

**CHANGE IN LANGUAGE POLICY:
THE REALITY OF IMPLEMENTATION IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES**

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Abstract

In Malaysia, a sudden change in language policy, from Bahasa Melayu to English, has been instituted for the disciplines of science and technology at varying levels of the educational system. For this paper, it will be the domain of higher education that will be focused on.

Language planning and policy in Malaysia is largely “top-down” in nature. In 2005, the students who had their pre-university courses in English would be first year students in university. These are undergraduates who would expect to have their first year university courses conducted in English. Unfortunately, this has not been the case as reflected by the letters written by a number of parents to the mainstream print media. Therefore this paper aims to unravel the reality of implementation of change in MOI in public universities. This will be done by examining the nature of transmission of directives from the higher levels of the Ministry to the academic management of public universities. What is the underlying ideology of the nature of directives issued to public universities? In turn, what are the attitudes of academic management and lecturers to this change in policy and how are they approaching the implementation of the policy in their institutions of higher learning? This will enable us to unravel the varying expectations of implementation between the Ministry, the public universities and society.

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