appropriation, the adoption, the adaptation, and the recycling of languages, cultures, knowledge and identities.²

Admittedly, the Western intellectual hegemony in the educational domain in Indonesia has been very obvious, especially in the establishment of the controversial international pilot project schools (henceforth RSBI) and schools with international standard (hencefort SBI) in Indonesia. This provides clear evidence that the hegemonic power of the colonizer is at work, as it has been allowed to seep into the country's

¹ See for example, Hyunjung Shin and Ryuko Kubota, "Post-colonialism and Globalization in Language Education", in Bernard Spolsky and Francis M.Hult (Eds.), *The Handbook of Educational Linguistics*, (Malde, MA: Blackwell, 2008), pp. 206-219.

² Alastair Pennycook, "English, Politics, and Ideology: From Colonial Celebration to Postcolonial Performativity", in Thomas Ricento, (ed.), *Ideology, Politics and Language Policy: Focus on English* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2000).

education system. Interestingly, although the Indonesian Constitutional Court issued its verdict in January this year, declaring the dismissal of the RSBI due to the segregation in education it has created, the Indonesian Education and Culture Minister Muhammad Nuh defied the ruling, saying that the RSBI still needs to operationalize for the sake of the nation's pursuing quality education.

Nonetheless, because of the social pressure against the operation of the RSBI, the Education and Culture Ministry decided to alter RSBI to the so-called *Sekolah Mandiri* (Independent School). Despite the alteration in the name, the spirit of nurturing the western intellectual determinism in the national education system is further sustained through the creation of the former. In fact, the brand-new school, albeit distinct in name, has been alleged by many Indonesian education practitioners and observers to operationalize like that of the RSBI, with English still being used as a medium of instruction and curriculum designs and assessment systems being imported from inner circle countries, most notably the U.S., the U.K., Australia, and Canada. Seemingly to have been enmeshed in the Westernization or Americanization ideology, national education system has had built its educational philosophy on this dominant ideology³.

In this article, I will first show that the Indonesian government's efforts to internationalize the national education system cannot be separated from what is often referred to as the "discourse of globalization", manifested (in this case) primarily through the fetish of English language education. I shall then examine the current educational practice in Indonesia, which is situated in this discourse of globalization in the light of a post-colonial perspective. Specifically, I shall unravel the Western intellectual determinism formulated in the policy regarding the goal of SBI, which has sparked protracted debates among scholars and educational practitioners. Finally, I try to envision the possibility of applying "pedagogies of resistance"⁴ which are rooted to local

³ This is reflected on an opinion article in Indonesia's leading newspaper written by Indonesia's Vice President Boediono who strongly suggests that the national curriculum be designed by adopting the ideas of Derek Bok, renowned scholar and former president of Harvard University, USA, regarding the essentials of global education (*Kompas*, August 27, 2012).

⁴ See Suresh Canagarajah, *Resisting Linguistic Imperialism in English Teaching* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

knowledge and wisdoms as strategies to appropriate and even to resist the intellectual determinism imposed by the Western ideology. It is through such pedagogies that the the creation of hybrid discourses and the taking over and recycling of languages, ideologies, cultures, and identities can be realized.

Education as Belonging to the Discourse of Globalization

In much of the discussion on globalization, the notion of globalization has been commonly perceived asymmetrically, with the countries (especially the U.S.) which exert considerable influence in terms of politics, economy, and culture to other countries being the locus of power. The powerful countries are often associated with the 'Center', while the powerless ones with the 'Periphery'. Ineluctably, as it is the former, especially the western country, which is often thought of holding power over the domains above and of imposing them to the latter, the epicenter of globalization is considered to emanate from the center. Globalization, as Phillipson contends, "dovetails with Americanization and Englishization"⁵. The following definition of globalization seems to capture this perception:

...In popular discourse, globalization often functions as little more than a synonym for one or more of the following phenomena: the pursuit of of classical liberal (or 'free market') policies in the world economy ('economic liberalization'), the growing dominance fo western (or even American) forms of political, economic, and cultural life ('westernization' or 'americanization'), the proliferation of new infomation of technologies (the 'Internet Revolution')...⁶

This definition clearly treats the center (i.e. the U.S.) as the epicenter and the gate-keeper of world order, through which globalization unilaterally flows and spreads world-wide. However, though this definition occludes education system as part of the phenomena of globalization, it is implicated in all of the above-mentioned phenomena. Education, more precisely language education, is closely interlocked

⁵ Robert Phillipson. *Linguistic Imperialism Continued*. (New York: Routledge, 2009), p.57.

⁶ W. Scheuermann (200), as quoted in Thomas Ricento, "Language Policy and Globalization", in Nikolas Coupland (Eds.), *The Handbook of Language and Globalization* (Malde, MA: Blackwell, 2010), pp. 123-141.

with economic liberalization, the rise of the dominance of the U.S.'s politics, economy and culture, and the advances of the information of technologies of the center.

In a stark contrast to the asymmetrical notion of globalization stands a symmetrical one, which diverts the sources of globalization from the center to the periphery. In other words, with this symmetrical vantage point, the sources of globalization are not necessarily from the center, but they can stem from the periphery, thus making a space for the possible construction of new discourses in the light of the local's ideologies, cultures, identities. It is important to note here that while the asymmetrical notion of globalization is often associated with Americanization, Englishization, economic liberalization, and technological revolution, the symmetrical notion of globalization can be imputed to localization, diversification, and transformation of societies, ideologies, languages, identities, and culture⁷, with other flows or sources of globalization, apart from economic liberalization, held responsible for the causes or forces of globalization.⁸ As such, the latter notion subscribes to the "transformationalist" (as opposed to "hyperglobalist" and "skeptical") view of globalization, which sees the possibilities of multiplied influences of globalization⁹

If contextualized from the globalization perspective, the discussion on education is often connected to (neo) colonialism or (neo) imperialism. Given the constellation of global hegemony of the center and the unequal power relations, education, along with economy, politics, and culture, is embedded in the complex web of this hegemony, and hardly escapes from the firm grip of it. This constellation seems to have constituted a powerful neo-imperial empire. Indeed, the center's domination of science and technology and of world's languages

⁷ Hyunjung Shin and Ryuko Kubota, "Post-colonialism and Globalization in Language Education", in Bernard Spolsky and Francis M.Hult (Eds.), *The Handbook of Educational Linguistics*, (Malde, MA: Blackwell, 2008), pp. 206-219.

⁸ Arjun Appadurai in his book – *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996) – uses the term *scapes* to describe a wide array of flows of globalization. These include ethnoscapes, technoscapes, financescapes, mediascapes, and ideoscapes.

⁹ See Thomas Ricento and Peter Garret whose articles are published in Nikolas Coupland (Eds.), *The Handbook of Language and Globalization* (Malde, MA: Blackwell, 2010), pp. 123-141 and 447-474, respectively. These articles discuss globalization from three perspectives: hyperglobalist, skeptical, and transformationalist.

has created a space that can pave the way for further perpetuating the global hegemony in a specific field like education. One effective way of doing this has been through the promotion of English language education in particular countries where English is considered as a foreign language. In such countries, the role of English as a global language is exalted and glorified, and as far as education is concerned it has been considered a remiss for not including the language in the school curricula. Yet, the excessive promotion of English through the educational sector has been without perilous consequences in that it can pose an imminent threat to the survival of language, ideology, culture, and identity of the periphery countries.

Robert Phillipson warns us that the one-sided flow of information and knowledge from the center to the periphery can lead to “linguistic dominance” or “linguistic imperialism”, which are often strengthened through ideologies that exalt the dominant language (i.e. English)¹⁰. As a sub-type of *linguicism* (coined using the analogy of racism, sexism and ethnicism), linguistic imperialism refers to “ideologies, structures, and practices which are used to legitimate, effectuate, and reproduce an unequal division of power and resources (both material and immaterial) between groups which are defined on the basis of language”¹¹. As the goal of English language education is the attainment of communicative competence in English, we surely cannot downplay the looming threat of linguistic imperialism envisaged by Phillipson:

“A focus on communication skills may well entail the dissemination of American ways of speaking and forms of communication, genre, and style of the dominant consumerist culture, which globalization is extending worldwide”¹²

Basing on John Galtung’s theory of economic, political, military, cultural, and social imperialism, Phillipson classifies three arguments of imperialist discourse for promoting English. They include “English-intrinsic arguments” (the capacities of English as a language),

¹⁰ Phillipson. *Linguistic Imperialism Continued*.

¹¹ Robert Phillipson, *Linguistic Imperialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 47; See also Tove Skutnabb-Kangas, “Linguistic Human Rights and Teachers of English”, in Joan Kelly Hall and William G. Eggington (eds.), *The Sociopolitics of English Language Teaching* (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters), p. 40.

¹² Phillipson. *Linguistic Imperialism Continued*, p.5.

“English-extrinsic arguments (the resources that English can provide), and “English-functional arguments” (the potential used of English as a language)¹³. The first argument signifies the nature of English as linguistically rich, protean, and interesting; the second describes the availability of English in providing necessary educational resources such as books, dictionaries, and teaching pundits; the final argument denotes the potential of English as a language of modernization, science and technology as well as a language of wider communication that can unite people and promote understanding across nations. Clearly, these three arguments serve as a powerful basis for disseminating the ideology of the center and for relegating and even repressing other ideologies that stand in opposition to it. Such an ideological repression aims at maintaining “injustice and inequality by means of language policies”¹⁴, and apart from connected to policies in education, they are also connected to policies in commerce, science, international affairs, culture and the media¹⁵.

Nevertheless, in order to fully capture the effects of linguistic imperialism now at work in the Indonesian context, Phillipson’ accounts may not be adequate. To begin with, his concerns over the inequalities in terms of structural power often neglect the local effects linguistic imperialism may have exerted. This is to say, that because he uses micro-social perspective, his vantage point is too impersonal and detached from what people are really experiencing in their everyday lives¹⁶. What is needed now is, what Canagarajah calls, a micro-societal perspective. This perspective can complement the insights generated by Phillipson, as it aims at unraveling “how linguistic hegemony is experienced in the day-to-day life of the people and communities in the periphery”¹⁷. Employing a micro-societal vantage point, we can spell out the struggles of and strategies of resistance used by individual person whose life has been affected by linguistic imperialism. This point is clearly relevant to the educational context where English is mandatorily learnt and taught to non-native English students. In fact, as Canagarajah ar-

¹³ Phillipson, *Linguistic Imperialism*, p. 271.

¹⁴ Phillipson. *Linguistic Imperialism Continued*, p.5.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Canagarajah, *Resisting Linguistic Imperialism in English Teaching*.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

gues, even classrooms can be potential sites for resisting “against the values and pedagogical practices from the center”¹⁸. Thus, while Phillipson’s structural power analysis of English imperialism tends to be global in its goal, and therefore misses the particularities of imperialistic effects on the grassroots, micro-societal point of view can throw light into how such effects are felt by individual people.

Furthermore, while Phillipson’s revelations of the global hegemonic of the Center need to be commended, his theory excludes “a sense of agency, resistance, or appropriation”¹⁹. Pennycook is particularly critical of linguistic imperialism argument. In his view, what this argument ignores is the discursive effects of the hegemonic roles of English over other languages. To capture the discursive effects of the spread of English, he uses the term “postcolonial performativity” –which complicates linguistic imperialism and the agency of resistance from ideological, political, and sociological perspectives²⁰.

Educational Practices in Indonesia: An Appraisal from Post-Colonialism

The center’s constant hegemony in education in the Indonesian context is particularly an interesting area to be examined in the light of post-colonialism. We can describe the hegemony in the field, borrowing the analogy of Appadurai’s scapes, as “educscapes”– which approximate to “ideoscapes”; that is, a global flow of ideas about the practices of education. This ideas include the philosophical outlooks which serves as the basis of education system, curricula, approaches to and methods of teaching, teaching materials, certification, and assessment systems.

It needs to be highlighted here that the crux of the issue surrounding the shift of orientation to global education, like other countries where English is deemed a foreign language²¹, is related to the fetish about the English language –a phenomenon also known as “English

¹⁸ Ibid, p. 42.

¹⁹ Pennycook, “English, Politics, and Ideology,” pp. 114.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 116.

²¹ See for instance Hyunjung Shin, “English Language Teaching in Korea: Toward Globalization or Glocalization?”, in Jim Cummins and Cris Davidson (eds.), *International Handbook of English Language Teaching, Part I* (The Netherlands: Springer), pp. 75-86.

fever"²². This is most conspicuous in the English language education in Indonesia where schools (especially state-owned) adopt English as a medium of classroom instruction or including English in the school curriculum. The Indonesian government-sponsored RSBI and SBI are cases in point. Equally conspicuous is the inexorable rise of the numbers of private-owned schools of early-childhood, primary and secondary education, which claim themselves either to be a "national-plus" or to use "international" curriculum and assessment system and "bilingual education". Despite distinct in labels, these schools share a commonality: promoting the importance of learning and using English as part of the celebration of globalization.

In a sense, the establishment of the RSBI and SBI accords with and is implicated in the asymmetrical notion of globalization; the most obvious being that they become an economic commodity –a logical consequence of free market. It is evident here that the systems employed in designing the curricula for these schools and probably other private-run schools bearing the label 'international' succumb to the economic stronghold of the center countries such as the U.S. and the U.K.:

Under this system, curriculums have generally been adopted from OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries –such as the UK's Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) or the US-based International Baccalaureate (IB)²³.

Among the varied flows of globalization mentioned previously, it is the above sense that is often captured by most of the voices critically articulated by local scholars here. After all, as these voices argue, the internationalization of schools in Indonesia are indicative of neo-liberalization in education which is buttressed by the capitalist ideology, creating elitism in education and further widening the gap between the haves and the have-nots. Because these schools can only be afforded by the opulent, their presence reflects the rise of the exclusive "regime of the rich"²⁴.

²² Stephen Krashen, *Dealing with English Fever* (Taipei: Crane Publishing Company, 2003).

²³ "Students New to International Schools Face Initial Adaptation Hurdles," *The Jakarta Post*, 10 May 2010.

²⁴ Setiono Sugiharto, "Schools as the Regime of the Rich" (*The Jakarta Post*, July, 30).

Nevertheless, the Indonesian government's efforts to internationalize national education system ought to be viewed from going beyond the understanding of both hyperglobalist and skeptical vantage point of globalization. That is, we need to see such as effort by adopting the transformationalist perspective, which allows diverse flows or forces that trigger globalization. It would be fair to argue here that the implementation of policies regarding the establishment of local schools with international flavor such as SBI and RSBI exhibits an interconnectedness among factors that effectuate the hegemonic power in national education system. In an ambition to provide correctives to the languishing national education system and to pursue quality education, the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture formulated the following goal of SBI²⁵ in the hope that local education is poised to compete in global fora:

- (1) SBI melaksanakan standar proses yang diperkaya dengan model proses pembelajaran di negara negara maju.
 - (2) Proses pembelajaran menerapkan pendekatan pembelajaran berbasis teknologi informasi dan komunikasi, aktif, kreatif, efektif, menyenangkan, dan kontekstual.
 - (3) SBI dapat menggunakan bahasa pengantar bahasa Inggris dan/atau bahasa asing lainnya yang digunakan dalam forum internasional bagi mata pelajaran tertentu.
 - (4) Pembelajaran mata pelajaran Bahasa Indonesia, Pendidikan Agama, Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan, Muatan Lokal, dan Pendidikan Sejarah menggunakan bahasa pengantar bahasa Indonesia.
 - (5) Penggunaan bahasa pengantar bahasa Inggris atau bahasa asing lainnya dimulai dari kelas IV untuk SD.
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- (1) SBI carries out processual standards that are enriched with learning process models from developed countries.
 - (2) Learning processes implement information and communication technology based approach that are active, creative, effective, fun, and contextualized.

²⁵ Landasan dan Pentahapan Perintisan SBI, (n.d.)

- (3) SBI uses English as the medium of instruction and/or other foreign languages that are used in international forums for particular subjects.
- (4) Such school subjects as the Indonesian Language, Religious Education, Citizenship Education, Local Content, and History Education shall be carried out through the medium of Indonesian.
- (5) The use of English or other foreign languages as the medium of education shall begin from the fourth grade of elementary school.

In one sense, this policy mirrors “educational imperialism” because it emulates and validates the professionalism of the center, and seemingly demotes the professionalism of the local where the real educational practices take place. In another, this educational policy epitomizes the so-called “language-spread policy”, in which the promotion of languages other than one’s own language is vehemently executed by the official body (i.e. government)²⁶. Clearly, because English, as Phillipson’s arguments of imperialist discourse have shown us, is intrinsically, extrinsically, and functionally alluring, it comes as no surprise that the language has been promoted with rigor in the formulation of the policy above. In this respect, the implementation of such a policy can be viewed as the fulfillment of three functions: economic reproductive, ideological, and repressive²⁷. The phrase in point (1) ‘enriched with learning process models from developed countries’ presupposes the superiority, modernity, and sophistication of learning process models from the center countries – learning models that need to be imported so as to supplement the learning model assumed to be existent in the local context. The phrase also implies the necessary infusion of values and beliefs of “good” learning process models into the models available in the local contexts. The importing of these learning models will have implications in the design of curricula, teaching methods and teaching materials used. What is unfortunate, however, is that this importing is often predicated on the assumption that the “good” learning models are congenial with and viable to be applied

²⁶ See Phillipson, *Linguistic Imperialism*.

²⁷ *Ibid*, p. 68.

in the local context. In so doing, this fulfills the ideological function. In terms of the arguments of imperialist discourse, point (1) can thus be subsumed under the English-extrinsic or what English *has* argument, which has to do with the wealth of resources English has and offers to other periphery countries.

Point (2) can be said to serve the economic-reproductive function, whereby technological dependence on the western products are inculcated through educational policy program and tangibly translated into the learning approach. The use of sophisticated learning approach using information and communication technology, as this point clearly shows, promises "active, creative, effective, fun, and contextualized" learning ambience. Yet, such an approach privileges only students from the well-off families, but ignores those from the disadvantaged ones. Also, it ignores the inherent constraints faced by schools in remote areas in which access to technology is hardly possible. David Block uses the coinage "McCommunication" pedagogies to describe such a teaching approach²⁸ In regard to the arguments of imperialist discourse, this point is connected to what English *does* arguments (or the English functional arguments) in which English offers access or pathways to modernization, sophistication, future success through the advancement of technological devices the center creates.

Point (3) and (5) exemplify the repressive function of English. Although it is stated in point (3) that other foreign languages are allowed to be used for classroom instruction, it is never clear what other foreign languages are permitted to be used²⁹. In practice, however, it is English that is most favored and used as the sole medium of instruction in all levels of education in Indonesia. There are plausible reasons for this. To begin with, in terms of the arguments of imperialist discourse, English is intrinsically appealing (hence English intrinsic arguments or what English *is* arguments) and is always labeled with positive ascriptions. Furthermore, the status of English as the first foreign language in Indonesian education system has well-established history,

²⁸ David Block, "'McCommunication': A Problem in the Frame for SLA, in Deborah Cameron and David Block (eds.), *Globalization and Language Teaching* (London: Routledge), pp. 117-133.

²⁹ Even if other foreign languages such as German and French are taught in secondary education level, students' and teachers' appreciation to these foreign languages is not as positive as that of English.

which cannot easily be eroded from the memory of the people. The strong historical ties with this language have in fact help sustain and strengthen the hegemonic root of English in Indonesian educational landscape. The use of English in early schoolings, as point (4) has indicated, could also have repressive function, provided that English is used subtractively (at the expense of students' own languages) rather than additively (as an additional language to students' languages). In a more extreme case, the repressive function of using English in formal education could lead to "linguistic genocide", the intentional murdering of language. Skutnabb-Kangas describes how this could possibly take place in education:

If you are an ESL *and* EFL teacher and/or if you teach minority children through the medium of a dominant language, at the cost of their mother tongue, you are participating in linguistic genocide. You are killing the necessary diversity and the prerequisites for life on our planet ³⁰ [italics added].

It is important to mention here that long before the Indonesian government established SBI and RSBI, internationally-inspired local private-owned schools (especially elementary, primary and secondary) had been in operation at remarkably exponential rates, bearing such labels as "international-standard schools", "national-plus schools", "bilingual schools", and "schools with international curriculum". Given the prestige status of English in the eyes of the Indonesian, all of these schools adopt the English-only policy and therefore tends to promote "the diffusion of English paradigm" rather than "the ecology of language paradigm"³¹.

The goal stipulated in points (4) may at first glance promote a sense of unity or nationalism by using the national language (i.e. the Indonesian language or *Bahasa Indonesia*) through formal education. The promotion of the language seems to reflect the "language ecology" perspective, which emphasizes "the cultivation and preservation of languages"³². It is commendable that amid the rapid spread of

³⁰ Skutnabb-Kangas, "Linguistic Human Rights and Teachers of English," p. 25.

³¹ See Ibid, pp. 40-41 for the characteristics of each of these paradims.

³² Robert Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas, "English only Worldwide or Language Ecology", *TESOL Quarterly*, Vol. 30, No. 3 (1996), p. 12. For the assessment of the language ecology perspective, see Pennycook, "English, Politics, and Ideology."

English globally, the Indonesian government has taken the initiative to preserve the national language and to protect it from the dominant use of English (in education) especially among children and teenagers. The current policy of scrapping the English subject from the curriculum in regular schools here, despite the fact that it reaped condemnation among scholars nation-wide, is indicative that the Indonesian government wants to ensure the survival of Bahasa Indonesia among young generations. However, if viewed from a similar ecology of language vantage point, such a policy is not without problem. The policy loses sight of the fact that Indonesia is a multilingual country with a wealth of local languages spread and spoken by their natives in the country's provinces, and as such the imposition of the Indonesian language as the only medium of instruction through formal education poses a perilous threat to the survival of the indigenous languages. Here *nationalization* serves as a stumbling block for *localization*. That is, the imposition of the *Indonesian-only policy* in formal education (for the sake of nationalism amid English language fervor) has the potential to proscribe students to use their own vernacular languages (localization). If the Indonesian language is acknowledged as the only legitimate language for use in schools contexts, but the students' native tongues are excluded and even stigmatized as irrelevant and probably distorting, then this is another case of linguistic imperialism – the causative factor of the death of local languages.

If the perspective of linguistic imperialism is applied as a framework of analyzing point (3) and (5) as well as point (4), then we have two layers of linguistic imperialism in practice. In the first layer is the legitimation of English as the medium of instruction in schools settings, with the consequences being the stigmatization of the national language, and in the second the legitimation of Bahasa Indonesia at the cost of Indonesia's local languages, with the consequences being the marginalization of the latter.

Reclaiming Local Knowledge: Toward the Pedagogies of Resistance

The tendency of the national education system which orientates itself to the center pedagogical paradigm and global English paradigm can be seen as a celebration of globalization. Yet, adopting the educational fundamentals from the center wholesale is a form of a globa-

lization utopia. Globalization therefore has been undisputed, cordially welcomed and uncritically perceived as if it always brings immense benefits for the common good of the people in the periphery. Here we unconsciously help sustain and even strengthen the already well-established neo-imperial empire, which continuously effectuates its hegemonic forces through linguisticism (i.e. linguistic imperialism) and educational imperialism. As these are enforced by the government through the educational policy to the Indonesian citizens, there seems to be an internal colonialism in practice:

“When members of the “peripheral” population are themselves the ones opting for education in the “center” language or promoting it for their countrymen, this merely means that they have been co-opted into linguisticism themselves; they are internal colonialist”³³

Needless to say, efforts to internationalize the national education system brings out an interesting irony when historically the country’s education system had long laid its educational philosophical grounding on local geniuses and knowledge. While the country’s founding fathers had managed to resist the hegemony in education (through, for example, a political movement like Mohhammad Hatta’s National Indonesian Education) during the colonial times for the sake of equality in the access to education, the present education system tends to do otherwise. While they legitimized local perspectives of education, the present education system delegitimizes them. While local knowledge were deemed highly relevant to and widely applied in the education system at that time, they are now disparaged as something parochial, disruptive, irrelevant, unscientific, and illogical.

The global pedagogical paradigm, which as many post-colonialism scholars have argued is still inspired by the Enlightenment or intellectual movement, has diverted our attention from localities to universalism, standardization and uniformity. This paradigm views diversity, variability, difference, and contingency as a hindrance, rather than a resource, and “jettison the idiosyncrasies associated with *the locale*”³⁴

³³ John Joseph, “Language and Politics”, in in Bernard Spolsky and Francis M.Hult (Eds.), *The Handbook of Educational Linguistics*, (Malde, MA: Blackwell, 2008), p. 360.

³⁴ Suresh Canagarajah, “Reconstructing Local Knowledge, Reconfiguring Language Studies”, in Suresh Canagarajah (ed.), *Reclaiming the Local in Language Policy and Practice* (Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2005), p. 5.

(italic added). It is this pedagogical perspective that has been injected in the current education system.

With the strong adherence to this perspective, it is no wonder that the present education system sees learning as a process of acquiring rather than constructing, negotiating and contesting knowledge. The system also treats learning as an impersonal and detached cognitive activity free from the subjective and biased involvement of human beings. Finally, it considers learning as transcendental rather than locally-bound, universal rather than cultural, and instrumental rather than both politically and ideologically motivated³⁵.

Thus, our endeavors to reclaim the relevance of local wisdom and knowledge in the context of globalization (where western hegemony finds its fertile grounds) necessitate the politicizing of education in general and language education in particular. That is, education must be viewed as a knowledge-making activity which is not neutral, ideologically-free and innocent, but instead is value-laden and loaded with competing ideologies³⁶. With such a view, the reclamation of the local is only possible if education is seen as a site of struggle. How then can this viewpoint offer a strategy for reclaiming local knowledge without losing sight of the positive benefits globalization brings about in our education system? Suresh Canagarajah suggests that this be carried out by what he calls a “deconstructive and reconstructive project”³⁷. The former refers to attempts to interrogate and critique established knowledge to suit the needs of the local, and the latter signifies the reinterpretation activity of the available local knowledge to adapt to current conditions. This project is mutually-reinforcing – one supports each other.

Both deconstruction and reconstruction activities have ramifications for our education system. To start with, despite positive promises it offers, globalization in the education realm still needs to be deconstructed and interrogated in light of the local knowledge long practiced by our education founding fathers. This already practiced knowledge needs to be understood as constituting vital politics of local

³⁵ Canagarajah, *Resisting Linguistic Imperialism in English Teaching*.

³⁶ See Pennycook, “English, Politics, and Ideology” for further reading of the notion of ideology.

³⁷ Canagarajah, “Reconstructing Local Knowledge, Reconfiguring Language Studies,” pp. 14.

identity or local wisdom, which can usefully be used to counter and even resist the hegemonic forces spread by the center. In addition, the long-practiced local knowledge needs to be continuously reinterpreted and reconstructed in order to keep abreast with the contemporary demands of the globalized world.

To further strengthen these deconstruction and reconstruction projects, we need to devise cultural strategies deeply rooted to the localities and specificities of the people who carry out these projects. This can effectively be executed collaboratively by involving related parties in institutions (e.g. academic and government) and organizations. Alwasilah *et.al.* provide evidence that the maintenance of local knowledge and wisdom in Kampung Naga (a small hamlet in Neglasari Village, Salawu District, Tasikmalaya Regency, West Java Province, Indonesia) can serve as a strong basis for generating insights into cultural strategies in not only education including literacy practices, but also other life domains such as economy, cultures, and politics³⁸. This is nevertheless just one (from a certain locality of Sundanese culture), yet a remarkable instance of a local epistemological practice – a strategic move that can help create pedagogies of resistance or what Kubota and Lehner call counter-hegemonic pedagogies rooted to the Sundanese people's daily life³⁹. Such an instance can certainly aspire to other similar local epistemological practices derived from other cultures and ethnicities in Indonesia.

Finally, taking a micro-social perspective, we can initiate pedagogies of resistance in a specific site such as classrooms through, for example, the teaching of English to non-native English speakers. In fact, post-colonial scholars' critiques of the use of the so-called Standard English in the teaching of English in foreign language contexts have paved the way for the creation of local varieties of English. This implies that the more dominant mode of Western model used for teaching is no longer accepted wholesale as the only mode of thinking, but is continuously appropriated by virtue of one's identity, ideology and rhetorical tradition.

³⁸ Chaedar Alwasilah, Karim Suryadi and Tri Karyono, *Etnopedagogi: Landasan Praktek Pendidikan dan Pendidikan Guru* (Bandung: Kiblat, 2009).

³⁹ Ryuko Kubota and Al Lehner, "Toward Critical Contrastive Rhetoric", *Journal of Second Language Writing* Vol. 13 (2004), pp 7-27.

With the increasingly acknowledged legitimacy of local varieties developed in local contexts, the challenge for classroom teachers now is to help themselves and their students develop critical consciousness of the use of English in the light of multilingual contexts. For example, rather than just adhering to the established model of learning, students can be asked to challenge and explore other learning models by virtue of their social, ideological, and political contexts.

Similarly, rather than passively implementing research products derived from the Center scholars, local teachers can complicate and problematize them in the light of their constant engagements with local realities they are facing in their everyday lives. Both teachers and students need to be cognizant as well that English language teaching can become a potential repressive activity that can curtail one's critical insights into issues related to injustice and inequality in terms of knowledge construction and production. To raise teachers' and students' consciousness of the potential repression of English to their agency, they need to be encouraged to do "the self-validation of *their* first language and culture, a process through which students *and teachers* begin with the belief that their own languages are not merely valid, but systematic and useful" [italics added].⁴⁰

Concluding Remarks

I have argued in this article that despite the emergence of post-colonial scholarship in recent years in education in general and language education in particular, the perspectives generating from such scholarship have not yet been well-informing in the Indonesian context, at least. We are a far cry from experiencing a post-colonial turn. Thus, insights emanating from post-colonial theory are necessary to help unravel Western intellectual hegemony now at work in our education system. As has been discussed previously, such hegemony – disguised in the name of globalization in education – takes the surreptitious shapes of linguistic imperialism and educational imperialism, both of which have the tendency to suppress the local politics of identity of our education system. The reclamation of local knowledge (through deconstruction and reconstruction and the creation of cultural strate-

⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 21.

gies) should provide a counter-hegemonic effort to the dominance of intellectual determinism. However, to be effective this effort should be systematically orchestrated in tandem involving academic and cultural institutions and governmental and non-governmental organizations. In so doing, we can help unveil the idea of pedagogies of resistance.