

Original Paper

Indonesian Language Diplomacy in the United States of America Through the Bahasa Indonesia Bagi Penutur Asing (BIPA) Program

Josephine Audrey^{1*}, Deasy Silvy Sari¹ & Kiagus Zaenal Mubarak¹

¹ Padjadjaran University, Bandung, Indonesia

* Josephine Audrey, E-mail: josephineaudrey01@gmail.com

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Abstract

Indonesian language (bahasa Indonesia) can be a soft power in promoting Indonesia in the international arena. The government through the Language Development and Development Agency took the initiative to facilitate foreign speakers to learn Indonesian through the BIPA program. The purpose of this study is to find out how Indonesian language diplomacy is in the United States through the Indonesian Language for Foreign Speakers or Bahasa Indonesia bagi Penutur Asing (BIPA) program. This study uses the concept of Cultural Diplomacy. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative research method. Data collection techniques were carried out by means of literature studies and interviews with BIPA Coordinators, BIPA teachers and students in the United States. The results of this study showed that cultural and Indonesian language diplomacy carried out through the BIPA program in the United States has been running since 2017 until today, where since the Covid-19 pandemic until now learning has been carried out online. The process of delivering materials is carried out by BIPA teaching staff who have been selected through various stages of selection. To find out how the results of BIPA learning in the United States, students must display their Indonesian language skills through a virtual Indonesian language showcase.

Keywords

Bahasa Indonesia, BIPA, Cultural Diplomacy, United States of America

1. Introduction

Language becomes an identity for a nation. The Indonesian nation is an archipelagic country that is very rich in culture and language. The various tribes and cultures that spread from Sabang to Merauke certainly have their own cultural and linguistic characteristics. However, this diversity is united in the Indonesian Nation. Bahasa Indonesia is the official national language of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) as sworn in on October 28, 1928 in the Youth Pledge which was also stipulated in Article 36 of the 1945 Constitution. Bahasa Indonesia is a valuable cultural heritage and must be preserved. Bahasa Indonesia is a unique and interesting language. There are several reasons for this according to Ivan Lanin, an Indonesian internet expert who is also an Indonesian language activist, namely that bahasa Indonesia itself comes from Malay and absorbs a lot of Sanskrit, Arabic, Dutch, and several other languages. Bahasa Indonesia does not have tenses and gender (unlike most Indo-European languages). Bahasa Indonesia also has no difference in meaning due to intonation, unlike Mandarin or Vietnamese which have a tone in their pronunciation that can make one word have different meanings. Apart from that, Bahasa Indonesia also has a fairly consistent pronunciation like its writing (Lanin, 2018).

As a means of communication, starting from the level between individuals to between countries, language has become an important aspect of life. The role of language is not only limited to daily communication, moreover, language plays a role in the economic, political, cultural, religious, science and technology, defense and security sectors, and many more. Meanwhile, the role and function of bahasa Indonesia has been growing. In accordance with Law no. 24 of 2009 concerning the Flag, Language and State Emblem and National Anthem, it is stated in Article 44 that the function of bahasa Indonesia wants to be further enhanced by the Government so that it can become an international language in a gradual, systematic and sustainable manner. Even though currently many foreign languages have been recognized as international languages such as English, Spanish, Arabic, Mandarin, and Russian, the nation's aspirations to make bahasa Indonesia as an international language have not disappeared. Instructions to increase the function of bahasa Indonesia to become an international language itself have been included in three official documents. First, Law Number 24 of 2009 concerning Flags, Languages and State Symbols, as well as the National Anthem. Second, Government Regulation Number 57 of 2014 concerning Development, Development and Protection of Language and Literature, and Improvement of Indonesian Language Functions. Third, it was mandated by the 11th Indonesian Language Congress in 2018 (Aziz, 2021).

Bahasa Indonesia can be a means of Indonesian diplomacy in the international arena. This can be seen from the large number of foreign citizens (foreigners) in most countries in the world who have an interest in learning bahasa Indonesia as well as the large number of speakers of Indonesian themselves who are spread all over the world. Until 2021, the number of bahasa Indonesia learners or students of the Indonesian Language for Foreign Speakers (BIPA) program has reached 10,730 people spread across 38 countries (Wahyuni, 2021). The need for foreign nationals who wish to continue their studies

or work in Indonesia, of course, requires that they at least have basic knowledge of the Indonesian language so that they are able to communicate and interact with Indonesian citizens or society easily. In addition, the existence of Indonesian as a compulsory subject at a number of foreign universities also requires foreigners to study Indonesian, such as Leiden University in the Netherlands, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies in South Korea, University of London in England, Tokyo University of Foreign Affairs. Studies (TUFS) in Japan, University of Melbourne in Australia, Taras Shevchenko National University in Ukraine, several universities in the United States such as University of Washington and Yale University, and many more (Husen, 2021). But apart from all this, there are also many foreign nationals who are interested in learning more about Indonesia because it started from their admiration for the diversity that Indonesia has, because of Indonesian cuisine, and there are also those who are interested because of its traditional arts (Sari, 2022).

Indonesian also has its own charm for the United States. This can be seen through a number of universities in the United States that provide bahasa Indonesia courses, including American University, Arizona State University, Yale University, Harvard University, Indiana University, Cornell University, Ohio University, Northern Illinois University, University of Georgia, Columbia. University, University of Colorado Boulder, University of Pennsylvania, University of Michigan, University of Wisconsin-Madison and University of Hawaii at Manoa (Agency for Language Development and Development, 2021).

Diplomatic relations between the United States and Indonesia have been established since 1949. The United States has become a country that has an important role in efforts to build the Indonesian nation. One form of cooperation that exists between Indonesia and the United States is by establishing exchange programs in the field of education that aim to increase understanding and strengthen the ties that link Indonesia and the United States. Many people have participated in this educational exchange program, namely around 2,815 Indonesians and 1,120 Americans from 1952 to 2020 (Setyo, 2020). The United States is committed to helping increase the higher education capacity of the Indonesian people and significantly increasing the number of people studying, teaching, and conducting research in the United States, as well as the number of Americans studying, teaching, and conducting research in Indonesia (Setyo, 2020).

As one of Indonesia's diplomatic efforts on the international stage, the Indonesian government, through the Language Development and Development Agency, Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (more popularly known as the Language Agency) took the initiative to create a program that accommodates foreigners to learn Indonesian officially. and structured. The learning program is called Indonesian for Foreign Speakers (BIPA). The BIPA program is a program for learning bahasa Indonesia skills (speaking, writing, reading and listening) targeting foreign speakers. The BIPA program then becomes a facility provided to answer the wishes and needs of foreign citizens in several countries to learn Indonesian language and culture in their respective countries, as well as the government's efforts to introduce Indonesian to the international arena. According to data for 2018, BIPA learning programs

have been carried out by approximately 36 countries in the world with no less than 130 institutions, consisting of Indonesian Embassies, universities, course institutions, and foreign cultural centers. (Language Development and Development Agency, 2018).

Teaching Indonesian in the United States itself is available in 25 institutions that work with the BIPA program. The twenty-five institutions consist of several universities, the embassy of the Republic of Indonesia, and the consulate general of the Republic of Indonesia which is located in the United States of America. This of course supports Indonesia's cooperation with the United States which aims to build the higher education capacity of the Indonesian people and significantly increase the number of people who study, teach, and conduct research in the United States, as well as the number of people in the United States who study, teach, and conduct research in Indonesia. Through this program, Indonesia builds its cultural diplomacy by providing an understanding of Indonesia's culture and image towards the United States as well as establishing good relations with the country concerned so that it can support cooperation in various fields. In this case, bahasa Indonesia can be an attraction for the people of the United States so that it can be better known and Indonesia's national interests can be achieved.

In addition, there are several factors that underlie the interest of citizens of the United States to learn or explore bahasa Indonesia. It can be said that the interest of foreign parties to learn Indonesian is because they want to conduct studies on Indonesia, in order to facilitate work in Indonesia, for smooth tourism to Indonesia, as well as smoothness in establishing international cooperation. Therefore, BIPA is here as a means of teaching Indonesian for foreigners in several countries, one of which is the United States (Cipta, 2023).

Currently, research related to cultural diplomacy that focuses on bahasa Indonesia as a medium of diplomacy has not been carried out much so that researchers are interested in finding out more about language diplomacy. Based on various literature studies that have been traced by researchers, there are many researchers who have researched and written about this BIPA program before but no one has specifically discussed BIPA learning programs held in the United States, even though this country is one of the countries that provides quite a lot of facilities for its citizens to learn Indonesian. In addition, researchers are interested in discussing BIPA in the United States, considering that this country is a super power country that has a great influence on international relations. Therefore, this study will explain how Indonesian language diplomacy in the United States is through the Indonesian Language for Foreign Speakers (BIPA) program.

2. Method

The research design that researchers use in this research is a qualitative research method. The research object in this study is the Indonesian Language for Foreign Speakers (BIPA) program as a means of Indonesian language diplomacy through the theory of cultural diplomacy. Researchers will conduct research by means of internet-based research, namely examining objects such as program actors/organizers, relevant institutions, learning curricula, and other necessary data. Then, in

document-based research, researchers will explore documents regarding ministries and institutions related to the Indonesian language diplomacy process and documents or reports regarding the Indonesian Language program for Foreign Speakers (BIPA). The researcher will also conduct interviews with the BIPA Coordinator in the United States who is responsible for implementing the BIPA learning program in the United States and with representatives of teaching staff and several BIPA students in the United States. The interview will discuss in more depth the Indonesian language diplomacy through the BIPA program. As for the explanation unit, namely the BIPA Program in the United States and Indonesian language diplomacy in the United States, researchers will also use information obtained from interviews and will use internet-based research and document-based research that will analyze forms of effort, policies, strategies/how to carry out, and actors of Indonesian language diplomacy in the United States.

3. Result

3.1 Indonesian for Foreign Speakers (BIPA: Bahasa Indonesia bagi Penutur Asing)

Indonesian for Foreign Speakers or what is more commonly referred to as BIPA is a learning program that uses bahasa Indonesia courses and training methods, where the subjects are foreign students. BIPA itself is an Indonesian language proficiency learning program for foreign speakers that focuses on aspects of speaking, writing, reading, and listening or listening. In 2000, the Language Center of the Indonesian Ministry of National Education began facilitating Indonesian language learning activities for foreign citizens. However, the pioneering of the BIPA program itself started in the 1990s. Finally in the 1999s, a group was formed specifically to organize and manage the BIPA program (Imran, 2006). The BIPA program itself has also been regulated in the Minister of Education and Culture Regulation (Permendikbud Number 27 of 2017). Based on these regulations, the objective of the BIPA program in general is to produce graduates with good and correct Indonesian language skills for any purpose in various contexts, both orally and in writing. Meanwhile, in particular, the BIPA program has the goal that students can master the four aspects of language skills, namely speaking, listening, writing, and reading skills according to their level. In practice, foreign speakers learn bahasa Indonesia to make it easier to communicate in working life in Indonesia. In order to survive in Indonesia, foreigners need bahasa Indonesia skills that can at least function as a means of communication in the work environment and society.

The Language Development and Coaching Agency itself already has curriculum standards that are guided by SKL BIPA (Indonesian Language Graduate Competency Standards for Foreign Speakers) which are developed into syllabus and then also translated into teaching materials. Based on an interview with the BIPA Professional Services Coordinator, Mr. Suardi Eka Cipta, it was stated that the implementation of BIPA in the United States uses the BIPA SKL standardization where the derivatives in learning materials can vary greatly. The development of teaching materials and so on adapts to the needs of the students themselves in their respective places. However, for the assignment of BIPA teaching staff at universities, a different curriculum is usually used. Universities or certain study programs usually have

their own curriculum for teaching Indonesian. There are also many universities abroad that already have an established curriculum for teaching Indonesian. Therefore, the policy of the Language Development and Coaching Agency is to follow the curriculum that has been implemented at the institution, with the possibility that later there will be additions or developments in teaching materials with material specifically developed by the Language Agency whose focus is a text-based approach. However, for the fundamentals of the curriculum at certain institutions or universities in each university will follow the existing curriculum.

According to Mr. Budiawan, one of BIPA teaching staff in the United States, in BIPA teaching practice, all refer to a predetermined curriculum, from novice to advanced. Each level has its own learning topics, but you don't have to be one hundred percent referring there because we as teachers also try to adapt to the character of the learner, the needs of the learner and also the targets to be achieved. But indeed the books provided by the Language Agency can be used as a reference or reference curriculum that students can use (Budiawan, 2023).

BIPA learning materials can be accessed via the official website of the Language Development and Coaching Agency. In this case, the Language Agency has provided BIPA learning reference material facilities that can be accessed by registered users, both individuals, communities, and/or institutions. The teaching materials provided are in the form of teaching materials, enrichment and support packaged in the form of electronic books, audio and/or video, as well as applications.

BIPA teachers must go through various stages of selection implemented by the Language Development and Coaching Agency before being assigned or sent abroad as BIPA teaching staff. Before registering as a teacher, there are several general requirements that must be met by prospective BIPA teachers. Based on the information listed on the website of the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, some general requirements for prospective BIPA teaching staff are Indonesian citizenship, at least a bachelor's degree education, aged 24-50 years, and have skills related to Indonesian art, both traditional and/or contemporary. Prospective BIPA teachers are also required to master certain foreign languages according to the needs of certain BIPA partner countries. One of the requirements for registering as BIPA teaching staff also includes having taught Indonesian to foreigners, as evidenced by a certificate from either a supervisor or a student who has been taught (Budiawan, 2023). Based on the interview that the researcher conducted with Mr. Budiawan, a BIPA teacher in the United States, after the administration stage has passed, prospective BIPA teaching staff will be called for an interview and psychological test, then there will be a writing test directly (writing on the spot), and teaching practice. Prospective teaching staff are prepared in such a way as to become competent BIPA teachers.

Meanwhile, if prospective BIPA teachers pass the administration and potential selection stages, they are also required to take part in the debriefing of prospective BIPA teaching staff before being sent abroad as BIPA teaching staff in certain countries. This is necessary so that prospective BIPA teaching staff have an adequate description and provision regarding the BIPA teaching and learning situation before going directly to the real BIPA class. The debriefing is carried out for approximately seven to ten days, in which

prospective teaching staff will be quarantined and provided with teaching materials, teaching methods, how to process documents abroad, what are things that are allowed and not abroad, and so on. In this case, the provision provided is not only related to cultural and teaching skills, but also technical matters beyond that. This is because the teachers do not only represent individuals or institutions but represent the Indonesian state. When they have been accepted as BIPA teaching staff, indirectly they are given a title, namely as Indonesian Language Ambassadors, so they represent the country of Indonesia abroad. The debriefing was also filled with speakers from various backgrounds, including academics, foreign ministries, language experts, and others who are certainly related to and understand the needs of BIPA teaching staff abroad.

3.2 BIPA in the United States

Based on the BIPA Program Organizing Institutions Network page, it is noted that overall the BIPA program is currently being held in 488 institutions both in Indonesia and abroad. The spread of BIPA is not as wide as the spread of English, but as of July 2022, it has been recorded that around 50 countries have collaborated with Indonesia to organize BIPA programs around the world (Language Development and Coaching Agency, 2021). Based on an upload on the Instagram account @bipakemdikbud, it is stated that throughout 2022, BIPA has been held in 52 countries with 185 organizing institutions, 150,290 students, and 307 teaching assignments. BIPA has become a topic of conversation in the eyes of the world, in fact, more and more universities or institutions are offering bahasa Indonesia classes for foreign speakers.

One of the countries that has supported cooperation in the implementation of BIPA is the United States. There is quite high enthusiasm among the people of the United States in learning Indonesian to support the holding of this program at 25 BIPA institutions throughout the United States. These institutions are Harvard University, Indiana University, Stanford University, American University, Ohio University, University of Colorado Boulder, Cornell University, Arizona State University, Columbia University, University of Washington, Haskell Indian Nations University, Johns Hopkins University, Consulate General Republic of Indonesia New York, Northern Illinois University, University of Pennsylvania, University of Delaware, University of Georgia, University of Hawaii at Manoa, University of Iowa, University of Michigan, University of Puget Sound, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Yale University, and Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia Washington, D.C.

BIPA teaching in the United States is one that is quite a lot of enthusiasts. Even during the Covid-19 Pandemic, because of the extraordinary enthusiasm of the world community in learning Indonesian, the Language Development and Coaching Agency together with the Indonesian Embassy in Washington, D.C. has facilitated foreign speakers in Indonesian online classes at the Indonesian Embassy in Washington, D.C. Indonesian Virtual Class at the Indonesian Embassy in Washington, D.C. This program was opened on Saturday, April 10 2021, at 07.00 WIB and lasts for three months, starting from April 14, 2021 to July 16, 2021. The total participants of this virtual bahasa Indonesia class has reached 291 people (Language Agency, 2021).

Based on the results of an interview with the BIPA Professional Services Coordinator, Suardi Eka Cipta, it was said that the history of teaching bahasa Indonesia in the United States and even in other countries actually started a long time ago. So the Language Agency cannot definitively answer when Indonesian was first taught in the United States. The language agency itself has started to carry out one of its functions as a regulator in the development of the BIPA program since the 2000s. However, there is already a central party, namely echelon II units that specifically handle the BIPA program as an effort to internationalize bahasa Indonesia.

According to the BIPA KKLP Coordinator, Iyus Yusuf, in general the BIPA program managed by the Language Agency was originally held from 2015. However, before that bahasa Indonesia teaching program in the United States had already been running because there was already COTI, the Indonesian language consortium in America which has in several major universities in the United States such as at Yale University and so on. COTI (Consortium for the Indonesian Teaching) is the only bahasa Indonesia teaching organization in North America. Its founding members include teaching faculty from seven NRCs (National Resource Centers) and five other institutions in the United States. At first, in 1975, according to Dr. John Wolff (Professor Emeritus in Linguistic and Asian Studies at Cornell), COTI's primary purpose was to manage the Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad program, but organically develop into a group dedicating its energies to the development of bahasa Indonesia pedagogy in the United States (COTI, 2023).

Based on data obtained from the BIPA Professional Services Coordinator, Mr. Suardi Eka Cipta, the initial assignment of BIPA teaching staff in the United States was for the Language Agency to facilitate BIPA at Yale University, where there was a request from there so that the Language Agency sent some teaching staff there. Then from 2018 to 2019, a cooperation agreement or MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) was made between the Language Agency and AMINEF (American Indonesian Exchange Foundation), so that the Fulbright FLTA (Foreign Language Teaching Assistant) program was formed with the Language Agency. In this program, the Language Agency works together to assign at least 14 teachers who are placed at a number of universities in the United States. The selection process that must be passed by the BIPA teaching staff who are assigned there is the same as the process that BIPA teaching staff are going through in general. However, specifically for FLTA with the cooperation program scheme earlier, the selection is carried out by two parties, namely by the Language Agency and by AMINEF itself because the selection for FLTA also has its own mechanism, there are special selection standards that are indeed implemented by AMINEF. Then also collaborate with the selection from the Language Agency specifically for the program. Unfortunately, the cooperation agreement has expired and was not renewed anymore, even though the program is actually a very good program because the Language Agency can assign teachers to more institutions in the United States, where if the Language Agency operates independently, the reach may not be wider.

After that, the Language Agency continued to establish good relations with universities in the United States of America and succeeded in holding BIPA programs at 25 universities in the United States.

However, since the Covid-19 pandemic until now, BIPA in the United States has focused more on implementing the online teaching and learning process because the Language Agency cannot assign teaching staff directly there. Even that was carried out centrally at the Indonesian Embassy in Washington, D.C., not directly to a number of universities (Cipta, 2023). So, BIPA in the United States is currently only being conducted online through a Zoom Meeting facilitated by the Language Agency and the Indonesian Embassy in Washington, D.C.

The interest of foreign speakers in learning Indonesian is considered quite good. This can be seen through the large number of foreigners who have the desire and interest to explore Indonesia for various purposes such as tourism, trade, economy, politics, arts and culture, and education. Based on data obtained by the author from the BIPA Assignment Coordinator for the Americas and Europe, in the United States currently there are around 360 registered initial participants and these students come from 206 cities from 33 states of the United States consisting of 42 kids student, 18 advanced students, 81 middle class students, and 214 beginner students. However, it was also explained that in practice the number of students could go up and down, for example for a class of advanced students at the first meeting there were 18 people present, at the next meeting there were 14 others but with different people, where in general they were actively learning the language. and Indonesian culture so that later they can show their bahasa Indonesia skills during the virtual showcase at the end of the lesson or at performances organized by the Indonesian Embassy in Washington, D.C. (Sinaga, 2023). Based on data submitted by the Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia to the United States, Rosan P. Roeslani, in his remarks at the virtual showcase of BIPA students in the United States, it was said that 79% of the participants were United States citizens, and 71% were beginners in learn Indonesian. There are 21 classes from basic to advanced levels, and for the first time we are opening classes for children. The average age of students is 27 years, with a range from 5 to 72 years.

Based on an interview conducted by researchers with a BIPA student in the United States, Rayen Torres, the first reason she learned Indonesian through the BIPA program was related to job opportunities. Rayen believes that Indonesia will become increasingly important in the world economy, so she thinks that knowing Indonesia can open the doors of career opportunities for her in the future. The second is because Indonesian is easy to learn. Indonesian is written using Latin letters and not tone language, making it easy to learn. His pronunciation is not much different from Spanish, which is Rayen's mother tongue, so she is sure that she will be fluent in a few years. The third is related to travel and culture. For Rayen, sustaining the decision to continue learning a language has to do with having opportunities to practice it, such as traveling to the country or watching films in the language, or by listening to music. So the rich culture of Indonesia makes it easier for her to maintain her motivation to study.

To find out how far the students' learning achievements are, it is necessary to have an evaluation in the form of a test or showcase that is shown by the students. At the virtual showcase, BIPA students ranging from BIPA for children, novice classes, to intermediate and advanced classes were given the opportunity to show their bahasa Indonesia skills. They can present it in various forms, such as self-introductions,

presentations, reading historical stories, reading poetry (both poetry by Indonesian poets or their own), telling stories, conversations, singing Indonesian songs (such as children's songs, national songs, pop songs, even dangdut songs), playing musical instruments with Indonesian songs, making Indonesian cooking videos, making Indonesian-language advertisements, making video interviews, and so on. These performances were freed up to the students according to their respective abilities and creativity. They can make videos of their bahasa Indonesia performances with a duration of 1-15 minutes and these videos will be shown during a virtual showcase via Zoom Meeting which is also broadcast live on the Indonesian Embassy's Youtube channel in Washington, D.C.

3.3 Indonesian Language Diplomacy in the United States

The Indonesian government continues to intensify Indonesian language diplomacy efforts so that the bahasa Indonesia can be better known internationally so that it can be used as an international language. Apart from that, Indonesian language diplomacy efforts were also carried out so that Indonesia could further expand its wings in international relations. One of the diplomatic efforts undertaken is cultural diplomacy through the Indonesian Language Learning Program for Foreign Speakers (BIPA) which has been held in several Indonesian educational institutions to foreign countries. One of them is BIPA in the United States. Through this program, Indonesia builds its cultural diplomacy by providing an understanding of Indonesia's culture and image towards the United States as well as building good relations with the country concerned so that it can support cooperation in various fields. In this case, bahasa Indonesia can be an attraction for the people of the United States so that it can be better known and Indonesia's national interests can be achieved. So Indonesian language diplomacy in the United States in this case is carried out through the BIPA learning program. Widiyanto and Sofi Aulia Rahmania (2018, pp. 115-117) further elaborate on the importance of language learning. According to them, the BIPA program not only teaches Indonesian language and culture but also provides economic and political diplomacy in its activities. Teaching materials cover a wide range of topics: tourism, culinary, and everyday life. Therefore, BIPA can be a forum for practicing cultural diplomacy in achieving Indonesia's national interests (Collins, 2020).

The existence of the BIPA program in the United States makes the people or citizens of the United States know about the culture of Indonesian society. Some of them even became interested in visiting Indonesia after studying Indonesian language and culture through the BIPA program. Overall, the BIPA program presents a combination of soft power, public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy in practice. The goal is to use language (and culture) to influence people to have a positive view of Indonesia. The implementation of BIPA creates a shared understanding of Indonesian culture in addition to promoting language so that it can build a positive image of Indonesia. Thus, directly bringing Indonesia to achieve its national interests, aims to promote Indonesian culture and support bahasa Indonesia in the international arena (Das, 2018, pp. 2-23).

Policies related to the promotion of Indonesian culture itself have been written in Constitution of Indonesia Number 5 of 2017 which was stipulated on May 24, 2017 and came into effect on May 29,

2017. The BIPA program is certainly not implemented without an underlying policy. The BIPA program itself has been designed and regulated in Constitution of Indonesia Number 24 of 2009 and Government Regulation Number 5 of 2014. These two laws are the basis for implementing the BIPA program as an effort to internationalize bahasa Indonesia. However, based on the researchers' interviews with the BIPA Professional Services Coordinator, Suardi Eka Cipta, and KKLP Coordinator, Iyus Yusuf, there are no statutory regulations covering the BIPA program specifically in the United States.

In carrying out Indonesian language diplomacy through the BIPA program, of course, well preparation is needed so that the main goal of BIPA, disseminating Indonesian language and culture, can be achieved properly. The preparation phase begins with identifying and determining the type of activity program to be carried out. Meanwhile, the type of activity that will be carried out is the Indonesian Language Learning Program for Foreign Speakers (BIPA) with the target of foreign speakers. This activity is in the form of a language course conducted to promote and teach Indonesian language and culture to foreign speakers. Furthermore, an assessment was carried out with partners from the country concerned both in the elements of government and non-government institutions. In this case, it is necessary to have a cooperation agreement made with another country to organize BIPA in that country as well as with related agencies or institutions. For coordination with institutions, the Language Agency also coordinates in advance with the Indonesian Embassy or the institution concerned. The Language Agency is active in establishing communication regarding what type of class is desired at the institution or the Indonesian Embassy because there are classes that are specifically made for business purposes in several countries, where the students are potential investors who will come to Indonesia, so of course it must be according to their needs, the general and special needs of Indonesian will be very different, where they may need vocabulary and other linguistic elements related to their field (Cipta, 2023). The Language Agency will carry out a needs analysis so that the implementation of the BIPA learning program can be carried out legally and in accordance with the applicable cooperation agreement.

The preparatory stage is also carried out by compiling teaching materials, starting from teaching material books, compiling materials that are specific in nature such as curriculum, enrichment books or supporting materials, teaching grammar, as well as test or evaluation materials. Apart from teaching materials, what needs to be prepared next is the teaching staff who will teach Indonesian language and culture to foreign speakers or BIPA students. The preparation of teaching staff certainly cannot be done haphazardly. There are various requirements and selection stages that must be passed by prospective teachers in order to obtain BIPA teaching staff with the required competencies so that the number and competencies of delegates sent to the relevant country are determined. Then, it is also necessary to prepare travel documents which include principle permits from the State Secretariat, passports, visas and tickets. Finally, the preparation stage is also carried out by preparing supporting facilities and infrastructure which include program manuals, publications, property, logistics, accommodation, and documentation.

When the preparations made are sufficiently mature, the BIPA program can be implemented immediately. The implementation phase begins with coordinating with representatives of the Republic of Indonesia which includes confirmation of invitations, confirmation of agendas, confirmation of international media coverage, and local transportation. Then, checking the location of the activities and accommodation, as well as checking the facilities and infrastructure. Furthermore, the implementation of the BIPA program is carried out like a language course or training, where there is a teaching-learning process that is carried out, both in the classroom and outside. The students will be taught about the use of Indonesian in four aspects (speaking, listening, writing, and reading) starting from the basic or everyday level to a more difficult level. Then BIPA students will learn Indonesian vocabulary and its use in various contexts. Apart from language, students are also introduced to the richness of Indonesian culture such as Batik, traditional dance, folk songs, traditional food, traditional musical instruments, regional clothing and other Indonesian culture. The teaching-learning process is also carried out in a two-way manner, so that students can practice using Indonesian through conversations or questions and answers with the teacher or facilitator and also with other students.

After the BIPA teaching and learning activities are completed in accordance with the curriculum set at each level, an exam or evaluation of the learning achievements of the students is carried out through the UKBI (Indonesian Language Proficiency Test), where a certificate of completion will be given to BIPA students who have passed the test. Through this exam, it can be seen how the achievements of learning Indonesian are obtained by each BIPA student. This graduation certificate will later be useful for students or foreign speakers so they can continue the BIPA learning program to the next level or if they want to continue studying or working in Indonesia. Meanwhile, the term of office for a BIPA teaching staff in a country is generally a minimum of one semester (6 months). One of the BIPA teachers in the United States, Mr. Budiawan, said that “In the United States, I started teaching at the end of last January and will end in May. Each assignment is at least one semester and after that it will be evaluated by the Language Agency, will further classes be given, possibly at the Indonesian Embassy in Washington, D.C. or in another country or taking turns with other teaching staffs” (Budiawan, 2023).

If the term of the BIPA teaching staff is over, then it is time to return to Indonesia. The post-activity stage that must be carried out by BIPA teaching staff abroad is logistics and property packaging, completing administrative accountability documents, confirming return tickets, and preparing reports for the BIPA KKLK. Then monitoring and evaluation is carried out by the Directorate of Cultural Heritage and Diplomacy. Monitoring is carried out from the preparation stage to the implementation of activities. The components to be monitored are goals/targets, implementation of activities, use of funds, management and documentation of activities. The purpose of monitoring is to anticipate if there is a violation of the procedures set out through the Cultural Diplomacy Guidelines. Meanwhile, evaluation in this activity is needed to find out the objectives as well as the benefits of carrying out activities for the benefit of promoting culture through heritage management and cultural diplomacy.

4. Discussion

The existence of the BIPA program in the United States is an appropriate means of cultural diplomacy and Indonesian language diplomacy because students (foreign speakers) can learn and know more about Indonesian language and culture through various materials taught by teaching staff in BIPA classes in the United States starting from the BIPA level 1-7 in accordance with the curriculum that has been stipulated in the SKL BIPA in Permendikbud Number 27 of 2017. BIPA is a program facilitated by the Indonesian government for foreign speakers in the United States to learn Indonesian starting from beginners to advanced levels. BIPA plays an important role in efforts to internationalize the bahasa Indonesia. With the development of BIPA, Indonesia has a great opportunity to become an international language. BIPA is one of the learning programs needed in the government's efforts to improve the function of bahasa Indonesia to become an international language and is carried out to complement the needs of foreign workers related to courses or bahasa Indonesia training programs. The more people who learn and use or speak Indonesian, the greater the chance for Indonesian to become an international language. In this way, Indonesia can also be increasingly recognized by the international community and can further expand its role in international relations.

BIPA was held in the United States for the first time in 2017 at Yale University, where the Language Agency sent teaching staff from Indonesia directly there. Unfortunately, since the Covid-19 Pandemic until now, the implementation of the BIPA program in the United States has been carried out online. However, this has not reduced the enthusiasm of foreign speakers in the United States considering the large number of students taking part in this virtual bahasa Indonesia class. The interest of foreign speakers in learning bahasa Indonesia is considered quite good. This can be seen through the large number of foreigners who have the desire and interest to explore Indonesia for various purposes such as tourism, trade, economy, politics, arts and culture, and education. This is of course very encouraging because from these numbers one can see the enthusiasm of foreign speakers who are interested in learning the rich Indonesian language and culture. In this case, the pandemic has not stopped the enthusiasm and interest of foreign speakers in learning Indonesian language and culture. Even though during the pandemic the Language Agency was unable to send teaching staff to destination countries, bahasa Indonesia teaching could still be held virtually and there were still quite a lot of enthusiasts. It is hoped that the opening of the bahasa Indonesia class will strengthen cooperation and diplomatic relations between Indonesia and the United States.

It doesn't end there, the bahasa Indonesia skills of the students must also be proven and evaluated through a virtual showcase which must be carried out by students to see the extent of achievement learn according to their creativity and abilities. From several performances shown by BIPA students in the United States at the virtual showcase as a whole, researchers saw that learning Indonesian language and culture through the BIPA program was quite successful because students were able to convey their thoughts and opinions in Indonesian, even though there are often some inaccurate pronunciations. However, they are able to understand and know about Indonesian language and culture. The

understanding related to Indonesian culture seen in this virtual showcase is related to the culture of Indonesian traditional folklore, food, songs and dances.

The Virtual Showcase was held via Zoom Meeting which is also broadcasted live on the Indonesian Embassy's Youtube account in Washington, D.C. In this case, BIPA as the Indonesian government's media in carrying out Indonesian language diplomacy efforts is not only open to students, but to other people who watch the virtual showcase. Through this program, Indonesia builds its cultural diplomacy by providing an understanding of Indonesia's culture and image towards the United States as well as building good relations with the country concerned so that it can support cooperation in various fields. In this case, bahasa Indonesia can be an attraction for the people of the United States so that it can be better known and Indonesia's national interests can be achieved. BIPA is also one of the government's efforts to improve the function of Indonesian as an international language so that the number of Indonesian speakers can increase and Indonesia can further expand its role in international relations. Overall, the BIPA program presents a combination of soft power, public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy in practice. The goal is to use language (and culture) to influence people to have a positive view of Indonesia. The implementation of BIPA creates a shared understanding of Indonesian culture in addition to promoting language so that it can build a positive image of Indonesia.

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