

Interactive-Contextual Mechanism in BIPA Instruction

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Instruction is a matter of considerable strategic significance among the variety of issues concerning the Indonesian Language For Foreign Learners (*Bahasa Indonesia bagi Penutur Asing*, abbreviated as BIPA) since instruction is directly related to the effort to improve the involvement of both learners and teachers in the teaching-learning process of BIPA in the classrooms.

The BIPA instructional process has several unique characteristics. BIPA instructional can be approached as a system that consists of several supporting component, that is to say instructional component and non-instructional component. The relationship and functional interaction among the components will generate a teaching learning process and learning.

BIPA instruction has a clear target that is to bring the learners to acquire natural language capability in *Bahasa Indonesia*. In broader terms, this naturalness of the acquired language includes many aspects, including the cultural aspects, which are inseparable from language. So, when the BIPA course is offered in Indonesia, then the socio-cultural consideration acquire increased urgency since consideration on the cultural aspect will also play a role as means and at the same time, end for the learner in communicating directly and meaningfully. And, in terms of the organization and management, a BIPA instructional process should be able to: (1) develop learners' motivation, and (2) facilitate the acquisition process for learners in acquiring Bahasa Indonesia in a natural way.

The application of training, practice and exposure within the interactive-contextual mechanism will *directly impact* the acceleration of competence acquisition for BIPA learners. Intensity and quality of learners' involvement in the mechanism of training, practice and exposure by presenting conducive setting or context for learning (in the sense of factual, direct and natural setting) will support the process of reinforcement and development of communicative competence of BIPA learners.

Key words: Interactive-contextual, BIPA, Instruction

1. Introduction

Instruction is a matter of considerable strategic significance among the variety of issues concerning the Indonesian Language For Foreign Learners (*Bahasa Indonesia bagi Penutur Asing*, abbreviated as BIPA) since instruction is directly related to the effort to improve the involvement of both learners and teachers in the teaching-learning process of BIPA in the classrooms. From these efforts to improve and manage the teaching-learning process, observation and identification can be made concerning the role of instructional components, their relations and mechanism, including the problems occurring during the process of learning. From the practice of instruction, one can also determine the parameter for the success of learning in an institution that offers BIPA courses.

The BIPA instructional process is basically a language learning process. However BIPA instructional process has several unique characteristics. BIPA instructional can be approached as a system that consists of several supporting component, that is to say instructional component and non-instructional component. The relationship and functional interaction among the components will generate a teaching learning process and learning results (Muliastuti, 2017; Winkel, 1989; Richards & Rodger, 1986). Of the several instructional components embedded within the learner is the most conspicuous and significant component. The learner as a component of the teaching learning process is the distinguishing feature of the BIPA instructional process that differentiates it from other kinds of language learning. A learner of *Bahasa Indonesia* as foreign language has several unique characteristics, especially in terms of the background and purpose of learning. The existence, condition and qualification of the learner will bring several important implications to their role and relation with the specification of other instructional components in the process of BIPA instruction. Furthermore, the learner component is also a matter for consideration as a variable

that may make a critical impact on the application of BIPA instructional process (Muliastuti, 2017; Stern, 1983).

BIPA instruction has a clear target that is to bring the learners to acquire natural language capability in *Bahasa Indonesia*. In broader terms, this naturalness of the acquired language includes many aspects, including the cultural aspect, which are inseparable from language (Rivers, 1987). Therefore, aside from the personal characteristics of the learner, the cultural factor is also implicated in the practice of BIPA instruction (Surajaya, 1996). Moreover, when the BIPA course is offered in Indonesia, then the socio-cultural consideration acquire increased urgency since consideration on the cultural aspect will also play a role as means and at the same time, end for the learner in communicating directly and meaningfully.

BIPA instruction as a program has assuredly a clear foundation, as apparent from the basic principles of learning in general. BIPA instruction as one form of language learning is based on the concepts of second language acquisition, as the foundation of its approach. The conceptualization for BIPA is mostly based on linguistics and second language acquisition theory (Muliastuti, 2017; Krashen & Tracy, 1983; Stern, 1983). The specification of BIPA instruction is evident in the following aspects: (1) learning objectives, (2) organization of its material or contents, (3) choice of methods and techniques, (4) use of resources and media, (5) practices in the instruction itself, (6) evaluation on the outcome of learning and (7) problems encountered during the learning process. In order to apply these aspects in BIPA instructional process, one certainly needs a clear conceptual foundation. Without any clear conceptual foundation, the direction that BIPA instruction might take will likely be biased and even result in undesirable outcome to its productivity.

The description of BIPA instruction above shows that BIPA instruction is a complex phenomenon. Its complexity is not only due to its instructional components, but also to its relatedness with

other factors in the application of BIPA instruction. In order to achieve adequate BIPA instruction, the aspects above should be considered jointly in a careful manner. In terms of the organization and management, a BIPA instructional process should be able to: (1) develop learners' motivation, and (2) facilitate the acquisition process for learners in acquiring Bahasa Indonesia in a natural way. These objectives should be mapped and recast into a specific and clear model of learning. The teaching-learning mechanism should also be based on adequate procedure and technique.

In terms of kinds of activity during practice, BIPA instruction is basically a process of patterning the learning behavior which is directed to promote and condition the motivation of learners in Bahasa Indonesia. Essentially, priority and special attention should be placed on how to develop the BIPA instructional process in such a way so as to condition and facilitate the learners to be *willing* and *capable* of using Bahasa Indonesia optimally in natural manner. To achieve this end, one needs a BIPA instructional model that is capable of exploiting and accommodating the efforts to achieve this objective. One of the available learning model in this sense is the BIPA instructional model which is based on *interactive-contextual* approach. This learning model is currently being applied and developed in BIPA Program in Malangkecewara University Malang.

2. Orientation of the BIPA Teaching-Learning Mechanizm

Basically, BIPA instructional process is a teaching-learning process whose management is based on the process of choosing, determining and developing resources and learning materials according to certain strategy in order to achieve the target of Bahasa Indonesia mastery for foreign learners. In relation with this learning, BIPA instruction is essentially directed to learning to use language, and not learning about the language itself. Therefore, the objective and target of language learning, including BIPA

instructional process, is to master the *active* and *communicative* language skill. In relation with these two objectives of language learning in BIPA, the learning process should be developed in such a way to achieve effectiveness in supporting the activities of the learners in the effort to master the communicative competence. An effective language learning process will enable the learner to acquire as much experience in language use within the most realistic and natural context as possible.

BIPA instruction is certainly not new. This is evident in the myriad number of BIPA programs, both in Indonesia and in other countries. However, it should be pointed that in objective terms, the BIPA programs in Indonesia would be different from those outside Indonesia. The special nature of BIPA program in Indonesia is evident from several aspects, such as: (1) the higher number of Bahasa Indonesia variety in use, (2) the variety of native speakers of Bahasa Indonesia, in terms of ethnic, geographical and social terms, and (3) the condition of Bahasa Indonesia which is still growing and developing (Subyakto & Sri Utari, 1988; Alwasilah, 1998; Moeliono, 1998). In several aspects, this growing condition of Bahasa Indonesia can be seen as an advantage for the purpose of enriching the material for learners. However, without careful consideration and anticipation, this condition may cause much disadvantage for BIPA learners.

In accordance with the condition described above, BIPA instructional process in Indonesia has a specific characteristics, which is evident in its *instrumental-external* aspects. It is this aspect which sets the tone for the climate of language use in Indonesia and it is also this aspect which needs to be taken into consideration as a variable in BIPA instruction. Foreign learners of Bahasa Indonesia cannot evade the wide divergence in the language environment. The variety in terms of the dialect, sociolect, and speech situation such as code-switching and diglossia are inescapable in the factual

application of language in social encounters. It must also be borne in mind that the objective knowledge and even experience that the learners gain in classroom cannot correspond directly with the empirical facts of language use in daily life. More often than not, BIPA learners will find many instances of language use in daily life, which are markedly different from what s / he has learnt within the confines of the classrooms. Since this phenomena is inevitable for every BIPA learners, its problematic potential should be taken into account in BIPA instruction.

This condition may cause psychological disturbance for the BIPA learners. They may feel confused, frustrated, and even afraid to use Bahasa Indonesia. This fear of making mistakes may consequently give rise to new feeling of incompetence that may obstruct the progress of BIPA instruction, that is the belief that they will never master Indonesian language (Widodo, 1994; Muliastuti, 2017). Considering the condition of the environment where the BIPA learners will apply the newly-acquired skill and the specific condition of BIPA learners, a model should be formulated for BIPA instruction which will accommodate these variables. As described above, one of the BIPA instructional models which is deemed capable of accommodating these variables is the interactive-contextual approach of BIPA instruction. This model for BIPA instruction places an emphasis on the development of competence acquisition through the teaching-learning mechanism such as habit-formation, application and actualization of Indonesian language in direct, factual and contextual interaction.

The manifestation and application of BIPA instructional model with an emphasis on interactive-contextual is based on the following basic principles:

- (1) The learning process is directed to the formation of communicative competence with the emphasis on the

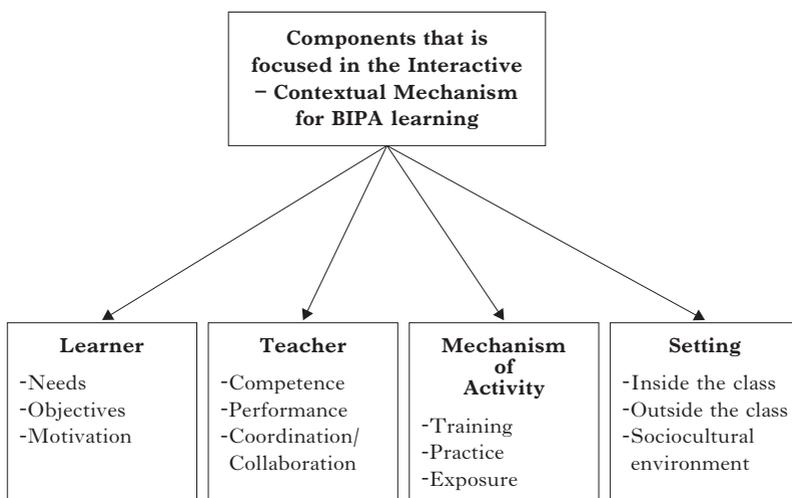
mechanism of interaction and context, that is the training, practice and exposure of language use in socio-cultural context, in accordance with the target, interest and development of the learners' condition.

- (2) All instructional components (especially those with potential for development) should be exploited and empowered for increasing the intensity of the acquisition process and optimizing the outcome of BIPA instruction.
- (3) Learners' motivation is taken as the basic strategic aspect or factor in BIPA instruction. Therefore, learners' motivation should obtain special attention in order to be maintained, augmented and improved so that the acquisition of learners' competence can be optimized.
- (4) The management of classroom in the learning process is oriented towards the creation of a "mood" that is conducive for learning, both inside and outside the class, that is matched with the socio-cultural condition.
- (5) In accordance with its role, the teacher / tutor should apply the interactive-contextual mechanism in doing their job (presenting the material to students) by relying on the acceleration of competence achievement by the learners.
- (6) In accordance with the approach, that is eclectic approach (with the emphasis on interactive-contextual mechanism), the language that is used in learning is target language or Bahasa Indonesia, even for the beginner classes. Mother language or first language is used only for "emergency" situation and for other special isolated purposes.
- (7) External condition of the class, that is the socio-cultural environment (facts, people and events) should be exploited and utilized as potential learning resources, which are capable of contributing to the teaching-learning process.
- (8) Problems in learning are seen as an inevitable part of the

management of learning. Therefore, the problems should be handled and resolved within an integrated framework with the conduct of BIPA program.

- (9) Assessment and evaluation (both process, results and program) are parts of the learning problem, which are necessary for the process of competence development and for optimizing the productivity of BIPA instruction.

The second point above concerns the instructional components that have a *potential* for further development, which refers to the four instructional components that becomes the focus for special treatment. The meaning of special treatment is that the four components is empowered in a more intensive manner (without neglecting other components) so as to achieve an optimal teaching-learning mechanism that is expected to bring maximum outcome. The four learning components are: (1) learner, (2) teacher, (3) activity, and (4) setting of learning. The interrelationship between the four components can be described as follows:



In this diagram, the four components of focus are seen as significant for the effort to create an optimum process and outcome of BIPA instruction. This is said without neglecting the role of other instructional components. Attitude and treatment of other instructional component will be automatically required to accompany the role and function of these four components in the practice of learning. The diagram above has identified the existence and relation between the four components in the teaching-learning process of BIPA. The diagram also shows how the aspects in the four components can be exploited for optimizing BIPA instruction.

3. The Application of Training, Practice and Exposure in the Interactive-Contextual Mechanism

Basically, the teaching-learning process of BIPA is a patterned interaction with the objective to achieve learners' activities maximally by exploiting all existing potentials and components of learning. In this teaching-learning process, the functions of cognition, affect and psychomotor capabilities of the learners should be utilized in accordance with the instructional objectives, which has been determined beforehand. The mechanism of teaching-learning process can be accommodated by using *training*, *practice*, and *exposure*.

Training, practice and exposure are techniques of learning which are utilized not only in language learning, but they also serve as the primary technique in the teaching-learning process of BIPA which gives the emphasis on the interactive-contextual approach. The three aspects of these learning techniques have strategic role and function, especially in the formation and reinforcement of the acquisition of language competence for BIPA learners. The application of these three techniques should consider (1) the basic principles, which is taken as reference, (2) the level of the language learner, (3) teacher or tutor as the facilitator of learning, and (4) the

learning target which is to be achieved.

Training as a BIPA instructional technique has the following functions: (1) to introduce, (2) to provide understanding, (3) to form habit and (4) to facilitate the use of certain language aspects, language skills and communication culture in Bahasa Indonesia. The training is applied by focusing and considering: (1) certain aspects of the content or material of learning, (2) frequency of training, (3) time of training, (4) pattern of training and (5) learners' condition. The training should also attend to its suitability with the learning setting which is used as a means to facilitate learning. Training is mostly conducted within classroom.

Considering the principles mentioned above, the activity of training is not the sole end of BIPA activity. Other factors that are of equal importance for training is the facilitator, that is in this case the teacher or tutor. In order to arrive at the correct training technique in BIPA instruction, the teacher or tutor must have adequate competence, including the ability and skill to train the learners. They should also be prudent and sensitive in creating effective forms of training so as to alleviate boredom on the learners' part. In the context of BIPA instruction, the condition and qualification of the learners also plays an important role. Though the learners are still beginners but they are often adult individuals with certain adult psychological characteristics when the training is initiated. This requires special attention, mainly in terms of the implication of training activity on their learning motivation.

The BIPA instructional technique which is strongly related with training is *practice*. Practice is meant to apply the understanding which has been acquired by the learners about the concepts, language usage and customs / culture in language applications. Similar to training, the practice is applied by paying attention to: (1) the aspect of the material of practice, (2) time of practice, (3)

procedure / pattern of practice, and (4) condition of learner. In accordance with the meaning of practice itself, before one can practice something, one should have an understanding about the thing which is to be practiced. Therefore the understanding of the material is one of the prerequisite for correct practice.

Practice also has the purpose of (1) applying the learners' understanding, for instance understanding of certain linguistic principle in the real-world usage of target language, (2) improving the understanding which has been acquired by the learner, (3) reinforcing learner's memory, especially for vocabulary, idioms, and other language custom. With this prerequisites in mind, the practice should be conducted in specific situation and condition, among others: (1) after the training is considered sufficient, (2) after a certain part of material is considered to be sufficiently mastered by the learn, (3) during the training for dubbing (*penyulihan*), (4) when presenting examples of certain word or sentence in different context, and (5) during the practice of short composition, both written and oral.

In a BIPA instruction, which applies the interactive-contextual mechanism, these two techniques, training and practice, should be followed by one more, that is exposure. Exposure will actualize the material which has been trained and practiced as a factual application in real-world communication. Besides, the exposure technique can also be utilized as testing ground for the skill and understanding that has been acquired by the learners. In this way, exposure is also useful as an activity, which further improve or perfect the process of communication competence acquisition by the learners.

Other than the role described above, exposure also has several functions which are related to the activity of training and practice. These functions are described as follows. *First*, exposure serves to develop the *hypothetical* vision of the learner about Bahasa

Indonesia in the form of understanding. *Second*, exposure serves to *prove* directly what the learners have acquired by presenting simple ideas from topics of their own interest. *Third*, exposure serves to assist the learners in gaining *courage* to communicate with other people though they are still in novice level. *Fourth*, exposure is meant to *improve* the ease of the learners' in communication. *Fifth*, exposure is meant to *develop* the communication competence of the learners by broadening the setting of learning outside the classroom. *Sixth*, exposure is meant to *reinforce* the courage and ease of communication in social situations where the learners meet a lot of people.

In relation to the three technical aspects above, a BIPA instruction which is oriented towards the interactive-contextual mechanism is based on the assumption that in order to produce adequate language competence, a learner must go through the right training, practice and exposure phases. This assumption is required due to the consideration of the quality of the learners' language capability which is still in the novice level. The learners still requires mechanical activity in the form of identification, understanding and habit formation processes in language skill. Besides, the correct usage of the language should be applied with sufficient opportunity to actualize the competence of the learners in real-world situation. Therefore these three techniques are essential variables for the application of interactive-contextual model of BIPA instruction.

4. Conclusion

The above description about how the application of BIPA instructional model gives the emphasis on interactive-contextual mechanism by relying on the techniques of training, practice and exposure in the implementation of teaching-learning process. As a conclusion, the following remarks are offered.

In order to obtain and achieve adequate acquisition of competence among the learners of BIPA, several processes are important, that is identification and habit formation for language activity, application of language rules correctly, and opportunity to apply the skills in actual manner within ongoing socio-cultural context of real-world situations. Such teaching-learning process requires accommodation on the procedures and techniques of training, practice and exposure.

The application of training, practice and exposure within the interactive-contextual mechanism will *directly impact* the acceleration of competence acquisition for BIPA learners. Intensity and quality of learners' involvement in the mechanism of training, practice and exposure by presenting conducive setting or context for learning (in the sense of factual, direct and natural setting) will support the process of reinforcement and development of communicative competence of BIPA learners.

Training, practice and exposure will have a very important role and function in BIPA instruction, both for conditioning the teaching-learning *process* and the *result* or outcome of the learning. Quality and effectiveness of the training, practice and exposure will contribute directly to the development and improvement of learners' communication competence, which is the main objective of BIPA instruction. Therefore, BIPA instructional process requires the techniques of training, practice and exposure to manage the BIPA instructional process in a careful and adequate manner.

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