

Teaching BIPA (Bahasa Indonesia Untuk Penutur Asing) for Sudanese; Lesson Learned in Bridging Indonesia and Sudan

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Abstract

Teaching BIPA is one of the programs conducted by Badan Bahasa (Language Body) The Ministry of Education and Culture. The Ministry holds BIPA class both in many language centers of universities in Indonesia and in Indonesian Embassy offices abroad or universities. For instance in Sudan. BIPA class was taught at Indonesian Embassy Office in downtown Khartoum, the capital of Republic of Sudan. This paper aims to describe lesson learned obtained during the implementation. This includes best practices and challenges. Furthermore, In Sudan particularly, teaching BIPA has been conducted prior to DIKTI initiatives. Both Embassy staff and Indonesian students working as Staff Assistant at the embassy involved in the program. This initiatives should be sustainable to more internationalize our Bahasa Indonesia around the globe.

Keywords: *BIPA, teaching, best practices, challenges*

1. Introduction

One of the recommendations of the 10th Indonesian Language Congress 2013 is internationalization of Indonesian language. It is hoped that teaching the language through a program called BIPA which stands for Bahasa Indonesia untuk Penutur Asing (Indonesian Languages for Non Native Speakers) must be more internationalized both quantity and quality. Therefore, DIKTI (Indonesian Higher Education) through SAME (Scheme of Academic Mobility and Exchange) invites university lecturers around Indonesia to get involved in BIPA teaching held at several universities, embassies and representatives of Indonesia around the world.

In addition, through “Darmasiswa (scholarship)” [1] provided for foreigners wishing to learn more about Indonesia and Indonesian Language. The teaching was held at language centers at respective universities or polytechnics all over Indonesia. Indonesian embassy in Republic of Sudan inquired a teacher to be teaching BIPA at the embassy in Khartoum. Thus, DIKTI responded by having such recruitment in 2013. “Other countries are Morocco, Poland, India, Ukraine, Russia, Bulgaria and Vatikan. Numbers of the lecturers involved were 12 and were from public universities and polytechnics in Indonesia.” [2]

Republic of Sudan consists of “15 states which received its independency on January 1, 1956. The capital of the country is Khartoum which is located between two Niles, the Blue Nile and the White Nile. Number of the population reaches 32 million after South Sudan was independent in 2011.” [2] The population consists of a variety of ethnic groups as follow:

Table 1. Ethnic groups in Sudan

Ethnic Groups	Percentage (%)
Black African	52
Arab	39
Beja and Nubian	6
Other	1

In addition, the relationship between Indonesia and Sudan began in “1910s through the establishment of *Al Irsyad* Foundation by *Syeikh Ahmad Surkati*. The official diplomatic bilateral relationship began in 1960 and was closed in 1967 due to financial issues. On January 6, 1996, the diplomatic relationship was opened again till current time. The areas of relationship covers many aspects such as politics, economics and social culture. “ [2]

In terms of political relationship, Indonesia as a member of United Nations has been involved in peace keeping forces. This force aims to respond the conflict in Darfour. The force involves in two different missions such as United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) followed by 20 Indonesian Armed Forces members and United Nations – African Mission in Darfur (UN-AMID) followed by 144 Indonesian Police members.

The next relationship can be seen in aspect of economy. There have been many kinds of relationships established such as in the field of agriculture, mining, maritime and fishing as well as industry and many more.

The field of social culture especially education relationship also plays an important role. Until now, there have been around 340 Indonesian students pursuing their Bachelor’s degree, master’s degree and Doctoral degree. Most of them are awarded scholarship from Sudan government. Indonesian students pursue their Bachelor, Master’s and Doctoral degree spread all over Khartoum.

One of the universities in which the majority of Indonesian students study is International University of Africa (IUA). Moreover, the implementation of BIPA can also be considered a part of Indonesia – Sudan educational relationship.

2. Implementation of BIPA

The implementation of BIPA in Sudan was based on the Letter of Decision by The Ministry of Education and Culture number 1251.6/E4.2/2013 dated on July 31, 2013 and Assignment Letter number 120/E4.2/2013 dated on August 26, 2013 and Approval Letter number B21017/Kemstneg/KTLN/KL.00/2013 dated on October 21, 2014 by The Ministry of State Secretary.

The class started from November 17, 2013 until January 8, 2014 making it almost 4 months. The class took a place at H. Agussalim Auditorium, the Embassy of Indonesia in Khartoum, the capital of Sudan from Sunday to Wednesday at 2pm until

5.30pm. In addition, number of participants registered in the class at the beginning was 11. In addition, there were some additional participants registering after meeting 3 of the class. The registration was held by the Embassy staff. However, until the end of BIPA implementation, there were only 9 participating filling out the application form. It is found that among 9 mentioned earlier, there was only 1 female participant. According to their educational background, most of them are high school graduate. Several participants are university students and the female one is a master's degree qualification. All together learnt all the topic taught in BIPA class.

Prior to this implementation, there have been classes of BIPA for Sudanese held by several Indonesian students pursuing their Master's and Doctoral degree and working as home staff at the embassy. According to the embassy staff, in implementing the pervious classes, they did not own books or modules used for the learning process. They simply compiled from different sources such as Internet. The previous classes aimed to prepare several Sudanese students who planned to pursue their undergraduate, master and doctoral degree in a variety of universities in Indonesia including my affiliation, Hasanuddin University (HU) of Makassar. Most of the Sudanese at HU at the moment are in the process of completing their degree.

In terms of the topics delivered in the class, the teacher used Lentera 1, 2 and 3, the books that were published by Pusat Bahasa (Language Center) of Department of National Education in 2008 and several internet sources as well as embassy staff experiences. The 3 books used during the implementation were given to the embassy staff for future BIPA class. The following is the schedule of BIPA class:

Table 2. Schedule of BIPA class

Meeting	Day/Date	Topic
1	Sun, Nov 17, 2013	Self Introduction (1)
2	Mon, Nov 18, 2013	Introduction Others (2)
3	Tue, Nov 19, 2013	Indonesian Alphabets
4	Wed, Nov 20, 2013	Days and Months
5	Sun, Nov 24, 2013	Question Words <i>Apa</i> or <i>Apakah</i>
6	Mon, Nov 25, 2013	Question Word <i>Siapa</i> (Who) and Colors
7	Tue, Nov 26, 2013	Conversation on KBRI (Indonesia Embassy) 1
8	Wed, Nov 27, 2013	Conversation on KBRI (Indonesia Embassy) 2
9	Sun, Dec 1, 2013	Pronoun (<i>Saya, Kamu, Kita, Mereka, etc</i>)
10	Mon, Dec 2, 2013	A Flight to Indonesia (1)
11	Tue, Dec 3, 2013	A Flight to Indonesia (2)
12	Wed, Dec 4, 2013	Adverb of Place

13	Sun, Dec 8, 2013	Conversation on Visa at the Airport
14	Mon, Dec 9, 2013	Introduction to Indonesia (1)
15	Tue, Dec 10, 2013	Introduction to Indonesia (2)
16	Wed, Dec 11, 2013	Adjectives (1)
17	Sun, Dec 15, 2013	Adjectives (2)
18	Mon, Dec 16, 2013	Using <i>Ayo, Mari</i> and <i>Yo</i>
19	Tue, Dec 17, 2013	Using <i>Dilarang</i>
20	Wed, Dec 18, 2013	Request; <i>Tolong, Mohon</i> , etc
21	Sun, Dec 22, 2013	Exercise (Sentence Arrangement)
22	Mon, Dec 23, 2013	Ordinal Numbers and Story Telling
23	Tue, Dec 24, 2013	Using Precise Question Words
24	Wed, Dec 25, 2015	Christmas Day
25	Sun, Dec 29, 2013	Visiting a Doctor
26	Mon, Dec 30, 2013	Expressing a Reason
27	Tue, Dec 31, 2013	Playing with Cardinal Numbers and Expressing Agreement
28	Wed, Jan 1, 2014	Sudan Independence Day and New Year
29	Sun, Jan 5, 2014	Expressing Disagreement
30	Mon, Jan 6, 2014	Review
31	Tue, Jan 7, 2014	Exercise 2 (Final Test)
32	Wed, Jan 8, 2014	Farewell Party

Based on Table 2, it is found that there are two days of holidays, Christmas Day and Sudan Independence Day which was coincidence with the 2014 New Year's Day. Moreover, there were two different exercises give in Meeting 21 and 31. The first exercise was arranged to be a Mid test and the last exercise was a Final test. The lesson plan that has been arranged was genuinely made up until Meeting 34. However, it could not be done due to the teacher's departure schedule back to Indonesia on Sunday, January 12, 2014.

The BIPA teaching process might have not run smoothly without the support of the embassy. The supports are teaching aids for example, LCD (Liquid Crystal Display), copied teaching materials and many more.

The topics on Table 2 were delivered in several different teaching methods as follow:

- a. "Translation" [3], this method is very common in second language teaching.
- b. "Direct" [4], this method was used to facilitate participants learning process for example in arranging sentences. The teacher closely monitored participant's performances one by one.

- c. “Think-Pair-Share (TPS)” [5], this method was used to pair participant to think of an issue then to pair each of them. In the end, each of them shared their learning experiences.
- d. “Role Play” [3], this method was used to engage participants and practice short Indonesian conversations.

Besides, the teacher also applied several ice breakers and energizers to stimulate participants’ motivation and spirit in the learning process. There were 3 ice breakers/energizers such as BIPA-KBRI-Sudan, Double-double this that, Dum Dum dada.

Not only that, the teacher also presented Indonesian children song such as “*Topi Saya Bundar*” (My hat is round) and “*Balonku ada Lima*” (I have 5 balloons). Both songs aimed to introduce colors and shapes in Indonesian language.

In building participants cultural understanding and awareness, power points and several videos were presented to describe unity and diversity in Indonesia. The participants felt in high spirits as if they have been in Indonesia already.

Furthermore, not only did I teach but also involve in preparing Dinner Reception held at Wisma Nusantara in which the H.E. Ambassador of Indonesia to Sudan and Eritrea welcome his invitees. I was in charge of welcoming fellow Ambassadors, Ministers and other distinguished guests.

3. Lesson Learned

In this part of the paper, I will explain lesson learned that covers several aspects such as challenges in Arabic colloquial of Sudanese, Indonesian-Arabic pronunciation, participants self motivation and social media support.

Sudan is one of the Arabic speaking countries. As a result, it shares language in common with other countries in the Middle East. Nevertheless, Sudan has its own “colloquial Arabic” [6] widely spoken over the country called *al darejiah*. This colloquial is one of the challenges faced by the teacher during the implementation of BIPA.

As a requirement to be teaching BIPA worldwide, the teacher at least can speak the local language in the host country. I personally felt difficult to catch their words at the very beginning of the class. With modern standard Arabic called *al fushhâ* I have learned in Indonesia, it did not help much due to the lack of colloquial understanding. In addition, few numbers of participants could not speak English very well. As result, very often body language was used to explain several words in Indonesia language. Nevertheless, there was only 1 participant speaking better English than of others. It is fortunate to have this participant who was always very helpful in making others understand the topic being discussed in the class.

The following are the examples of Sudanese colloquial common expressions

Table 3. Comparison of Sudanese Colloquial Arabic (SCA) and Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) [7]

Sudanese Colloquial Arabic	Modern Standard Arabic	Translation
/šinu/	/ʾayyu šayʾin huwa/	what
/ʾakalta/	/ʾakaltu/	I have eaten
/minu/	/man huwa/	Who is he?
/mini/	/man hiya/	Who is she?
/habâbak/	/marhaban bika/	You are welcome

According to Table 4, it can be said that consonant of /p/ in /pa:sir/ and /k/ in /ka:bar/ as well as /g/ in /ge:rak/ are pronounced differently and changed into /b/ in /ba:sir/, /g/ in /gabar/ and /j/ in /ji:rag/. In addition, not only do participant indiscriminate Indonesian consonants but also vowels that be seen in the following table:

Table 4. Mispronounce Indonesian consonants:

Indonesian Consonants	Participants' Pronunciation	English Translation
/p/ e.g. <i>pasir</i> /pa:sir/	/b/ e.g. /ba:sir/	sand
/k/ e.g. <i>kabar</i> /ka:bar/	/g/ e.g. /ga:bar/	news
/g/ e.g. <i>gerak</i> /ge:rak/	/j/ e.g. /ji:rag/	movement

Another lesson learned is Arabic-Indonesian pronunciation. In this part of the paper, I will describe how Sudanese involving in BIPA class pronounce Indonesian consonants. Some of the Indonesian consonants are not phonemic, so Sudanese participant indiscriminate or mispronounce these phonemes as follow:

Table 5. Comparison of Sudanese Colloquial Arabic (SCA) and Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) [7]

Indonesian Vowels	Participants' Pronunciation	English Translation
/e/ e.g. <i>belum</i> /be:lum/	/i/ e.g. /bi:lum/	before
/o/ e.g. <i>bola</i> /fo:to/	/u/ e.g. /bu:la/	ball

According to the Table 5, it is seen that vowel /e/ in /be:lum/ and /o/ in /bo:la/ are pronounced differently and changed into /i/ in /bi:lum/ and /u/ in /bu:la/

Based on the both facts above, Brown claimed that in second language acquisition it is called "interference" [8]

Another lesson learned I found during the implementation of BIPA is students motivation. Prior to the beginning of the class, several participants have been aware of scholarship provided by Indonesian government for Sudanese. Therefore, they

enthusiastically participated at the very beginning of the class. They wished to improve their Indonesian language.

The issue of scholarship made them more attentive in taking a part in every activity offered in the classroom. Unfortunately, after the notification from the embassy in regards to the study programs was issued, none of those study programs offered in the scholarship met their expectations. Most of these participants wished to pursue their study in Faculty of Medicine. Meanwhile, study programs offered in the scholarship were agriculture and engineering. Consequently, their self motivation seemed to be losing and resulted from their absenteeism in the classroom.

On the other hand, as a teacher I tried not to be hopeless. With contact numbers in hand I kept contacting them wishing to see them coming back to the classroom. It worked for several participants but it did not work for others.

Lastly, the support of social media played important role in engaging participants in learning BIPA. I designed a group on Facebook (FB) to get in touch with them. As explained early that the class begins from Sunday to Wednesday, the existence of this social media is to keep them practicing their Indonesian language.

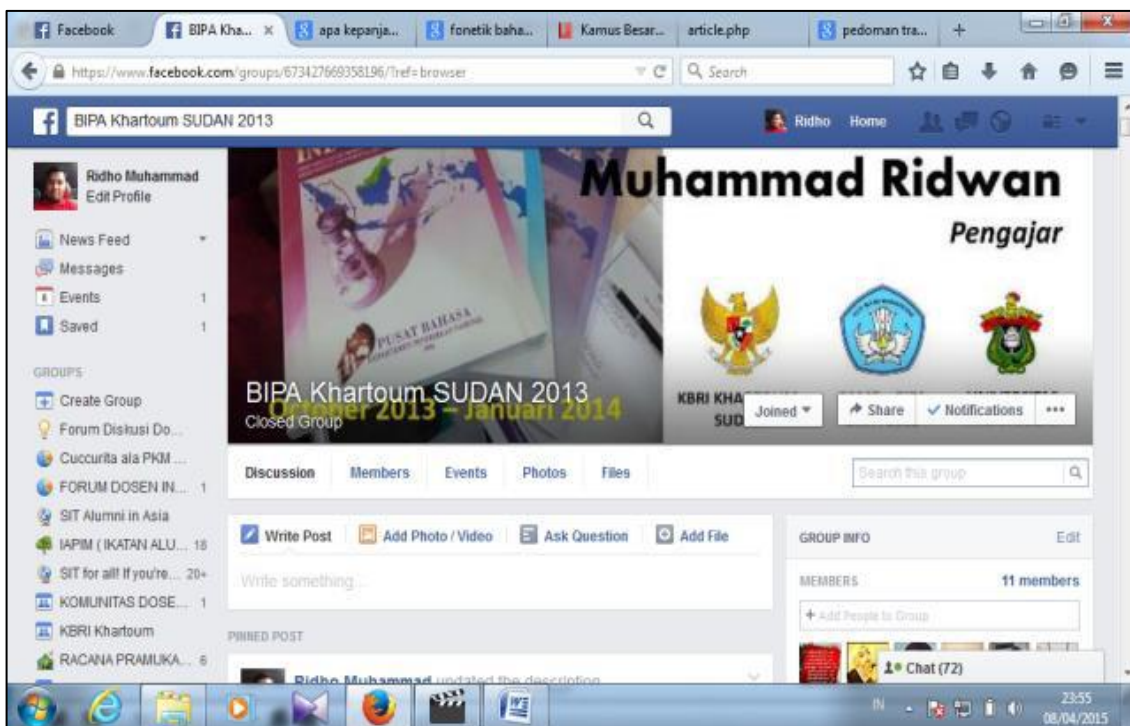


Figure 1: BIPA Khartoum Sudan 2013

Fig.1 shows the cover of BIPA group on Facebook. The group has been followed by 11 people. 1 member is an embassy home staff; another is a BIPA teacher teaching in Bulgaria and the last one is a Sudanese student studying at Hasanuddin University of Makassar. The rest of the group members are BIPA participants.

BIPA participants began the FB chatting mostly every morning and evening.

However, as several of them are university students, they might not be able to have a chat in the morning. Therefore, they did the chatting in the evening or right after the class of that day was done.

The following Fig. 2 is an example of chatting in Indonesian language by several BIPA participants:



Figure 2. Example of participant chatting on FB

As a part of their exercise, Fig. 2 shows how they practice their Indonesian language. It was undeniable that several of them still struggled to express their ideas. However, 2 or 3 of them were very motivated and always responded the questions offered to them.

4. Conclusion

To sum up this paper, there are several important points as follow:

- a. Teaching BIPA worldwide is one of the 10th Indonesian Language Congress
- b. The Ministry of Education and Culture through DIKTI has invited many lecturers from different universities in Indonesia to get involve in internationalizing this language.
- c. Lesson learned from the implementation of BIPA consists of challenges in pronunciation of Indonesian by the participants. Besides the teacher himself found several experiences dealing with Sudanese colloquial Arabic. Finally, participants' self motivation in learning BIPA needs to maintained

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