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Portraits of Graduates in Becoming Multilingual and Multicultural Citizens in the Context of Internationalization

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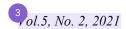*Corresponding Author's Email: samirahdunakhiri@unm.ac.id*

Abstract
The purpose of this paper was to investigate the portraits of graduates who have learned English as a foreign language on one hand, while maintaining Indonesian and local languages on the other. This study draws on poststructuralist notions of identity and language learning and uses a portraiture lens emphasising contexts and voice. This paper draws on data from semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews of five key participants relating their contextual backgrounds and their efforts to be bilinguals. Learning an additional language requires systemic and multifaceted overarching approaches over relatively long periods of time rather than a single strategy within a short period. These efforts have contributed them to beome multilingual and multicultural individuals. Empirical evidence shows that situational factors such as language exposure and motivation play dominant roles to assists learners to be bilingual and biliterate individuals. The situational factors link closely to the exposure in terms of quantity and quality of experiences to the target language. They are, nevertheless, valuable as portraits of learners.

Keywords: Portraiture, analysis, identity, bilingualism, learners, Indonesia

Introduction

This paper explores the experiences a range of individuals in becoming proficient multilingual and multicultural citizens. The paper responds the limited publication of Indonesian multilingual and multicultural themes globally (Adnan, 2014; Welch, 2012). Such themes as identity, language learning, and bilingual education are notable gaps. The peripheral condition of Indonesia in the context of world knowledge development is due to its citizens' general lack of mastery of a world language (e.g. English) which means many Indonesians are unable to communicate with the world (Paauw, 2009). This research is vital to establishing an understanding of what efforts each successful language learner has invested in participating in the world

community by gaining English as an additional language. This study draws on an epistemology derived from poststructuralist notions of identity and language learning for a number of reasons. Firstly, the nature of bilingual education implementation is to respond to the demand of global employment opportunities where the ability to speak an international language is highly valued. Secondly, little is known about bilingualism, identity, and language learning in the Indonesian context, and research needs to explore the phenomenon from the perspectives of educators who are proficient in both languages: Indonesian and English.

We argue that the mastery of an additional language is not only used as a medium of instruction, but also it is a process of identity construction. Norton (2000) suggests that language should be understood in relation to socially constructed reality, not merely a neutral medium of instruction. Specifically, the term identity in the context of language learning is seen as "how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future" (Norton, 2000, p. 5). The identity is unstable and changes over time according to particular contexts.

Literature review

Concept of portraiture and internationalization

The introduction of portraiture into the research community through the publication of *The Good High School: Portraits of Character and Culture* (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1983), and *I've known Rivers: Lives of Loss and Liberation* (1994) provided samples of rich and detailed portraits of structural, ideological, relational and cultural themes. Despite several scholars criticising and delineating the downfall of its applicability (English, 2000), the authors consider portraiture as an emerging qualitative terrain (Chapman, 2005; Hackmann, 2002) and a pedagogical research method (Gaztambide-Fernández, Cairns, Kawashima, Menna, & VanderDussen, 2011) that can be mapped for bilingual educational research. Portraiture is defined as:

> a method of qualitative research that blurs the boundaries of aesthetics and empiricism in an effort to capture the complexity, dynamics, and subtlety of human experience and organizational life. Portraitists seek to record and interpret the perspectives and experience of the people they are studying, documenting their voices and their visions—their authority, knowledge, and wisdom. The drawing of the portrait is placed in social and cultural context and shaped through dialogue between the portraitist and the subject, each one negotiating the discourse and shaping the evolving image (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997 p. xv).

Portraiture offers researchers spaces for different ranges of actions. It allows researchers to enlighten individual stories personally, professionally and politically (Chapman, 2005). It is a self-transformational tool that can facilitate personal and social interest (Ngunjiri, 2007). Specifically, portraiture could be used to depict identities of language learning; for example the work of Kearney and Andrew (2013) on language maintanance of Irish and Scotish Gaelic in New Zealand, "identity narratives" (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004, p. 18), temporal contexts: *past – present – future* (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), motivation (Dörnyei, 2001) and investment (Norton, 2000). The use of temporal contexts allows the researchers to trace the historical, current, and prospects of changing identities.

Internationalization means here is the possession of global knowledge and skills that transform people to be multicultural citizens. The citizens who accept similarities and respects differences across different contexts of interaction. The language use of different interactions

depending on each individual so that they can switch the language based on their needs and demanding situations. The following section will describe research method, the portraits of five multilingual graduates and then followed by the discussion and conclusion.

Research method
Contexts in portraiture
        A context plays important roles in narrating the portrait of identity. It embraces "notions of temporal contexts, spatial context, and context of other people" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 32). It could exist in two opposite directions, such as inside and outside settings and in a correlational domain such as the relationships between students' performance and socio-economic status (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Similarly, a context can be the historical, personal, demographical and ecological spaces that would enrich and enhance an in-depth permutation of portraiture (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997).

Voice in portraiture
        The study used three types of voice: voice as witness, voice as dialogue, and voice as interpretation. The voice as "the research instrument echoes the self of portraitist - from eyes, ears, insights, style, and aesthetic stands. It is deeply empirical, grounded in systematically collected data, sceptical questioning (self and actors), and rigorous examination of biases" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997 p. 89). The following sections describe the voice and its associated research method.

Voice as witness: observations
        The voice as witness deals with the outsiders' stance, which "looks across patterns of action and sees the whole, the outsider also takes advantage of the position as a stranger, which allows her to see through new eyes" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, pp. 87-88). The authors conducted 'unobtrusive observation' (Creswell, 2013) which was an act of observation without interfering with the research subjects, nor distracting from the participants' attitudes and practices. The benefits of observation were that it helps to provide more in-depth understanding of the behavioural and motives of the cases (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The observations were carried out not only in the classroom contexts but also outside class room contexts where the bilingual supporting activities were held. The classroom context observations aimed to depict the use of Indonesian-English as medium of instruction for teaching and learning purposes. In addition, the observations outside classroom contexts were conducted to portray the substantial supporting approaches to further bilingual learners.

Voice in dialogue: face to face interviews, phoned, and emailed conversations
        The participants shared with the researchers ideas about bilingual education, identity and language learning topics through semi-structured interview questions, which were then followed up by phone and email conversations with participants. The semi-structured interviews were conducted during a five-month field work visit to the research site. The interviews involved a dean, a program coordinator, a senior lecturer, a secretary of a program, and a lecturer. All the five participants in this study took part actively especially teaching in the BE programs. The interviews

lasted approximately 45 minutes to 60 minutes in length. All transcripts of audio-recorded interviews were transcribed and returned to each participant to verify accuracy of the content and the transcription. This process enhances the trustworthiness of the research

Voice as interpretation: thematic analysis

The researchers' attempts to make sense of the data were through grounded thematic analysis. We use the term "grounded" because it was initially based on the themes and patterns immersed from the data-*being grounded*-so that 'embedded meaning and relationships can emerge' (Patton 2002, p. 454). Then themes were arranged thematically based in the order of importance and number of times participants identified each themes. The relationship of portraiture as a method of analysis and identity is described in the Figure 1 below.

Findings-Portraits

Mr. Andre

For Andre, spending his childhood in a far remote area of Indonesia meant a struggle for exposure to international languages, particularly English. He commenced learning English starting in junior secondary education. During this educational period, he admired his English teachers who developed his love of learning English. He says:

> *I bring with me everywhere I go two things: the Quran (Holy book of Moslem) and bilingual dictionary. At first I could not even pronounce English words correctly and all of my friends were laughing at me.*

He continued his senior high school in the capital city of the province. He kept improving his English and became well-known, as 'a walking dictionary' because he usually brought his bilingual dictionary with him. He was not only good at English but also at science. He then decided to enrol in the Mathematics Education program. Because of his outstanding achievement in his bachelor studies, he was recruited as a teaching and research assistant at his university where he has taught for approximately five years. His teaching responsibilities and motivation to pursue studies overseas led him to commit to learning English.

He had taken several intensive English training programs that resulted in gaining a TOEFL score of 500. After achieving a score of 500 TOEFL, he then applied for a scholarship for a Master's degree in the Netherlands. After passing the scholarship tests, he was awarded a place in the double degree program. Prior to commencing his study in an English speaking university, he had to participate in a six month pre-departure intensive English and intercultural training program. The outcome of the IELTS intensive training enabled him to attain an IELTS (International English Testing System) score of 6.5 that led him to be eligible to continue his Master's degree in an English speaking university overseas.

Mr. Bahrin

Bahrin's attitude was totally negative to English. He could not understand his teacher's explanation of English when he was studying in junior and senior secondary schools. He says of that time: 'Every time English subject starts, I cannot keep my eyes open. As a result, my English subject grade was poor'. So he decided to enrol in bachelor studies in the Maths program, because he assumed that he would not encounter materials written in English. In the first semester of his

freshman period, he loved listening to his lecturers talking about overseas countries and educational opportunities for students. Some of his lecturers provided readings in English. These two interconnecting factors led him to rethink his attitude to English.

He recognised his limited English was a barrier. Every weekend he participated in an English camp provided by private and community organisers that aimed to focus on learning English. Every semester holiday he went to an English village, which was called 'Kediri English Village' in East Java (one of the Indonesian provinces in Java island). He says: 'It was not like real English as seen on TV, but everyone there learns English, grammar focus, conversation focus, vocabulary focus, listening focus, and many others'.

His long investment in English resulted in a 527 score of TOEFL prior to applying for the Australian Development Scholarship (ADS) for Master's and Doctoral studies. With that score, he was eligible for that scholarship. He was lucky to become one of three hundred recipients of the ADS scholarship to pursue his further studies in Australia. Prior to commencing his study in Australia, he had to participate in a nine month pre-departure intensive English and intercultural training program.

After six months intensive training, he achieved an IELTS (International English Testing System) score of 6.5 (advanced level), and was eligible to continue his Master's degree in an English speaking university overseas. He spent one and half years there completing his degree, and that led to the doctoral program at the same university. Returning from the educational journey, he was recruited as a lecturer in Guru University.

Mr. Tasrif

Growing up as a city dweller who was accustomed to modern technology and the hustle and bustle of urban life style, Tasrif was initially exposed to English during primary school. He had studied English as an elective subject in primary school. He says: 'I loved the way my teacher of English teaching through games and singing activities'. Since then, he chose to continue in private junior and secondary schools where English was used as one of the media of instruction in schools.

After completing his high school education, he continued his study in a Bachelor of Science in a government university because he wanted to be a scientist, with Indonesian as a medium of instruction. He realised that his English was poor because of limited exposure to English reading materials compared to his senior high school colleagues. Therefore, he decided to be a tourist guide every weekend to enhance his English.

With outstanding academic and non-academic achievements, he was awarded the Australian Development Scholarship (ADS) for a Master's Program. His long term investment and effort to develop English as an additional language skill resulted in passing the IELTS (International English Testing System) with a score of 7.0 (advanced level). He was excited to continue his Master's degree in an Australian university. He spent one and a half years there completing his Master's degree, while participating in a number of volunteering activities. Returning from his educational journey, he used his proficiency in English on both his personal and professional roles including the recently implemented bilingual program.

Mr. Mudasir

Mudasir was committed to learning English outside school hours since he was a child. He was raised as a disciplined and persistent person since his early childhood. He was one of the most outstanding students regarding his achievement of English during his secondary schooling. He

argues: 'The two-hour learning English during secondary education was not enough to help to me to speak English'. So he joined English courses every afternoon after his return from school.

After graduating from secondary education, he decided to enrol in three departments: 'English was my first choice and Math was my second choice, and Music was my third choice'. Surprisingly, it was so competitive that he was unable to gain his first choice, but he was recruited into the Maths program. During his bachelor studies, he volunteered as an English language instructor at the Sunday English Meeting Club. He organised a lot of different activities for the club members who regularly met every Sunday.

A variety of English club activities assisted him to maintain and improve his English. His English language ability was gained through a series of rehearsal readings of English materials where he learned English words, grammar, and pronunciation. After graduating, he planned to teach Maths in rural areas. However, he came across senior academics and lecturers who motivated him to pursue further studies. He eventually sat for the TOEFL test. He gained a TOEFL score of 510 which met the criteria for the Australian Development Scholarship (ADS) for the Master's Program. He was awarded a scholarship for further studies at an Australian university. Prior to commencing his study in Australia, he had to participate in a nine month pre-departure intensive English and intercultural training program and had an IELTS score of 6.5. After completing his Master's, his supervisors assisted him to get a PhD scholarship. Upon returning to Indonesia, he used his English skills on many occasions including in the recently implemented bilingual program.

Mr. Gifran

Gifran completed all his educational experiences from primary to doctoral levels in the Indonesian educational system. He struggled with English since becoming a university student. He says: 'My English is very poor and I am still joining English courses up until now'. When asked about his last score of English proficiency, he replied: 'I have never achieved more than 400 of TOEFL Score'.

During his bachelor studies, he relied on translation texts and his friends to share with him whenever he had English texts to read. He was so enthusiastic about improving his English. He joined a number of English classes either taught by native speakers or local competent teachers in his hometown and other cities in Indonesia. He still feels that his English competency needs to be strengthened.

During the interview, he tried to use English with me as the researcher as a chance to practice his English. He switched to Indonesian frequently, whenever he could not recall the English words. His future motivation is to write a paper and present it at an international seminar or conference in an English speaking country.

Discussion

The time frame of Clandinin and Connelly (2000): *Past – Present – Future* is used to discuss the portrait of the five participants in this study. From the past perspectives, the four participants (Andre, Bahrin, tasrif, Mudassir and Gifran) used a successive multilingual language learners approach (Hornberger, 2004) because they learned English seriously and systematically at an adult stage through informal learning, Andre used a simultaneous approach (Hornberger, 2004; Meisel, 2008) to language learning because he acquired English as an additional language since early childhood through to formal schooling.

From the present and future perspectives, the five participants' investment in language

learning (Norton, 2000; Norton & Toohey, 2011) transformed (and probably will continue to transform) them to become multicultural citizens. Academically, they were fortunate to be exposed directly in English speaking universities where they had opportunities to immerse themselves and further improve their English proficiency. As a result, during their studies, they had a chance to get some papers published in journals and presented papers in international conferences. Socially, they had opportunity to get in contact and establish networking with international academic communities during their overseas studies. Culturally, they have developed a multicultural competence (Sercu, 2006) that could assist them to respect different ethnicities and different cultural backgrounds in a multicultural environment. Such intercultural engagement could enrich their knowledge on multiculturalism resulting in being more open to different perspectives and attitudes.

From a motivational perspective, the instrumental motivation (Dörnyei, 2001; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1991) influenced the participants in mastering English as a foreign language. From the past lens, the desire of the participants in this study to use English was a means of mastering content and learning about other cultures. They encourage themselves to be multicultural citizens. The desire to contribute actively to the current debate of knowledge development was also identified as part of their instrumental motivations. The characters of their instrumental motivation were progressive, not permanent and heterogonous (Dörnyei, 2003) because it changes according to tasks and responsibilities assigned to them. For example, in the present lens, their work responsibilities as academics require the participants to master academic English enable them to disseminate their teaching and research works globally.

More importantly, the development of the participant's foreign language proficiency was also influenced by the "the situational factors" (Beardsmore, 2011, p. 138) which relates particularly to the quality and quantity of exposure to the target language outside formal educational contexts. The participants in this study had the opportunity to be exposed to the target language intensively post their bachelor educational activities in relatively long periods of learning.

Conclusion

The paper offers narrative portraits of multilingual and multicultural graduates who have managed to successfully achieve good level of proficiency in English as a foreign language. The portrait indicators of their successive learners' investment (Norton, 2000) are seen from their returns on overseas educational attainment where English is used a medium of instruction. In addition, instrumental motivation (Dörnyei, 2001) and conditional factors (Beardsmore, 2011) contributed to the successful achievement of learning English. This research was carried out with successful learners of a foreign language in an Indonesian university context and the findings provide a new perspective on identity influencing the implementation of bilingual education policy, particularly in developing countries. Since this research was a small scale study, the findings cannot be generalised to a broader population. However, our in depth exploration of the phenomenon and the results can possibly contribute to insightful theoretical and practical knowledge to the community. Future research needs to explore the other factors that play supporting roles in acquiring additional language. Future research also needs to be conducted within larger samples in multiple sites (Merriam, 2009). Multiple settings will contribute to broader population samples and extend our findings by providing a comprehensive evidence to complement the findings in this paper.

This study has pedagogical implication in a way that a new learner of English within Indonesian context and other similar contexts may follow their steps to successfully learn other language. Moreover, at the new digital age development, they may invent a new creative technological way to improve their foreign language competence, as it is required in the current modern age.

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