

Bahasa Indonesia Vocabulary Acquisition on a Five-Year-Old Refugee

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Abstract

The paper attempts to answer the questions on the total of Bahasa Indonesia vocabulary that Mazen Abdu Daud has acquired and mastered from the first time he has been following the preparation class for almost four months. This is a qualitative study. It is conducted in a UNHCR's learning center in Ciputat, Jakarta. It has been seen as potentially significant for some main reasons. First, this study draws attention to give an understanding about forced displace person including refugee and asylum seeker. The description of presence needs life and how Bahasa Indonesia is important for them. Second, it offers readers an overview of many refugees in Jakarta Greater area about their country, culture, and history of life. Then, it provides detail information about vocabulary acquisition of Mazen. Concurrently, this study will contribute to give an overview of the refugee education experiences in Indonesia as a transit country, especially who live in Jakarta Greater area. And the last, this study offers unique insight into how refugees adapt to the community in the scope of displacement, marginalization, loneliness, and socialization in the host culture. Such findings will inform teachers, school officials, and policymakers as they consider new ways to assist newly arrived immigrant, including refugees and asylum seekers. This study also contributes to studies on language acquisition process.

Keywords: *acquisition, refugee, bilingualism, qualitative*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini berupaya menjawab pertanyaan tentang total kosakata Bahasa Indonesia yang diperoleh dan dikuasai Mazen sejak pertama kali mengikuti kelas persiapan selama hampir empat bulan. Penelitian adalah penelitian kualitatif. Penelitian ini dilakukan di pusat pembelajaran UNHCR di Ciputat, Jakarta. Penelitian ini terlihat potensi signifikan untuk beberapa alasan utama. Pertama, penelitian ini menarik perhatian dalam memberikan pemahaman tentang orang yang dipindahkan secara paksa termasuk pengungsi dan pencari suaka. Deskripsi tentang kebutuhan untuk hidup dan bagaimana Bahasa Indonesia berperan penting bagi mereka. Kedua, menawarkan kepada pembaca gambaran dari pengungsi-pengungsi yang tinggal di wilayah Jabodetabek tentang negara, budaya, dan sejarah hidup mereka. Kemudian, penelitian ini memberikan informasi detail tentang akuisisi kosa kata oleh Mazen Abdu Daud. Bersamaan dengan itu, penelitian ini akan berkontribusi untuk memberikan gambaran tentang pengalaman pendidikan pengungsi di Indonesia sebagai negara transit, terutama di wilayah Jabodetabek. Dan yang terakhir, penelitian ini menawarkan wawasan unik tentang bagaimana pengungsi beradaptasi dengan masyarakat dalam lingkup perpindahan, marginalisasi, kesepian, dan sosialisasi dalam budaya tuan rumah. Temuan semacam itu akan memberi informasi kepada guru, pejabat sekolah, serta pembuat kebijakan ketika mereka mempertimbangkan cara-cara baru untuk membantu imigran yang baru tiba, termasuk para pengungsi dan pencari suaka. Studi ini juga berkontribusi pada studi tentang proses akuisisi bahasa

Kata Kunci: pemerolehan, pengungsi, bilingualisme, kualitatif

Introduction

At the start of this research, I have been working as an education officer at one of a learning center for refugee at Jakarta area for almost two years. I am working under the United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on refugee's project. For many years, UNHCR makes coordination and elaborates with Indonesia government counterparts.¹ This coordination particularly conducts to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Coordinating Ministry for Political, Legal and Security Affairs, the Ministry of Law and Human Rights. These are also including the Directorate General of Immigration and the Ministry of Home Affairs to provide good protection, support and identify comprehensive solutions for a person under UNHCR's mandate.

Furthermore, UNHCR also engages with international, NGO, and civil society partners to implement the protection for

¹ Ali, M. (2015). Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Indonesia: Problems and Potentials. *Open Journal System*, 1-22.

refugee that include UN agencies, Church World Service (CWS). Besides, UNHCR's implementing partners involved in assistance programs, as well as operational partner including some NGO international such as the Indonesian Red Cross, International Organization for Migration (IOM), Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), and the National Human Rights Commission. This collaboration of all NGO is aimed to assist the Government of Indonesia, ensuring the effective protection of refugees, asylum-seekers, and stateless persons.²

For many years, Indonesia becomes a transit country for refugee and asylum seekers, although Indonesia is not a part of the signing of the 1951 Refugee Convention.³ In fact, there are over 14.000 refugees in

² UNHCR, I. 'Factsheet Indonesia'. 2016. Retrieved from <https://www.unhcr.org/id/wp-content/uploads/sites/42/2017/05/Indonesia-Fact-Sheet-October-2016.pdf>

³ Ali, M. (2015). Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Indonesia: Problems and Potentials. *Open Journal System*, 1-22.

Indonesia.⁴ Due to this condition, it needs an agreement to Indonesia Government. After long-awaited, *Presidential Regulation (Perpres) No 125 of 2016 on the Treatment of Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Indonesia*, signed by President Joko Widodo on 31 December 2016 becomes a regulation which organizes the position towards refugees and asylum seekers in Indonesia.⁵ By the agreement of its government, UNHCR has authorization to help, protect, and find the solution for them. An immigration regulation ensures that refugees and asylum seekers have access to UNHCR, and allows them to stay temporarily in the country until their refugee status can be confirmed and an appropriate solution can be found for them.⁶

There is a huge amount of refugee around the world.⁷ UNHCR pursues a range of options for refugee based on their different situation. The treatments include the resettlement to a third country for the most vulnerable, family reunification, voluntary repatriation to countries of origin, and temporary protection mechanism that focus on vocational training and promoting access to labor scheme, particularly joint projects with members of host communities, as well as income-generating activities.⁸

In a transit country, UNHCR gives an effort to increase the mechanism of self-reliance. Self-reliance defines as the ability to rely on all of the resources (physical,

social and natural capital or asset) from an individual, household or community to fulfill their own basic needs.⁹ Those are included protection, food, water, shelter, personal safety, health, and education. In Indonesia and other countries as a hosting country for refugee, they also conduct many programs in collaborating with some NGO (international and local) to realize the self-reliance goal.¹⁰ The implementation of education conducted by UNHCR includes the strengthening of institutional commitment and preparedness, regarding policy, staffing arrangements and training, and funding.

In education, UNHCR continues to implement educational programs. For example, the program was conducted in Syrian refugee. Many Syrian refugee children will be referred to language supports, such as ESL programs in their districts.¹¹ This research is also a folk bilingualism. Because the Syrian refugees have to master the second language to obtain the requirement in studying in public school in the third country. In Indonesia, the implementation of education is conducted through the Catholic Relief Service (CRS), PKPU HI, and Dompot Dhuafa. Refugees' children have access to primary and secondary education in Indonesia public school. So, many learning centers are built as a place for the refugee to study. They can learn the English language, Indonesian language, Mathematics, Science, Computer, and life skills such as training of handphone service, make soap, make handicraft from plastics, etc. It is also the place for children to

⁴ Hirsch, A. (2018). After the Boats Have Stopped: Refugees stranded in Indonesia and Australia's containment policies. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 1-5.

⁵ Missbach, A., (2018). Stalemate: Refugees in Indonesia – Presidential Regulation No 125 of 2016. *CILIS*, 1-28.

⁶ Missbach, A., *Ibid*

⁷ Pathak, & S. (2018, March). Refugee Crises around the World Today. *Annual Research Journal of SCMS, Pune*, 6, 18-31.

⁸ Lego, J. B. (2012). Protecting and Assisting Refugee and Asylum Seekers in Malaysia: The Role of UNHCR, Informal Mechanism and The Humanitarian Exception. *Journal of political science and sociology*, 75-99.

⁹ Frank, A. (2014, September). The Self Reliance Strategy And Refugee Livelihoods: Evidence From Oruchinga Refugee Settlement, South Western Uganda. *International Journal of Research In Social Sciences*, 4, 59-65.

¹⁰ Frank, A., *Ibid*

¹¹ Wofford, M. C. (2018). A human right to literacy education: Implications for serving Syrian refugee children. *International Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, 182-190.

be prepared for entering local public school such as primary school and accelerated school (PKBM/Pusat Kegiatan Belajar Masyarakat/Society Education Center).

For preparation classes to enter the public school, Dompét Dhuafa conducts class in the learning center. It has three levels based on their range of age. Level A is for 4-5 years old, B for 6-7 years old, and C for 8-15 years old. The A and B levels are prepared for entering "Sekolah Dasar" or primary school and C level for PKBM.

The main requirements for entering public school is the students has to speak up and write in Bahasa Indonesia. So, the main subjects in the preparation school are Bahasa Indonesia and Mathematics subjects. All of the students in the preparation school are refugees. They are so come from many countries such as Somalian, Yemen, Iran, Afghanistan, etc. On summary, they are forced to learn Bahasa Indonesia to improve their education. They encounter folk bilingualism.

When they arrived in Indonesia for the first time, all most of them just speak their "mother" or native languages. It also happens to Mazen Daud. He just speaks in Somalian as Somali child. The core is how he adapts to the folk bilingualism that force to him. Then, this article will explain how many Bahasa Indonesia vocabularies that Mazen acquires from the first time he has been following in the preparation class in several months.

Theoretical Framework

a. Second Language Acquisition

Second language acquisition (SLA) is defined as the learning of any language in addition to the mother tongue. The mother tongue as a first language also useful as an introduction to a second language because it can be acquired after having received

the competences in a first language. Ellis argued that the second language is not only the language learned or succeeding one's mother tongue, but other languages, the third or fourth language is part of the second language acquisition.¹² By acquiring another or additional languages, an individual requires passing the stages as the way as same as in learning their first language. In learning language, some people find difficulty, especially adult. Moreover, it is essential for second language learners accepting an enormous amount of language exposure that given for them to learn it.¹³

Many people decide to learn second or more language for many reasons. For instance, they want to improve their knowledge, expanding to get a better job, communicating to society. Learning the second language requires time, effort, and organization for the individual to learn the language. One needs to be fluent in the native language also.

Generally, learning the mother tongue is not difficult, but rather, the skills in learning other language varies for the individual, their attitudes towards the language and motivation. The second language can be acquired either formal or informal. To acquire formally can get in schools and language courses and through walking on the streets and interacting with the community is a way to acquire second language informally.¹⁴ Besides, globalization makes people knowing or learning more different language and culture every day through many media such as social media, television, internet, etc.

¹² Ellis, R. (1997). *Second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. p.3.

¹³ Krashen, S. (1981). *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning*. Pergamon Inc. p.19.

¹⁴ Darko, A. A. (2010). Language Acquisition: Acquiring Languages beyond knowledge in first language. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 97-134.

The benefit of acquiring the second or third language is important because it can improve the knowledge and increase opportunities in employment.¹⁵ Given this, it is therefore very essential to be aware of acquiring a second language and its contribution to people's educational development in general.

b. Bilingualism

Bilingualism is defined as "knowing" two or more languages. Weir states that "bilingualism is considered as mastering two languages equally".¹⁶ According to Moradi, bilingualism can be defined as the use of at least two languages, either by a group of speakers or by an individual.¹⁷ Then in using the languages, for many bilinguals, they use one language is spoken at home and tends to be in informal registers, while the other is spoken in school with an extensive academic vocabulary, but this does not reflect a deficiency, merely a different area of knowledge. Then, it is rare to find bilinguals with a balanced or equal ability in their language usage. One language is often used more than the other language, and this can change with time. It is rare to find bilinguals with a balanced or equal ability in their language usage. One language is often used more than the other language, and this can change with time.

There are many types of bilingualism:¹⁸

1. Early and late bilingualism. It considers the age when mastering the languages.

2. Balance and dominant bilingualism. These regard to the relation between the fluency and the proficiency among the languages used by the bilingual.
3. The compound, Coordinate, and Subordinate Bilinguals. These consider dealing with the properties of how two or more linguistic codes are organized and stored by individuals.
4. Folk and Elite Bilinguals. These depend on variables such as cultural identity and language usage.
5. Additive Bilinguals and Subtractive Bilinguals. These regarding on how one's L2 influences the retention of one's L1.

In this paper, folk bilingualism distinguishes as the result of the contact of ethnic groups who have to become bilingual involuntarily to survive; here they do not have a choice, they have to learn the language of the setting where they live.¹⁹

c. Vocabulary

Learning vocabulary is one of the vital parts of learning a language because vocabulary is the language itself.²⁰ People use vocabulary in applying the language, whether in spoken or the written. Sometimes, we do not need structure. In contrast, we only need words or vocabularies to convey our meaning to others. For that reason, the Nation realized that vocabulary acquisition is essential for language use.²¹

There are some definitions to give meaning in vocabulary. Murcia said that "Vocabulary can be defined, roughly, as the

¹⁵ Martha, G. A. (2018). The Benefits of Second Language Learning. *ResearchGate-Modern Language Journal*, 408-451.

¹⁶ Maftoon, P. (2011). Who is Bilingual. *ResearchGate-journal of Educational Research*, 323- 326.

¹⁷ Moradi, H. (2014). An Investigation through Different Types of Bilinguals and Bilingualism. *International Journal of Humanities & Social Science Studies (IJHSSS)*, I(II), 107-112.

¹⁸ Moradi, H., *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Guerrero, C. H. (2010). Elite Vs. Folk Bilingualism: The Mismatch between Theories and Educational and Social Conditions. *ERIC*, 165-179.

²⁰ Alqahtani, M. (2015). The Importance of Vocabulary in Language and How to be Taught. *International Journal of Teaching and Education*, III, 21-35.

²¹ Nation, I. S. *Learning Vocabulary in Another Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2001, p.23.

words we teach in the foreign language".²² Then, Read argued that "Vocabulary has been defined in separated meaning such as the word".²³ Moreover, in another definition, Schmitt said the meaning of vocabulary is *words*, a formulation that is admirably adequate for the layperson."²⁴ From the statements above, it shows that vocabulary is words that are related to the meaning of the word and the way to use them in communication.

d. Refugee

Because of war, many people have to live in conflict, crisis, and persecution. Some civil try to defend on their country, but others flew out to another country seeking for protection. They come from many conflict countries and live in another country as refugees and asylum seekers. According to UNHCR's data, there are 65.6 million refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and asylum seekers all over the world.²⁵

Who are Internally Displaced People (IDP)? "People forced who flee their homes, but unlike refugee, they never cross an international border."²⁶ These individuals move to seek safety such nearby towns, schools, settlements, internal camps, even forests, and fields. However, IDPs are not protected by international law or eligible to receive many types of aid because they are legal under the protection of their government. Meanwhile, asylum seekers are people who are expelled from their country

and are seeking asylum in other countries and have not received a decision on refugee status.

Then, the definition of a refugee is defined. "A refugee is a person who forced to get out from his or her country because of persecution, war, or violence."²⁷ There are many reasons for a refugee fleeing their countries such as war and ethnic, tribal, and religious violence. Most of the refugees have a well-founded having traumatic and fear of this persecution. They go to another country to get civilization to the third country which can give them safety and nationality.

Regarding the 1951 Convention on Refugee Status and the 1967 Protocol:²⁸

"A refugee is a person who fears that he /she will become a victim. A refugee defines as a person who feel fears that he or she will become a victim of torture on the ground of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or because of his political opinion, then outside his home country and may or may not wish to return to his home country for reasons of being a victim of persecution."

Who is an asylum seeker? The asylum seeker is a people who flee from their own country and try to get sanctuary in another country; they apply themselves for asylum. An asylum seeker must proof and demonstrate that his or her fear of persecution in his or her home country is well-founded. Then, their status will be changed to refugee if they registered by UNHCR as refugees. Their condition will be better, and they will receive legal protection

²² Murcia, M. C. *Teaching English as a Second Language or Foreign Language*. Massachusetts: Heinle Publisher. 1991, p.4.

²³ Read, J. *Assessing Vocabulary*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2000, p.16.

²⁴ Schmitt, N. *Vocabulary in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2000. p.5.

²⁵ Pathak, & S. (2018, March). Refugee Crises around the World Today. *Annual Research Journal of SCMS, Pune*, 6, 18-31.

²⁶ Akhuznada, W. e. (2015). Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs); Anxiety and Depression. *ResearchGate*, 3, 337-342.

²⁷ UNHCR. (2011). *UNHCR Resettlement Handbook*. Geneva: Imprimerie Centrale S.A. Retrieved from <https://cms.emergency.unhcr.org/documents/11982/44343/UNHCR%2C+Resettlement+Handbook%2C+2011/>

²⁸ UNHCR. (1954). *Journal of International Law*, 193. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/4bc2ddeb9.pdf>

and material assistance if they are recognized as a refugee.

Findings and Discussion

This research was conducted in the qualitative approach. The researcher chose a case study. Then, she decided to collect the data by doing interviews, observation in his class, and using teachers' diary on his achievement during his study from September until December 2018. This research was not aimed to find the result. It just described further research.

a. *The Participant*

The subject of the data was a Somalian child who speaks in Somalian and forced to speak Bahasa Indonesia in age five years. He uses Somalian language in the family. Then, he uses Bahasa Indonesia at learning center course. Meanwhile, he uses Bahasa Indonesia in the environment since he lives in Indonesia. He has to learn Bahasa Indonesia to communicate with his refugee's friends who come from several countries and his Indonesian friends surrounding his house. The researcher took him in the private course as a sample.

b. *Data Collection Procedure*

The ways of collecting data were in a variety of ways such as a) interviews to the object (Mazen Abdul Wadud), his father, and his teachers, b) observation in his class and c) using teachers' diary on his achievement during his study from September until December 2018.

c. *Data Analysis Technique*

In this analysis, it was conducted by ongoing analysis and after collecting the entire data.²⁹ Purpose an analysis model consists of three concurrent steps. They are data reduction, data display, conclusion drawing, or verification. The procedures are:

(a) identify the teachers' diary on the object's achievement (b) observe in the class (c) analyze bilingual child's ability through the interviews (Mazen, parents, and teachers). The data of this study were taken from the interview, diary, and observation. In this study, the researcher firstly tried interview to get preliminary information on the implementation of the bilingual child in his daily life. After that, the teachers' diary on Bahasa Indonesia was observed. This was intended to crosscheck between observed and the data interviewed.

d. *Finding*

Based on the empirical data from the father and teachers, this bilingual child was categorized into active bilinguals. He can use languages actively in speaking and applying those languages in activities in class and makes conversation with his friends from another country. The refugees only used Bahasa Indonesia in class preparation. They were not allowed to use their native language, even English. However, they used another language or maybe their native language in their preference. They usually found it difficult to use the second or third language. For example, Mazen's father explained, "It is hard for children that living in a country that they feel like they are born in this country, but their parents come from another country. They still bring their habitual nature life. In this statement, Mazen communicates the deliberate choice that many children of refugees make to stay connected to their parents' countries of origin and inherently languages of origin.

Mazen's father explained that his family uses Somalian language to maintain "their" language to stay connected to "their" family. But, he stressed that Bahasa Indonesia was essential to speak to the teachers and his friends in course because his friends come from many countries with

²⁹ Miles, B. M. *Qualitative data analysis: a method source book (3rd edition)*. Arizona: Sage. 2014 p. 109.

their native language such as Farsi language from Afghanistan, Urdu language from Iran, Arabic language Yemen, etc. for Mazen's activities.

The following is the total and kinds of vocabulary mastered by Mazen

No	Indicator	Kinds	Total
1.	Mentioning his identity	His name, his father name, his mother name, his brother & sisters name, his address.	14
2.	Memorizing number 1-5	1,2,3,4,5	5
3.	Memorizing things on body	Shirt, T-shirt, skirt, short, hat, glasses, veil, sandals, shoes	9
4.	Telling about activities at home	Sleep, take a bath, eat, drink, tooth brush	6
5.	Asking permission	Asking permission to toilet, drink, eat	3
6.	Doing the instruction given by the teacher	Sit, tidy up, listen, look, shut up	5
7.	Mentioning transportation vehicles	Car, bicycle, motorcycle, plane	4
8.	Mentioning part of the body	Eyes, nose, mouth, hands, legs	5
9.	Mentioning animals living in sky, land, water	Birds, butterfly, crabs, fish, cat, chicken, rabbit	7
10.	Parts of animal body	Head, eye, ear, tail	4
11.	Kinds of animals' food	Grass, carrot, fish, rice	4
12.	Animal's part of body for moving	Legs, wings	2
13.	Understanding types of shapes	Circle, cubes, triangle	3
14.	Understanding primary colors	Red, blue, yellow	3
15.	Mentioning things in the classrooms	Pencil, book, sharpener, eraser, whiteboard	5
16.	Memorizing number 6-10	6,7,8,9,10	5

17.	Mentioning secondary colors	Purple, orange, green	3
18.	Expressing feelings	Angry, happy, sad, disappointed, hot, cold	6
Total			90

From the teachers' diary above, it can be concluded that the total of vocabulary mastered by Mazen average 90 vocabularies during September until December on his school. The kinds of vocabulary are mastered in basic level of Bahasa Indonesia. Furthermore, from the Mazen's father in his interview, he said that Mazen also can speak "lo", "gue", "Bapak", "Jalan", "jajan", "beli", "ayo", "Sakit", "pergi", "nangis", "Rumah", and "teman". Those words are got through his interaction with his friends at surrounding his home. Mazen can master almost a hundred Bahasa Indonesia words in almost four months.

Conclusion

The influences of folk bilingualism in refugee to learn Bahasa Indonesia cannot be seen as the refugees' children have been cured of their traumatic lives that happened in their country. When they can adapt to their new places, they can enjoy acquiring other languages. However, for refugee, sometimes they have to learn a new language to survive and continue their life even to improve their study. They also have to make interaction in the transit country with the transit country's language. Unfortunately, language learning and acquiring are not at all a simple task. Most of those who point the finger at migrant language shirkers vastly underestimate the effort involved in language learning. The consensus in applied linguistics is that language learning takes a long time and that the precise duration and outcome as measured in proficiency level are almost impossible to predict as they depend on many factors. Most of which are outside of

the control of an individual language learner, such as age, level of education, aptitude, teaching program, language proximity, or access to interactional opportunities.

Even though the results from this study did not indicate any statistically significant effects of Bahasa Indonesia language courses on refugees' language development, studies from other fields have shown a positive effect. For instance, after they can master its language, they can continue their study, get the certificate that useful in the third country.

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