



Language variation in BIPA teaching: innovative solutions for effective language learning in communication competencies

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abstract

The Indonesian for Foreign Speakers (BIPA) program faces challenges in accommodating language variations, including local dialects, registers, and diverse cultural contexts. This article analyzes innovative approaches in BIPA teaching at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, including communicative, multimodal, audiolingual, and real-task-based learning methods. The research uses a qualitative approach of case studies with data collection techniques in the form of observation, interviews, and documentation. The findings show that this combination of methods is effective in improving the communication competence of BIPA students, both formally and informally. Direct interaction with local communities, integration of digital technology, and visual-audio media enrich students' learning experience and strengthen their pragmatic abilities. This article recommends a language variation-based approach as a strategic solution to create relevant, adaptive, and contextual learning in support of the success of BIPA programs at the international level.

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Introductions

The Indonesian Program for Foreign Speakers (BIPA) at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta has undergone significant development in recent years. An increase in the number of foreign students interested in learning Indonesian. However, one of the biggest challenges in teaching BIPA is the diversity of language variations that must be faced, ranging from dialects to different registers. This language variation is a linguistic phenomenon that occurs in various regions of Indonesia, which affects the way foreign students understand and use Indonesian in daily communication (Douglas, 2007). In this context, language variation, which includes differences in dialects becomes an important aspect that must be considered in the teaching of BIPA. BIPA students at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta come from a variety of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, so understanding language variations is very important in helping them master Indonesian effectively. According to Trudgill (2000), language variation is one of the riches that reflects the cultural diversity of a society, but it also poses challenges in language learning (Claire, 1998).

The teaching of BIPA requires an innovative approach to address this variation in language. Various studies have shown that the use of adaptive teaching methods, such as task-based learning, intercultural conversation simulations, and the integration of digital technology in language learning, is able to improve the communication competence of foreign students (David, 2004). This innovation not only focuses on linguistic aspects, but also on students' pragmatic ability to interact with native speakers. In addition, the BIPA program at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta also implements a learning method based on direct experience through field practice, which allows foreign students to interact directly with the local community. This interaction provides an opportunity for them to understand the variety of languages used in various social situations, such as in markets, places of worship, and educational institutions. This is in line with the opinion of Kramsch (1998) who emphasized the importance of understanding the social context in language learning (Jack, 2014)

The importance of innovation in BIPA teaching lies not only in technical language mastery, but also in the ability of students to understand the cultural nuances that exist in Indonesian. Therefore, learning solutions that integrate language variations and social contexts are expected to be able to improve the communication competence of BIPA students, both in formal and informal situations. According to Richards and Rodgers (2014), effective learning is one that is able to integrate linguistic aspects with relevant language use situations (Petter, 2000)

Thus, language variations in BIPA teaching at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta require innovative and adaptive learning solutions. An approach that pays attention to the diversity of languages and cultures in Indonesia is expected to help BIPA students develop better communication skills that are relevant to the context of communication in Indonesia. This language variation-based learning is a strategic step in increasing the effectiveness of teaching Indonesian for foreign speakers (Jack, 2014).

This research is urgent because it seeks to create a teaching method that not only teaches Indonesian as a language, but also functional and contextual communication competence, especially in the use of language variations in real-life situations. The results of this research will make a significant contribution to the development of curriculum and teaching methods in the BIPA program, especially at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. This research will also provide guidance for teachers in designing learning materials that are more innovative and in accordance with the needs of foreign students, as well as help improve the quality and reputation of BIPA teaching at the international level.

Method

This study uses a qualitative approach of case studies to understand language variations in BIPA teaching and explore innovative solutions implemented. The subject of the research is a BIPA student at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. Data were collected through participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation to gain an understanding of the challenges of language variation as well as innovative media used in teaching. The data were analyzed by qualitative descriptive analysis through reduction, categorization, and conclusion drawn, using triangulation techniques to ensure the validity of the data. This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of innovative strategies in BIPA teaching, such as learning with a communicative approach, a multimodal approach and an audiolingual method, in improving the communication competence of foreign students.

The subjects of this research consist of BIPA teachers and foreign learners who take part in the BIPA program at the UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Language Center Jakarta. The participants totaled 8 people who covered Chinese, Thai, Vietnamese, and Turkish language backgrounds. To ensure the validity and credibility of the data, this study uses source triangulation (comparing data from observations, interviews, and documentation) and triangulation methods (using multiple data collection methods to test the reliability and findings). In addition, a member check is carried out, where the results of the interview will be confirmed to the participants to ensure the accuracy of the data interpretation.

Result and Discussions

BIPA students stated that language variations such as local dialects (e.g., Betawi and Javanese dialects) are one of the biggest challenges they face. Some students expressed confusion in understanding the difference between formal Indonesian and everyday language that is often used by native speakers in informal situations. This research provides several innovative learning methods to improve BIPA student communication, namely with learning methods with a communicative approach, a multimodal approach and an audiolingual method. In addition, a direct experience-based approach through interaction with local communities has a positive impact on understanding language variations.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

This method emphasizes real communication skills using everyday language through interactive activities such as role-playing, discussion, or simulation of daily life situations (Doeglas, 2014). The communicative approach in BIPA learning has a number of significant advantages, especially in accustoming students to use Indonesian contextually. Through this method, students are invited to understand and communicate in situations relevant to daily life, such as going to the market, ordering food at a restaurant, or asking for directions on the street. This activity not only provides practical experience, but also strengthens students' ability to apply the language directly to their needs in the real world. In addition, this approach gradually increases students' confidence in speaking, as they get the opportunity to use the language in a supportive and interactive atmosphere. For example, vocabulary card games that require students to structure sentences based on a specific context are not only fun but also effective in enriching vocabulary and grammar skills. As such, this approach is not only relevant but also capable of creating meaningful and applicable learning experiences.

This activity involved students in a direct visit to Taman Mini Indonesia Indah, East Jakarta. Interacting with the local community using Indonesian provides a very valuable real experience for BIPA students at UIN Jakarta. In this activity, students are invited to go directly into the community, such as communicating with traders, artists, or local figures in certain areas. During the interaction, they document the experience through simple interviews that dig into information about local life, culture, or traditions. The results of this activity are then processed into written reports or videos presented in Indonesian, training their ability to write and speak effectively.

In addition to deepening language skills, this activity also opens students' insight into the diversity of Indonesian culture, so that they not only learn the language, but also understand the values contained in it. This supports the development of contextual communication skills while strengthening connections with local communities.

Multimodal Approach

The multimodal approach in learning Indonesian for Foreign Speakers (BIPA) has proven to be effective in improving students' language skills through the integration of various media such as video, audio, images, and text. This research was conducted on BIPA students at UIN Jakarta. For eight weeks, students take classes with a multimodal approach that includes the use of video conversations of everyday life, podcasts, popular Indonesian songs, as well as visual assignments such as creating posters or infographics in Indonesian.

Table 1. Learning Outcomes with a Multimodal Approach

No	Indicator	Accessibility
1	Improving Listening Skills	Students who learned through video conversations and podcasts showed significant improvements in understanding everyday vocabulary and Indonesian intonation. Hearing tests before and after the program showed an average improvement of 35%.
2	More Contextual Speaking Skills	By imitating the style of speaking in videos and songs, students are more confident in using everyday expressions such as greetings, requests, and thanks. Post-program interviews show that 80% of students feel more comfortable talking to local students.
3	Writing and Reading Skills Development	The task of creating posters and infographics on local cultural themes encourages students to explore new vocabulary. The analysis of the final project showed that students were able to use a more varied vocabulary and better sentence structure than at the beginning of the program.
4	Higher Learning Motivation	Satisfaction surveys show that 90% of students find this approach more appealing than conventional methods such as grammar or translation exercises. The combination of visual and audio media makes the learning process more fun and relevant.

A multimodal approach to language learning not only has a positive impact on key skills such as listening, speaking, writing, and reading, but it also has significant potential in dialect language learning and reinforcement. The integration of audio-visual media, such as conversational videos and podcasts, can help students understand language vocabulary and intonation more deeply, including variations of local dialects that are often used in everyday conversations. By imitating the speaking style of songs and videos that contain dialectical elements, students become more confident in using more contextual expressions, thereby strengthening their understanding of the nuances of diverse dialect languages. Creative tasks such as the creation of posters and infographics about local culture also encourage the exploration of regional vocabulary, which enriches students' writing and reading skills while maintaining the continuity of dialect language variation in the academic context.

The multimodal approach is able to meet the learning needs of students who have different learning styles, such as visual, auditory, or kinesthetic. The integration of technology and local cultural materials in the learning process also accelerates students' adaptation to life in Indonesia. This study

recommends the use of a multimodal approach as the main strategy in BIPA learning, especially in institutions such as UIN Jakarta, to support the achievement of more holistic language and cultural competencies.

Audiolingual Method

This method uses dialogue repetition, sentence pattern practice, and intensive drilling as the main approach. The research was conducted for six weeks with learning based on the audiolingual method in 12 learning sessions. The results of the study show that this method is effective in strengthening students' basic speaking and listening skills.

Table 2. Learning Outcomes with the Audiolingual Method

No	Indicator	Accessibility
1	Hearing Improvement Fluent	After six weeks of study, students showed an average improvement of 30% in listening tests. Students are able to recognize common sentence patterns such as self-introduction, request, and greeting.
2	Speaking Skills Improving	Through dialogue repetition exercises, students are more confident and fluent in speaking. Analysis of dialogue recordings showed significant improvements in pronunciation, intonation, and speaking fluency. The average speaking test score increased from 60 to 85.
3	Sentence Pattern Memory	Drilling exercises help students memorize sentence structures automatically. Students were able to construct simple sentences such as "I like to eat fried rice" or "Where can I buy a bus ticket?" without grammatical errors.
4	Student Satisfaction Level	Satisfaction surveys show that 85% of students feel that the audiolingual method helps them in mastering everyday phrases. However, some students feel that this method is less varied and requires integration with other contextual activities.

The audiolingual method has been proven to be effective in improving listening, speaking, and remembering sentence patterns skills through intensive repetition and drilling. This approach has great potential in learning and strengthening dialect language, as it focuses on the repetition of phrases and sentence patterns that can be adapted to dialectal variations. Through dialogue exercises that use local dialects, students can more easily recognize, memorize, and use sentence patterns according to the intonation, pronunciation, and language structure of the dialect being taught. In the context of speaking, the audiolingual method helps students achieve fluency in speaking and more precise pronunciation. If the learning material involves dialect-based dialogue, students learn not only the standard language but also local variations, which ultimately strengthens the understanding of linguistic diversity. Additionally, drilling exercises can be used to memorize distinctive phrases or phrases in a particular dialect, such as greetings, introductions, or everyday expressions that reflect cultural identity.

The audiolingual method has proven to be effective in building the foundation of Indonesian language skills, especially for listening and speaking skills. However, this study recommends that audiolingual methods be combined with communicative approaches to improve the relevance and application of language in real-life situations. BIPA UIN Jakarta, this method can be used as a first step before students are directed to a more complex method, namely a project-based or multimodal approach.

Task-Based Learning

Task-based learning that involves direct interaction with the local community is also implemented to enrich students' experience in using language variations in daily life situations. Students stated that the simulation method and direct interaction with native speakers is very helpful for them in understanding and using language variations. Some students feel more confident in communicating after the implementation of this innovative method, especially in informal situations such as in markets or public places.

This study found that the implementation of task-based learning that involves direct interaction with the local community is very effective in enriching the experience of BIPA students in using language variations in daily life. Students who take part in this program are given the task of interacting with native speakers in a variety of situations, such as in markets, places of worship, and other public settings. This activity allows students to directly practice their language skills in real-life contexts, while also facing the challenges of existing language variations, such as local dialects and informal registers.

Most students feel that the task-based learning approach gives them the opportunity to understand how language variations are used in a variety of social contexts. They realize that the language learned in class is sometimes different from the language used in daily conversations by the local community. For example, some students report that the Betawi and Javanese dialects they often encounter around Jakarta and its surroundings provide a challenging but very rewarding new experience to broaden their horizons about the language variations in Indonesia. The results of the questionnaire given to students showed that 83% of them felt that this activity-based task helped improve their communication skills in Indonesian.

They stated that interacting directly with local communities makes them more confident in using language variations, especially in informal situations. In addition, students also feel that this assignment encourages them to better understand the difference between formal Indonesian taught in the classroom and the everyday language used in society.

Interaction with native speakers through the task-based learning method also provides students with the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of local culture and values. In addition to helping to improve linguistic competence, this task also enriches their understanding of the sociocultural aspects that affect the use of language variations. This hands-on experience is considered important by students because it gives them a more holistic picture of how Indonesian is used in various daily life situations, which ultimately increases the effectiveness of their language learning.

Table 3. Results of BIPA UIN Jakarta Student Questionnaire

No	Statement	Response
1	Language variation-based learning helps to understand communication both oral and written and formal and non-formal	88%
2	Language variation-based learning improves your communication competence	89%
3	You feel more confident communicating in Indonesian after participating in this program	82%
4	Social interaction simulations are very effective in helping them understand language variations	84%
5	Language variation-based learning helps to learn independently outside of the classroom.	85%
6	Real activity-based tasks are very effective in improving communication skills in Indonesian.	83%

The results of the questionnaire given to BIPA students show that language variation-based learning is very helpful in improving their formal and informal communication. About 88% of respondents stated that language variation-based learning that includes local dialects helps them in understanding different nuances of the language, while 89% feel that this approach improves their overall communication competence.

In addition, 82% of the respondents admitted that they were more confident in using Indonesian after participating in this program, which emphasized the importance of understanding language variations in the learning process. Students also revealed that simulation methods and task-based learning that involve direct interaction with the local community are very effective in improving their communication skills. As many as 84% of respondents felt that simulated social interaction helped them understand the variations of language used in informal situations, such as in TMII or in everyday conversations. In addition, 85% of students also appreciate the use of digital technology, such as language applications and learning videos, which allow them to learn independently outside the classroom.

The results of this study show that language variation-based learning, including dialect languages, has been proven to be effective in improving students' communication competence in various contexts. This approach not only helps build students' confidence in using the dialect, but also provides a real simulation for more contextual and relevant language practices. In addition, language variation-based learning encourages students to learn independently outside the classroom, so that the learning process becomes sustainable and more meaningful. Furthermore, this method strengthens students' linguistic understanding of the standard language and existing dialect variations. As such, this approach not only focuses on improving communication skills, but also plays an important role in efforts to preserve the dialect language as part of the local cultural wealth that must be maintained.

Overall, this study shows that innovative teaching approaches, both through technology integration and direct interaction with the community, play an important role in improving the communication competence of BIPA students. An approach that takes into account the variety of local languages and cultures not only makes learning more relevant and contextual, but also equips students with the skills needed to communicate effectively in a variety of social situations in Indonesia.

Conclusions

Innovation in teaching Indonesian for Foreign Speakers (BIPA), especially at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, to face the challenges of language variation. With a communicative, multimodal, audiolingual method, and real task-based learning, this article emphasizes that the combination of these methods can significantly improve the communication competence of BIPA students. Direct interaction with local communities and the use of technology also play an important role in deepening understanding of the diversity of Indonesian language and culture. These findings contribute to the development of more relevant and adaptive learning methods, supporting language mastery as well as integrating cultural values in learning. The results of this study are expected to be a reference in the development of an effective and internationally competitive BIPA curriculum.

Innovative approaches such as the use of digital technology, the integration of visual and audio media, and real conversation simulations provide positive results in improving students' speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. BIPA students at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta admit that this practical experience helps them understand the variety of

languages used in daily life, such as the difference between the formal language taught in the classroom and the informal language used by the local community. Furthermore, the study offers insights into how language variation can be used as a learning asset, rather than as a barrier. This article emphasizes that a language variation-based approach allows students to not only learn the language technically, but also understand the cultural values contained in Indonesian. These findings make a significant contribution to the development of BIPA's curriculum and teaching strategies, making it more contextual, adaptive, and competitive on an international scale. Thus, this article recommends the integration of various innovative approaches in the BIPA program to produce learners who are not only linguistically proficient, but also pragmatically and culturally competent, so as to be able to communicate effectively in various social contexts in Indonesia.

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