

Wayang Sada (Sodo): A Media of Indonesian Language Learning and Cultural Introduction for Foreign Learners

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Abstract

Indonesia has about 718 regional languages that are unified by Indonesian as the national language (spoken by 90% of Indonesians). In addition, culture in Indonesia is also diverse, one of them is *wayang sada/sodo*. It is a puppet from sticks of young coconut leaves in the Gunungkidul area, Yogyakarta. The use of it in learning Indonesian language and culture is very interesting. Therefore, the objectives of this research are: (1) to explain the existence of *wayang sada/sodo* in Gunungkidul, Yogyakarta; (2) to explain the process of Indonesia language learning and cultural introduction using *wayang sada/sodo*; (3) to identify and strengthen Schumann's acculturation theory and Krashen's monitoring system theory with a combination of Paivio's dual coding theory on Indonesian language learning and cultural introduction. The research method is qualitative with an ethnographic approach. The data are collected by participatory observation (directly teaches Indonesian using *wayang sada/sodo*), social media observations (IG Lafida Int'l Institute—lafida_ii; about learning Indonesian language and culture based on cultural anthropology for foreigners managed by Nafila), in-depth interviews, documentation, and document studies on the use of interactive media in language and culture learning, especially Indonesia. The informant of this research are the foreign learners who learn Indonesian language (about 6 (six) learners). Then, the data are analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model analysis (focus on descriptive, emotion, and values coding). The results of this research, are: (1) *wayang sada/sodo* is a puppet made of *sada/sodo* which means sticks of young coconut leaves, commonly found in the Gunungkidul area, Yogyakarta. *Wayang sada/sodo* is an artistic and cultural asset created by residents of Padukuhan Gunungbang, Bejiharjo Cultural Village, Karangmojo District which has become a new variety of *wayang* art; (2) Indonesian language learning and cultural introduction using *wayang sada/sodo* is very meaningful, interesting (attractive), interactive, introducing Indonesian culture directly, both offline and online; (3) the use of *wayang sada/sodo* can be a novelty of theory by strengthening and combining Schumann's acculturation theory (social and psychological factors with new cultural adjustment), Krashen's monitoring system theory (creative constructive process), and Paivio's dual coding theory (audio and visual) in Indonesian language learning as well as culture for foreign learners.

Keywords: Wayang *sada/sodo*, language learning, cultural introduction, foreign learners.

The Background

Indonesia is the largest archipelagic country. It is consisting of around 16,771 islands (in 2020) to 17,000 (in 2021). The addition of the island will later be registered at the 2022 United Nation Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) meeting [1]. The existence of islands has become a place for the distribution of different microcultures so that they are regionally specific. More than 300 ethnic groups spread throughout Indonesia. The largest is the population of Java (41%) who mostly occupy the island of Java. Others include, but are not limited to, the people of Malay, Batak, Betawi, Sundanese, and Madurese. Most ethnicities have a language, history and culture that is specifically related to them [2]. The hinterlands of Sumatra, Kalimantan and Papua feature ritualized speech and local epic narrative traditions, while in Java and Bali, the visual and performing arts are heavily influenced by the Hindu epics Mahabharata and Ramayana. [3].

Indonesian is included in the Austronesian language family which is one of the largest language families in the world. According to ethnologists, Indonesian is classified as follows: Indonesian < Local Malay < Malayan < Malaic < Sundic < Western < Malayo-Polynesian < Austronesian. Related languages include Javanese, Madurese, and Sundanese [4]. Actually, Indonesia has 718 regional languages [5] that are unified by Indonesian as the national language (spoken by 90% of Indonesians).

As we know, language is needed to communicate in community. Therefore, for some experts, it is said that language is one of the unique abilities of humans, including awareness, sociality, and culture to make meaning and communicate with other related to the imagined and remembered realities of the world, factual events, intentions, and desires [6]. On the other hands, the definition of language consists of language is systematic; is a set of arbitrary symbols those are primarily vocal, but may also be visual and have conventionalized meanings to which they refer; is used for communication; operates in a speech community or culture; is essentially human, although possibly not limited to humans; and is acquired by all people in much the same way; language and language learning both have universal characteristics [7]. Based on these opinions, it can be said that language is a unique symbol possessed by humans which has various functions to interact with others socially and culturally.

The development of language use is in line with the times so that the need for language use is not limited to the first language but also the second, third and so on. This is in line with the opinion that globalization with its global society has given rise to the need to understand cultural differences and communicate across cultural boundaries has increased exponentially [8]. Then, human is able to learn languages after the first language (L1) in bilingual and multilingual cases and the opportunity to master a second language (L2) came from travel, work, migration, war, marriage, and life events. [6]. This opinion emphasizes that the acquisition of a second language is a human ability to master a language after the first language, both in bilingual and multilingual conditions. Furthermore, it can be said that second language learning (LL2) is influenced by social and cultural conditions or context of the learners. It leads to learners' attitudes which appear in learners' motivation to learn L2.

Schumann's acculturation theory focuses on the process of social and psychological integration of second language learners (2LL) with the target language group (TL). Therefore, this acculturation model is based on social and psychological factors. The meaning of acculturation, understood as a collection of socio-psychological factors, is the main cause of SLA [9] [10].

Thus, it can be interpreted that the acculturation model for L2 acquisition is influenced by social (conditions around learning, including culture) and psychological (comfort that encourages the creation of L2 learning motivation) received by the learner when studying L2 language dealing directly with native speakers.

Meanwhile Krashen's monitoring system shows that inputting plays an important role in the process of listening. The best method in the monitoring system model is to provide input that the learner can understand in a comfortable situation (without anxiety) and contains the messages that the learner really wants to hear. This method does not force initial production in L2 but allows students to produce it when they are 'ready' and language improvement can be made through communicative (understandable) input rather than forced and corrected production [11]. From the model it can be explained how 'acquisition' and 'learning' are used; the acquisition system initiates speech and the learning system 'monitors' speech to check for and correct errors in a comfortable situation (without anxiety) and the messages are interested.

Then, Paivio dual coding theory asserts that there are two ways a person can expand learning materials, namely verbal associations and visual images [12]. This dual coding theory postulates that visual and verbal codes can be used when recalling information [13]. The theory can be understood that the learning process, especially L2 language learning can be supported by material that can be seen visually and heard verbally. The association of these two codes allows the learner to remember the information he has learned. Based on the three theories above, it can be postulated that language learning can be easily understood and learning is interesting if it pays attention to the social psychology of the learner by providing fun material input and associating that input with visual and verbal codes.

Actually, Indonesian society is a multicultural society which grows with a variety of cultural structures [14]. Therefore, the culture in Indonesia is also diverse which then presents local culture. As it is known that local culture contains local wisdom that can strengthen the local knowledge (indigenous knowledge) of the local community [15] [16], like *wayang sada/sodo*. *Wayang sada/sodo* is a coconut leaf sticks puppet in the Gunungkidul area, Yogyakarta. It is the work of Mbah Marsono from Padukuhan Gunungbang, Bejiharjo Cultural Village, Karangmojo District and has become a new variety in the world of *wayang* art [17]. Its use in learning Indonesian language and culture is very interesting for the learners because it can learn the language as well as get to know culture and see one of the cultural works of the Indonesian people directly, especially those in Yogyakarta. This condition can be seen from the initial observations which show that Indonesian language and cultural learners are very enthusiastic to know more about this *wayang*.

Therefore, the objectives of this research are: (1) to explain the existence of *wayang sada/sodo* in Gunungkidul, Yogyakarta. (2) To explain the process of Indonesia language learning and cultural introduction using *wayang sada/sodo*. (3) To identify and strengthen Schumann's acculturation theory and Krashen's monitoring system theory with a combination of Paivio's dual coding theory on Indonesian language learning and cultural introduction.

The Method

A qualitative design is used in this study with a critical paradigm to find new concept. This study also examines the cultural and local wisdom as a media of Indonesia language learning

and cultural introduction (using *wayang sada/sodo*). So, this study uses an ethnographic approach. The ethnographic approach is based on anthropological and sociological studies that examine the conditions of behavior, language, and actions that take place in a cultural group naturally for a long time [18]. The informant of this research are the foreign learners who learn Indonesian language (about 6 (six) learners).

The data were collected by participatory observation (directly teaches Indonesian using *wayang sada/sodo*), social media observations (IG Lafida Int'l Institute—lafida_ii; about learning Indonesian language and culture based on cultural anthropology for foreigners managed by Nafila), in-depth interviews, documentation, and document studies on the use of interactive media in language and culture learning, especially Indonesia. The data were collected since February-April 2022. Then, the data are analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model analysis, especially for the observations and interviews data were reduced to several important notes by using a holistic coding method (determination, coding and coding, taking notes, and drawing conclusions); it is focused on descriptive, emotion, and values coding [19].

Discussion

The existence of *wayang sada/sodo* in Gunungkidul, Yogyakarta

Wayang (shadow puppets) crafts are generally made using animal skins, such as buffalo or cow skins since ancient times until they were recognized by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization). However, different from puppet crafts in general, Mbah Marsono or whose full name is Marsono Hadi Wardoyo (74 years), a resident of Padukuhan Gunungbang, Bejiharjo Village, Karangmojo District, Gunungkidul creates unique puppet creations that he makes from sticks of young coconut leaves (*sodo*). *Wayang* figures or characters still refer to the puppet figures of the Mahabharata and Ramayana stories and legends in Javanese society.

According to Mbah Marsono, he has been fond of making puppets and puppeteers since he was a child (since elementary school) because he aspired to be a puppeteer. However, he had to suppress this desire because the price of *wayang kulit* (shadow puppets) at that time was very expensive and difficult to find. Therefore, he was creative in making puppets from the grass around his house. Later, because the grass puppets were easily damaged, he also made puppets from sticks of young coconut leaves, which became known as *wayang sada/sodo*.

Mbah Marsono began to seriously pursue the made of *wayang sada/sodo* in 2011 after he retired from his job as an employee of PT. Pos Indonesian. Mbah Marsono can make 2 *wayang sada/sodo* every day or 60 puppets every month. The orders for *wayang sada/sodo* are also increasing, some are ordered for gifts, souvenirs, or for display at home. However, there are also those who buy to introduce culture to children (including me and team who ordered *wayang sada/sodo* for introducing Indonesian language and culture to foreign learners). Therefore, as he said, he made two kinds of *wayang sada/sodo*, namely *wayang* for performances and *wayang* for decoration.

Wayang sada/sodo for performances, he made in 28 characters, such as *arjuna*, *nakula*, *shinta* to *punakawan* (we ordered the characters of *arjuna* and *srikandi*). The *wayang sada/sodo* characters resemble the typical shadow puppet characters, but the curves of the characters are not as detailed as the shadow puppets. Meanwhile, *wayang* for decoration have various sizes,

ranging from small and flat ones to large 3-dimensional ones. For the 3-dimensional, Mbah Marsono combined sticks, parts of the coconut tree (coconut flower wrapping midrib and coconut fiber as the binding material for the puppets). Then, the name of *wayang sada/sodo* characters that he created are also taken from the name of the part of the coconut tree with the Javanese name which has been modified to represent the character or with the aim of propriety and harmony aspects of names in *wayang*. This indicates the uniqueness of the *wayang sada/sodo* and the extraordinary creativity of Mbah Marsono.



Figure 1. Mbah Marsono

(Photo from [20]; on March 18, 2020)

Furthermore, according to Mbah Marsono, *wayang sada/sodo* is a wayang creation with the theme of being environmentally friendly, *go green*. Apart from using natural materials, *wayang* stories also raise the theme of the environment in their performances. So, through the appearance of *wayang sada/sodo* there is a message to preserve the environment. It's because *wayang sada/sodo* is made from coconut tree waste or from coconut parts that can be cultivated. In addition, the stories that are shown sometimes also talked about how to preserve the environment by representing the names of the characters from the parts of the coconut tree names in Javanese.



Figure 2. *Wayang Sada/Sodo* (Arjuna and Srikandi)

Moreover, to preserve the existence of *wayang sada/sodo*, Mbah Marsono taught this skill to a deaf child who was very talented and interested in wayang. She is Rofitasari Rahayu, a resident of Grogol V, Bejiharjo Village, Karangmojo District, which is a neighboring village with Mbah Marsono.

The process of Indonesia language learning and cultural introduction using *wayang sada/sodo*

Learning Indonesian and introducing culture using *wayang sada/sodo* is very meaningful because the learners can see directly the part of Indonesian culture that is a medium of learning. It can change the learners' views about Indonesian culture which is very diverse, as conveyed by the one of foreign learners, that:

"Learning Indonesian with wayang sada helps me get to know part of Indonesian culture".

In addition to providing a meaningful learning process, the use of *wayang sada/sodo* is also very interesting for the learners so that it can motivate them to be more enthusiastic while learning. This motivation arises because *wayang sada/sodo* is a new thing for foreign learners so that it raises their curiosity to learn.

Then, learning Indonesian and introducing culture using *wayang sada/sodo* are also interactive because *wayang* demonstrations are used to get acquainted, share stories, and convey information, especially about Indonesian culture. For example, the use of *wayang* Arjuna is applied to introduce Arjuna's character, his passion (this is part of cultural information) by using Indonesian according to the rules, this is as stated by one of foreign learners, that:

"I can get to know wayang characters and find out information about these characters besides learning Indonesian."

Furthermore, *wayang* is used to convey assignments, either reading assignments or dictation with proper sentence structure. So, the language learning delivered can be in the form of reading and writing; hear and speak. This can help students remember the subject matter for a long time. In addition, as explained above, the use of *wayang sada/sodo* can also introduce Indonesian culture directly, both offline and online. The process of learning can be seen as below:

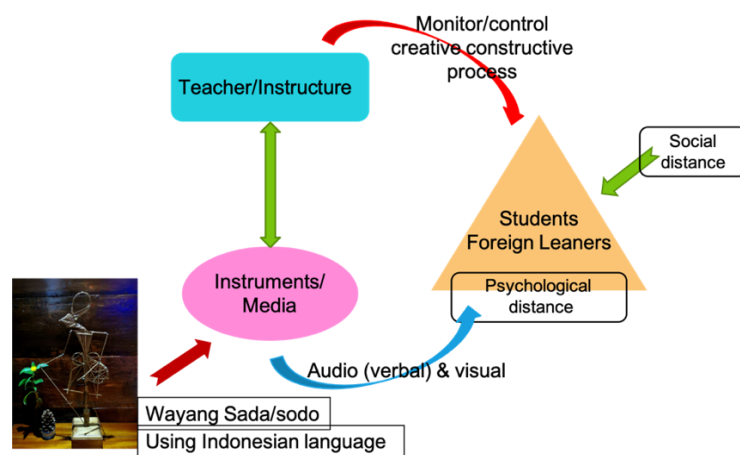


Figure 3. The process of Indonesia language learning and cultural introduction using *wayang sada/sodo*

Thus, learning Indonesian and introducing culture using *wayang sada/sodo* can motivate foreign learners in an audio-visual way (in accordance with dual coding theory) with good control from the teacher with a constructive creative process (in accordance with input process as monitoring model) so as to reduce the social and psychological distance (in accordance with acculturation theory) of learners by knowing firsthand the socio-cultural conditions of Indonesia using wayang media. This can raise the interest of foreign students to learn Indonesian language and culture as well as keep memories of the richness of Indonesian culture.

Identifying and strengthening Schumann's acculturation theory and Krashen's monitoring system with Paivio's dual coding theory on Indonesian language learning and cultural introduction.

The acculturation model of L2 learning is influenced by social factors (conditions around learning, including culture) and psychological factors (the convenience of language learning that encourages the L2 learning motivation) that learners receive when learning L2 dealing directly with native speakers. In the case of using *wayang sada/sodo*, the learning process provides comfort for the learners with an interesting and interactive situation so as to create motivation to learn Indonesian language and culture.

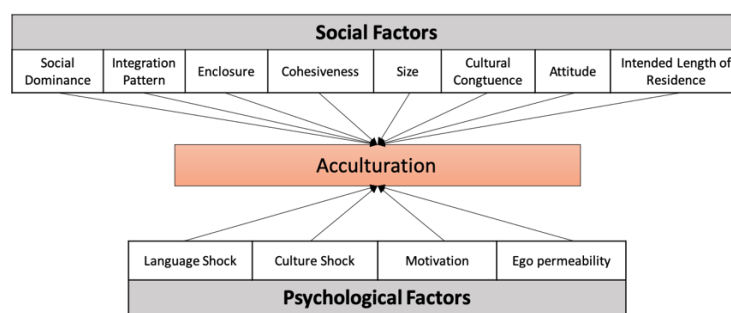


Figure 4. Schumann’s acculturation model
(based on Schumann’s acculturation theory [9])

Figure 4 above is a model acculturation scheme adapted from acculturation theory by Schumann. There are social and psychological factors that influence the success of a second or foreign language learner, especially in learning Indonesian language and culture.

The monitoring system in L2 learning shows that input plays an important role in the process of listening to language use. The best method for processing input in this system is to convey something that is easily understood by the learners in a comfortable situation (without anxiety) and contains information that is really wanted to be heard by the learners. This method allows learners to learn L2 when they are 'ready' and language improvement can be done through communicative (understandable) input without coercion. So, it is understood that the acquisition process of initiating speech and the learning system 'monitoring' speech to check and correct errors can be carried out both in comfortable situations (without anxiety) and with interesting information. Related to this monitoring system, learning Indonesian language and culture with *wayang sada/sodo* can prepare learners with good motivation without coercion (but with interesting things) and with information that learners really want to hear, such as information on *wayang* characters being demonstrated using Indonesian which is in accordance with good and correct linguistic rules.

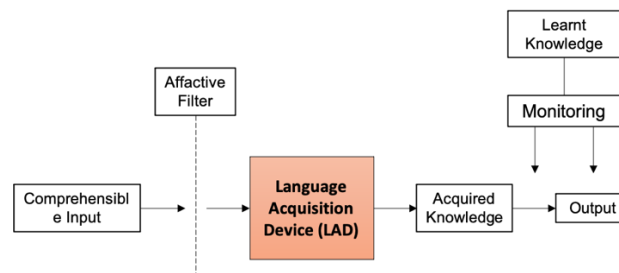


Figure 5. Input process

(based on Krashen’s monitoring model [11])

Figure 5 above is a schematic of the input process in the monitoring system adapted from the monitoring model by Krashen. There are factors of learner readiness (learning without coercion) and interesting information that affect the success of a second or foreign language learner, especially in learning Indonesian language and culture.

Furthermore, dual coding theory asserts that verbal associations and visual images can expand a learner's learning process (as well as L2 learning) and strengthen a learner's memory when recalling information. Thus, it can be understood that the learning process, especially L2 language learning can be supported by materials and media that can be seen visually and heard verbally. These two codes allow the learner to remember the information the learner has learned (long term memory). Therefore, the use of *wayang sada/sodo* in learning Indonesian (as an L2 or foreign language) and introduction to Indonesian culture can help learners to remember the subject matter for a long time. This is because the use of *wayang* media is related to visual codes (physical of *wayang* characters) and verbal codes (submission of information about *wayang* characters using Indonesian).

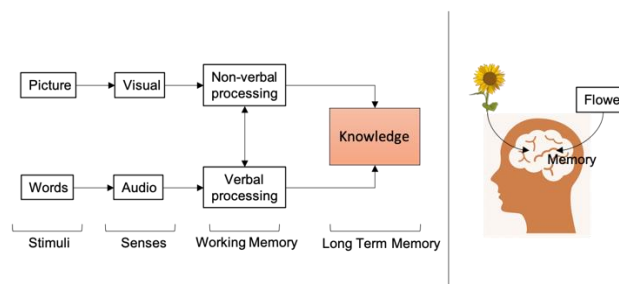


Figure 6. Verbal and non-verbal input knowledge

(based on Paivio’s dual coding theory [12])

Figure 6 above is the association scheme of visual and verbal (audio) codes adapted from Paivio's dual coding theory. The visual and verbal (audio) code factors affect the success of learners while learning, especially second or foreign language learners, which in this case is learning Indonesian language and culture.

Based on the explanation above, it can be conveyed a "new concept" in language learning and cultural introduction, especially Indonesia for foreign learners by using *wayang sada/sodo*, namely the "interactive socio-cultural model". The concept is based on the identification, association, and strengthening of three theories, namely the Schumann acculturation theory (especially with regard to social background and motivation—for psychological factors), Khrasen monitoring model, and Paivio dual coding theory. Thus, the use of *wayang sada/sodo* media can make the learners easily understand the learning materials and the learning process becomes interesting if it pays attention to the psychological and social factors of learners by providing attractive and interactive material input (so that learners do not feel forced to learn) and associating this input with visual and verbal codes so that subject matter can be remembered for a long time (long term memory).

Conclusions and Suggestion

Conclusions

Wayang sada/sodo is a puppet made of sada/sodo which means young coconut leaf sticks, commonly found in the Gunungkidul area, Yogyakarta. *Wayang sada/sodo* is an artistic and cultural asset created by residents of Padukuhan Gunungbang, Bejiharjo Cultural Village, Karangmojo District which has become a new variety of *wayang* art;

Indonesian language learning and cultural introduction using *wayang sada/sodo* is very meaningful, interesting (attractive), interactive, introducing Indonesian culture directly, both offline and online; used audio-visually with good control from the teacher by creative constructive process so as to reduce the social and psychological distance of the student by knowing firsthand the social and cultural conditions of Indonesia with wayang media.

The use of *wayang sada/sodo* being a novelty of theory by strengthening and combining Schumann's acculturation theory (social and psychological factors with new cultural adjustment), Krashen's monitoring system theory (creative constructive process), and Paivio's dual coding theory (audio and visual) in Indonesian language learning as well as culture for foreign learners. The scheme of the novelty of concept (second/foreign language learning as well as culture) like below (interactive socio-cultural model):

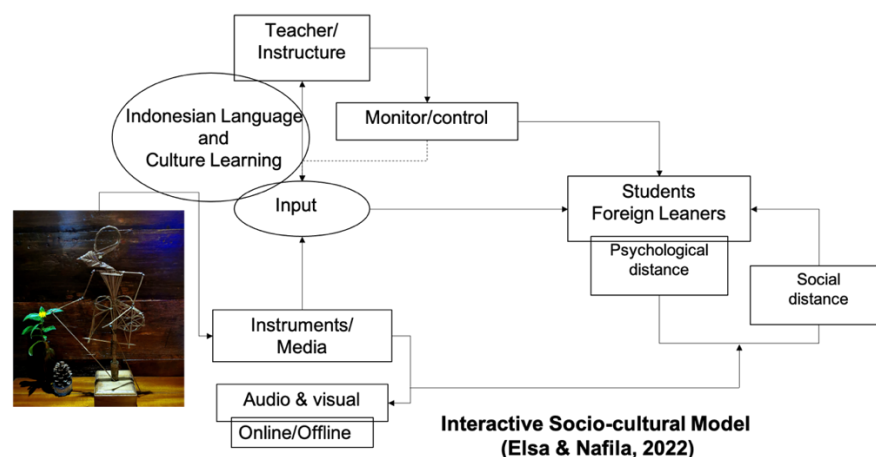


Figure 7. The interactive socio-cultural model

in second/foreign language learning and cultural introduction

Suggestion

Every cultural instrument in other places in Indonesia or other countries can be researched and used as a media of language learning and cultural introduction for foreign learners.

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