


Chapter 4

Integrating Skills– Based Approach in Indonesian Teaching

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ABSTRACT

The teaching approach that integrates Indonesian language skills is theoretically possible, but in practice it is still rarely done. This condition is also reflected in the results of the Indonesian language proficiency test which shows an imbalance in language skills. In addition, the complexity of the assessment is also a factor that inhibits the implementation of this approach. Understanding the characteristics of language skills can be the key to the success of implementing an integrative approach. By utilizing Indonesian language teaching resources that are rich in culture, integrative teaching has the potential to produce learners who have holistic skills so that they can communicate effectively. In addition, proficiency-based teaching can be attempted simultaneously with activities that involve more than one language skill. Consistency and suitability between learning activities and evaluation also need to be considered. With these efforts, learners will be able to experience authentic learning experiences so that they are motivated.

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INTRODUCTION

Rationale for Integrating Language Skills

Language is the most important means of thinking, expression, and communication. Every human being who thinks, expresses ideas, and communicates always involves language. As an entity, language is grouped into three forms: *langage*, *langue*, and *parole* (De Saussure, 2004). *Langue* and *langage* are abstract so they cannot be observed, observed, or measured. However, *parole* is concrete because it is the language used in the communication system so it can be observed, measured, and even researched. Language in the form of *parole* is ultimately viewed in three parallel functions, namely ideational, interpersonal, and textual (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014). To fulfill these three functions, language mastery is not enough to be partial. In communication events, the realization of language (*parole*) involves receptive and productive skills. In other words, communication can be created when there is a party involved as a language producer and there is someone who plays a role as a language consumer even though the two roles can exchange positions.

Role exchange in practical communication requires language users to be able to have the ability to listen, read, speak, and write at the same time. These four skills cannot be segregated because it is impossible for someone in communication to only master speaking skills without listening, likewise someone involved in literacy activities cannot master writing skills without reading. Moreover, these four skills are not sufficiently studied theoretically. In other words, knowledge about the definition of listening, speaking, reading, and writing will be meaningless without direct habituation or practice. These practical activities can be obtained systematically, planned, and programmed through language teaching with an integrative approach.

Language teaching that integrates the four language skills can support learners to be proficient in practical communication. However, the author does not consider that segregated learning is without benefits. Oxford (2001) stated that segregated learning still has benefits, at least in terms of ease in delivering material. In addition, segregated learning is believed to make learners more concentrated. However, segregated learning is considered as an old-style teaching (Su, 2007; Abdrabo, 2014) so that it cannot achieve communicative competence. In fact, communicative competence is needed, as stated by Richards (2005) that communication is a holistic process that often relies on several language skills or modalities. On the other hand, Abdrabo (2014) stated that one language skill cannot be taught effectively without interaction with other skills. In fact, integrative teaching triggers student activeness in class (Su, 2007) and enables authentic communication (Akram and Malik, 2010).

Language skills can actually be combined. Productive language skills (speaking and writing) can be trained on the basis of receptive skills, such as listening and

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