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paper text:

**Task-based Integrated Communicative Competence in the Teaching of Survival Indonesian for Overseas Students**

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Abstract: This paper discusses the good practices

**in the teaching** and learning **of survival Indonesian for overseas students**

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who have immediate needs to express themselves in some limited topics of their fields of interest in Indonesian. The good practices as discussed in this paper are based on the underlying concepts of task-based integrated communicative competence teaching. The relevant good practices, in addition to being soundly based on scientific accountability, are planned and carried out in a series of instructional activities

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to meet the pressing needs of overseas students/speakers of other languages to be able to communicate in Indonesian in limited situations within a relatively short time.

### **In the teaching of survival Indonesian for overseas students**

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that is grounded on the integrated communication using task-based approach, an instructor of the teaching Indonesian to speakers of other languages (TISOL) must be able to understand well of the role and the relatedness of each pedagogical task so as to enable the students' mastery of the integrated language skills. Ideally, the relatedness between the instructional activities in the classroom (pedagogical task) and the language use in the immediate real world of the overseas students (target task) creates relevant and meaningful language teaching material being learned and at the same time serves to become a solid foundation for further improvement of the language skills. Keywords: Survival Indonesian, Teaching Indonesian to Speakers of Other Languages (TISOL), Task-based Indonesian Introduction With the ever-increasing development of colleges in Indonesia, it comes as no surprise that the demand for admission to any study program in Indonesian context from overseas students also shows a tendency to be on the rise. On one hand, overseas students feel like gaining some international experience from their exposure in any study program in Indonesia as part of the degree program they are pursuing in their respective countries; on the other hand, colleges in Indonesia have become more aware of their own needs to open their market that will at the same time help place them on the international map of colleges. Some colleges have been more than serious to cater for the special needs of such international students by offering courses taught in English. However, the demand to attend courses taught entirely in Bahasa Indonesia is in fact also in demand for some reason. Therefore this in itself provides with such an opportunity, but at the same time also a challenge to colleges in Indonesia. This paper seeks to elaborate some scientific consideration that has resulted in the good practices in my own instructional activities, in my capacity both as an instructor and course designer pertaining to the teaching of Indonesian to speakers of other languages (henceforth, TISOL and ISOL) that may include

### **the teaching of survival Indonesian in particular for overseas exchange students**

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as a special focus. This paper is prepared as part of "voices from the classroom" (cf Nunan, 1996) for sharing my own experience with some colleagues in dealing with ISOL classes that fall under the category of "low-structure teaching" (Nunan, 1999 : pp. 74-75), i.e. instructional activities that give more freedom to students in the attainment of the instructional objectives. What the teacher does more is to become as a facilitator for the smooth running of the pedagogical tasks in the classroom that serve to assist the students to attain the communication skills in the real world outside the immediate need of the classroom situations. So such classes are also recognized to have the "high-structure teaching" on account of the teacher's great power and control in the classroom activities that relate to the real world. Survival Indonesian as part of TISOL Survival Indonesian as used in this paper means as a minimalist language instruction in Indonesian for overseas students joining exchange program in an Indonesian college. Such programs normally runs for a period of one up to two semesters, during which time students from any partner colleges overseas will stay in Indonesia to take some courses to be transferred toward their degree program in their respective colleges in their home countries. It has been my suggestion that any universities involving in such exchange



programs to require the incoming overseas students to study Indonesian specially prepared to cater their needs. Unlike Indonesian students joining an exchange program in any English-speaking colleges overseas and therefore they are required to attain some

level of English proficiency prior to their admission to such a

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program, incoming overseas exchange students studying in any Indonesian college may have various backgrounds pertaining to Indonesian. Some may have sufficient working knowledge of Indonesian to attend classes taught in Indonesian as a medium of instruction, whereas some others may not have prior language skill at all in Indonesian. Those of the students who have no prior skill in Indonesian are usually directed to attend courses offered in English. Therefore their proficiency in English is also mandatory. Those of the students who have prior proficiency in Indonesian may have access to join regular classes taught in Indonesian with minimal aids to improve their Indonesian at the same time. The term survival Indonesian is more appropriate to refer to the type of students who have no prior background in Indonesian at all, but they have been admitted to attend courses of their choice taught in English. The good thing that any instructor may enjoy in an ISOL class teaching survival Indonesian is that the students usually have great motivation to learn the language and culture being taught. Surely their sheer motivation to be able to attain a certain level of proficiency in Indonesian to enable them to communicate in limited circles may provide impetus for the class progress. Task-based communicative competence teaching Catering for the special needs of incoming overseas exchange students who have no prior knowledge of Indonesian is not an easy job to do, but if this is carried with a loving spirit of the instructor, this will give particular satisfaction in itself. It stands to reason that a successful dedicated instructor who has done a good job on this may have assisted the overseas students to be able to communicate in Indonesian, of which is quite relevant for their immediate needs, within a short span of time. So to me the great job of an instructor in ISOL teaching survival Indonesian is to address the question of the optimal ways to prepare and carry out instructional activities for those overseas students majoring in may different fields to enable them to communicate in limited settings within a short span of time. Instructional activities of TISOL classes teaching survival Indonesian applying the principles of task-based teaching must be appropriately understood by the instructor that in such classes the students must be directed to get involved in some activities that may provide them with a link between what they do in the classroom and their immediate needs in the real world outside the classroom. Following Nunan (2004, p. 25), TISOL teaching survival Indonesian with an emphasis on the task-based language teaching is undertaken on the following theoretical underpinning: Real world task / target task Pedagogical task Skills Exercise task Activation task Language exercise

Figure: Framework for task-based teaching Communicative activity The activities are in the forms of (a) Classroom instructional activities: pedagogical task, consisting of exercise task and activation task, and (b) Classroom teaching and learning as simulation of the so- called real-world task/target task. In short, the classroom teaching and learning must be capable of producing the learning outcome in the forms of a number of communicative skills required in the real world. The pedagogical task may only be successfully undertaken if the instructional activities are directed toward the goal of creating language skills that are interlinked with the communicative skills. Classroom instructional activities (pedagogical tasks) Incoming overseas exchange students are signed up to learn survival Indonesian that is normally listed under the formal name BIPA 1 (Bahasa Indonesia bagi Penutur Asing 1/ ISOL 1) having 4 credit hours. This means that the students will be attending 26 – 28 classroom activities with a duration of 100 minutes for each class in one whole semester. In relation to such classes, it is noteworthy to consider some of Riasa's assertion (2007, p. 78) regarding weaknesses commonly found in ISOL classes, among other things: (a) The fact that



students need more interesting and meaningful learning activities (rather than teaching activities) is less understood. (b) Unprogrammed, one-way, and monotonous teaching technique. In line with Riasa's assertion above, I would say that ISOL classes teaching survival Indonesian should be in the hands of experienced professional instructor who is fully aware that his/her main duty is to plan and carry out classroom activities that may provide ample opportunities for the students to have interesting and meaningful learning activities. As stated by Nunan (1989 in Nunan 1999, p. 25) that in a foreign language classroom, a language learner is demanded to understand, manipulate, produce expressions, or interact in the language being learned and at the same time their attention is focused on mastering the meaning, not on mastering the forms or structure. The seven principles of task-based teaching

The following is an example of a series of learning activities done by two ISOL learners of Dutch-speaking background and three ISOL learners of Japanese-speaking background who were preparing themselves to do a field trip that was scheduled to visit the temple of Prambanan and that of Borobudur. The teaching was carried out in accordance with the principles of task-based teaching (Nunan, 2004, pp. 35-38), namely: scaffolding, new task relates to previous task, recycling, active learning, integration, reproductive to creative, and reflection.

**Principle 1 : Scaffolding ?** Lesson and teaching material must be fully supportive to the successful accomplishment of the learning activities. The teacher prepared a text on the temple of Prambanan that was accessed from the internet. The text was chosen to be on the level of difficulty that did not discourage the learners. The text was exemplified as follows: PRAMBANAN, CANDI HINDU TERCANTIK DI DUNIA

Candi Prambanan adalah bangunan luar biasa cantik yang dibangun di abad ke-10 pada masa pemerintahan dua raja, Rakai Pikatan dan Rakai Balitung. Menjangkau setinggi 47 meter (5 meter lebih tinggi dari Candi Borobudur), berdirinya candi ini telah memenuhi keinginan pembuatnya, menunjukkan kejayaan Hindu di tanah Jawa. Candi ini terletak 17 kilometer dari pusat kota Yogyakarta, di tengah area yang kini dibangun taman indah. Ada sebuah legenda yang selalu diceritakan masyarakat Jawa tentang candi ini. Alkisah, lelaki bernama Bandung Bondowoso mencintai Roro Jonggrang. Karena tak mencintai, Jonggrang meminta Bondowoso membuat candi dengan 1000 arca dalam semalam. Permintaan itu hampir terpenuhi sebelum Jonggrang meminta warga desa menumbuk padi dan membuat api besar agar terbentuk suasana seperti pagi hari. Bondowoso yang baru dapat membuat 999 arca kemudian mengutuk Jonggrang menjadi arca yang ke-1000 karena merasa dicurangi. (<http://www.yogyas.com/id/yogyakarta-tourism-object/candi/prambanan/>, accessed Nov.10, 2010) The text as exemplified above provided information that supposedly represented the real world that was going to be explored by the learners when they were expected to be doing their best to gather more information from tourism brochures or other similar written sources.

**Principle 2 : New task relates to previous task ?** New task to do must be built up upon previously accomplished task The task that learner has to do is not something completely new. The new task must be based on the previous tasks that the students have successfully accomplished.

**Principle 3 : Recycling ?** Recycling the language to maximize opportunities for learning and to activate the elements of learning principles. Having gone through the previous principles, the learners have already been familiar with the text on Prambanan and have been familiar with the language structures and the vocabulary of that text. Recycling may be applied, for instance, by directing the students to practice conversation in pairs focusing on the same topic. The following is an example of the conversation that the students have produced:

Candi Prambanan A : Ini candi Hindu atau candi Budha ? B : Candi Hindu. A : Kapan Candi Prambanan didirikan ? B : (Didirikan) pada abad ke-10. A : Pada masa raja siapa candi ini didirikan ? B : Pada masa Rakai Pikatan dan Rakai Balitung A : Berapa jauh candi ini dari Yogya ? B : Kira-kira 17 kilometer.

**Principle 4 : Active learning ?** The learning will give the greatest advantage if it is directed to use actively the language being studied. The instructor facilitated the students to use the language being learned actively. Many different activities were done for this such as: - The learners practiced in pair of the dialog as in principle 3 above. - The learner took turn to do a role play to simulate the real world.

**Principle 5 : Integration ?** Learner



should be taught to understand and get the feel of the relatedness between language forms, communicative functions, and semantic meaning. The learners had to be able to master the communicative function to ask and to give information. For that purpose, the learners had to practice that the language forms to express the communicative functions to ask and to give information could be short or long. The short forms were often more context-bound. A : Kapan candi ini candi Prambanan didirikan ? B: (Candi ini) (Ini) didirikan pada abad ke-10. Principle 6 : Reproductive to creative ? Learner should be encouraged to move from reproductive to creative language use. Learners were directed to work in pairs to create their own variation of the dialog. This activity prepared the learners to face the real world of language use. The learners, for instance, (if possible with minimal help of the teacher) could create their own dialog like the following: Candi Prambanan A : Ini candi Hindu atau candi Budha ? Candi ini – candi Hindu atau candi Budha ? / Ini candi agama Hindu atau candi agama Budha ? B : Candi Hindu. Candi Hindu / Candi agama Hindu A : Kapan Candi Prambanan didirikan ? Kapan didirikan ? B : (Didirikan) pada tahun. ... . A : Pada masa raja siapa candi ini didirikan ? B : Pada masa Rakai Pikatan dan ..... A : Berapa jauh candi ini dari Yogya ? Candi ini berapa jauh dari Yogya ? Dari Yogya – candi ini berapa jauh? B : Kira-kira 17 kilometer. Principle 7 : Reflection ? The learners should be allotted with the opportunity to do a reflection (think, get the feel, digest, etc) of what they have learned and evaluate how far they have made progress. Some practices that were done on this stage, for instance: reading by heart (quickly) – looking up – and saying it, i.e. they glanced at their note very quickly, then they looked up to express the part of the conversation they were intended to say. If the learners were able to do such activities easily, they could be given another opportunity to do the role play of some variation of the dialog. Method of integrated communicative competence teaching In a language classroom that applies the method of integrated communicative competence teaching, the teaching and learning activities must be capable of giving the opportunity to the learners

**to develop the four major language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.** I am of the

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opinion that they must be taught in that order, but they must not be treated separately; the four must be integrated. However, the decision whether one particular skill must be given more time at one time should be properly handled so as to allow balanced distribution of time for each skill in the teaching and learning activities as a whole. The following is an example of the teaching-learning activity in an ISOL class teaching survival Indonesian that attempts to recycle the four language skills integrally: I. Percakapan ? Yumi Memperkenalkan Diri Yumi : Kenalkan nama saya Yumi – Yumi Nakamura. Dini : Saya bernama Dini. Apa betul kamu berasal dari Jepang ? Yumi : Benar, saya berasal dari Jepang. Dini : Sudah berapa lama tinggal di Surabaya ? Yumi : Baru satu minggu. Saya tiba di Surabaya hari Sabtu lalu. Dini : Kamu kuliah atau bekerja di sini ? Yumi : Saya kuliah sebagai mahasiswa pertukaran. Di Jepang saya kuliah di Universitas Nagoya. Dini : Berapa lama kamu akan tinggal di Surabaya ? Yumi : Saya akan tinggal di sini selama satu tahun. Dini : Apa yang kamu inginkan selama di Surabaya ? Yumi : Saya ingin punya banyak teman. Saya ingin banyak bicara dalam Bahasa Indonesia. The learner, first of all, listened to the short conversation above, and after that they were asked to manipulate the language sounds by reading the text part by part in accordance with the example given by the teacher (LISTENING and READING). They were invited to understand the conversation that was close to their “current real world” as exchange students studying in a college in Indonesia. The teaching-and-learning activities become more interesting and meaningful as they were close to the “current real world” of the learners. In other words, such a conversation became quite beneficial to the real world of the students, that was to say that such a conversation would directly help the learners to communicate in a similar real world as reflected in the teaching material in the classroom



activities (pedagogical task). There is nothing wrong with the so-called eclectic approach, i.e. something understood as pick and choose a particular thing that is deemed to be better or more useful at one time, this is to say that one thing may be chosen and given a priority on ground of its usefulness to back up the attainment of the goal of language teaching that applies integrated communicative competence. The teacher may motivate the learners to interact in accordance with the topic that simultaneously may be directed toward a simulation of the current real world of the learners as beginning exchange students. Exercises in the forms of pattern practices to be accompanied by their suitable substitutions may help the learners to be able to communicate in Indonesian for their immediate needs in the real world. The following is a list of some basic sentence patterns dan their substitutions based on the previous conversation: Pola Kalimat dan Latihan Subtitusinya 1. Yumi Nakamura Kato Fukuyama Saya Kamu Anda Santi Susan Keats Dia memperkenalkan diri 2. Saya bernama Dini. Kato Fukuyama Yumi Nakamura Santi Susan Keats 3. Kenalkan nama saya Yumi – Yumi Nakamura. Kato – Kato Fukuyama Susan – Susan Keats Lina – Lina Harlina 4. Apa betul Ibu kamu Anda Bapak berasal dari Jepang ? Australia Amerika Serikat Korea 5. Benar, saya berasal dari Jepang. Australia Amerika Serikat Korea 6. Sudah berapa lama tinggal di Surabaya ? di Jakarta ? di Malang ? 7. Baru

**satu minggu. dua minggu tiga minggu satu bulan dua bulan tiga bulan**

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Saya tiba di Surabaya satu minggu yang lalu. du a minggu tiga minggu sa tu bulan du a bulan tig a bulan Having completed the above exercise, the learners were invited to have a talk in accordance with their real world (SPEAKING). Then, due to the limitation of the allotted time for the study, for allotting enough time for WRITING, the learners were assigned a homework to write in the form of a short guided essay following after the framework of the reading text as found in the exercise on READING competence as exemplified below. The learners were encouraged to share their completed assignment in the next class. Membaca ? Berikut ini catatan Yumi : Saya ingin memperkenalkan diri saya Nama saya Yumi Nakamura. Saya berasal dari Jepang. Saya tiba di Surabaya minggu lalu. Saya akan tinggal di Surabaya selama satu tahun. Saya senang belajar sebagai mahasiswa pertukaran. Saya harap saya bisa dapat banyak teman selama di Surabaya. Kalau mempunyai banyak teman pasti saya akan banyak bicara dalam Bahasa Indonesia. Pertanyaan bacaan dengan jawaban betul (B) / salah (S) 1. Yumi Nakamura sudah lama tinggal di Surabaya. (B / S) 2. Yumi sudah tinggal di Surabaya selama tiga tahun. (B / S) 3. Yumi berasal dari Korea. (B / S) 4. Yumi bekerja di sebuah perusahaan Jepang di Surabaya.(B / S) 5. Yumi ingin mempraktekkan Bahasa Indonesia dengan banyak orang. (B / S) Optimizing the exposure to the real-world tasks for the enrichment of the communicative competence Both structured and unstructured teaching and learning in the real world of the learners had to be motivated in order to optimize the usefulness of the exposure to the surroundings / social contexts for successful attainment of the goal to master survival Indonesia to be able to communicate in the designated settings. Considering that the limited allotment of the time for ISOL classes could optimize the effort to help the learners to communicate in Indonesian, integrated communicative tasks derived from the learners' current real-world were also selectively inserted in the classroom activities. This was certainly something feasible to be done as previously stated that in such a low structured classroom format, the role of competent instructor is dominant to create meaningful learning without neglecting the pre-existing syllabus. A competent ISOL instructor who is really familiar with the current real-world of the learners will be capable of picking and choosing the ISOL learners' current real-world to provide good trials of communication for strengthening their communicative competence. In my own teaching situation, I know for sure that some kind of learning has taken place outside the classroom, for instance, in an activity like an excursion study. Therefore topics of conversation related to that particular



excursion study may be benefited for communication that simulates the real world. The ISOL learners must have interacted with their Indonesian classmates. They might have taken some pictures of the excursion events. If pictures – be they hardcopy or softcopy – are available, therefore the pictures of the real world that the learners have been very familiar with can provide classroom activities that are both interesting and meaningful for them. Those of the students shown in the pictures are invited to share their stories in the forms of Indonesian they have mastered. Without any assistance or just a little if any from the instructor or the classmates, a learner may do his or her best to retell a real story of his /her own. The result could surprise us as they may prove to have benefited the real world exposure to the utmost of improving their communicative competence. Not surprising that the learner may have picked up and mastered some practical forms of conversation from their immediate surroundings. The following is an illustration of my conversation with overseas exchange students from Japan – real beginners – who have just learned Indonesian in my class for 2 months, and they have just completed an excursion study including a visit to Borobudur temple: (watching pictures of some activities of the excursion study that included a visit to Borobudur Temple) Guru May Guru Kojiro Guru Miho Guru Kojiro Guru Miho Kojiro : Berapa lama studi wisata ? : Delapan hari. : Senang selama studi wisata ? : Senang ... saya melihat-lihat obyek wisata. : Apa tidak capai ? : Yah, capai ... tapi ...tapi senang. : Sempat naik sampai ke puncak Candi Borobudur ? : Sayang tidak. : Mengapa tidak naik sampai ke stupa yang bagian atas ? : Ya, sebenarnya ingin ... tapi sayang tiba-tiba hujan. Kami harus kembali ke bus. : Kalau naik ke atas bisa kena hujan dan basah ... dan nanti sakit. The dialog on the learners' current real-world above can be reduced to writing to become a model of conversation. Thus it becomes one of the pedagogical tasks that really reflects the real world. Then the dialog may be used for a role play involving the same learners by switching to different roles.

Conclusion Having discussed the topic raised in this paper, some important points regarding TISOL classes teaching survival Indonesian may summed up as follows: 1) TISOL classes teaching survival Indonesian runs within a short span of time. Yet it has to contribute to provide the learners with the communicative competence to be able to communicate in limited circles in Indonesian. 2) The teaching materials (pedagogical tasks) used in TISOL classes must be selectively chosen in the forms of topics related as close as possible to the current real world of the learners. As such pedagogical tasks may become more interesting, meaningful and useful as they cater for the learners' immediate needs. 3) A competent, knowledgeable ISOL instructor must have a keen interest in what is going on in the learners' current real world and motivate them for the smooth learning of Indonesian from their surroundings to make up the limited allotment of the time for TISOL classes. 4) A competent, knowledgeable ISOL instructor could benefit the learners' current real world, bring it to the classroom in the forms of teaching materials/exercises/enrichment or strengthening materials to enhance the learners' integrated communicative competence in Indonesian.

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