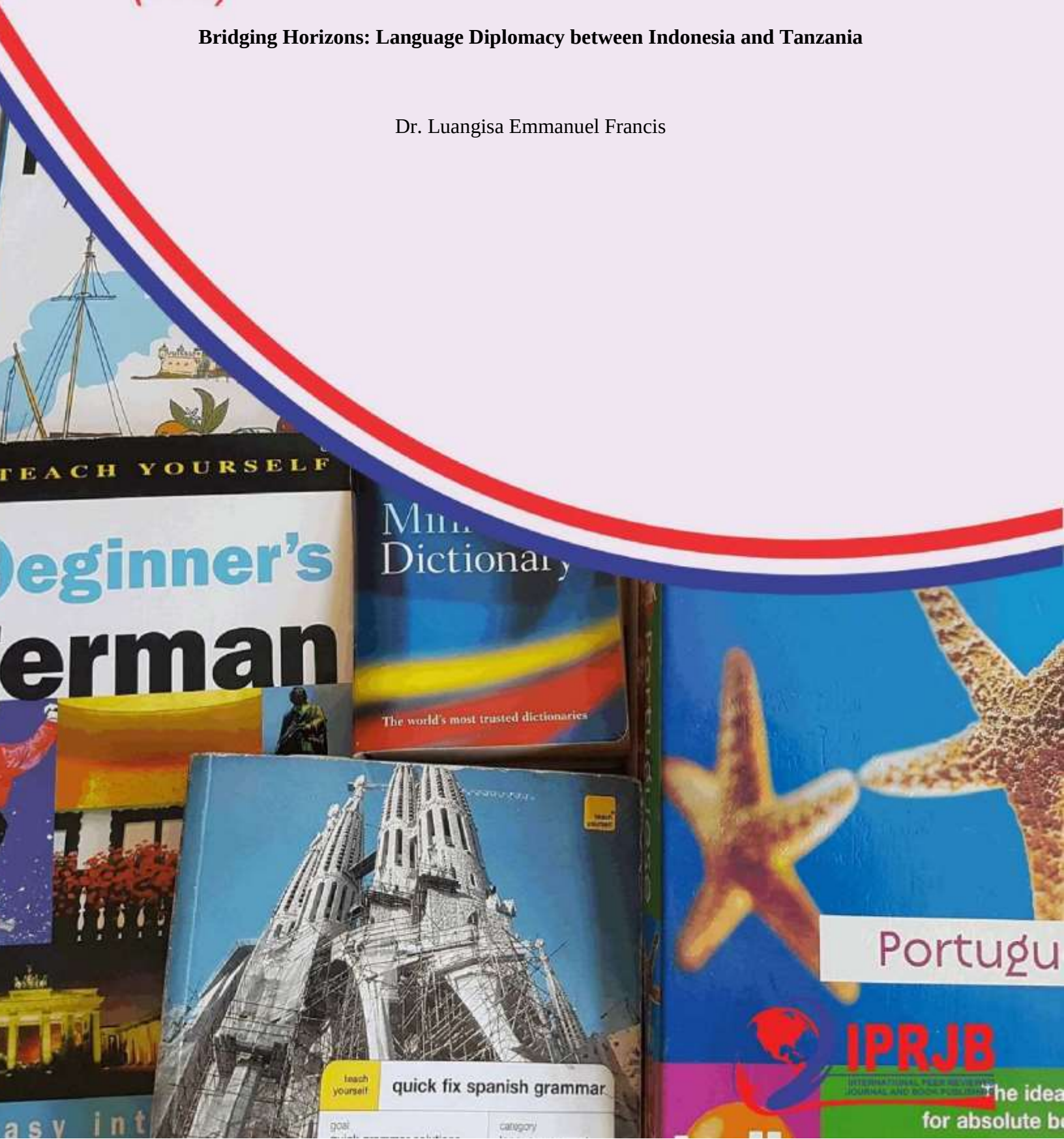


International Journal of Linguistics (IJL)

Bridging Horizons: Language Diplomacy between Indonesia and Tanzania

Dr. Luangisa Emmanuel Francis



Bridging Horizons: Language Diplomacy between Indonesia and Tanzania

 ^{1*}Dr. Luangisa Emmanuel Francis
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and East African
Cooperation, Tanzania

Article History

Received 25th July 2026

Received in Revised Form 30th August 2026

Accepted 28th September 2026



How to cite in APA format:

Luangisa, F. (2026). Bridging Horizons: Language Diplomacy between Indonesia and Tanzania. *International Journal of Linguistics*, 7(2), 16–27. <https://doi.org/10.47604/ijl.3984>

Abstract

Purpose: Building upon historical ties such as the landmark 1955 Bandung Conference and more than six decades of diplomatic relations, this article investigates the transformative potential of language diplomacy between Indonesia and Tanzania. Both nations, situated across the Indian Ocean, are cultural and linguistic mosaics where Kiswahili and Bahasa Indonesia serve as unifying symbols within diverse populations. The central problem addressed is the underutilization of language as a formal diplomatic tool. While economic and political cooperation has been explored, linguistic collaboration remains marginal, leaving untapped opportunities for fostering deeper cultural connectivity and equitable partnerships. This study seeks to fill that gap by examining how official languages can transcend domestic functions to become instruments of transmarine cooperation and cultural exchange, with direct beneficiaries including policymakers, educators, and cultural institutions in both nations.

Methodology: The research employs a qualitative approach, combining historical analysis of diplomatic milestones with comparative discourse analysis of language policies, supplemented by interviews with cultural and diplomatic practitioners. This triangulation allows for a nuanced understanding of how language operates simultaneously as national identity, cultural influence, and diplomatic negotiation.

Findings: Findings suggest that language diplomacy between Indonesia and Tanzania could deepen bilateral ties, enhance mutual understanding, and set a global precedent for equitable linguistic partnerships.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: Ultimately, the paper argues that “bridging horizons” through language diplomacy offers a pathway toward a new era of transmarine unity driven by cultural diplomacy and shared linguistic heritage.

Keywords: *Language Diplomacy, Bahasa Indonesia, Kiswahili, Lexical Borrowing, Cultural Exchange, Transmarine Cooperation*

JEL Classification: Z13, F53, O19

©2026 by the Authors. This Article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>)

INTRODUCTION

Language transcends its role as a simple medium of communication, embodying identity, unity, and power. It shapes the cultural and political landscapes of nations, operating as a unifying force in linguistically diverse regions. Kiswahili and Bahasa Indonesia, central to Tanzania and Indonesia respectively, exemplify this transformative potential. Both languages have played pivotal roles in fostering cohesion within their nations while also offering opportunities for international collaboration.

Historically, the 1955 Bandung Conference marked a turning point in Afro–Asian solidarity, emphasizing the importance of cultural and linguistic cooperation in international relations (Fonda, 2017). This legacy continues to resonate symbolically today, serving as a historical baseline for South–South solidarity. However, it is important to acknowledge that bilateral linguistic engagement between Indonesia and Tanzania has historically been minimal. While Bandung fostered a spirit of cultural unity, structured language diplomacy between Jakarta and Dodoma/Dares Salaam is a contemporary development, emerging only in recent years as part of broader efforts to institutionalize South–South cooperation.

Conceptual Clarification

Cultural diplomacy broadly encompasses the use of art, education, media, and cultural exchange to foster international understanding. Language diplomacy, by contrast, is a more specific subset: it refers to the deliberate use of language as policy, pedagogy, and symbolic capital to advance diplomatic objectives. Unlike general cultural diplomacy, which may rely on diverse cultural artifacts, language diplomacy centers on linguistic instruments: the promotion of national or regional languages, the establishment of language institutions abroad, the integration of language training into diplomatic curricula, and the use of shared linguistic heritage to build trust and solidarity.

In the case of Indonesia and Tanzania, language diplomacy involves leveraging Kiswahili and Bahasa Indonesia not merely as cultural symbols but as functional tools of bilateral engagement. Their shared linguistic features are not “true cognates” but lexical borrowings (loanwords) primarily from Classical Arabic and Persian, introduced through centuries of Indian Ocean trade and cultural exchange (Lodhi, 1992; Mazrui & Mazrui, 1998). These borrowed parallels, alongside certain structural similarities, provide fertile ground for collaboration in education, diplomacy, and cultural exchange.

Problem Statement

This study addresses the gap created by the underutilization of language as a formal diplomatic instrument in South–South cooperation. While economic and political collaboration between Indonesia and Tanzania has been explored, linguistic diplomacy remains marginal. Prior scholarship has overlooked the potential of Kiswahili and Bahasa Indonesia as vehicles of cultural connectivity and diplomatic negotiation.

The beneficiaries of addressing this gap include policymakers seeking innovative diplomatic strategies, educators and cultural institutions aiming to expand linguistic exchange and broader societies in both nations that stand to gain from enhanced cultural connectivity. By situating

language diplomacy at the center of bilateral relations, this study contributes to theory, practice, and policy in international cooperation.

Research Questions

This study seeks to explore the transformative potential of bilateral language diplomacy between Indonesia and Tanzania. The central research questions guiding this inquiry are:

1. How can Kiswahili and Bahasa Indonesia serve as instruments of bilateral diplomacy?
2. What strategies can be employed to institutionalize language cooperation between Indonesia and Tanzania?
3. In what ways can language diplomacy contribute to broader Indian Ocean rim and Afro–Asian solidarity, thereby anchoring its geographical scope in historical and contemporary transmarine networks?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Language Diplomacy in Global Context

Language serves as both a cultural touchstone and a powerful tool for diplomacy. National languages unify diverse populations, projecting cohesive identities internationally. Institutions such as the British Council, Alliance Française, and Instituto Cervantes exemplify how language strengthens cultural ties and promotes cultural diplomacy (Melissen, 2005). Regional frameworks like La Francophonie and the Ibero-American Summits highlight strategic linguistic partnerships, emphasizing shared heritage and collective identity.

At the multilateral level, the United Nations demonstrates the importance of multilingualism in diplomacy. Its recognition of six official languages ensures inclusivity and legitimacy in global negotiations (United Nations, 2024). This multilingual policy illustrates how language diplomacy can balance diversity with fairness, preventing linguistic dominance by a single power.

Theoretical Foundations

The concept of language diplomacy is closely tied to soft power. Nye's (2004) notion of cultural attraction remains useful for framing language as a strategic asset, but more specialized scholarship is needed to explain Afro–Asian linguistic flows. Lodhi (1992, 2000) has shown how Arabic and Persian loanwords entered Kiswahili and Malay/Indonesian through centuries of Indian Ocean trade, while Scott (2009) highlights the role of religion and commerce in shaping Afro–Asian cultural networks. These perspectives anchor language diplomacy in the historical realities of transmarine exchange, moving beyond Eurocentric models of linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 2003).

Critical Reflections on Existing Models

Frameworks such as La Francophonie have achieved cultural cohesion but face criticisms of centralization and hierarchy (Schiffman, 2000). The Nordic Cooperation has struggled with political cohesion, revealing challenges in sustaining linguistic unity (Etzold, 2021). The European Union, despite recognizing 24 official languages, often defaults to English, raising questions of equity.

China's Confucius Institutes and Japan's Japan Foundation illustrate how language diplomacy can be institutionalized through cultural centers abroad. While effective in promoting Mandarin and Japanese globally, they have faced criticism for being overly state-driven (Gil, 2017; Ogoura, 2009). These examples underscore the need for balance between cultural promotion and mutual exchange.

Kiswahili–Bahasa Indonesia Partnership

Kiswahili and Bahasa Indonesia serve as unifying languages within linguistically diverse nations. Kiswahili connects over 120 Tanzanian tribes, while Bahasa Indonesia bridges more than 300 ethnic groups across Indonesia (Cohen, 2018). Their shared lexical borrowings from Classical Arabic and Persian, transmitted through Indian Ocean trade and Islamic networks, provide natural synergies for collaboration (Lodhi, 1992; Mazrui & Mazrui, 1998; Scott, 2009).

Unlike hierarchical models such as La Francophonie, a Kiswahili–Bahasa Indonesia partnership could be built on principles of equality and reciprocity. Institutionalizing language training programs, cultural exchanges, and joint research initiatives would establish a model of South–South linguistic diplomacy that challenges traditional North–South paradigms. Kiswahili's rise as a lingua franca demonstrates how language can transcend ethnic divisions (Prah, 2009), while Bahasa Indonesia has consolidated national identity across diverse islands (Sneddon, 2003).

Empirical and Historical Context

Indonesia and Tanzania's historical connections, rooted in Afro–Asian solidarity during the 1955 Bandung Conference, provide symbolic ground for cooperation. Yet bilateral linguistic engagement has historically been minimal. Active language diplomacy is a contemporary development, emerging as part of broader South–South cooperation. Shared influences, such as Arabic loanwords, highlight centuries of cultural interaction across the Indian Ocean, creating a foundation for mutual understanding.

Recent initiatives reinforce this trajectory. Indonesian cultural diplomacy in Tanzania has included arts and educational exchanges, while Kiswahili has gained visibility in Asia through academic programs (Selvianis et al., 2023). These efforts demonstrate the contemporary relevance of language diplomacy in strengthening bilateral ties.

Critical Comparative Analysis: Political Economy of Language Diplomacy

Language diplomacy is not only cultural but institutional. Programs require sustained funding, clear ministerial ownership, and coordination. In Tanzania, Kiswahili promotion is primarily driven by the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, while international projection falls under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation. In Indonesia, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology oversees Bahasa domestically, while the Ministry of Foreign Affairs integrates language promotion into cultural diplomacy abroad. This dual ownership raises questions of whether language diplomacy is primarily an educational export or a foreign policy instrument. Funding models vary accordingly: education ministries prioritize curricular integration, while foreign ministries emphasize scholarships, cultural centers, and bilateral exchanges.

Regional Bodies and Bilateral Linkages

Regional frameworks further shape bilateral language diplomacy. The East African Community (EAC) has formally mandated Kiswahili as a working language, elevating its status beyond Tanzania and embedding it within regional integration. This institutional recognition strengthens Tanzania's ability to project Kiswahili internationally. Conversely, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has adopted English as its working language, reflecting pragmatic choices but limiting the elevation of Bahasa Indonesia within regional diplomacy. This divergence creates both challenges and opportunities: while Kiswahili enjoys regional institutional backing, Bahasa Indonesia's promotion relies more heavily on national initiatives. A bilateral partnership between Tanzania and Indonesia could therefore serve as a corrective, positioning both languages as instruments of South–South solidarity across the Indian Ocean rim.

Research Gaps

Existing scholarship has extensively examined language diplomacy in the context of global powers (EU, UN, Confucius Institutes), but far less attention has been given to South–South linguistic diplomacy. Specifically, the bilateral potential between Tanzania and Indonesia remains underexplored. This study addresses that gap by situating Kiswahili and Bahasa Indonesia as instruments of diplomacy within the Indian Ocean rim and Afro–Asian solidarity networks, thereby contributing to both theory and practice in international cooperation.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research design integrating historical analysis, comparative discourse analysis, and semi-structured interviews to examine the role of Kiswahili and Bahasa Indonesia in language diplomacy (Creswell, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). The target population included diplomats, educators, and cultural practitioners in Tanzania and Indonesia, with purposive sampling yielding 20 participants (10 from each country) to ensure thematic saturation and diversity of perspectives. Data collection combined archival sources such as Bandung Conference transcripts, policy documents, and case studies with interviews conducted in English, Kiswahili, and Bahasa Indonesia, supported by bilingual assistants for accuracy. Instruments were validated through triangulation across archives, interviews, and secondary literature (Campbell, 2020). Data were analyzed thematically using NVivo software, with intercoder reliability above 85% (Braun & Clarke, 2006), and discourse analysis was applied to policy texts to capture narratives and rhetorical strategies (Fairclough, 2013). Findings were presented in line with ethical protocols, ensuring informed consent, confidentiality, and reflexivity, while limitations included small sample size and translation challenges, mitigated by triangulation and careful interpretation.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Cultural Significance

The 1955 Bandung Conference remains a pivotal moment for Indonesia–Tanzania relations, symbolizing Afro–Asian solidarity and mutual respect for linguistic diversity. As Fonda (2017) notes, the conference emphasized multilingualism as a tool of unity, setting a precedent for cultural diplomacy in the Global South. Kiswahili and Bahasa Indonesia, rooted in Arabic and indigenous influences, serve as unifying tools that foster resilience and cooperation. Their shared cultural

heritage positions them as ideal candidates for cultural diplomacy, reflecting Mazrui and Mazrui's (1998) argument that language can consolidate identity while bridging diverse communities.

Beyond its symbolic resonance, the Bandung Conference established a template for South–South cooperation that continues to influence diplomatic practice. Delegates framed language as both a cultural resource and a political instrument, demonstrating that multilingualism could serve as a foundation for solidarity among diverse nations. Kiswahili's adoption by the African Union in 2022 illustrates how this legacy has matured into continental policy, positioning the language as a Pan-African lingua franca that strengthens identity and unity. Similarly, Bahasa Indonesia's recognition within ASEAN highlights its role in fostering regional cohesion, showing how indigenous languages can achieve international prominence.

Recent developments further underscore this significance. In 2022, the African Union adopted Kiswahili as an official working language, elevating its status as a continental lingua franca (African Union, 2022). That same year, UNESCO declared 7 July as World Kiswahili Language Day, recognizing its role as a language of unity and peace. Similarly, in November 2023, Bahasa Indonesia was officially recognized as one of the languages of the UNESCO General Conference, marking a historic milestone for Indonesia's linguistic diplomacy. Beyond this, Bahasa Indonesia has gained recognition within ASEAN and beyond, with Indonesian language programs expanding in universities across Asia and Africa (Sneddon, 2003). These milestones highlight the growing global relevance of both languages in fostering unity and diplomacy.

Pragmatic Applications

Language diplomacy between Indonesia and Tanzania manifests in several practical dimensions. In education, incorporating Kiswahili and Bahasa Indonesia into school curricula builds cross-cultural understanding and equips future generations for bilateral collaboration. Sneddon (2003) highlights how language education in Indonesia has historically been central to national integration, and similar strategies can be applied in Tanzania. Joint curricula, scholarships, and teacher exchanges between Tanzania and Indonesia can institutionalize linguistic cooperation. Such initiatives not only equip future generations with cross-cultural competencies but also embed language diplomacy into national education systems.

Trade is equally enhanced by linguistic collaboration. Shared languages reduce transaction costs, facilitate negotiations, and improve trust in business contracts. Cohen (2018) emphasizes that linguistic competence in diplomacy reduces misunderstandings and enhances efficiency in negotiations, which extends naturally to commerce. Tourism and investment also benefit from linguistic accessibility, as shared languages encourage mobility, reduce cultural barriers, and attract international collaboration. This dimension of language diplomacy extends beyond state-to-state relations into everyday exchanges that strengthen economic and social ties.

Cultural exchange also plays a vital role. Joint language programs, festivals, and literature projects deepen cultural connections and promote mutual respect. Ogoura (2009) demonstrates how Japan's cultural diplomacy through language has enriched bilateral ties, offering a model for Indonesia–Tanzania cooperation. Diplomacy itself benefits from linguistic collaboration, as Kiswahili and Bahasa Indonesia in forums such as the Indonesia–Africa Forum enhance multilateral relations through mutual comprehension. This aligns with Nye's (2004) concept of

soft power, where language becomes a vehicle for attraction and influence. Leadership advocacy further institutionalizes language diplomacy into strategic frameworks, creating lasting commitments. Bueno (2024) shows how leadership advocacy in the Ibero-American community has sustained linguistic cooperation, offering lessons for Indonesia and Tanzania.

Addressing challenges requires joint funding initiatives, digital language tools, and immersive programs to overcome resource disparities and proficiency gaps. Gil (2017) notes in the case of Confucius Institutes that digital platforms and institutional support are critical for sustaining language diplomacy in resource-constrained contexts. Youth engagement through scholarships and online exchanges can further ensure sustainability (Zaharna, 2010).

Comparative Cases

Insights from the Ibero-American Framework and ASEAN strategies underscore the value of linguistic partnerships. The Ibero-American model, coordinated by SEGIB (2010), demonstrates how shared heritage can be institutionalized through summits and policy frameworks. ASEAN, meanwhile, has promoted English as a working language while encouraging multilingualism, showing how pragmatic linguistic choices can foster regional unity (Kirkpatrick, 2010).

The African Union's adoption of Kiswahili illustrates how regional organizations can elevate indigenous languages to continental prominence. The Bandung Conference's multilingual approach provides a compelling precedent for fostering collaboration, showcasing the transformative power of language diplomacy in contexts of decolonization and solidarity. Confucius Institutes further illustrate how language promotion can be institutionalized globally, combining cultural diplomacy with educational outreach (Gil, 2017).

Strategic Outcomes

The findings suggest several strategic outcomes of institutionalizing Kiswahili–Bahasa Indonesia cooperation. Enhanced linguistic fluency strengthens trade and economic cooperation by reducing communication barriers, lowering transaction costs, and facilitating smoother negotiations (Cohen, 2018). Equipping diplomats with Kiswahili and Bahasa Indonesia builds trust and simplifies international collaborations, resonating with Melissen's (2005) argument that cultural diplomacy enhances credibility and legitimacy in international relations.

Greater cultural understanding deepens bilateral relations and expands diplomacy efforts. Festivals, literature exchanges, and joint academic programs enrich cultural ties, echoing Prah's (2009) emphasis on African languages as tools of unity. Indonesia and Tanzania can also pioneer transcontinental linguistic unity, inspiring inclusive frameworks worldwide. By institutionalizing language diplomacy, they position themselves as leaders in South–South cooperation, contributing to global debates on equity and inclusivity in international relations (UN News, 2025).

Finally, language diplomacy contributes directly to Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), particularly SDG 4 (quality education), SDG 5 (gender equality, through inclusive language programs), SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth), and SDG 16 (peace, justice, and strong institutions), reinforcing its policy relevance (United Nations, 2024). Moreover, the contribution of Kiswahili–Bahasa Indonesia cooperation extends to SDG 17 (partnerships for the goals), reinforcing the idea that linguistic collaboration is not only cultural but also a driver of global

partnerships and inclusive development. Digital diplomacy offers new avenues for sustainability, with online platforms, virtual exchanges, and language learning apps expanding access and reducing resource disparities. By institutionalizing Kiswahili–Bahasa Indonesia cooperation, Tanzania and Indonesia can pioneer a model of transcontinental linguistic diplomacy that advances both national interests and global equity.

Synthesis

Overall, the findings demonstrate that Kiswahili and Bahasa Indonesia are more than communication tools; they are strategic assets for diplomacy, trade, and cultural exchange. Comparative cases such as the Ibero-American Framework, ASEAN strategies, Confucius Institutes, and AU language policy highlight both opportunities and challenges. The Indonesia–Tanzania partnership offers a unique model of South–South linguistic diplomacy, rooted in historical solidarity and oriented toward future global leadership. Taken together, the evidence shows that institutionalizing language diplomacy requires coordination between ministries of Foreign Affairs and Education, supported by regional bodies such as the EAC and ASEAN. The partnership thus contributes to theory by expanding the scope of South–South linguistic diplomacy, and to practice by offering a replicable model of transoceanic cooperation across the Indian Ocean rim.

Conclusion and Future Perspectives

This study has demonstrated that Kiswahili and Bahasa Indonesia are not merely linguistic instruments but strategic assets with the capacity to shape diplomacy, trade, and cultural exchange between Tanzania and Indonesia. Rooted in shared histories of resilience and solidarity, these languages embody the spirit of Afro–Asian cooperation articulated during the Bandung Conference of 1955. That historic gathering emphasized cultural identity and mutual respect as foundations for international collaboration. Kiswahili and Bahasa Indonesia, as languages of resistance and unity, continue to advance this legacy by serving as bridges across continents and cultures. Their role in unifying diverse populations underscores the potential of language diplomacy to foster trust, strengthen bilateral ties, and project cultural influence globally.

The findings indicate that language diplomacy can be applied pragmatically across multiple domains. In education, integrating Kiswahili and Bahasa Indonesia into curricula builds cross-cultural literacy and prepares future generations for collaboration. Joint academic programs, exchange scholarships, and bilingual research initiatives can nurture scholars and professionals fluent in both languages, thereby creating a human infrastructure for cooperation. In trade, shared linguistic competence reduces barriers, enhances efficiency, and minimizes misunderstandings in negotiations. Cultural exchanges, festivals, and literary projects deepen mutual respect, while diplomatic forums benefit from the inclusivity of multilingual communication. Leadership advocacy ensures that these initiatives are institutionalized, creating sustainable frameworks for cooperation that extend beyond political cycles.

Looking ahead, several opportunities emerge. First, the institutionalization of language diplomacy through joint programs, scholarships, and digital platforms can ensure continuity and accessibility. Technology offers new avenues for language learning, including online courses, mobile applications, and virtual exchanges, which can bridge resource gaps and expand participation.

Youth engagement will be critical, as younger generations are both custodians of cultural heritage and drivers of innovation. By equipping young people with linguistic skills, Tanzania and Indonesia can cultivate ambassadors of cultural diplomacy who will sustain the vision of Afro–Asian solidarity.

Second, the Tanzania–Indonesia partnership can serve as a model for South–South cooperation. By demonstrating how linguistic collaboration fosters solidarity, the two nations can inspire other countries in Africa and Asia to adopt similar frameworks. This approach challenges traditional North–South paradigms and positions the Global South as a leader in inclusive diplomacy. Language diplomacy thus becomes not only a bilateral tool but also a multilateral strategy, capable of reshaping global power dynamics by emphasizing cooperation among developing nations. The symbolic power of Kiswahili and Bahasa Indonesia lies in their ability to articulate a narrative of independence, resilience, and shared destiny, which resonates across the Global South.

Third, the global implications of this partnership extend to sustainable development. Language diplomacy contributes to quality education, economic growth, and stronger institutions, aligning with broader international goals such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For instance, SDG 4 (Quality Education) is advanced through multilingual curricula and exchange programs; SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) benefits from reduced trade barriers and enhanced communication; and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) is reinforced through inclusive diplomatic practices. By embedding linguistic cooperation into policy frameworks, Tanzania and Indonesia can enhance their global visibility and influence, positioning themselves as champions of cultural diplomacy in international forums.

At the same time, future perspectives should emphasize adaptability. While historical precedents such as the Bandung Conference provide inspiration, contemporary challenges require innovative solutions. Globalization, digital divides, and shifting geopolitical landscapes demand that language diplomacy evolve beyond traditional methods. Digital diplomacy, regional integration, and cultural entrepreneurship offer pathways for expanding the reach of Kiswahili and Bahasa Indonesia. For example, digital platforms can host joint cultural archives, podcasts, and interactive learning modules, while regional organizations such as ASEAN and the African Union can incorporate linguistic cooperation into their agendas. Cultural entrepreneurship, through film, music, and literature, can further amplify the visibility of these languages internationally.

Comparative insights from other regions underscore the potential of language diplomacy. The spread of Spanish across Latin America, the promotion of French through Francophonie, and the global influence of English all demonstrate how language can serve as a vehicle for cultural identity and geopolitical influence. Kiswahili and Bahasa Indonesia, though less globally dominant, possess unique strengths: they are languages of solidarity, rooted in histories of anti-colonial struggle and collective resilience. Their promotion through diplomacy offers an alternative model to hegemonic linguistic paradigms, one that emphasizes inclusivity, equity, and mutual respect.

Challenges must also be acknowledged. Resource limitations, political will, and the dominance of global languages such as English and Mandarin may pose obstacles to the expansion of Kiswahili and Bahasa Indonesia. Addressing these challenges requires sustained investment, visionary

leadership, and innovative partnerships. Governments, universities, civil society organizations, and private enterprises must collaborate to ensure that language diplomacy is not merely symbolic but also practical and impactful. By embedding linguistic cooperation into trade agreements, educational policies, and cultural initiatives, Tanzania and Indonesia can safeguard the longevity of their partnership.

Ultimately, Kiswahili and Bahasa Indonesia stand as powerful instruments of cultural diplomacy, capable of reshaping international relations through inclusivity and mutual respect. Their partnership not only strengthens bilateral ties but also contributes to a broader vision of global cooperation, where language serves as a bridge to peace, prosperity, and shared identity. By embracing adaptability, leveraging technology, and institutionalizing cooperation, Tanzania and Indonesia can pioneer a new era of transcontinental linguistic unity. This vision, rooted in the spirit of Bandung yet responsive to contemporary realities, positions language diplomacy as a transformative force in the twenty-first century. Kiswahili and Bahasa Indonesia remind us that words are not merely tools of communication but vessels of history, identity, and solidarity — and when harnessed strategically, they can illuminate pathways toward a more just, inclusive, and interconnected world.

Synthesis of Contributions

This conclusion underscores three major contributions: to **theory**, by expanding the scope of South–South linguistic diplomacy beyond symbolic solidarity; to **policy**, by identifying ministries, regional bodies, and institutional frameworks capable of sustaining cooperation; and to **practice**, by outlining concrete applications in education, trade, culture, and digital diplomacy. Together, these contributions position the Tanzania–Indonesia partnership as both a bilateral innovation and a replicable model for Afro–Asian solidarity across the Indian Ocean rim.

REFERENCES

- African Union. (2022). *Decision on the adoption of Kiswahili as an official working language of the African Union*. Addis Ababa: African Union Commission.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa> ([doi.org in Bing](https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa))
- Bueno, J. (2024). Leadership advocacy and linguistic cooperation in the Ibero-American community. *Ibero-American Journal of Language Policy*, 18(2), 145–162.
- Campbell, D. (2020). Triangulation revisited: Methodological rigor in qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 26(2), 129–140. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800419869020> ([doi.org in Bing](https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800419869020))
- Cohen, D. (2018). *Language and identity in Tanzania and Indonesia*. Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota.
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2018). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (5th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Etzold, T. (2021). *Nordic cooperation and political cohesion*. Stockholm: Nordic Council Publications.
- Fairclough, N. (2013). *Critical discourse analysis: The critical study of language* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.
- Fonda, C. (2017). The Bandung Conference and Afro–Asian solidarity: Historical perspectives. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 52(3), 345–360.
- Gil, J. (2017). *Confucius Institutes and Chinese soft power*. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press.
- Kirkpatrick, A. (2010). *English as a lingua franca in ASEAN: A multilingual model*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
- Lodhi, A. Y. (1992). Arabic loanwords in Swahili and Indonesian: A comparative study. *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, 1(1), 1–20.
- Lodhi, A. Y. (2000). The linguistic impact of Indian Ocean trade networks. *Journal of Afro–Asian Studies*, 5(3), 77–95.
- Mazrui, A., & Mazrui, A. (1998). *The power of Babel: Language and governance in the African experience*. Oxford: James Currey.
- Melissen, J. (2005). *The new public diplomacy: Soft power in international relations*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Nye, J. S. (2004). *Soft power: The means to success in world politics*. New York: PublicAffairs.
- Ogoura, K. (2009). *Japan Foundation and cultural diplomacy*. Tokyo: Japan Foundation Press.
- Phillipson, R. (2003). *Linguistic imperialism continued*. London: Routledge.

- Prah, K. K. (2009). The role of Kiswahili in African integration. *African Sociological Review*, 13(1), 1–18.
- Schiffman, H. (2000). *Language policy and centralization*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Scott, J. S. (2009). Religion, trade, and cultural networks in the Indian Ocean. *Journal of World History*, 20(3), 411–437.
- SEGIB. (2010). *Informe de la Secretaría General Iberoamericana: La cooperación iberoamericana*. Madrid: Secretaría General Iberoamericana.
- Selvianis, R., Putra, A., & Mussa, H. (2023). *Indonesian cultural diplomacy in Africa*. Jakarta: Universitas Indonesia Press.
- Sneddon, J. N. (2003). *The Indonesian language: Its history and role in modern society*. Sydney: UNSW Press.
- UN News. (2025). South–South cooperation and sustainable development. *United Nations News*. Retrieved from <https://news.un.org>
- United Nations. (2024). *Multilingualism in the United Nations*. New York: United Nations Publications.
- Zaharna, R. S. (2010). *Battles to bridges: U.S. strategic communication and public diplomacy after 9/11*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.