



Dynamics of Cultural Transfer in Pluricultural Learning of Bahasa Indonesia untuk Penutur Asing

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Abstract: As students of BIPA (Bahasa Indonesia untuk Penutur Asing or Indonesian for Foreign Speakers) learning, cultural aspects are fundamental to understand. One reason is that having cultural awareness can increase the success of the language learning process, including BIPA learning. This study aims to describe the dynamics of cultural transfer and its challenges in Indonesian language learning for pluricultural-based foreign speakers. This research applies a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. The results indicate that cultural learning for BIPA students is achieved through three key aspects: cultural products, cultural values, and cultural behavior. Inherent teaching methods are more recommended than separate teaching methods. The challenges of cultural transfer in BIPA learning start with: 1) very different cultural backgrounds; 2) BIPA programs tend to be theoretical; 3) Indonesian culture is very diverse and complex; 4) cultural education requires teachers to have the capacity and experience in cultural understanding and communication; and 5) the fast speech tempo of Indonesian society. This article provides a comprehensive overview of the dynamic process of cultural transfer and the challenges of learning Indonesian for pluricultural-based foreign speakers. This research is expected to contribute to the development of BIPA teaching-learning activities that are more adaptive, contextual, and capable of enhancing cultural understanding for learners.

Keywords: BIPA; cultural transfer; pluricultural

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INTRODUCTION

It is undeniable that the ability to communicate in two or more languages is indispensable in the current era of globalization. Among the many languages spoken worldwide, one that has attracted many foreigners is Indonesian. Along with the development of the Indonesian nation in the international arena, Indonesian has become a language that is considered important in various countries. In fact, many foreigners, especially students from various parts of the world, are interested in learning Indonesian for various purposes. In accordance with the opinion of (Susilo, 2016), seeing the various purposes of foreign learners studying Indonesian, it can be grouped into three main objectives of foreigners learning Indonesian: 1) the desire of learners to have basic interpersonal communication skills; 2) trying to master the concepts and principles of Indonesian language learning; and 3) wanting to explore Indonesian culture in all its aspects. Setiawati, as cited in Hermawan and Sukoyo (2023), describes learning as an active effort that directs individual behavior through stimulation and response to the surrounding environment.

With the increasing number of foreigners interested in learning Indonesian, the Indonesian government has initiated a program in response. This program can serve as a stepping stone for foreign speakers to understand Indonesian as a second, third, or subsequent language, as well as to grasp the communication habits of Indonesian society. The program in question is the Bahasa Indonesia bagi Penutur Asing (BIPA), or Indonesian Language for Foreign Speakers, an Indonesian language learning program designed for foreign speakers to learn Indonesian (Andriana et al., 2024). The government's activities in implementing the BIPA program are aligned with the vision of the Language Development and Development Agency. This aligns with Asteria (2017), who explains that the Indonesian government's efforts in developing BIPA learning are in line with the vision of the Language Development and Development Agency, which aims to make Indonesian an international language among nations by presenting a positive image of Indonesia. According to Amin (2021) and Permatasari et al. (2022), several universities in Indonesia have introduced BIPA programs, increasing the development of interest in learning Indonesian among foreign speakers. In BIPA, understanding of language cannot be separated from the cultural context behind it, because language itself is a cultural product within a nation's society. Language and culture are two interconnected entities (Husna & Khaerunnisa, 2022; Chairunnisa, 2018). Thus, the two cannot be separated.

When studying BIPA, teachers must provide insight into the identity of the Indonesian nation, either directly or indirectly (Asteria & Nofitasari, 2023; Sari & Cahyani, 2020). As a BIPA student, understanding cultural aspects is crucial. One of the reasons is that having cultural awareness can increase the success of the language learning process, including BIPA learning (Communicative & Matters, n.d.). This aligns with Alalou's opinion (Murtianis et al., 2019), who emphasized that culture can enhance the quality of language learning. The existence of cultural aspects included in the learning material is a good start for introducing the ins and outs of Indonesia as a whole to BIPA students. Learning Indonesian with cultural content involves learning Indonesian by incorporating the cultural values of Indonesian society, utilizing Indonesian cultural teaching materials, and adopting the values, senses, and ways of thinking prevalent in Indonesian society (Widianto & Zulaeha, 2016).

In previous research on obstacles to cultural transfer in BIPA learning, the development of pluricultural-based BIPA teaching materials, as well as the introduction of traditional Indonesian games in BIPA classes, has revealed a lack of information regarding specific descriptions of pluricultural-based BIPA learning and innovations to overcome these obstacles. This article explores the dynamics of cultural transfer for effective and sustainable BIPA learning. Based on the explanation, this research contributes to the development of the scientific field by providing a comprehensive analysis of the dynamic process of cultural transfer in BIPA learning and its challenges. This analysis can serve as a reference for future studies in language education, intercultural communication, and applied linguistics. By identifying the specific mechanisms through which cultural elements are integrated into language instruction, this study offers valuable insights for curriculum developers, educators, and policymakers in designing more effective BIPA learning strategies. Additionally, this research addresses gaps in previous studies by presenting innovative approaches to overcoming obstacles in cultural transfer, ensuring that BIPA learners not only acquire linguistic competence but also develop a deeper understanding of culture. The findings of this study are expected to enhance the theoretical framework of pluricultural-based language learning and provide empirical evidence that supports the role of culture in second language acquisition, ultimately strengthening the position of Indonesian as an international language. This study aims to describe the dynamic process and challenges of cultural transfer in BIPA (Bahasa Indonesia untuk Penutur Asing or Indonesian for Foreign Speakers).

METHODS

This research applies a qualitative descriptive approach to analyze the dynamics of cultural transfer in BIPA (Bahasa Indonesia untuk Penutur Asing or Indonesian for Foreign Speakers) learning. The qualitative method allows researchers to thoroughly describe and analyze the objects of study by gathering detailed insights from various sources (Mustika et al., 2023). According to Adlini's opinion (Mudrik et al., 2024), the descriptive approach is particularly suitable for this study as it aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomena being investigated, specifically the cultural transfer in BIPA learning. By employing this method, researchers can capture the experiences, perspectives, and challenges faced by both teachers and students within the context of BIPA education at Universitas Negeri Surabaya. The research subjects consist of BIPA teachers and students at Universitas Negeri Surabaya. The sample size comprises one teacher and six students, selected through purposive sampling to ensure representation from diverse proficiency levels and cultural backgrounds.

The primary objective of this research is to investigate the process of cultural transfer in BIPA learning, with a focus on the experiences of both teachers and students. Specifically, the study seeks to uncover the strategies, challenges, and outcomes associated with integrating cultural elements into language instruction. By examining these aspects, the research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of how cultural knowledge is transmitted and acquired in BIPA classrooms, ultimately providing insights that can enhance the effectiveness of BIPA teaching and learning practices.

The data collection techniques used in this study are interviews and observations. In-depth interviews were conducted with BIPA teachers to explore their experiences in facilitating cultural transfer. Direct observations were carried out in BIPA classes at Universitas Negeri Surabaya to examine real-time interactions and cultural integration in the learning process. To ensure the validity of the findings, this study employs data triangulation by cross-referencing information from interviews, observations, and relevant documents. Data triangulation, as defined by Murtianis et al. (2019), is a technique that cross-verifies data by combining multiple sources or methods. In this study, triangulation was achieved by comparing data from interviews, observations, and relevant documents.

This approach not only strengthened the credibility of the findings but also provided a more holistic understanding of the research problem. By integrating diverse data sources, the researchers validated their conclusions and ensured the reliability of the study's outcomes. This triangulation method enhances the reliability of the study and offers a comprehensive perspective on the dynamics of cultural transfer in BIPA learning.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

BIPA programs in Indonesia are primarily designed for various skill levels, ranging from basic to intermediate and advanced (Oktavia, 2019). This provides an opportunity for non-native speakers to start learning at a basic level and progress to higher levels as their abilities progress. The BIPA program encompasses various components, including vocabulary learning, grammar, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Learning materials cover topics related to Indonesian culture, history, and social realities. Culture is deeply connected to society. Melville J. Herskovits and Bronislaw Malinowski argue in the book Soerjono Soekanto (Izza, 2023) that everything in society is determined by the culture of the society itself. One of the advantages of the BIPA program in Indonesia is the integration of cultural elements. This includes an introduction to Indonesian culture, social norms, cultural values, and daily practices (Andriyanto et al., 2021). This program supports a deeper understanding of language in a cultural context. An example is the implementation of BIPA learning at Universitas Negeri Surabaya. In the classroom teaching and learning process, there is a two-way interaction between teachers and students, as well as among students. The cultural differences between students significantly influence the cultural transfer process in BIPA learning. Cultural transfer is considered successful if both parties understand that they have cultural differences and similarities. This is also in line with the opinion that each individual has unique differences, which have both strengths and weaknesses. These strengths are developed into expertise, while weaknesses are transformed into strengths. In this way, the chances of success in communicating will be greater (Yuniatin & Asteria, 2022). Therefore, in intercultural communication, it is essential to be more open and understand the perceptions of other cultures, thereby avoiding premature judgment and minimizing conflict (Holliday, 2013).

BIPA programs often include complementary materials such as culture-based integration (local wisdom) and Indonesian literature (Utama et al., 2024). This helps students interact more deeply with the Indonesian language and culture. Learning in the curriculum usually begins with an introduction to Indonesian culture. From a cultural perspective, culture can manifest in various forms, including cultural products, values, and behaviors. Cultural products can be some tangible and visible results of human work, such as food, clothing, traditional musical instruments, temples, and remo dance, among others. Cultural values are principles held by society to form norms, for example, in the form of values such as cooperation and courtesy ethics. This includes things like how to interact with someone older and show respect to guests. In comparison, cultural behavior refers to actions carried out by society, encompassing daily activities, such as those that are permitted and prohibited. This is in accordance with Koenjtraningrat's opinion in Agustina (Rahmawati et al., 2023), which means that culture is divided into three forms: culture is ideas, norms, and regulations that are invisible to time; culture is also interpreted as community activities; and culture is also interpreted as a real, observable physical object. These three forms of culture need to be taught at different portions and levels.

Furthermore, Indonesian literary works such as folk tales, fairy tales, and pantuns are also part of BIPA learning because they provide insight into Indonesian history, myths, and cultural values (Ilawati & Nurlina, 2025). In BIPA learning, the approach or method used to integrate culture can be done either on its own as a free course (separate) or integrated in the context of daily life (attached). The teaching method is separate, meaning that aspects of Indonesian culture are taught separately in special courses. What is meant by 'inherent' is that there is an insertion of Indonesian insight into the topics taught. For example, when studying *soto* or *tumpeng* (a type of food), the teacher will integrate information regarding how it is prepared and the values or philosophy it embodies. BIPA Unesa teachers recommend embedded teaching methods because language learning should be integrated with any topic. This is depicted in Figure 1.

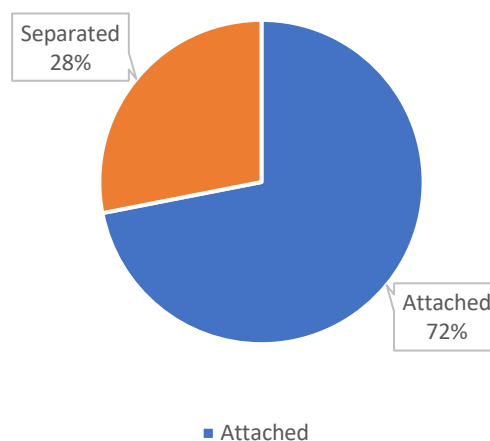


Figure 1. Recommended Teaching Methods in Bahasa Indonesia for Foreign Speakers

BIPA learning is closely related to bilingualism. Bilingualism can be interpreted as the use of two languages by a speaker in his interactions with other people (Murtianis et al., 2019). Bilingualism in BIPA learning can occur when students use two or more languages simultaneously in the learning process. For example, BIPA students use their native language as they learn Indonesian. Bilingual learning can occur when participants use their native language to understand Indonesian concepts and vice versa. Based on the diagram, it can be seen that the attached teaching methods are more recommended, with a result of 72%. Besides, the separated teaching methods are not recommended for use in teaching BIPA, with a result of 28%.

Some BIPA programs involve foreign speakers in joint activities with local communities, such as visits to traditional markets, villages, or cultural celebrations. This allows direct interaction with Indonesian culture. Teaching culture in the BIPA curriculum has a significant positive impact on foreign speakers' understanding and competence in Indonesian. Cultural teaching helps students understand Indonesian in a cultural context. They learn why certain words and expressions are used in specific situations, developing a deeper understanding of the language's nuances. Students become more sensitive to social norms, cultural values, and conventions in Indonesian society. They understand the diversity of language used in everyday situations as well as in social interactions. Cultural treasures help learners avoid mistakes in message exchange that may arise if they do not understand the cultural context.

There are several challenges and barriers to cultural transfer when learning BIPA. Foreigners have very different histories and cultural backgrounds. This aligns with the opinion that the BIPA class is interesting because it comprises students from various countries, each with different cultural backgrounds (Murtianis et al., 2019; Rosa, 2024). The BIPA program can overcome these challenges by providing a gradual introduction to Indonesian culture, starting with basic concepts and gradually increasing (Suyitno, 2017). The use of case studies, cultural comparisons, and participatory activities in a cultural context can help learners integrate better into Indonesian culture. There are examples of cultural differences between Indonesians and foreigners. For instance, one notable difference is the way Indonesians and foreigners eat, with the majority of Indonesians typically eating with their hands. In contrast, foreigners eat with specific utensils, such as chopsticks. The other challenge is that BIPA programs tend to be theoretical, with less in-depth explanation and discussion of the culture directly. This can reduce learners' real experience of Indonesian culture. Incorporating practical experience into the curriculum is one way to address this issue, which can be initiated by collecting data related to various examples of local culture. This aligns with the opinion that the introduction of local culture in teaching materials can be started by collecting samples of local culture, such as Sulawesi culture, which can be divided into several categories (Amin, 2021), for example, traditional food, tourist attractions that are iconic to South Sulawesi, typical Bugis Makassar dances, and local Sulawesi cultural products such as Bugis silk. Additionally, involving learners in hands-on activities such as cooking Indonesian food, attending traditional ceremonies, or interacting with local communities can significantly enhance cultural understanding.

Furthermore, Indonesian culture is very diverse and complex. This aligns with the opinion that Indonesian culture evolves as people seek to incorporate elements of globalization (Winarna, 2023; Nahak, 2019; Setiawati, 2024). The BIPA program is expected to cover various aspects of Indonesian culture, allowing foreign speakers to immerse themselves in it. This may involve learning about regional cultures, languages, and the diversity of religions and ethnicities. Cultural education requires teachers to possess the capacity and experience necessary for cultural understanding and effective communication. BIPA teacher training and development, including cultural aspects, should be an integral part of the curriculum. This ensures that teachers have the knowledge and skills to support cultural transfer. In line with this, BIPA teachers must be familiar with the area in their country that is the target of their teaching, as well as the delivery of learning materials (Salma et al., 2023). Indonesian people's speech tempo is another challenge. Learners often hear conversations and explanations about Indonesian culture. When explaining Indonesian culture to foreign speakers or BIPA learners, teachers often speak at a pace that is too fast, making it difficult for BIPA learners to grasp the message conveyed by the speaker. Coupled with their vocabulary mastery, it is not too much. This is also in line with the opinion that states the obstacle causing foreign learners to have difficulty mastering the structure of Indonesian is the mastery of vocabulary and its formation, which they are not familiar with (Ryee, 2019).

These challenges or obstacles can hinder the process of cultural transfer, so the role of BIPA teachers, lecturers, and instructors in guiding learners to understand and absorb Indonesian culture is crucial. Teachers can integrate learning about Indonesian culture into language learning. This includes conveying information about Indonesia's history, values, customs, and social norms (Fauzan et al., 2023). Teachers can also organize hands-on experiences such as visits to historical sites, cultural celebrations, or interactions with local communities or people. This helps learners experience the culture for themselves (Ristiyanis & Widiyanto, 2019). Teachers can utilize educational materials, such as Indonesian movies, music, literature, and information, to help students understand various aspects of the culture (Rachmayani, 2015). Teachers should always be willing to answer learners' questions related to Indonesian culture, even those that seem simple or unrelated to the learning context. In addition, intercultural dialogue facilities encourage learners to interact with native speakers or members of the local community, helping them absorb Indonesian culture. BIPA programs often include tests

and assessments designed to measure learners' progress in enabling them to learn about Indonesian culture. These tests include oral tests, which are conducted at UAS by Unesa students through question-and-answer activities, written tests, which involve working on questions, field studies, when BIPA students participate in Indonesian Department Week activities organized by the Department's Student Association, and project-based tests, when BIPA students create PowerPoint presentations. The BIPA program emphasizes the importance of having qualified and experienced teachers to teach Indonesian to foreigners. Trained and experienced teachers can provide a more effective learning experience. Some of these assessments are illustrated in Figures 2 and 3.



Figure 2. Students Answering Spoken Final Test



Figure 3. Students Presenting PowerPoint

The successful application of cultural transfer to BIPA students can be measured through several indicators that reflect their integration into Indonesian culture. One form of this is when they can communicate fluently and appropriately using Indonesian in everyday contexts. BIPA students who can understand and apply vocabulary and expressions in cultural contexts demonstrate success in transferring cultural knowledge into their language skills. Additionally, the active participation of BIPA students in local community activities can also be considered an indicator of successful cultural transfer. Students who are actively involved in such activities show a deep interest in Indonesian culture. This success not only enriches the students' experience but also strengthens the cultural ties between them and Indonesia. Thus, the success of cultural transfer in BIPA education extends beyond language skills to include participation and appreciation of culture in daily life.

In line with that, BIPA learning cannot be separated from the role of technology. Technology supports teachers in realizing learning objectives. Technology can be utilized as a learning resource, a learning medium, or for evaluation purposes. A BIPA teacher must be creative and skilled in utilizing the sophistication of today's technology. With the help of technology, BIPA teachers can search for related learning resources, such as videos found on the internet, or create their own. With the help of technology, BIPA teachers can search for related learning resources, such as videos found on the internet or created by themselves. Teachers who creatively and innovatively adapt technological advances in classroom learning have a significant effect on student learning achievement (Masito et al., 2023; Difla et al., 2024). Technology can be used as a teaching medium, such as finding reading materials for enrichment. Then, technology can also be used as an evaluation or assessment tool. Thus, BIPA learning will make learners more interested and less prone to boredom and monotony. This aligns with the opinion that the teacher, as the first figure to teach Indonesian to learners, should make Indonesian language learning more engaging (Tafonao, 2018). With the existence of engaging learning, learners indirectly become more interested in learning Indonesian. BIPA teachers can use interactive multimedia in the learning process. By presenting information through images, videos, and writing, this interactive multimedia can help students understand cultural material that has abstract concepts (Sari & Mutiara, 2022). To enhance the effectiveness of BIPA learning, teachers and learners must work together to continue learning, gather

information, and practice it. Teachers must design and prepare the BIPA learning module in a way that allows for pluralism-based approaches, starting from the planning, implementation, and evaluation stages, highlighting its strengths and weaknesses (Mulyati, 2019). The three stages must continue to be followed for the next lesson. Meanwhile, students must also be willing to explore Indonesian insights beyond those taught in class by their teachers. Students must try to overcome the fear of practicing what they have learned. If this is done consistently, their level of confidence will continue to increase over time.

Evaluation and review of BIPA programs is a crucial process to ensure that the learning is adequate and appropriate. BIPA programs in Indonesia should have clear policies and approaches regarding cultural transfer. This includes the extent to which Indonesian culture is incorporated into the school curriculum and the degree to which learners understand and appreciate it. It is essential to ensure that Indonesian culture is effectively integrated into the country's educational curriculum. The program should provide a range of diverse learning materials, including those that incorporate cultural aspects. This can include cultural texts, videos, music, and media from other sources. Cultural content presented through various BIPA learning media can stimulate foreigners' motivation and interest, making it easier for Indonesian learners to understand and absorb the Indonesian language and culture simultaneously (Salama & Kadir, 2022). In line with this, learners should have the opportunity to experience Indonesian culture firsthand, such as by visiting historical sites, participating in cultural celebrations, or interacting with native speakers by inviting them or visiting their homes. Interacting with native speakers can provide benefits for educational institutions or organizations that invite them to participate. Learning integrated with local culture can be experienced directly, providing learners with very meaningful learning experiences (Sumarni et al., 2022). They can bring new perspectives, current knowledge, and practical ideas that may not be taught in the institution (Hamdiah, 2023). Teachers need a way to measure learners' understanding and absorption of Indonesian culture. The teaching and learning process is considered successful if the material taught to learners can be well absorbed and applied in real life. Thus, a match between the teacher and the learners is necessary so that the teaching and learning process can run smoothly. Learning materials can be absorbed well by learners if comfort is built into the process between teachers and learners (Rusydiyah et al., 2021). BIPA teachers must also be trained and fully supported to teach good cultural transfer. It is essential to regularly evaluate the BIPA program and update it in accordance with cultural and social changes in Indonesia. This will help ensure the program remains relevant and effective in transferring culture to each learner.

Cultural transfer in BIPA learning plays a crucial role in preserving and promoting the Indonesian language and culture at both national and international levels. By integrating cultural elements into language instruction, BIPA programs help expand the global reach of Indonesian, fostering its recognition as an international language. Furthermore, cultural transfer ensures that foreign learners not only acquire linguistic competence but also develop an appreciation for Indonesian values, traditions, and social norms. This deeper cultural understanding strengthens intercultural dialogue and global engagement with Indonesian heritage. Additionally, BIPA learning serves as a form of cultural diplomacy, enhancing Indonesia's soft power by fostering connections between nations through language and culture. The inclusion of cultural transfer in BIPA programs also supports tourism and economic opportunities by encouraging learners to engage more meaningfully with Indonesian society. In this way, the sustainable integration of cultural transfer in BIPA education safeguards Indonesia's linguistic and cultural identity while enhancing its global relevance.

CONCLUSION

BIPA learning is the primary focus of efforts to facilitate individuals from various countries in understanding and communicating in Indonesian. A deep understanding of Indonesian cannot be achieved by focusing solely on linguistic aspects; it must also encompass cultural aspects. Cultural learning for BIPA students is conducted through three aspects: cultural products, cultural values, and cultural behavior. BIPA teachers recommend embedded teaching methods rather than separate teaching methods. The attached teaching methods are more recommended, with a result of 72%. Besides, the separated teaching methods are not recommended for use in teaching BIPA, with a result of 28%. In its implementation, learners experience challenges and obstacles in BIPA learning, including: 1) different cultural backgrounds; 2) learning that tends to be theoretical; 3) Indonesian culture is very complex; 4) inexperienced teachers; and 5) the fast tempo of Indonesian people's speech. Cultural transfer in BIPA learning not only supports an understanding of Indonesian culture but also contributes to the preservation of the Indonesian language and culture at both national and international levels. Furthermore, this research can contribute to enriching the scientific literature in the fields of language learning and cultural studies.

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