

## My Jungle Story Matters: Autoethnography and Language Planning and Policy

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### Abstract

The present paper discusses the value of autoethnography as a research methodology in the area of language planning and policy in investigations of language, power, and identity. Traditionally, research methodology in the area of language planning and policy focuses on language, power, and identity from a sociopolitical perspective at the national level. These methodologies do not easily examine how the issues of language, power, and identity are related to the lives of individuals. Therefore, this paper argues for the use of autoethnography as a research methodology in language planning and policy research because it systematically analyzes personal experiences in order to understand the researcher's cultural experience regarding her or his perspectives, beliefs, and practices of language as a language user. This paper also argues that autoethnography can be combined with traditional research methods such as historical-structural analysis and ethnography of language policy to make language planning and policy research more diverse and critical.

*Keywords:* Language planning and policy; autoethnography; research methodology; power; identity



## **My Jungle Story Matters: Autoethnography and Language Planning and Policy**

It was one of those hot and humid days of April in tropical Bangladesh in 2002 when I stepped into the renowned Department of English in Dhaka University. I had minimal money in my pocket to pay train fares to return home at the end of the day. I did not know anybody and I had no place to stay in this city of millions of people. In order to begin my official journey towards a B.A in English, I was looking for the department office to submit my admission form. I saw a room where the door was slightly ajar. I knocked, entered, and asked where the department office was. A person from the other side of the table did not respond to my question but yelled at me: “Where do all these “junglees” come from?” I apologized and ran away from the room. It was my first “welcome” from a professor of the Department of English in Dhaka University. The word junglee is common English slang in Bangladesh and is used to refer to people who are considered uncivilized, ill-mannered, and illiterate. This, however, was not the first time that I had been considered a junglee. During my first week in Grade 6 in one of the prestigious schools in my hometown, Mymensingh, a teacher, pointed at me in front of other giggling girls, asking “Where does this junglee come from?” One of my classmates was ashamed of the fact that she had to go the same school with a junglee like me. Yes, these experiences made me ask several times on several occasions, what makes me a junglee?

My admission to the Department of English in the famous Dhaka University in 2002 put this junglee on display. I used Bangla rather than English before my admission to the Department of English. I began to recognize the power of English in my life after I accepted the offer of admission. I remember strangers came to see me in my house with fresh milk and homemade food to congratulate me. Because I had neither the educational supports to be prepared for Dhaka University’s highly competitive admission exam nor an extraordinary academic record in my high school, it was unimaginable and unthinkable for my family, relatives, friends, and neighbours that I could get into the Department of English in Dhaka University. However, I could not even enjoy this success. I lost my high school friends who did not get into the Department of English, even if they had outstanding records in high school. Suddenly I realized that I was far ahead in a race where nobody could reach me. The advantage that I gained by acceptance into this prestigious English-medium program made my friends feel angry, frustrated, and betrayed. I was an imposter in their eyes and still am in many people’s eyes today. Because of these experiences and others, I often ask myself, what has English made me? Why have I chosen English to educate myself? Did I have any other options to choose? How does English impact my life as a student?

The theme for this special issue is power and identity in education. My understandings of identity and power are informed by those who work in the area of critical applied linguistics such as Bonny Norton (1995, 2012, 2013), Alastair Pennycook (2001, 2014), and Suresh Canagarajah (2001, 2005) among others. According to poststructuralist views, identity is complex, dynamic, in flux, and multi-faceted (Norton, 1995) because it is an evolving and changing process (Hamid, Jahan, & Islam, 2013). Bonny Norton’s work around language and identity is particularly useful for my research in the area of language planning and policy. Norton (1997) explains that when a person uses language it is not only to exchange meaning but also to organize or reorganize a sense of who the person is. In the case of my research, this may perhaps be as a response to broader policy as in the story of my first encounter with Dhaka University’s Department of English. Norton also says that there can be a desire for a certain identity that linked to the distribution of material resources in the society. The people who have access to these material

resources enjoy power and privilege. Power and privilege determine how they relate to the world and how they see their future possibilities (Norton, 1997). Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of language and power also influence my understanding of power. Bourdieu (1991) points out that language is a means of communication but it is also a medium of power. Individuals exercise power through language. For example, English is a material resource for social and economic development in the postcolonial context of Bangladesh (Hamid, Jahan, & Islam, 2013). Consequently, the Bangladeshi people desire English, because it gives power and privilege to those who have access to this language. From a postcolonial perspective, I see a language user's identity as constructed through colonial discourses of superiority and inferiority, which create othering (Hamid, Jahan, & Islam, 2013). Therefore, there are no simple answers to the questions, "Who am I?" Or "What has English made me?" The power of English, with its discourses of superiority and inferiority, categorize and attach my identity to different contexts in everyday life. On the one hand, I was superior to those students who did not get an opportunity to graduate with a B.A. in English from Dhaka University. I still am superior to those students of Bangladesh who do not have the opportunity to pursue doctoral studies in Canada. On the other hand, I was inferior to Bangladeshi students who had access to English in their childhood. In addition, discourses of native-speakerism (Holliday, 2006) ensure that I remain inferior to those who use English as a first language. My understandings of language, power, and identity contribute to my language planning and policy research in the postcolonial context of Bangladesh where those with a command of English enjoy enormous power and prestige and where English speakers create linguistic othering (Sterzuk, 2011). My lived experience in Bangladesh and critical readings of language planning and policy research suggest that English language planning and policy sustain systems of inequality that impact Bangladeshi students' lives in schools and universities. My experience and readings lead me to ask, "Why have I chosen English to educate myself?" and "How does it impact my life as a student?" In reading about possible research methodologies in the area of language planning and policy (Hult & Johnson, 2015; Tsui & Tollefson, 2007; Ricento, 2006), I have come across many traditional approaches to research, such as critical discourse analysis (van Dijk, 2001; Fairclough & Wodak, 1997), discourse analysis (Martin-Jones, 2015; Canagarajah, 2001; Pennycook, 2001), ethnography of language policy (McCarty, 2014; Johnson & Ricento, 2013; Hornberger & Johnson, 2007), historical-structural analysis (Tollefson, 2015), and intertextuality analysis (Hult, 2010). From my readings, I have found these approaches do not center a researcher's personal experience in research or writing to describe and understand her or his cultural experience in a particular research context. Because of the questions I ask myself when I think about language planning and policy, I believe that including personal narrative in language planning and policy research is important.

Autoethnography is an approach that systematically analyzes personal experience in order to understand the researcher's cultural experience regarding her or his perspectives, beliefs, and practices of language as a language user (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011). I am not the only researcher who understands the value of autoethnography in research of the relations between English and power. In a qualitative research strategy paper, Bangladeshi scholar Obaidul Hamid (2015) reveals the relationship between English and aspects of development by drawing on his own life and lived experience. Hamid (2015) utilizes autoethnography as a research methodology for understanding the role of English in terms of employability, mobility, and development in different stages of his life. It is worth mentioning that Hamid and I come from similar backgrounds and have pursued Master's and Ph.D. programs abroad after completing a B.A. in

English at the Department of English in Dhaka University. Both Hamid (2015) and I turn to autoethnography in our research and writing because of our experiences with English, and with identity, and power in education. In the area of language planning and policy research, including the researcher's experiences is important because it contributes to an understanding of why language learners and users invest in particular languages and how languages impact individuals. In this regard, the examples from my ongoing doctoral research illustrate the value of autoethnography in language planning and policy research because it allows a researcher to critically analyse language, power, and identity as well as the impacts of language planning and policy on individuals' lives from an insider's perspective. Accordingly, it brings a more diverse and critical approach to the field of language planning and policy research. In this paper, I begin by presenting traditional research methodology in language planning and policy research. Then, I move to a discussion of autoethnography as a research methodology and what it might look like in language planning and policy research. I also discuss how autoethnography can blend together with other research methodologies, for example, historical-structural analysis and ethnography of language policy, in investigations of language, power, and identity in education.

### **Traditional Research Methodologies in Language Planning and Policy Research**

In this section, I will briefly explain what I understand by language planning and policy and how I define it. After that, I will present an overview of traditional approaches in language planning and policy research.

#### **Language Planning and Policy**

Government, non-governmental organizations, scholars, and community leaders develop language planning and policy formally and informally around the world. Language planning and policy decisions influence the right to use and maintain languages, affect language status, and determine which language should be nurtured in a speech community. Cooper (1989) defines language planning as "deliberate efforts to influence the behaviour of others with respect to the acquisition, structure, or functional allocation of their language codes" (p. 45). Formal language planning of government or informal language planning of individuals influences the function, structure, and acquisition of languages in a speech community and aims to solve the problem of communication. Many independent states faced challenges with language problems after the Second World War. Linguists were hopeful of resolving the language problems through language planning. Although it was unclear what language planning might look like, they generally agreed that language planning produced a language policy, which was an "officially mandated set of rules for language use and form within a nation-state" (Spolsky, 2012, p. 3). The language policy or set of rules for language use can be implicit in a speech community. Thus, a nation-state does not always implement an explicit written language policy. However, there are language ideologies and observable patterns of language practice in language use. Therefore, there is no obvious answer to the question "What is the language policy for a specific nation?" (Spolsky, 2004). In this case, Bangladesh does not have an explicit written English language policy but there are ideologies and consistent or non-consistent patterns in English language practice in schools and universities that appropriate language use and are enacted as language policy. Hence, it is a challenging task to come up with a simple explanation of English language planning and policy in the context of Bangladesh.

## Traditional Research Methodologies

European colonization ended in many countries in the 1950s and 1960s around the world. For example, the British left the Indian subcontinent in 1947 (Hamid, Jahan, & Islam, 2013) and some African countries became independent around 1960 (Opoku-Amankwa, 2009). In order to build national identities, postcolonial nations wanted to remove colonial languages in many spheres of their lives and to promote native languages instead in language planning policy (Tsui & Tollefson, 2007). This notion of constructing identity through a native language in postcolonial countries led to growth in research in the area of language planning and policy. However, early research in language planning and policy focused on developing a theoretical framework for language policy. Later, it included structures, functions, and uses of language among its areas of concern but did not address the ideological and sociopolitical realities of language use (Johnson, 2011). Research in language planning and policy went through many changes and often faced challenges in making connections between policy texts, and discourses at the macro-level and language use at the micro-level (Johnson, 2011). As a result, critical language policy (Tollefson, 1991) has emerged in the research area of language planning and policy that analyzes language as an element of socio-cultural context. This research approach shows that language policy can function as a tool of power to marginalize minority languages and minority language users, and serves the interests of the sociopolitical dominant groups in a society (Shohamy, 2006; Tollefson, 1991). Furthermore, Ruiz (1984) finds connections between discourse and power in language planning and policy that can also be used for social control. According to Ruiz (1984), the study of language policy should address language as problem, language as right, and language as resource. For this reason, critical discourse analysis (van Dijk, 2001, Fairclough & Wodak, 1997) has become popular in language planning and policy research that examines the production and reproduction of discourse to analyze the relations between language and power.

A group of critical scholars in the field of applied linguistics engaged with language planning and policy research as a hegemonic mechanism that relates the discourse of dominance and marginalization in the 1980s and 1990s (Hult & Johnson, 2015). Therefore, language planning and policy research explores historical and sociopolitical processes that lead to the development of language policy (Ruiz, 1984; Tollefson, 1991; Ricento, 2006; Shohamy, 2006). Furthermore, since the 1990s and from the beginning of the 2000s, a number of researchers have combined ethnography and discourse analysis (Hult, 2010), or ethnography and critical discourse analysis (Johnson, 2011), to examine the language planning and policy process (Hult & Johnson, 2015). Ethnography and critical discourse analysis contextualize the policy text and discourse together to understand the reasons for the recontextualization of language policy in a particular context (Johnson, 2011). The ethnography of language policy focuses on the language users' perspectives, beliefs, and practices around language. Critical discourse analysis establishes intertextual and interdiscursive links between policy texts and discourses, whereas ethnography contextualizes the policy texts and discourse. Other scholars have also applied different analytical methods to language planning and policy research from their respective fields. For example, researchers who have backgrounds in economics have combined economics with language planning and policy research. The combination of economics and language planning and policy provides a systematic framework to select, design, and evaluate language policy options that assist citizens and the authorities to create a language policy with higher levels of welfare and fairness (Grin, 2012).

This brief overview of traditional approaches to language planning and policy research suggests that researchers pay attention to different and critical ways to address issues of power and identity in language planning and policy research.

### **Historical Overview of Language(s) in Bangladesh**

I agree with Ramanathan and Pennycook (2007) when they say that it is necessary to understand how to think about one's past and present and how history positions one. According to Ramanathan and Pennycook (2007), one will not be able to comprehend the present state of English, English language teaching, and its theories without understanding the colonial past. Pennycook (1998) suggests that "the long history of colonialism has established important connections to English" (Pennycook, 1998, p. 4). The connections are in the relations between English and the discourses of colonialism (Pennycook, 1998). Therefore, I present a brief historical overview of English along with Bangla in Bangladesh. This history of language(s) in Bangladesh also helps to clarify how power and identity associate in a way that leads to language planning and policy.

The British East India Company played a central role in spreading English in the subcontinent (India, Bangladesh and Pakistan). The British defeated Nawab Siraj-ud-Daula of Bengal in 1757 and occupied Bengal (Ali, 2013). The British East India Company came to trade with India but become a colonial power with the help of the British army (Ali, 2013). On the one hand, The East India Company established the College of Fort William in Calcutta in 1800 to teach local languages (Sanskrit, Bangla, and Hindi) to the East Indian officials (Islam, 2011). On the other hand, the Indian-educated middle class recognized the socio-economic value of English. Therefore, another college was built to teach English language and literature to the Indian people (Islam, 2011). English literature became a central part of the curriculum in British schools and colleges by 1820 (Al-Quaderi & Mahmud, 2010). Thomas Babington Macaulay (1835), a British historian and politician, wrote in his *Minute* on education for India in 1835, "I have never found one among them [Indians] who could deny that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia" (para 35). Macaulay's *Minute* indicates the colonial bias behind English literary education. According to Kachru (1998), Macaulay tried to establish English as "the language on which the sun never sets" in Indian subcontinent. The British colonial rulers used English as a tool to practice power in the subcontinent. During colonial rule, English was the primary medium of administration, judicial work, media communication, and parliamentary affairs (Imam, 2005). The British built English-medium schools to give privilege to a group who were educated in English, but made them a subordinate class of native people in administration and professions (Imam, 2005). Thus, the British created a class-based society regarding access to English. Although the British left the Indian subcontinent in 1947, English remained there and became a symbol of power and prestige.

A number of organized revolts took place in many parts of the Indian subcontinent against the British East India Company's military and political occupation. The British military forces defeated these rebellions and replaced the authority of the East Indian Company over the Indian subcontinent. The Indian subcontinent came directly under the rule of the British crown in 1857 (Ghosh, 2014). The 1857 rebellion was the first war of independence in the Indian subcontinent. The British crown left the Indian subcontinent in 1947, dividing it into two countries, India and Pakistan, based on two religions: Hindu and Islam (Ghosh, 2014; Pandey,

2001). Hindus of Pakistan had to migrate to India and Muslims of India migrated to Pakistan. This migration is known as partition or *deshbhag*. It was followed and accompanied by violence, killing, rape, and arson (Pandey, 2001). However, Bangladesh was not born as an independent country immediately like India and Pakistan after the British rule in 1947. Between 1947 and 1953, it was a province of Pakistan called East Bengal, and then it was called East Pakistan until secession in 1971 (Ghosh, 2014). English continued to be used in East Bengal or East Pakistan in a number of public and private roles (Banu & Sussex, 2001).

However, the Pakistan government announced that Urdu would be the national language of East Bengal or East Pakistan in 1948 and 1952. Urdu was not a language spoken by most of the people in East Bengal (Ghosh, 2014). As a result, East Bengal resisted the imposition of Urdu as the national language. A movement in support of Bangla started in 1948, centered at Dhaka University (Imam, 2005). In 1952, the government confirmed that Urdu would be the national language and created a second wave of the language movement. This movement was a movement of resistance, also known as the *bhasha andolon* (language movement) and became a national movement within East Bengal (Ghosh, 2014). On February 21, 1952, a number of people who protested against Urdu as the national language were killed (Imam, 2005). Finally, the government recognized Bangla as the national language on March 23, 1956 (Imam, 2005). The martyrdom of the language movement left a deep impression on Bangladeshis and created a strong Bengali nationalism. Bangladesh had been a part of India and then it was a part of Pakistan; therefore, it did not have its own independent identity. This language movement was the first time that Bangladeshi people recognized their individual identity as a nation and not as a part of India or Pakistan. Thus, Bangla, the language, has become a symbol of national identity. However, language policy and planning in Bangladesh that emphasizes English in education has been gradually replacing Bangla. This is a threat to national identity (Imam, 2005).

The *bhasha andolon* or language movement of 1952 was the beginning of conflict between East Pakistan and West Pakistan. The relationships of these two states never improved but became worse. West Pakistan rule was colonial in nature and dominated East Pakistan economically and politically (Imam, 2005). The history of Bangladesh between 1948 and 1971 is a history of resistance, political uprising, and a war of independence. Pakistan attacked East Pakistan at midnight on March 25, 1971. East Pakistan declared its independence on March 26, 1971 and was reborn as Bangladesh. There was a long 9-month war between these two countries that again led to killing, rape, arson, and migration (Ghosh, 2014). Bangladesh won its victory on December 16, 1971, beginning its journey as an independent country (Imam, 2005; Banu & Sussex, 2001).

After 1971, English continued to be used in education, law, and media in Bangladesh and gained power and prestige in socio-political and economic contexts (Banu & Sussex, 2001). However, the standard of English proficiency in education has fallen since 1971 (Imam, 2005). The independent government of Bangladesh gave tremendous importance to “Bangla everywhere” that limited English use in the socio-cultural context (Rahman, 2005). The language policy of Bangla everywhere did not create teachers eligible to teach English (Imam, 2005). However, English was not irreplaceable all at once because it was difficult to introduce Bangla vocabulary, structures, and discourses in administration, law, and media where English was deeply rooted (Banu & Sussex, 2001). The Bangladesh government made English a compulsory language again in 1989 because of a “faulty language policy in 1972” that caused English education to suffer (Rahman, 2005, p. 32). In 1990, English was introduced as a compulsory

subject across many disciplines (Rahman, 2005). Although having different political ideologies from 1971 to the present time about the concept of nationalism, all the governments from different political parties stress the importance of English. Interestingly, English has continued to be a crucial part of communication, especially amongst urban educated Bangladeshis. In addition, the elite of Bangladesh are educated in the English-medium schools and have carried out the British-determined curriculum and assessment from the colonial period. The elite group is always in favor of using English and influences language policy-making decision in Bangladesh (Rahman, 2005).

From the above description, it is clear that English in Bangladesh has its roots in the British colonial period. However, the history of Bangladesh, especially the history of *bhasha andolon* or the language movement in 1952, makes me wonder why the Bangladeshi people accepted English in their lives but resisted the imposition of Urdu. I ask why they welcome English but no other languages. Therefore, I read, think, and search for an answer to my question. Consequently, I explore language policy and planning in Bangladesh and a way to connect my personal experiences with English to research. The next section presents the value of autoethnography as a research methodology in language planning and policy research.

### **Autoethnography in Language Planning and Policy Research**

In this section, I will explain autoethnography as a research methodology; the value of autoethnography as a research methodology in the area of language planning and policy in investigations of language, power, and identity; and how it can be combined with other research methodologies. I will use examples from my ongoing doctoral research throughout the discussion. My doctoral research critically examines English language policy and planning in Bangladesh and asks three questions: (a) What are the historical and structural factors that lead to English language policy and planning in Bangladesh; (b) How does English language policy and planning sustain systems of inequality in the education systems of Bangladesh; and (c) Why have I chosen English to educate myself? This paper draws on historical-structural analysis (Tollefson, 2015), ethnography of language policy (Johnson, 2013), and autoethnography (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011) **in interpreting and analysing** the data.

### **Autoethnography: A Research Methodology**

Autoethnography is a form of inquiry in research and writing (Chang, 2008; Ellis, 2009). Researcher uses autoethnography as an approach in research and writing “to describe and systematically analyze (-graphy) personal experience (auto) in order to understand “her/his own cultural experience (ethno)” (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011, p. 273) regarding language, power, and identity. According to Hoppes (2014), a researcher seeks to answer one or more of the following questions:

1. What is this life about?
2. Who exactly am I in this moment?
3. What are my personal and professional paths really about, how are they related, and where are they taking me?
4. Am I prepared for the challenges ahead? (p. 63)

Researchers who want to use autoethnography in their research on language planning and policy in investigations of language, power, and identity might ask themselves “Why have they chosen a particular language or languages to educate themselves?” in order to understand their cultural experience with a language or languages. The questions from Hoppes (2014) focus my attention on my past in Bangladesh as a student and my present life as a researcher. I have adapted Hoppes’ (2014) questions and ask myself the following questions about my journey with English:

1. What is this life about that English has made for me?
2. Who exactly am I at moments when I have to use English?
3. What are my personal and professional paths really about, how are they related, and where are they taking me as a user of English and a researcher?
4. Am I prepared for the challenges ahead as a researcher?

I explore these questions in my research and writing to analyze and describe English language users’ perspectives, beliefs, and practices around language in Bangladesh. I apply “autobiography and ethnography to do and write autoethnography” (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011, p. 273). In other words, a researcher places herself/himself in the “dual roles of researcher and research participant to make autoethnography as a meaning-making tool” (Hoppes, 2014, p. 64) into research and writing.

### **Value of Autoethnography in Language Planning and Policy**

Traditional positivistic research considers anything based on the self as subjective and does not perceive it as worthy (Canagarajah, 2012). In contrast, autoethnography values the self as a rich place of experiences and perspectives (Canagarajah, 2012). In my research, knowledge about language planning and policy is based on my place of origin, Bangladesh, and my identity as a user of English. In other words, autoethnography acknowledges the situatedness of one’s experiences, rather than suppressing them (Canagarajah, 2012). The next main objective of autoethnography research and writing is to bring out how culture shapes identity and is shaped by personal experience. In turn, one’s experiences and development through these experiences are socially constructed (Canagarajah, 2012). Autoethnography explains how culture in a particular context shapes identity and how it is shaped by personal experience. According to Canagarajah (2012), writing is not only a tool for transferring a person’s knowledge and experiences, but it also supplies creative resources such as narrative for generating, recording, and analyzing data. With this in mind, a researcher includes her or his personal voice in narrative to generate, record, and analyze the data in autoethnographic research writing. Narrative in autoethnography allows a researcher to explore some “hidden feelings, forgotten motivations, and suppressed emotions” (Canagarajah, 2012, p. 261) in research and writing.

Autoethnography scholars suggest that there are two kinds of autoethnography: *evocative autoethnography* and *analytical autoethnography*. Evocative autoethnography is a detailed narrative as a superior form of knowledge (Ellis & Bochner, 2006). However, it is important to remember that personal experiences shape narratives that imply an analysis of those experiences (Canagarajah, 2012). Other autoethnography scholars propose analytical autoethnography that connects theory and research findings together to make this analysis explicit (Anderson, 2006). In my research in the area of language planning and policy, I apply both evocative

autoethnography and analytical autoethnography. On the one hand, I use analytical autoethnography to explain issues of language, power, and identity from a theoretical perspective to support and analyze research findings in the area of language planning and policy. On the other hand, I apply evocative autoethnography to make my research and writing more interesting and understandable to the general readers.

Narratives of personal experiences that are “autoethnographic texts” (Pratt, 1991) are not merely a form of expression or self-representation of stories. Canagarajah (2012) emphasizes that storytelling is not politically innocent because it brings a resistant dimension to research and writing. I am intrigued by how Pratt (1991) explains autoethnographic texts:

A text in which people undertake to describe themselves in ways that engage with representations others have made of them. Thus if ethnographic texts are those in which European metropolitan subjects represent to themselves their others (usually their conquered others), autoethnographic texts are representations that the so-defined others construct in response to or in dialogue with those texts. (p.175)

Autoethnography allows a person to articulate their experiences through autoethnographic texts, rather than letting others represent them. This is very significant for members of communities who are marginalized and lack other resources to vocalize their knowledge and interests. Generally, outsiders present these marginalized groups’ knowledge from the outsiders’ perspectives (Pratt, 1991; Canagarajah, 2012). In this regard, autoethnography is a valuable form of knowledge construction in the field of language planning and policy that focuses on language, power, and identity. Language planning and policy research scholars in diverse communities can use autoethnographic texts to represent their lived experiences and knowledge from the insiders’ perspectives.

When a marginalized person or group lives in a context where a particular language is a tool for domination, it is not easy for the individual or the group to recognize how power and identity associate with language. Chapman (2005) puts it well:

When you’re in it, it’s like the sky, it sits over-head and covers everything, darkens and lightens scenery and landscapes, but you don’t notice it, no one goes out in the morning and says, Oh, I’ve got to keep an eye out for the sky today, unless they’re sailors or gardeners or hikers. (p. 264)

The essence of Chapman’s argument is that we cannot realize the “class” when we are in the class because our constructions of the subjectivity and discourse as a member of the class are naturalized through the history of class. Likewise, the socio-economic status of the colonizer language creates a class and constructs subjectivity and produces a discourse of power where a member of this class will fail to observe how a language can be used as a tool to dominate others. For example, I never asked myself before in Bangladesh, “Why have I chosen to educate myself in English?” I was like other general students accustomed to the discourse “I need English” and I could not see the impacts of English in my life. A person like me who has used English to educate herself and is privileged in a certain context because of English, does not necessarily ask the questions: “Who is being the most benefited in this language promotion?” (Imam, 2005, p. 471), or “Whose interests are being served?” (Majhanovich, 2013, p. 250), and “Why does one need to adopt someone else’s language/identity in order to achieve ‘development’” (Imam, 2005, p. 471)? The reason is that we utilize the opportunity of the domination and power of English

that constructs our identities to access a powerful social network through a language (Hasan & Rahaman, 2012). Furthermore, Chapman (2005) describes herself as a “daughter of the empire” (Chapman, 2005, p. 262-263). I am not sure if I should call myself a “daughter of empire,” but I am a product of English, and that is connected with the British Empire.

### **Blending Autoethnography With Historical-Structural Analysis and Ethnography of Language Policy**

A researcher is an insider in autoethnographic research and analyzes a problem from an insider’s perspective. Autoethnography considers personal experiences as resourceful data. As I have mentioned earlier, my readings do not suggest that autoethnography is a common research methodology in the issues of language, power, and identity in language planning and policy research. Autoethnography can also be combined with other research methodologies, such as historical-structural analysis and the ethnography of language policy, because both research methodologies investigate power and identity in the area of language planning and policy research. Historical-structural analysis uses historical sources and structural factors to explain the ways language policy and planning maintain class-based power and inequality. The concept of power is a central focus of historical-structural research in language planning and policy research (Tollefson, 2015). Autoethnography fits well with historical-structural analysis to find and analyze historical and structural factors from a particular research context. For example, I use autoethnography to find historical factors that lead to language planning and policy in the context of Bangladesh. I have learned the history of Bangladesh through my parents’ stories that I use in my research and writing. To illustrate, my father’s story was: *I was a small boy during bhasha andolon. Many people gathered in streets everyday with placards. They shouted together “Rashtro bhasha Bangla chai” (We want Bangla as [our] national language). It was not a peaceful time. There were military and police.*

This history is also helpful because it clearly indicates how power plays a role in language planning and policy in Bangladesh to dominate the Bangladeshi people. People resist domination through language because language is connected with identity, defining whom a person is (Norton, 2010). Furthermore, the ethnography of language policy focuses on language users’ perspectives, beliefs, and practices around language (Johnson, 2011), explaining how language planning and policy maintains class-based power, dominant versus dominated groups, and inequality. Johnson (2013) describes five characteristics of ethnography of language policy: a balance between outsider and insider perspectives of a researcher in a research context, a long-term engagement with a research community, multiple sources of data, discourses that sustain inequality in policy, and social and historical contexts of policy. He states that ethnography of language policy can take many forms but it must include one of these above characteristics (Johnson, 2013). Autoethnography can be blended together with ethnography of language policy to create a balance between two perspectives—a researcher as an insider and an outsider—to present a long-term engagement with a research community, and to use autoethnographic data as a different data source. Johnson (2013) argues that “ethnographers of language policy still need to interrogate their own agency in the contexts in which they study” (Johnson, 2013, p. 47). Autoethnography provides an opportunity for researchers in ethnography of language policy research to critically analyze their own agency in the research contexts by adding their own stories and voices. Moreover, ethnography in language planning and policy needs to be mixed with autoethnography because it investigates the processes of power relations through which language policy and planning are constructed (McCarty, 2015). In this particular aspect, I use

historical-structural analysis, autoethnography, and ethnography together to examine who (agent), where (context), when (colonial history) and what (process) comes together to create, interpret, and appropriate language policy and planning in Bangladesh in a way that sustains the systems of inequality and impacts students' lives.

### **Conclusion**

Traditional approaches to research in the area of language policy and planning do not explain how language, power, and identity play significant roles in individual lives. In this paper, I have argued for the value of autoethnography as an approach in the investigation of language, power, and identity related to language planning and policy research. As a research methodology, autoethnography can provide more a diverse and critical approach to language planning and policy research. This paper also argues that researchers who are members of marginalized groups should include their experiences, in order to represent knowledge of language, power, and identity from the perspectives of insiders. The reason is that if outsiders present knowledge on behalf of marginalized groups, then marginalized groups cannot represent themselves.

Furthermore, the present paper describes how autoethnography can be blended together with two other research methodologies: historical and structural analysis and the ethnography of language planning and policy. Historical and socio-economic factors influence language planning and policy that sustain systems of inequality and impact language users' lives. Both historical-structural analysis and ethnography of language policy examine power. Power is very much associated with language, creating class and marginalizing others. This paper emphasizes the value of adding autoethnography to these methodologies to explain how inequality in language planning and policy impacts individual lives in terms of power and identity.

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