

Student Assistance through Training on Javanese Language and Culture at Walailak University Thailand

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Abstract

The community service activity at the political science study program, Walailak University Thailand has the aim of introducing Javanese language and culture to improve Indonesian insight. The target of this activity is political science students, walailak university who need initial and advanced guidance to improve Indonesian insights. This activity is very helpful for students in providing initial provision before taking a lecture program in Indonesia. This service activity provides theoretical knowledge and cultural practices in the classroom which include the introduction of Javanese language and traditional games. The activity method is carried out with discussions, presentations and cultural practices. The results of the activity showed the enthusiasm of students in learning Javanese language, Javanese culture and Indonesian in general. A total of 61% of students stated that they could know Javanese vocabulary, 22% of students knew Javanese culture. 9% of students got preliminary knowledge if they visit Indonesia, while 8% of students got important information related to Javanese culture.

Keywords: Javanese language; Javanese culture; Indonesian insight

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Introduction

Walailak University is one of the campuses in Thailand that offers Indonesian language classes as a specialized course. Cultural diplomacy can promote and foster a positive image of Indonesia on the world stage by facilitating the realization of national aspirations and garnering positive responses from partner countries (Iriani, 2023). In connection with this, Walailak University has executed Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with several universities in Indonesia, particularly Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Universitas Negeri Malang, and Universitas Trunojoyo Madura. In 2010, ASEAN Studies played a crucial role in promoting activities related to these MoUs, including collaborations

on the Indonesian-Thai Dictionary project, the Thailand-Indonesia dictionary, and the Indonesian-Thai pocket dictionary to assist students in learning the Indonesian language. Initially, Indonesian students participated in the Indonesia Teaching Practicum Program, initiated in 2015, and ASEAN Studies students have been continuously sent for language and cultural learning in Indonesia through the In-country Program since 2010. They recognize that exchanging knowledge and experiences with foreign educational institutions can provide different perspectives and contribute to the development of teaching and learning processes, as well as the potential of students and faculty.

Indonesia has the potential and cultural richness to attract foreign learners to study the Indonesian language and culture by leveraging its diversity (Utami, 2024). Indonesian for Foreign Speakers (BIPA) learning is increasingly developing in Thailand, including in schools. For example, at Suksa School with good educational management and administration, curriculum, instructors, and teaching materials (Fahreza & Syamsuyurnita, 2024).

ASEAN Studies, as a regional study, acknowledges that to understand Indonesia, learning the Indonesian language is essential. Students in this program are required to undergo self-development through In-country activities, Community Service Programs, and internships in Indonesia to align with the needs and learning outcomes. Third-year students must register and travel to learn from native speakers. Additionally, the ASEAN Studies education projects in their respective countries aim to enable students to use the language of neighboring countries accurately and efficiently, resembling native speakers. Communication media in BIPA learning can be implemented through the introduction of local culture. Local culture serves as a means of communication with the local community (Hermoyo & Suher, 2017). Continuous activities are needed to enhance Indonesian insights through community service. The introduction to Javanese culture is conducted in the Political Science Program at Walailak University (WU), Thailand, to enhance Indonesian awareness.

The selection of community service program materials is aligned with the learning needs of students at Walailak University (WU). In this regard, it is emphasized that the alignment of materials with the competencies presented in Indonesian Language Learning (BIPA) needs attention. BIPA teaching materials at the A1 and A2 levels in *Sahabatku Indonesia* include several competencies, such as introducing oneself and others, asking and

answering questions about personal details such as where they live, people they know, and possessions. The presented competencies cover introduction, self-identity, physical characteristics, and family. All of these materials include (1) Introduction, (2) Self-Identity, (3) Physical Characteristics, and (4) Family (Kurniasih, 2021).

Indonesian, as the unifying language from Sabang to Merauke, reflects the diversity of ethnicities and cultures in the nation, rich in noble values and the philosophy that is beneficial to life (Budiawan, 2017). Language, literature, and culture are crucial not only for domestic learners but also for international learners, one of which is through the introduction of Javanese culture in Thailand. Culture-laden material can be selected by considering the content of values and etiquette through local wisdom and Indonesian socio-cultural practices (Pujiono & Widodo, 2021). The introduction of Javanese culture in the Political Science Program at WU includes general Javanese cultural material, Javanese language, children's songs (*tembang dolanan*), and *Wayang* (traditional puppetry), providing students with preparation for learning the Indonesian language and culture, both for those about to start and those who have completed the In-country program in Indonesia. Through these activities, it is expected to enhance the Indonesian awareness of students.

Method

The activities carried out during the implementation of the community service program cultural introduction for students of the political science program at Walailak University, Thailand, to enhance Indonesian awareness include the following:

1. Preliminary observation before the program to ensure the learning needs of students are met.
2. Discussions, the community service team discussed the introduction of Javanese culture with students.
3. Theory, the community service team provides material on general Javanese cultural topics, Javanese language, and traditional games.
4. Practice, students engage in cultural practices: singing children's songs, and practicing Javanese language with the community service team.
5. Presentation, the community service team gives students the opportunity to present their learning outcomes, both in Javanese language and culture

Results and Discussion

The activities commenced with an Opening Ceremony on July 17, 2023, led by the Dean of Political Science at WU. The opening, from 08.00 am to 11.00 am local time, included speeches and introductions by each student and faculty member. The purpose of this event was to follow up on the six-year MoU between UNESA and WU, strengthening academic and non-academic cooperation. The collaboration between the two parties has been successful, involving activities such as developing BIPA evaluation questions, summer courses, internships, and research.

The positive response from Political Science students in learning Javanese language and culture was evident. The learning process was deemed interesting and engaging, as demonstrated by the enthusiastic participation of the students in the introduction of Javanese culture, focusing on topics such as traditional songs and Javanese language.



Figure 1. Community Service Team Received by the Dean of the School of Political Science and Public Administration

Introduction to Javanese Language and Culture in the Fundamental Indonesian Class

The sociocultural situation of Indonesian society has special markers and appeal for foreign learners (Widianto, 2017) . From 01.00 pm to 03.00 pm, the Community service team joined the Fundamental Indonesian class. Dr. Octo Dendy Andriyanto, M.Pd., introduced Javanese greetings and expressions to students at the beginner level. This aimed to prepare students for the In-country program in Indonesia, emphasizing basic Javanese language skills and an understanding of the social environment.

BIPA learners were exposed not only to linguistic aspects but also to cultural understanding. The session included traditional Javanese greetings songs and language introduction. This was crucial for students to adapt easily during their language studies in Indonesia. The essence of learning Javanese was emphasized in understanding its messages and values as a means of respecting others.



Figure 2. Community service team explaining Javanese language materials

BIPA learners do not only study linguistic aspects. Learners who focus solely on language may encounter difficulties when communicating with native speakers. Understanding language accompanied by a good understanding of culture poses no significant issues in the social environment of Indonesian society (Khoirunnisa & Sunarya, 2023). BIPA learning in this session also introduces a song about greetings in Javanese language. Cultural knowledge can be provided to anticipate cultural shocks and prepare for such differences in situations (Asteria & Nofitasari, 2023). This is done to acquaint learners with basic Javanese language expressions commonly used when meeting someone. Indirectly, it also reinforces Walailak University students to easily adapt to situations while learning the language in Indonesia. The most crucial aspect of learning Javanese is to interpret the messages and values within it as a means of respecting others.

Here is a song about greetings in Javanese that is sung together:

Yen esuk sugeng enjing
(if it's morning, say good morning)
Yen awan sugeng siyang
(If it's noon, say good afternoon)
Yen sore sugeng sonten

(If it's evening, say good evening)

Yen bengi sugeng dalu

(If it's night, say good night)

The material on Indonesian language and culture can be customized and mapped according to needs to encourage learners' interest (Farikha et al., 2024). The material on language and culture is presented in the form of videos and direct examples. Not only that, students are also given stimuli regarding daily activities presented through images. BIPA instructors can utilize technology in the learning process, such as YouTube for videos of dance and songs, as well as Indonesian culture-themed films (Hertiki, 2017). Indonesian cultural material can be packaged through enjoyable learning media, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of learning by considering the characteristics of the learners (Salama & Kadir, 2022). In sequence, students guess or provide answers to the images pointed out by the lecturer. This activity is guided by Meilita Hardika, S.Pd., M.A., interactively and accompanied by enjoyable games.

Various teaching materials for Indonesian Language for Foreign Speakers (BIPA) used by BIPA instructors include *Lentera Indonesia*, *Sahabatku Indonesia*, *Basic Indonesia*, and others. However, not all BIPA textbooks present materials or information about the social and cultural aspects of Indonesian society. Since language usage is tied to culture, it is essential to prioritize its presentation. Some observations include individuals with high proficiency in the Indonesian language but lacking an understanding of cultural communication (Pangesti & Wiranto, 2018).



Figure 3. Community service team explaining daily activities in the context of Javanese-Indonesian language



Figure 4. Interactive learning media during community service

Next, students were introduced to the traditional song and game called "Cublak-cublak Suweng." Integrating cultural values into BIPA learning can provide learning variations so that it can be conducted enjoyably (Rahaya & Sahidillah, 2022). An explanation of its aesthetic, musical, and cultural elements was provided to enhance awareness of Javanese culture. The students showed great enthusiasm in learning about the rules of the "Cublak-cublak Suweng" game. The choice of presenting material about traditional songs and games had several reasons: (1) limited knowledge among foreign speakers about these traditional songs, (2) traditional songs represent Javanese local wisdom distinct from other countries worldwide, (3) these songs encapsulate values and practical uses in daily life, (4) they are relatively easy for the general public to learn, and (5) traditional songs like "Cublak-cublak Suweng" have become icons for Indonesian children playing traditional games. The material was presented using both English and Indonesian languages to ensure clear communication between instructors and learners.

BIPA learning, especially language, goes hand in hand with cultural introduction (Melinda & Muzaki, 2023). Introducing Javanese culture through traditional songs is not a difficult task, especially considering that Thomas Stamford Raffles introduced Javanese gamelan to the Western world for the first time in 1816 (Hermiasih, 2015). The presentation elaborated on the content of the traditional song material, providing detailed explanations with practical examples to make it easier for students to understand and apply.

The material covered: (1) the definition of traditional songs, (2) the purpose of traditional songs, (3) types of traditional songs, (4) musical scales of traditional songs, (5)

examples of traditional songs, (6) practical techniques for traditional song performance, and (7) the meaning of traditional songs. Each aspect of the material was presented and discussed thoroughly in a two-way interaction so that students from Walailak University in Thailand could grasp the content. Traditional songs are highly suitable for foreign speakers to enhance their proficiency in Indonesian language and culture. This is because traditional songs offer various advantages, such as (1) instilling character and moral education, (2) improving memory skills, (3) serving as a tool for knowledge and childcare, (4) fostering a high level of social spirit, and more.

Here is the documentation of the Javanese cultural introduction activities for WU students. Local culture holds strong potential and needs to be explored and promoted internationally, one of which is through the Community Service Program. The UNESA Community service team demonstrates consistency and commitment to conducting similar activities, and the international community can receive materials from native speakers (Indonesians). The participating team focuses on Indonesian culture, both theoretically and practically (Juwariyah et al., 2023).



Figure 5. Explanation and practice of traditional songs and games

At the end of the material presentation, Daeng Meilani, a student of Javanese Language and Literature Education, invited WU students who were still in the early levels of BIPA to sing one of the traditional songs while practicing the "Cublak-Cublak Suweng" game. The purpose of providing this material is to introduce Indonesian culture, particularly Javanese culture, to be more widely known internationally. In addition to enhancing BIPA proficiency, the students were also introduced to several Javanese vocabulary words that were new to Walailak University students. The process of improving the quality of BIPA

(Indonesian Language for Foreign Speakers) learning can be carried out by considering the attractiveness of the teaching materials. Attractive teaching materials will influence the interest of BIPA learners (Agustina, 2021). The practice of traditional songs, accompanied by movements corresponding to the lyrics, will bring joy and engagement during the game. This is considered a means of preserving local wisdom. In terms of the process, this game fosters camaraderie among players, trains communication skills, and encourages social interaction with others. This activity equips students with knowledge about the Javanese language and culture before they engage in academic activities in Indonesia.

Student Response to the Introduction of Javanese Language and Culture

Learners are always faced with the social and cultural conditions of native speakers (Indonesians). This situation will have a positive impact on learning, especially on their language skills (Fajriani, 2024). Positive responses were demonstrated by Political Science students during the learning sessions on Javanese language and culture. The results indicate that the learning process was presented in an interesting and highly interesting manner. This proves that learning Javanese language and culture is beneficial, especially for students who will visit Indonesia. Here is an overview of the enthusiasm for the activities.



Figure 6. Presentation of student response data

Data presentation regarding the responses of Thai students to the introduction of Javanese culture in the Javanese-Indonesian language class indicates that the class is considered interesting. This is evident from 50% of the students stating that the Javanese-Indonesian language class is interesting, and another 50% stating it is very interesting. From

this positive response, it can be concluded that Political Science students from Walailak University in Thailand can comprehend and understand what the presenters convey in the Javanese-Indonesian language class. The high percentage can be influenced by the selection of materials collaborated with the study groups in the Javanese-Indonesian language class. This aligns with the goals of introducing Javanese language and culture to students, and there are benefits gained during the activities. Here is the presentation of data regarding the benefits of introducing Javanese language and culture to Political Science students at Walailak University.



Figure 7. Presentation of data regarding the benefits of the activities

During the learning process in the Javanese-Indonesian language class, student responses are divided into four categories. The highest percentage, amounting to 61%, indicates that students were able to learn Javanese vocabulary. A total of 22% of students gained knowledge about Javanese culture. About 9% of students acquired preliminary knowledge for visiting Indonesia. Meanwhile, the lowest percentage, 8%, indicates students who obtained essential information related to Javanese culture. Therefore, nearly the entire percentage of the introduction to Javanese culture, aimed at increasing awareness of Indonesian culture, can be considered successful and well-aligned with the learning goals, serving as an initial stage before students proceed to learn the Indonesian language at one of the campuses in Indonesia. Community Service activity regarding the introduction of the Javanese language and culture has never been conducted before, making this activity an initiation to prepare students who will participate in the In-country program in Indonesia.

Conclusion

The community service cultural introduction to Javanese culture for students of the Political Science program at Walailak University, Thailand, was carried out to enhance Indonesian awareness for students participating in the In-country program in Indonesia. Students' positive response and engagement demonstrated the success of the cultural introduction, aligning with the goals of learning and the initial stage of learning the Indonesian language before student study in Indonesia.

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