

Summary of SEAMEO Members' Language Policy Laws

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Language_policy

SEAMEO Members' Language Policy by Categories

					Sectorial Policies:			
					Bilingualism or trilingualism policies			Strategic multilingualism policies
SEAMEO Members	Assimilation	Non-intervention	Differentiated legal statute	Valorization of the official language	Non-territorialized individual rights	Territorialized individual rights	Territorial rights	non-territorialized individual rights
Brunei Darussalam								
Cambodia				x				
Indonesia	x							
Lao PDR								
Malaysia								
Myanmar	x							
Philippines			x			x		
Singapore								x
Thailand	x							
Timor Leste				x				
Vietnam	x			x				
Associate Members	Assimilation	Non-intervention	Differentiated legal statute	Valorization of the official language	Non-territorialized individual rights	Territorialized individual rights	Territorial rights	non-territorialized individual rights
Australia		x						
Canada					x			
France				x				
Germany		x						
Netherlands			x					
New Zealand					x			
Norway					x			
Spain			x					

Many countries have a **language policy** designed to favour or discourage the use of a particular [language](#) or set of languages. Although nations historically have used language policies most often to promote one [official language](#) at the expense of others, many countries now have policies designed to protect and promote regional and ethnic languages whose viability is threatened.

Overview

The preservation of cultural and linguistic [diversity](#) in today's world is a major concern to many scientists, artists, writers, politicians, and leaders of linguistic communities. Up to one half of the 6000 languages currently spoken in the world are estimated to be in danger of disappearing during the [21st century](#). Many factors affect the existence and usage of any given human language, including the size of the native speaking population, its use in formal communication, and the geographical dispersion and the socio-economic weight of its speakers. National language policies can either mitigate or exacerbate the effects of some of these factors.

What follows below is one of many ways in which language policy laws can be categorized.

Assimilation policies: [Indonesia](#), [Myanmar](#), [Thailand](#), [Vietnam](#)

A policy of assimilation is one that uses measures to accelerate the downsizing of one or more linguistic minority group(s). The ultimate goal of such policies is to foster national unity inside a state (based on the idea that a single language in the country will favor that end). It is based on the belief that every person in a given society should be able to function in the dominant language regardless of which language that person speaks.

Non-intervention policies: [Australia](#), [Germany](#)

A policy of non-intervention consists in choosing to allow the normal rapport between the main linguistic group and the minorities evolve on its own. This almost invariably favours the dominant group. Sometimes, such policies are accompanied by administrative measures protecting certain minorities.

Differentiated legal statute policies: [the Philippines](#), [Netherlands](#), [Spain](#)

A policy that recognizes a different legal statute for a given language usually aims at allowing the coexistence of multiple linguistic groups inside a state. Typically, the majority has all its linguistic rights secured and sometimes promoted while the minority or minorities are given special protection for their language.

Valorization of the official language policies: [Cambodia](#), [East Timor](#), [France](#), [Vietnam](#)

A policy favouring the [official language](#) is a policy of [unilingualism](#). Sometimes, it favours the (or a) [national language](#), sometime it favours a colonial language with a strong influence internationally. In some cases, such policies are accompanied by measures recognizing and protecting [minority languages](#) or [indigenous languages](#). This approach may be considered in two broadly different types of situations: where the official language is also the [first language](#) of the majority of the population, and where it is not.

Sectorial Policies

Bilingualism or trilingualism policies

A policy favouring the two official languages is a policy of [bilingualism](#). There are many different ways in which these policies can be applied.

Based on non-territorialized individual rights: [Canada](#), [New Zealand](#), [Norway](#)

A policy of bilingualism based on non-territorialized individual rights recognizes the same rights to all members of a community whatever their location on the national territory.

Based on territorialized individual rights: [The Philippines](#)

A language policy based on territorialized individual rights recognizes the same rights to all members of a community within a specific region.

Based on territorial rights: --

Strategic multilingualism policies

Based on non-territorialized individual rights: [Singapore](#)

A policy of multilingualism based on non-territorialized individual rights recognizes the same rights to all members of a community whatever their location on the national territory.
