

## **The Sign Language Research Laboratory (LRBI) at Universitas Indonesia**

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This paper deals with the establishment and development of LRBI under the Department of Linguistics of the Faculty of Humanities at Universitas Indonesia (University of Indonesia/UI). In 2006, a preliminary collaboration between Universitas Indonesia and the Asia Pacific Sign Linguistics Research and Training Program (APSL) at the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) was started. The program is supported financially by The Nippon Foundation of Japan and was conducted in collaboration with The Indonesian Association for the Welfare of The Deaf (IAWD). The goal of this program is to establish a university-level sign linguistics research and training program in the Asia-Pacific region with a view to promoting long-term empowerment of Asia-Pacific Deaf people.

As one of the collaborators of the APSL program, UI sent two representatives to Hong Kong to receive formal training at the MA level, majoring in Sign Linguistics. IAWD also sent three Deaf representatives to the Higher Diploma Program in CUHK. The training program ended in 2013.

Having the trainees back to their home country, UI began setting up a research unit under their Department of Linguistics. This was finally established in December 2013 under the name of Sign Language Research Laboratory (LRBI). Our goal is to set up a place for organizing research on sign languages in Indonesia and for developing sign languages in Indonesia in order to promote sign language use for the Deaf communities and gain awareness about the importance of sign language.

In the first and second year (2014 and 2015), the project focused on three major activities: training, research, and community outreach and products. There are three programs for training Deaf people in our project so far: Sign Language Teaching Training, Basic Lexicology and Lexicography of Sign Language, and Deaf Studies Training. After completing these training programs, the participants will be engaged in continuous activities, such as development of materials for teaching sign language, teaching sign language, and preliminary production of sign language dictionaries. We are currently conducting a few research projects on sign language, mainly on the language attitudes of the Deaf towards (sign) language in family contexts, lexical variation in Yogyakarta Sign Language, sign language semiotics, a collaborative research on Jakarta Sign Language word order with APSL in Hong Kong. We have already launched a set consisting of an instructional manual and a dictionary of Jakarta and Yogyakarta Sign Language (Book and Dictionary 1). By the end of this second year project, two more sets will be launched. We also have additional activities of sign language training for LRBI team members which include participation in linguistics seminars and/or conferences.