

Forced Migrants, Media, and Securitization: Making Sense of the Changing Representations of Transit Asylum Seekers in Indonesian Print Media*

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Abstract

This paper aims to explain how and why the representations of transit forced migrants in Indonesian major print media had significantly shifted in two timespans: (1) during the arrivals of the Indochinese refugees in 1975-1996 and (2) in the period of the new generations of refugees from Middle Eastern and South Asian countries in 1997-2013. Using media content analysis of 216 news articles from three major print media in Indonesia, this study has found out that the Indochinese refugees were given positive labels and they were mainly discussed in connection with the non-security themes. In contrast, the new generations of forced migrants were portrayed negatively, given labels such as 'illegal immigrants' and they were framed as security threats. Grounded within Securitization Theory, this paper thus argues that the changing representations were likely caused by the securitizing moves made by specialized agencies in Indonesia.

Key words: *transit forced migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, media representations, Securitization Theory, Indonesia*

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Introduction

In the midst of the Indochinese refugee crisis in July 1979, the Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs Mochtar Kusumaatmadja when interviewed by reporters said, “if ASEAN countries refuse to provide protection for refugees then the third countries will use it as an excuse for not receiving the refugees” (*Kompas*, 14 July 1979). The minister used the term ‘refugees’ to represent people who flee their home country due to political instability and conflict. In line with this label, the government also discussed the issue of protection. Decades later, commenting on refugees stranded at the sea border between Indonesia and Australia – which created diplomatic tension between the two states – the Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs Hasan Wirajuda said, “They are illegal immigrants. Should we let them come in, even when our law does not allow it?” (*Tempo* magazine, 9 September 2001). Unlike the first statement, the second statement shows how the recent forced migrants were labeled as ‘illegal immigrants’. Thus, their attempt to anchor their boats in Indonesian soil should be prohibited. The changes in the way the forced migrants are discussed within those two timespans are very striking, which consequently leads to questions of how and why the changes happened?

How immigrants are perceived in the receiving or transit countries has become a central issue in the academic

world as well as in the realm of immigration policy. Categorizing immigrants contributes to different treatments among them as the different terms have social and political implications for people who are labeled within those categorizations (Brun, 2010, pp. 337-355). Moreover, ‘refugees’ and ‘asylum seekers’ have different meanings compared to ‘illegal migrants’, with the last term usually associated with crimes (Koser, 2006, p. 44).

Previous studies on how refugees and asylum seekers are perceived negatively by hosting countries have been conducted mainly in relation to Western countries. Those studies predominantly discuss how media and government represent refugees and asylum seekers negatively – as a security threat (Esses, Medianu & Lawson, 2013, pp. 518-536; Gilbert, 2013, pp. 827-843). KhosraviNik (2009) shows that the representations of refugees and asylum seekers can change in different socio-historical settings, though he does not intend to explain the crucial problem of why representations of forced migrants change. Studying the changes can contribute to knowledge on the possible socio-political drives behind the changes, thus providing a more comprehensive picture on the nexus between media representations and transit forced migrants.

This paper will try to fill this gap not only by analyzing how the representations have changed but also by seeking explanations on the causes of these changes.

Additionally, this study will also fill out another research gap, which is the representation of forced migrants in a transit state – since issues of border controls, asylum seekers management, and immigration policies' transfers from Australia to Indonesia have otherwise been dominating studies on refugees and asylum seekers in Indonesia (Missbach, 2013, pp. 281-306; Kneebone, 2014, pp. 596-618; Nethery & Gordyn, 2014, pp. 177-193).

This paper discusses how transit forced migrants² were portrayed differently in Indonesian print media within two different socio-political settings – during the arrivals of Indochinese migrants in 1975-1996 and during the influxes of new generations of international migrants in 1997-2013. This study uses media content analysis in order to see the patterns of forced migrants' representations. The results show that the forced migrants were portrayed differently. Indochinese migrants were labeled mainly with the positive term such as refugees, while the new generations of refugees were portrayed with more

² The transit forced migrants in the context of this paper means that the migrants did not actually intend to stay in Indonesia, but rather used Indonesia as a stepping-stone while awaiting their resettlement in a developed country, such as Australia. Additionally, Indonesia still has not ratified the 1951 United Nations Convention on Refugees, which means that the Indonesian government will not grant refugee status for foreign applicants and also will not offer permanent settlements for refugees. However, the Indonesian government allows United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to open an office in Indonesia and take care of refugees' applications.

negative labels, such as illegal immigrants. Securitization Theory is utilized in order to shed some light on the possible explanations behind the changing representations.

The paper is structured as follows. The first part provides a brief explanation on the arrivals of international forced migrant in Indonesia. The second part discusses the theoretical framework of this study, which is followed by a section discussing methods and data collections. The fourth part discusses the research result, while the fifth part is discussion section that will be followed by the last section – conclusion.

International Transit Refugees in Indonesia

The end of Vietnam War in 1975 was marked by the victory of the communist regime that caused massive outflows of Vietnamese-Chinese descendants who resisted the communist ideology. Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia were three countries in Southeast Asia that received the biggest number of Vietnamese refugees (see *Table 1*). Those countries were considered a transit location for the refugees who intended to stay in developed countries. According to an Indonesian historian, Asvi Marwan Adam, the inflows of Indochinese refugees to Indonesia can be divided into three periods (Swastiwi, 2012). First, the period of 1975-1978, which was marked by the use of refugee camps on several Indonesian islands. Second, the period of

1979-1989 which was marked by the establishment of a refugee camp on Galang Island. Additionally, this period was also characterized by the leniency in granting refugee status. Lastly, the period of 1989-1996, where forced migrants had to face stricter screening processes. Missbach (2013, p. 292) notes that after June 1989, refugee status, while initially granted to all of the Indochinese forced migrants, started to become assessed on an individual basis. In this sense, each asylum seeker had to provide evidence of his/her claim. A person who failed to provide substantial evidence would face repatriation.

The first group of Indochinese forced migrants that used Indonesia as transit country was recorded on 19th May 1975, when a group of 92 people arrived and then continued their journey to Singapore (Fandik, 2013). On 22 May 1975, a boat that carried 25 refugees anchored at North Natuna Island, Indonesia (Ismayawati, 2013). In the first quarter of 1979, the arrival of refugees to Indonesia rocketed to about 40,000 people. In comparison, however, the number of Indochinese refugees in Indonesia was a mere 2,800 people in 1978 (Ismayawati, 2013).

Table 1. Indochinese Refugees' Arrivals by Boat in Countries of First Asylum 1975-1995

Countries	1975-1979	1980-1984	1985-1989	1990-1995	Accumulation
Malaysia	124,103	76,205	52,860	1,327	254,495
Hong Kong	79,906	28,975	59,518	27,434	195,833
Indonesia	51,156	36,208	19,070	15,274	121,708
Thailand*	25,723	52,468	29,850	9,280	117,321
Others	30,538	48,139	25,200	3,076	106,953
Total	311,426	241,995	186,498	56,391	796,310

Source: UNHCR (2000: 98)

*Thailand received higher overland Indochinese refugees that reached 640,246 people in total from 1975-1995

During the same year, the Indonesian government also offered Galang Island as a refugee processing camp. The idea was warmly welcomed by those states in the international community who ended up donating money for the establishment and operational costs of the processing camp. This movement resulted in the international community applauding the

'humanistic' approach of the Indonesian government towards the transit forced migrants (*Kompas*, 19 June 1996). Initially, Galang Island Refugees' Camp was proposed to only last for 2-3 years from the first time it was established in 1979 (*Kompas*, 24 July 1981). However, it took 17 years before the Indonesian government closed the camp in August 1996. From the 121,708

refugees using Indonesia as transit location, 111,876 of them were resettled in third countries – with the vast majority of the refugees being resettled in the USA (Ismayawati, 2013).

Not too long after having dealt with the influx episode of the Indochinese forced migrants, Indonesia started to receive new generations of forced migrants who mainly came from some countries in the Middle East, Central Asia, and South Asia, such as Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, and Sri Lanka. The first inflow of forced migrants from Afghanistan and Iran that arrived in Indonesia was recorded in 1996, 12 of which traveled by air (Missbach, 2013).

Unlike the Indochinese refugees who gained widespread public attention within Indonesia due to their significant volume in 1979, the new waves of forced migrants only began receiving attention after the MV Tampa incident at the end of August 2001. The Australian conservative government rejected a request by MV Tampa – a Norwegian ship – to dock in Australia. This was due to the ship having rescued 438 forced migrants that sought for an asylum in Australia. These migrants were initially onboard of an Indonesian ship that had sunk in the sea (McKay et al., 2011, pp. 607-626). This incident created diplomatic tension between Australia and Indonesia because both countries refused to receive the forced migrants.

Table 2. Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Indonesia 2006-2013

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Refugees	301	315	369	798	811	1,006	1,819	3,206
Asylum Seekers	265	211	353	1,769	2,071	3,233	6,126	7,110
Returned Refugees	0	0	1	311	0	0	35	0
Others	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
People on Concern	566	526	726	2,878	2,882	4,239	7,980	10,316

Source: UNHCR (2007-2014)

Unlike the Indochinese refugees who were accommodated on Galang Island, the ‘new generations’ of forced migrants live in several cities in Indonesia. Some of them have to stay in immigration detention centers while others can stay in cheap hotels

or rent rooms or houses from local residents. The majority of forced migrants that are allowed to live in open detention centers stay in Bogor, West Java, in Riau, Sumatera Island, or in Makassar, Sulawesi Island. The International Organization for

Migration (IOM) provides funding for food for refugees and asylum seekers who are detained in immigration detention centers at a cost of IDR 15,000-25,000 (USD 1.5 to 2.5) per person per day (Nethery et al., 2012, p. 102).

Forced migrants living outside the immigration detention center also get a monthly living allowance from the IOM or from other international organizations. Refugees and asylum seekers have to sign a certificate declaring their compliance before they are allowed to live outside immigration detention centers. The declaration consists of five points, including: “the refugees should stay within specific area designated by the Directorate General of Immigration; refugees are not allowed to be at the airport or seaport unless accompanied by an immigration officer, [...] and refugees should report to Immigration every two weeks for purposes of registering their presence” (Peraturan Direktur Jenderal Imigrasi Nomor IMI-1489.UM.08.05, 2010).

Theoretical Frameworks

This section discusses the nexus between media representations and securitization of transit forced migrants. Establishing the link between those issues is critical in order to provide a theoretical foundation to answer the questions of: how and why the portrayal of forced migrants in Indonesian major print media was different within two different time spans. This section is divided into two correlated parts.

The first part explains media representation theory that provides an explanation on what media representation means and how this, in turn, affects the forced migrants’ changing portrayals in media. The second part discusses Securitization Theory: key concepts, and how this theory can be useful in this study.

Media Representations

The way media portrays social groups, whether in connection with their sexes, races, religions or origins, is the primary concern of media representation theory (Levinsen & Wien, 2011). According to Chavez (2001), media representation is closely connected to the construction of meaning. Referring to Hall’s notion of representation, he underlines that people “use symbols to communicate, or represent what we want to say about our feelings, beliefs, concept, plans, etc” (Chavez, 2001, p. 34). In this sense, the news articles do not merely consist of passive or neutral symbols or words; rather, they actively produce and convey ‘messages’. How media represent forced migrants has implications on the public perception of who forced migrants and thus, how to treat them.

On the one hand, public “discourse” influences media; on the other hand, media, in turn, influences the public through its role in reconstructing and developing “discourse” (Pettersson, 2006, p. 41). The former argument is in line with Geraghty’s (2000, p. 368) point of view on the importance of the media’s role in making

“realistic representations”. Geraghty furthermore argues that the representations will only work when they go along with the audience’s understanding of the object being represented. In a very extreme example, when the media represent a pigeon as a dangerous and deadly animal, the audience might refuse to accept those representations if society, in general, perceives the pigeon as a friendly and adorable animal. However, when the audience, hypothetically speaking, already believes in the possibility of the pigeon as a vector of avian influenza – a deadly virus – they might accept the representations of the pigeon as a dangerous animal.

Media representations of a particular social group do not reflect the “true nature” of the group being portrayed since media representations are inevitable social constructions. Moreover, Edgar and Sedgwick (2002) argue that representations have nothing to do with the interests of the represented groups or how the groups expect to be portrayed. A group, according to these scholars, “can be represented in a manner that might be conceived as stereotyping them” (Edgar & Sedgwick, 2002, p. 339). This argument fits well into the context of transit forced migrants. It is not in the interests of forced migrants to be represented as ‘outsiders’ or ‘illegal immigrants’. Instead, those representations are put forth as stereotypes that might jeopardize migrants’ interests. Therefore, what triggers media to represent something

as they represent it? Does it reflect society’s understanding of certain realities?

Krzyzanowski and Wodak (2009) as cited in Busch and Krzyzanowski (2012, p. 279) argue that several studies have shown the connection between media representations and political agenda on the issue of migration and asylum seekers. The argument is based on the concept of “chain of recontextualizations” in which the media and politics have dual directional relations. First, political discourses are taken by media through politicians’ statements or speeches. Second, discourses in the media are used by politicians (Bernstein, 1990; Wodak, 2000; cited in Busch & Krzyzanowski, 2012, p. 279).

Securitization Theory

The previous section in this part has led to two understandings: what is represented in the media is the construction of reality, and the media representations can arguably be influenced by political agendas which can construct an issue as a security problem. In that regard, Securitization Theory is helpful for this study in two ways: (1) it enables one to situate the issue of transit forced migrants in the realm of either security or non-security, and (2) it allows one to identify when an issue has or has not been securitized.

Securitization has become one of the prominent theories of security studies in the last few decades. This theory is closely

associated with a group of scholars referred to as the 'Copenhagen School', which consists of Buzan, Waever, and several others (Columba & Vaughan-Williams, 2010, p. 75). The theory provides for the possibility of widening the concept of security. This is possible because Securitization Theory does not subscribe to the understanding of security by objectivist's who assumes the existence of "objective" threats is outside of their social construction. For several decades, the realist-traditionalist's understanding of security has dominated security studies. This view presupposes the state as the most important aspect of security and thus situates the military sector as the main response to security concerns (Sheehan, 2005).

In contrast, Securitization Theory – grounded in a constructivist paradigm – challenges the objectivist understanding of security by arguing that security is socially constructed. However, the Copenhagen School does not offer a subjective construction of security that lies upon personal perspectives of threats because this might result in a radical relativist's way of understanding security. Instead, the Copenhagen School proposes a middle ground between objective-positivist and subjective-relativist. They highlight an "inter-subjective process" of the construction of security (Buzan et al., 1998, p. 30). According to Hansen (2000, p. 288), the "inter-subjective" understanding paves the way for the widening of the security

concept but is also able to hinder "unlimited expansion" that can make the security concept become meaningless.

Before further discussing the key concepts of Securitization Theory, I would like to highlight a crucial concept from the Copenhagen School that is central to this paper, which is "the spectrum of public issues". According to Buzan et al. (1998), public issues can be understood from a spectrum consisting of non-politicized, politicized, and securitized issues. The first point refers to an issue that is not debated publicly and therefore, the state has no involvement in the issue. When the issue is politicized, the state will have a role in it and the issue will receive public attention, which will then lead to debate. A securitized issue means that the issue is perceived as an existential threat to a particular object. Thus, an extraordinary response is employed (Buzan et al., 1998, pp. 23-24).

Concerning the process of how an issue becomes a security concern, Ole Waever (1995, p. 55) argues that "security is not of interest as a sign that refers to something more real: the utterance itself is the act". His claim is based on the concept stating that security could be regarded as speech acts, where declaring something as a security issue is an act. It means that an issue or social groups can be securitized if actors enunciate to certain audiences that the intended issue poses an existential threat to one or more particular referent

objects and that therefore, in order to handle the issue, extraordinary measures need to be taken immediately (Waeber, 1995, p. 55; Buzan et al., 1998, p. 21). It is the dynamics of those components: actors, existential threats, referent objects, extraordinary measure, and audiences that are central to Securitization Theory. An existential threat generates a sense of urgency and therefore locates an issue on the top of the priority list that needs to be handled immediately, often using unusual measures. The securitization can only work if the object being presented is currently under threat or is considered as something fundamentally important (Buzan et al., 1998).

However, 'speech acts' – the epistemology of Securitization Theory – has mainly become the object of criticism by other scholars working with the widening of the security concept. Balzacq (2005, p. 181) claims that speech acts focus too much on the "internal" nature of threats, but negate "external threats" that have nothing to do with the discursive strategy of speech acts. In contrast, he argues that language influences people's perception of reality, but language does not construct it. In other words, language plays a role in the construction of meaning, but it is not the only thing that matters. His epistemological stance allegedly differs from that of the Copenhagen School, which Buzan et al. (1998, p. 204) claim as "radically constructivist". Drawing upon the case of securitization of migration in Greece,

Karyotis (2012) underlines a relatively similar problem on the inability of the 'speech acts' approach to illuminate the non-discursive process of the securitization of migration. As the consequence, he argues that speech acts fail "to capture the full dynamic of the complex process through which issues are raised on the security agenda" (Karyotis, 2012, p. 392).

Huysmans (2000) provides a suitable alternative theory that can illuminate the "complex process" of the securitization of migration presented in this paper. Huysmans highlights that 'speech acts' can impose securitization, but it is not the only possible way. Securitization can also be imposed through "restrictive policy and policing" (Huysmans, 2000, p. 751). The latter argument is developed to tackle the "weak" point of the discursive approach – that speech acts that only focus on political speeches in the public domain inevitably belittle the less visible, but still influential, works of "security experts", such as the police (Huysmans, 2006, p. 8).

In that context, I find the concept of "security continuum" that Huysmans developed from Didier Bigo to be useful for this paper. Security continuum is "an institutionalized mode of policymaking that allows for the transfer of the security connotations of terrorism, drug trafficking and money-laundering to the area of migration," (Huysmans, 2000, p. 760; Huysmans, 2006, p. 71). Huysmans further explains that the transfer of security concern

to the migration issue will work in the way that it would change people's perception on the initial meaning of migration issue or refugees' issue. Hammerstad (2014, pp. 268-269) also shares a similar idea to Huysmans by arguing that in many cases, refugees and asylum seekers are not directly referred to as "threats or enemies", but "they were lumped together with other more traditional scary trends such as international crime". In this paper, I include other types of crimes that, according to previous studies, are regularly connected to migrants, such as people smuggling, arms smuggling, human trafficking, global mafias, and arms smuggling (Sorensen, 2012; Curley, 2008).

In a nutshell, the theory is useful for this study in two ways. First, almost all public issues can be securitized, thus the way the media represent refugees and asylum seekers can contribute to securitization or it can also be a tool to analyze whether an issue is securitized or is not. Second, securitization can take the form of direct labeling to migrants as existential threats (Buzan et al., 1998). It can also take the form of lumping the migration issue together with frightening crimes (Hammerstad, 2014).

Methods and Data Collections

This study uses media content analysis as an analyzing tool. Media content analysis is a "message-centered methodology" (Neuendorf, 2002, p. 9, cited in Macnamara, 2005, p. 1) that is useful in

the analysis of a broad range of texts, from the contents of newspapers or newsmagazines to the content of films and television programs (Macnamara, 2005, p. 1). Hansen et al. (1998, p. 95) argue that this method is "by definition a quantitative method" due to its emphasis on identifying and counting topics or communication symbols in texts under scrutiny. This method is chosen for this study because it provides patterns of media portrayal over time on particular issues in large corpuses (Berelson, 1952; Gunter, 2000, cited in Levinsen & Wien, 2011, p. 842). In this sense, content analysis is used to establish representation patterns of the transit forced migrants in Indonesian major print media over the period of 38 years.

Before I designed my research, I first conducted a pilot test with small samples. This pilot test was intended to see whether this study is worth doing in the first place. The samples were *Kompas* newspaper articles with the distribution of 54 articles representing the period of the Indochinese refugees' arrivals, and 63 articles representing the period of the new generations of forced migrants. In that sense, the results shall be the basis for the overall design of this research.

In utilizing content analysis, this study subscribes to the procedure of Hansen et al. (1998, p. 98-99); (1) formulating research questions, (2) choosing samples, (3) constructing categories, (4) developing coding schedule, (5) testing the

coding schedule in small scale and readjusting it, and (6) conducting the full coding and thus analyzing the data. All of the steps are performed in a sequential order. The categories and the coding schedule are developed in parallel to one another by consulting to the pilot study, the literature review and also to the theoretical framework.

The news samples were taken from three prominent and influential media houses in Indonesia. Two of them are newspapers, namely *Kompas* and *Tempo*, while the other one is a newsmagazine named *Tempo*. There are some reasons as to why these three print media sources were chosen. First, two out of the three media sources were established before the arrivals of Indochinese refugees in 1975. *Kompas* newspaper was founded in 1965 while *Tempo* magazine was established in 1971. *Tempo* newspaper was established in 2001, but since it is under similar editorial management, it can be argued that the reports of *Tempo* magazine during the arrival of Indochinese refugees are somewhat comparable to the news articles of *Tempo* newspaper. This enables this study to access continuous reports on refugees from different time spans. Second, these three media sources are also the highest ranked Indonesian media in terms of their circulation. Additionally, those media also have an expansive national distribution, as well as nation-wide news coverage. Third, these media houses have high reputations for their good quality in Indonesia.

When the selection of media sources and time periods were completed, the next step taken was to select news samples in accordance with “relevant content” (Hansen et al., 1998, p. 104). The samples were chosen through relevant sampling design, with the use of certain keywords. Internal search engines from *Kompas* and *Tempo* were used since Indonesia does not have an integrated media archive. Searching for articles on Vietnamese refugees, the keyword combinations used were those of *pengungsi* (refugees), *Vietnam*, *imigran gelap* (illegal immigrants), *Indocina* (Indochinese). For the recent waves of refugees, the keywords were *imigran gelap* (illegal immigrants), *transit*, *Indonesia*, *pengungsi* (refugees), *suaka* (asylum).

As many as 256 entries were found in the data selection through relevant keywords for the Indochinese refugees and 298 entries for the time after the arrival of Indochinese refugees. In order to find samples that serve the purpose of this research, all of those articles were read and reselected. For the articles that only mentioned Indonesia, but no Indonesian sources were mentioned, the items were omitted. In total, there were 216 relevant samples³ that were coded for this study, with distributions of 129 articles from *Kompas* newspaper, 37 articles from *Tempo* magazine, and 50 articles from *Tempo*

³ Other studies that used media content analysis had various numbers of samples, ranging from 203 articles (Nolan et al., 2011) to 1,174 articles (Levinsen & Wien, 2011).

newspaper. For the articles distribution which was based upon the time span, 123 articles were published in time span of new waves of forced migrants (1997-2013), while 93 articles were published during the Indochinese forced migrants' arrival (1975-1996).

Results

The results show that the way transit forced immigrants were labeled and discussed in one period evidently changed in the other. The content analysis of the labels was conducted at the level of the entire article. Each article was only coded once. During the period of the arrival of the Indochinese refugees, the vast majority of the sample used positive labels. The label of 'refugees' appeared in 72 percent of the news samples. In total, the combination of positive representations such as 'refugees', 'mix-positive' and 'boat people' reached 89 percent. Mix-positive contains a combination of two or more of the positively connoted labels, such as 'refugees', 'boat people',⁴ and 'asylum seekers'. The use of negative terms, such as 'illegal immigrants', was very low. There was no single article that solely used 'illegal immigrants' to represent the migrants.

Instead 'illegal immigrants' was always used together with a positive label like 'refugees' (See Table 3 for details).

In contrast, the uses of labels dramatically changed in the second time span; negative labels dominated the major print media's representation of the transit forced migrants. The 'illegal immigrants' label appeared in 60 percent of all news samples, while the combination of positive labels – 'refugees', 'asylum seekers', and 'mix positive' – appeared only in 5 percent of the samples (see Table 3).

Changing Themes

The content analysis also scrutinizes the way transit forced migrants were discussed in the media reports. In this study, the unit of analysis was at the level of an actor's statement. Each actor's statement in a report was coded only once. In total, there were 209 statements coded from 93 articles in the period of Indochinese refugees and 278 statements coded from 123 articles in the second period. The number of statements is the same as the number of actors making the statement.

⁴ In this study, I categorized "boat people" as a positive label. I was aware that it might be problematic to categorize "boat people" as a positive label since in developed countries, it has negative connotation. However, for Indonesians, "boat people" shows the plight of the forced migrants that had to leave their country on an unsafe vessels and with limited resources. Therefore, it evoked local people's sympathy.

Table 3. Representations of Transit Forced Migrants in Indonesian Print Media

Labels	Indochinese (1975-1996)		Post-Indochinese (1997-2013)	
	Frequency	(%)	Frequency	(%)
Refugees	67	72	2	2
Mix positive	14	15	3	2
Mix positive-negative	8	9	40	33
Fugitive	2	2	0	0
Boat people	2	2	0	0
Illegal Immigrants	0	0	74	60
Immigrants	0	0	2	2
Mix negative	0	0	1	1
Asylum seekers	0	0	1	1
Total	93	100	123	100

N = 216

Table 4. Themes of Transit Forced Migrants Discussion

Themes	Indochinese		Post-Indochinese	
	Frequency	(%)	Frequency	(%)
Non-Security	186	89	41	15
Security	22	11	179	64
Non-conclusive	1	0	58	21
Grand Total	209	100	278	100

Table 4 shows that the themes of the statements in the two timespans were very different. In the period of Indochinese refugees, the non-security theme was dominant, contributing to 89 percent of 209 statements. This theme incorporates discussion on the plight of refugees, living conditions, and solutions. In contrast, in the time span of the new generation of forced

migrants, the security issue dominated the statements, with the frequency of 64 percent of 278 statements. The non-security themes dropped to 15 percent.

Changing Actors

Regarding the actors who made the statements, the Indonesian government officials appeared most frequently within

both time spans. In the period of the Indochinese refugees' arrivals, the government officials' statements contributed to 48.3 percent of 209 statements. Various international actors appeared at 28.7 percent. The category of 'refugees' statements' was in the third place with 11 percent (see Table 5). The domination of the government officials

increased significantly in the second timespan. In the period of the new waves of forced migrants, the Indonesian government officials contributed to 70 percent of the overall statements (see Table 6). In this time span, the presence of international actors reduced to third place, with the forced migrants' voices increasing to the second place.

Table 5. Actors in the Period of Indochinese Refugees Influx

Actors	Total	(%)
Indonesian government	101	48.3
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	43	20.6
Ministry of Defense/Military	29	13.9
Local Government	6	2.9
Police	4	1.9
President	3	1.4
Members of parliament	8	3.8
Ministry of Information	3	1.4
Other government officials	1	0.5
Immigration	2	1.0
Ministry of Social Affairs	1	0.5
Port authority	1	0.5
Refugees	23	11.0
Local people	15	7.2
International actors	60	28.7
UNHCR	15	7.2
Vietnam	11	5.3
Australia	10	4.8
The USA	8	3.8
Others	7	3.3
ASEAN (collective)	2	1.0
Malaysia	6	2.9
IOM	1	0.5
Media	8	3.8
Others	2	1.0
Total	209	100.0

Although the statements by the Indonesian government were dominant in both time spans, there were some shifts in sub-categories within the Indonesian government category. During the time of Indochinese refugees' arrival, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defense/Military were the two most dominant institutions. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs contributed to 20.6 percent of the overall statements, while the Ministry of Defense contributed to 13.6 percent. These compositions changed drastically in the second time span. Those two institutions dropped to third and fourth

place respectively during the time of the new waves of forced migrants. Their roles were replaced by DGI and INP. The DGI voices in the media reached 27.3 percent, while the INP contributed to 26.3 percent of the overall 278 statements.

In addition, changes in compositions also occurred in the international actors' category. During the Indochinese refugees' arrival, UNHCR, Vietnam, Australia, and the USA voiced concerns regarding the care of Indochinese refugees. In the period of the new waves of forced migrants, the USA's voices disappeared. In contrast, Australia's voices became dominant.

Table 6. Actors in the Period of Post-Indochinese Refugees

Actors	Total	(%)
Indonesian government	195	70.1
Immigration	76	27.3
Police	73	26.3
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	17	6.1
Ministry of Defense/Military	17	6.1
Local government	4	1.4
Members of parliament	2	0.7
Others government officials	2	0.7
Port Authority	2	0.7
President	1	0.4
Ministry of Social Affairs	1	0.4
Refugees	33	11.9
International actors	25	9.0
Australia	11	4.0
UNHCR	7	2.5
IOM	5	1.8
Others international actors	2	0.7
Local people	7	2.5
Media	7	2.5
Academician/experts	6	2.2
Others	4	1.4
Smugglers	1	0.4
Total	278	100.0

Discussion

Using media content analysis, this study has identified different representations of the transit forced migrants in Indonesia within two different time spans. They were labeled differently and the themes of the discussions also changed. Those changes led to one major question: why were the Indochinese refugees portrayed with positive labels and were discussed in non-security theme, while the newer generations of forced migrants were represented with negative labels and thus framed as security threats? The theoretical framework chapter has provided tools for answering the question. Referring to Buzan et al.'s (1998) spectrum of public issues, this paper can argue that the different representations were because of the issues being situated at different points of the spectrum.

During the Indochinese refugees' arrival, transit forced migrants were allegedly situated in the zone of a politicized issue. In contrast, the issue of the new generation of forced migrants was in the process of moving from the politicized zone to the securitized zone. This section will further establish empirical evidence to support these arguments. The issue of the Indochinese refugees was discussed widely in the print media, and thus, the government regulated the migrants (Buzan et al., 1998). In 1979, the Indonesian government established a refugee

processing camp in Galang Island. Within the same year, the Indonesian President Suharto issued a Presidential Decree Number 38/1979 concerning the Coordination for Solving the Vietnamese Refugees Problem in Indonesia (Keputusan Presiden RI 38/1979). The decree becomes the only presidential decree to regulate international refugees transiting in Indonesia (Taylor & Rafferty-Brown, 2010, p. 144).

Content analysis in the previous sections has shown that in the period of the Indochinese forced migrants, almost 90 percent of the samples show the use of positive labels towards the migrants. In addition, about 89 percent of 209 statements made by the actors in the samples of news articles can be grouped into the category of non-security issues. It means that even though the issue was debated in the public sphere, the migrants were not securitized. Graph 1 shows that almost 60 percent out of 186 statements with the non-security theme in the period of Indochinese forced migrants' arrivals discussed refugees in relation to an effort to solve the problem. This theme includes the establishment of a refugee processing camp, their resettlement, repatriation, and international cooperation in handling refugees. The second most common theme was the humanity theme incorporating the living condition of the forced migrants, the refugees' plight while in the journey to Indonesia, the refugees' basic needs, and their waiting time in

Indonesia. The opportunistic behavior of refugees⁵ was in third place.

The newer generations of forced migrants that came from Middle Eastern countries and South Asian countries were labeled mainly with negative terms, such as “illegal immigrants”. Labeling transit forced migrants as “illegal migrants” cannot be separated from states’ efforts to govern migration as it is not only a matter of categorizations (Scheel & Squire, 2014) – it represents an underlying way of the states’ thinking that inevitably contributes to why the refugees and asylum seekers are handled through tougher measures. Furthermore, the previous section shows that 64 percent of 278 statements in the period of post-Indochinese refugees’ arrivals discussed refugees along with security concerns.

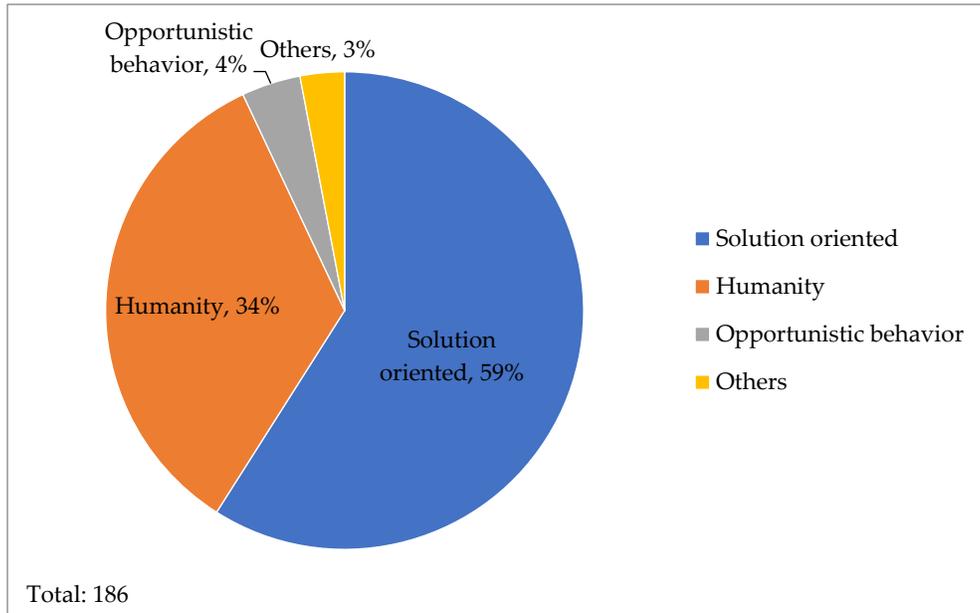
In arguing that these changes serve as signs that the issue has been securitized, it is necessary to answer the following questions (Buzan et al., 1998; Waever, 1995): What existential threats are associated with the transit forced migrants? Who are the actors? What extraordinary measures are available to deal with the threats? In regards to threats and extraordinary measures, this study, as mentioned in the theoretical chapter, also takes into account

the argument which states that forced migrants do not need to be directly referred to as threats, but to associate them with traditional or transnational crimes (Huysmans, 2000; Hammerstad, 2014).

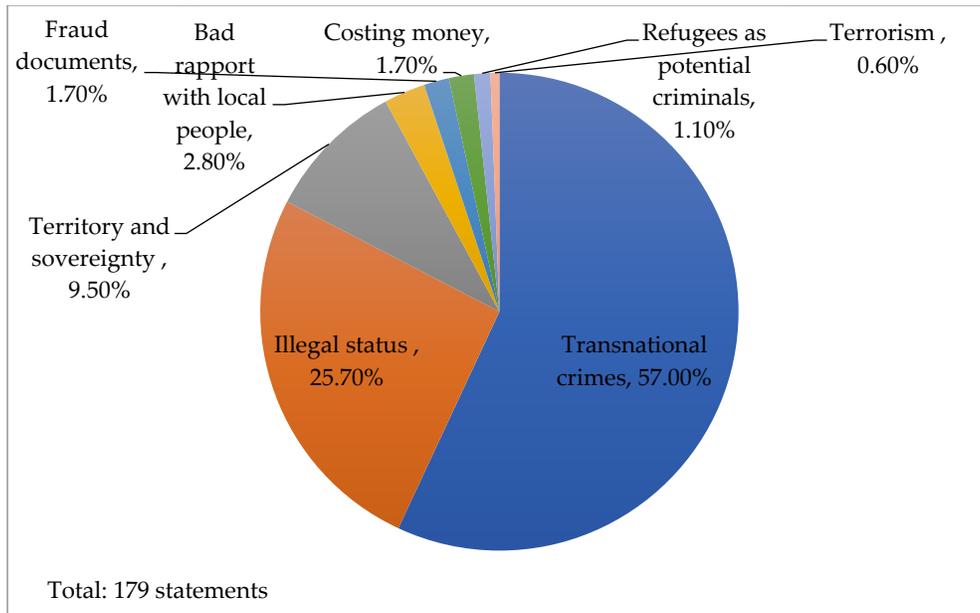
Graph 2 provides empirical evidence for the aforementioned argument. Approximately 57 percent of 179 statements – categorized as security theme – discussed the migrants along with a transnational crime theme. The crimes include people smuggling, human trafficking, and drugs trafficking. The second security issue associated with forced migrants was the illegal status of their presence in Indonesia. About 25.7 percent of the statements contributed to this discussion. In total, those two threats contribute to 148 of 179 statements. In general, the transnational crimes and the illegal statuses of migrants can be categorized under traditional physical threats (Innes, 2010).

⁵ This theme of opportunistic behavior was not categorized under ‘security issues’ because it was mainly statements from the Vietnamese authority saying that the refugees fled their country due to their failure to adapt with the communism’ style of life. It was not considered a threat for Indonesians who are also against the communist ideology.

Graph 1. Details in Non-security issue, Indochinese Refugees' Arrivals



Graph 2. Threats Associated to Transit Forced Migrants



However, the societal and economic threats that appeared quite frequently in developed countries (Innes, 2010) evidently are not the case in Indonesia. It can be due to the fact that Indonesia is a very diverse

nation consisting of hundreds of ethnicities, languages, and cultures. All of those ethnicities are united by the political

ideology of *Pancasila*⁶ – the five principles – that also includes the idea of multiculturalism. In a sense, there is no homogenous identity of ‘being Indonesian’ that might be harmed by the presence of these forced migrants in transit. Furthermore, the economic threat is apparently insignificant because of two reasons. First, the basic needs of the forced migrants are provided by international organizations such as IOM and UNHCR – not by the Indonesian government. Second, while waiting in Indonesia, the refugees and asylum seekers are not allowed to work, which means that they cannot compete in the local job market (Peraturan Direktur Jenderal Imigrasi IMI-1489.UM.08.05, 2010).

Regarding the actors who make the securitizing moves, Huysmans (2000, p. 758) argues that in the European Union context, the securitization of migration includes “multiple actors such as national governments, grass roots, European transnational police network, and the media”. I, too, agree that securitization is a complex process. Therefore, it might be problematic to refer the actors of the securitization of migration to particular persons or institutions. However, the

empirical materials of this study provide evidence that INP and DGI⁷ were the two dominant securitizing actors, making the most frequent statements in the media (see Table 6). Moreover, Table 7 shows those two actors were mainly giving statements concerning the illegality of transit forced migrants’ statuses and other statements that linked transit forced migrants with transnational crimes. In total, those two institutions contributed to 104 statements of the overall 148 statements referring to transnational crimes and illegal statuses of the migrants.

Police and Immigration officials gain legitimacy in securitizing the issue due to their nature of being “specialized agencies” (Watson, 2009) or “security professional” (Huysmans, 2000). According to Watson, their main audiences – who need to be convinced on the nature of the threats and the solutions that need to be taken – are “the governing elites” (Watson, 2009, p. 20). In that sense, their statements in the media shall be understood as not to get public approval of the securitizing move, but rather, they will be seen as part of “symbolic measures” (Bigo, 1998, p. 158) in order to establish an image that they have done something to handle the refugees’ issue, although they do not have to

⁶ *Pancasila* is the Indonesian national ideology consisting of five principles, respectively: (1) belief in one God, (2) just and civilized humanity, (3) Indonesian unity, (4) democracy under the wise guidance of representative consultations (5) social justice for all the peoples of Indonesia. I borrowed a translation of the five principles from *Encyclopedia Britannica* <http://global.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/440932/Pancasila>

⁷ INP and DGI consist of various individual actors from national, provincial, and district levels. The reason for lumping them together as actors at the institutional level is due to the chain of command nature of those two institutions. It is unlikely for police officials to show dissenting opinion about transit forced migrants against their institutional policy.

necessarily solve the problem. In other words, the aim is to gain “moral support” from the public, while they achieve “formal

support” from the elites (Balzacq, 2005, p. 184).

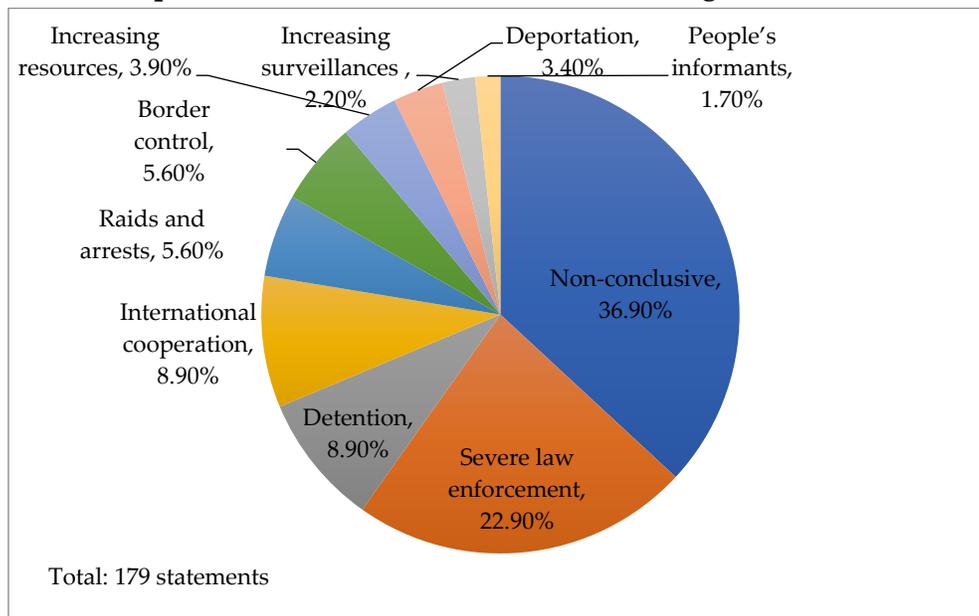
Table 7. Actors and the Security Framing of Transit Forced Migrants

Actors	Total	Percentage
Police	58	55.8%
Transnational crimes	48	46.2%
Illegality status	10	9.6%
Immigration	46	44.2%
Transnational crimes	19	18.3%
Illegality status	27	26.0%
Total	104	100.0%

The arguments thus relate to the extraordinary measures they offer. In *Graph 3*, from 179 statements on threats associated with transit forced migrants, the vast majority offer no concrete solutions. In addition, 22.9 percent suggest severe law enforcement as a way to deal with the threats. This includes investigation into the smuggling cases and also the idea to increase punishment for people who are involved in the smuggling process. The idea of severe punishment has been implemented after the Indonesian government issued a revision of the Immigration Law in 2011. People who are involved in the smuggling process, whether ‘directly’ or ‘indirectly’ can be convicted to 5 to 15 years in prison (Article 120 of Law

Number 6 of 2011,). The law has a massive impact on refugees and asylum seekers in transit in Indonesia. With the new regulation, any kind of assistance given in connection with an alleged people-smuggling network can lead to imprisonment.

This part has offered securitization as an explanation to understand the different representations of transit forced migrants in Indonesian print media within the two timespans. Yet, the argument still has a big “hole”. Immediate questions would be revolving around: why were the Indochinese refugees not securitized? And why were the new generations of refugees securitized?

Graph 3. Solutions Offered to Handle the Migrants' Threats

Even though the Copenhagen School is clear in providing the operationalization framework on the process of securitization, they fail to offer a comprehensive tool to analyze the reasons why an issue is securitized, while other issues are not. Further analysis using additional theoretical guidance other than securitization theory is needed to scrutinize the actors' decision to securitize or not to securitize the migrants. In this context, studies conducted by Karyotis (2012) can be useful. He argues that the motivation of actors to securitize or not to securitize transit forced migrants can be explained through the notions of subconscious drives and cost-benefit calculations.

Additional reading towards the materials using the concepts of subconscious drives and cost-benefit calculations, combined with some domestic

and global political constellations, might provide some possible explanations. The materials suggest that the decision to not securitize the Indochinese forced migrants was to provide a good image of Indonesia in the international community after the Indonesian military invasion of East Timor in 1976. Ever since the invasion, Indonesia had been seen by the international community as an abuser of human rights.

In addition, it was also intended to attract resources and maintain legitimacy, which was possible because it corresponded to the global perception of the forced migrants. During the 1970's the international community showed willingness to provide financial aids as well as to accept refugees. The subconscious drive was allegedly connected to the hatred of communism in Indonesia after the 1965 failed coup, for which the communist party

was accused of being the mastermind behind it. Therefore, the Indochinese refugees were seen as the victims of the communist regime in Vietnam that deserve assistance from Indonesians.

The next generations of forced migrants coming to Indonesia had no connection to communist regimes. In addition, the experiences of handling the Indochinese refugees contributed to the understanding that following a 'soft' approach might cost too much while securitizing the migrants can instead attract more resources. Again, this was in line with global or regional perceptions on the issue of forced migration. States have been more reluctant to accept forced migrants. Additionally, securitizing forced migrants can also serve to maintain legitimacy by showing to the public that the government conducted harsh policies to deal with the aliens. Still, these plausible explanations need to be explored more.

Conclusion

Drawing upon the Indonesian case, the paper shows how the representations of transit forced migrants at the time of Indochinese refugees in 1975-1996 were remarkably different compared to that of the new generations of refugees from Middle Eastern and South Asian countries that came to Indonesia in 1997-2013. The former were portrayed with positive labels and discussed with a non-security approach, whereas the latter, by contrast, were framed as a security threat. I have

shown the different portrayals of forced migrants using media content analysis on 216 articles from Indonesian major print media. This paper thus places the different media portrayals within the spectrum of public issues from the Copenhagen School. This paper establishes the argument that the Indochinese refugees were situated as a politicized issue, but they were not securitized. Therefore, the portrayals of refugees at that time were still positive. Even though they were considered a humanitarian burden, they were not framed as threats. In contrast, the new generations of forced migrants were shown as being lumped together with transnational crimes. They were also often labeled as 'illegal immigrants'. In this sense, I argue that the issue had been securitized.

Even though this paper has tried to answer not only "how" the issue was portrayed differently but also "why" it was portrayed differently, further research is still necessary. The "why" aspect is still worth scrutinizing more by exploring the reasons why the actors decided to not securitize Indochinese migrants and decided to securitize new waves of forced migrants. At the end of the discussion part, this paper suggests possible explanations by exploring domestic and global political constellations. However, the arguments still need to be explored more using different theory and methods.

One of the weaknesses this paper appears to have is that it has not been able

to dig deeper on the implications of moving the issue from the realm of a politicized issue into the realm of a securitized issue. Did it actually solve the problem – or was the securitization of forced migration only a “symbolic” gesture? Only through further research can we gain more knowledge by answering this question. In addition, this study only divides the period of over 30 years into two-time spans simplifying the complex nature of media representations. However, in each timespan, there were also different dynamics, which cannot simply be explained through the spectrum of the public issue. For example, the label that was generally used in the period of 1975-1996 was consistent, with almost no mention of “illegal immigrants”. However, in the 1990’s the way it was discussed was a little different, with more emphasis on repatriation efforts.

About the Author

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