**ILTLP CLASSROOM-BASED INVESTIGATION REPORT**

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**AREA OF INVESTIGATION**

How do I use texts ‘without culture ‘ to promote Intercultural Language Learning?

A lot of readers available for Indonesian are only Indonesian in the language used. They don’t provide any insights into Indonesian life and culture. In fact often they are misleading, particularly when they are direct translations of books in English keeping the same images and concepts. However these are the texts students often relate to and find engaging. So I wished to explore how to utilise these resources so that students will still gain opportunities for Intercultural Language Learning.

**CLASSROOM PRACTICE**

I selected the big book ‘Balon Balon Saya’ (‘My Balloons’) to read to students. This is a formulaic number and colour book showing balloons bursting one by one.

As I’d done in the past, I asked students to examine the language and in groups to present a page to the class in Indonesian and English.

However the following lesson we revisited the text by discussing who wrote it, who it was written for and what it told us about life and people in Indonesia. To help students answer these questions I read them an authentic Indonesian reader ‘Hari Hari Besar Nasional’ (‘Big National Days’) as a contrast. This reader is produced by the Indonesian Education Department for Indonesian students. In pairs students were given a page from this reader and presented to the class what the pictures told them about people and life in Indonesia.

I set students the challenge of improving on the ‘Balon Balon Saya’ book. Their task was to write their own mini counting down and colour book that also gave the reader some insights into Indonesian life and culture. I showed them the video segment ‘Si Berti’ from ‘A Look at Indonesia’ showing the daily routine of a young Indonesian boy. Prior to viewing students were directed to look for ideas for their mini story. Students shared with class what they’d noticed in video.

We did a class mini story initially to model what I wanted students to achieve. We brainstormed, in English, verbs they could use instead of ‘burst’ and I made a list providing the equivalent Indonesian word.

**DATA OR INFORMATION GATHERED**

I observed and later took notes and/or read/made copies of:-

- students’ responses to the questions regarding the big book
- students’ presentation from the authentic reader page
• students’ oral and written description of what they found out from video
• students’ mini books – subject selection and pictures and oral explanation as to how it gives
  insights into Indonesia.
• students’ responses to general overview questions to working on investigation. ‘What did you like
  about the investigation?’ ‘What did you find out’

FINDINGS

1. Range of students’ responses to the Big Book ‘Balon balon saya’
   Who wrote big book?
   ’Written by an Indonesian person as written in Indonesian language’
   ’Made in China as most things are’
   (I directed students to look at names of author/illustrator, David Brown/ Anne Helyard)
   ’Written by an Australian as Australian name’
   ’Written by a Japanese author, as Helyard Japanese name.’
   Who was big book written for?
   ’For Indonesian children.’
   ’For Australians to learn number and colours in Indonesian.’
   What did big book tell about Indonesia?
   ’Balloons burst because hot in Indonesia .’
   ’Indonesians like balloons, and the colours they like.’
   ’nothing’

2. Range of students responses to authentic reader ‘Hari Hari Besar Nasional’
   • Who was reader written for/by? Why?
     ’Written for Indonesian early learners, because much more detailed and complex words than big book.’
     ’Written by an Indonesian as more complicated language and more of a story than big book.’
     ’Written by an Indonesian for Indonesian kids because you ( me the teacher ) want to compare it with the
     big book.’
   • What did the picture on your page of ‘Hari Hari Besar Nasional’ tell about Indonesia?
     ’Three wheel cars. Garuder Egol. The flags.’
     ’Most of the children have black hair. They have different colour skin to us. There uniform is difrent to
     ours. The girls ties are difrent to the boys. They have soad (sewed) on badges.’
     ’28 October shows what Indonesian children look like such as special hats and bits of cloth around there
     body. It also celebrates young children’s day.’

3. What did the ‘Si Berti’ video tell about Indonesia?
   ’Berti has a bath with a bucket ,the bath is very high and tall and he doesn’t climb in.’
   “He has rice and chicken soup for breakfast and starts school early.’
   ‘He sleeps on a long pillow’ ‘He finishes school and goes home at lunch.’
   ’He plays with marbles and made a wooden truck.’ ‘He buys ice cream from a cart.’
4. Range of ‘Indonesian’ topics students selected for their mini books, as an alternative to balloons.

Es krim (ice cream), komodo, orangutan, harimau (tiger), rambutan, pisang (banana), ular (snake), garuda (eagle), bis (bus), cicak, topeng (mask), kelereng (marbles), guling (long pillow).

Selection of students’ responses to how story gives insight to Indonesia.

Story shows ice cream cones ‘Ice creams melting one by one because hot in Indonesia.’

Student agrees to my suggestion to draw an Indonesian style ice cream cart on front.

Story shows snakes crawling away ‘Palm trees in background show it is in Indonesia.’

Story shows masks breaking, sketched an authentic Indonesian mask on cover.

5. General overview. What I liked? and What I found out?

Some oral responses I dictated from students who were stuck with what to write:-

‘Got a chance to write something in Indonesian. It was a good experience because it was fun. Life in Indonesia is very different to up here. You didn’t have to go to the shop to get icecream.’

‘I liked writing my own book and people can read my own writing. Indonesia is much different than Tasmania and Australia.’

‘They always have rice and rice is healthy for you. I think it would be a good place to visit. They don’t have to go to the shop to get icecream.’

‘I liked the costumes they wore. I liked how you don’t have to walk to the shop to buy icecream, they come to you. In Indonesia sometimes they don’t have cereal for breakfast they have rice. I could climb a tree and sing.’

INTERPRETING THE INFORMATION

My main findings are:-

1. I can’t make assumptions about student’s cultural understandings and interpretations. I couldn’t assume that students realised the big book was written for Australian learners and gave no insights into Indonesian culture. In fact a number of students attempted to make meaning of the big book with respect to Indonesia. This shows how important the selection of materials is and how we may be sending students messages we didn’t intend. Only some students noted that the authors name was Australian and so probably written by an Australian. This indicates either not all students had developed the critical literacy strategy of using the name of the author or did not recognise name was not typically Indonesian. Many students had the understanding that if the book was written in Indonesian then the author must be an Indonesian person.

2. The importance of selecting the right questions to elicit the meaningful and on target responses. Initially my question on the big book was too broad ‘Where do you think it was made?’ This generated off the track responses, Refining the question to Who do you think wrote the book ‘Australian or Indonesian?’ ‘Orang Australia or Orang Indonesia?’ Who was the book written for ‘Australian or Indonesian children?’ Anak Australia atau anak Indonesia? Helped to keep responses on target and weave in some language as well.

Some students who were struggling with presenting what their page from the authentic book told them about Indonesia. Refining the question to ‘How is what you see on this page different from what you see in Hobart?’ really helped them.

3. Students were much more engaged in discussing who wrote the respective books etc than I had anticipated. It has involved a lot more class time sitting and discussing than what I normally do. Out of over 150 students I only observed one who was openly negative.

4. It was a bit of a leap for most students to grasp the insights into Indonesia from the stimuli (authentic
Ingrid Colman, Tas

book and video) and then select from that a subject suitable for their story. As it needed to be something that came in four colours and could be drawn and count down one by one.

Students who wrote about marbles and long pillows were successful in this.

Rather than using the special stimuli most students opted to select from the Indonesian alphabet pictures on the worksheet/cover I’d designed for their books. We’d already spent some time working on these and they were more familiar and they could use the pictures.

Some students found writing the language and pattern of numbers and colours, for their mini books a challenge. This meant they did not have as much energy to focus on revealing life in Indonesia. I found giving those students a book which already had the sentence stems helped.

I discussed with students who chose subjects that weren’t particularly Indonesian (e.g. bus, snake, ice cream) how they could convey information about Indonesia through their illustrations. It helped to have copies of posters and scenes etc as models.

### MATERIALS AND EXEMPLARS

See attachment below.

### EVALUATION

Students enjoyed revisiting the texts and discussing the nationality of the author and intended audience. They were particularly engaged in writing their own mini stories to improve on initial big book. It gave students a sense of purpose and satisfaction. Being able to write their own stories helped students to correct their preconception that only Indonesians can write stories in the Indonesian language.

I selected the authentic reader because it also had balloons on the front but in this case being held by Indonesian children in national dress. However the activity of providing groups with a different page from book to present to class had problems. Some pages were a bit more limited in what they showed about life in Indonesia. Maybe next time just select pages which are richer in cultural information for students to present.

A direct extension of the writing task would be to get students to select different objects for each page of the story and count up rather than down. Also to encourage them to move away from the formulaic language pattern if capable.

An extension of the critical literacy/cultural awareness tasks would be to have a class box of texts varying in cultural richness and source. Students in pairs select a text and evaluate the text using a generic worksheet. The evaluation would cover and build on the questions asked in this investigation.

An alternative approach would be to get students to write and illustrate a mini story in Indonesian for Indonesian children to find out about life in Australia.

### REFLECTION

I was fascinated by the ingenuity and creativity of students’ responses and initial understandings. The positive engagement of students during the discussions made me feel encouraged to do more discussion to elicit their understandings in the future. I started to get more confident with how to ask more effective questions. I enjoyed seeing students so engaged in working on their stories. I look forward to building on the students’ skills and awareness raised in this investigation.
Eskrim in tan diletah?
Borong Eskrim sekang?

This shows the Indonesian
cart for selling ice cream.
As seen on video.
Drawn from a poster.

Saya punya tiga Eskrim.

Var macam a la, listing dan puluh.

by Nadia
Rambutan

Saya

Rambutan