

LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL VARIATIONS AS BARRIERS TO THE TEFL SETTINGS IN PAPUA

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Abstract: The article aims at presenting a description of languages and cultures and the effect on the teaching of English as a Foreign Language in schools in Papua. It starts with a general picture of the uniqueness of languages and cultures in Papua: its geography, the originality of the people, and the languages and cultures of both NAN and AN. The word “Papua” (used to be called Irian Jaya) in the above title is the name of the Eastern Province in Indonesia. The article further presents ongoing controversial issues on the impact of linguistic and cultural diversity in Papua towards the educational development including the TEFL program in this province. It then provides alternative solutions as reflected in the pedagogical implications to be employed in multicultural classrooms particularly in Papua.

Key words: NAN (Non Austronesian), AN (Austronesian), BI (Bahasa Indonesia), CA (Communicative Approach), L1 (Mother Tongue).

Papua is a unique area. The New Guinea Island or Papua lies to the East of all the great islands of the Malay Archipelago and forms a blockade between them and the Pacific Ocean. The Southern part of the island stretches out towards the continent of Australia separated by the Arafura Sea and Torres Strait, which at its narrowest point is the great group of the Solomon Islands on the South of the Equator, while the Northern is the cape of Arfack Peninsula. Wollaston (1912) states that the total length of the Island from East to West is 1490 miles, and North to South is more than 400 miles. New Guinea Island is the second largest island on earth after Greenland. That was the large territory of the Dutch in the era of the Kingdom of Sultan of Ternate, who claimed Western New Guinea as a part of his territorial control. It was then previously a Dutch colony, known as Netherlands New Guinea, and it became a part of Indonesia in

1963. There has been no clue to what exactly is the origin of Papuan. The answers were disputable among many researchers such as linguists and anthropologists, and it remains mysterious to whom they called "Papuan". Among others, Wollaston (1912) writes that the name "*papua*" comes from the Malay word "pauwah" meaning "woolly" or "frizzy", and was first applied to Papuans based on their typical hair, and later used for the island itself. However, there is no evidence to support this etymology. Moreover, Papuan has its own characteristics; apart from the curly hair, Wollaston provides one physical characteristic of "nose" as one of the typical features which distinguishes Papuans from their surrounding neighbors. This is what he says "the most characteristic feature is the nose, which is long and fleshy and somewhat Semitic in outline, but flattened and depressed at the tip" (Wollaston, 1912:26). Even though many anthropologists and linguists have conducted so many studies on Papuans, there are no answers yet to the question of "the origin of Papuan". Another interesting question is how Papua (a small geographical area) could have so many distinctive languages and cultures. The speakers of these languages and cultures of NAN and AN have their own distinctive characteristics and cultures, which, in fact, become barriers to educational development in general and particularly the TEFL in Papua as presented in the following paragraphs. Prior to the description of those languages and cultures, some views of the origin of Papuan will be illustrated first.

THE ORIGIN OF PAPUAN AND THE CULTURES

The previous paragraph seems to suggest that the Papuan were identified largely by their physical features, and very little evidence of their cultural background is used for the identification. Research does not enlighten us as to whether the Papuans are truly the original inhabitants of New Guinea. Furthermore, some people in different parts of the island admitted themselves to be possibly of Negrito hoard, suggesting that Papuan may not have been the original inhabitants of New Guinea. Other folktales tell about the arrival of people strongly resembling the African people; however, this idea lacks supporting evidence. Interestingly, it is hard enough to find places in this globe comprising as many different ethnic groups with different religions, traditions, cultures and languages within such a very relatively small geographical area. According to Eric (1990), New Guinea Island was inhabited 60,000 years ago by a group of people who moved from the Asian continent. The climate at that time was said

to be very cold. A range of mountains were covered by snow, and it is historically assumed that this great island used to be a part of Australia. People in this island believe that “Puncak Jaya” (Jaya Peak Mountain) is said to be evidence of everlasting snow.

About 6000 years ago, the climate in this area had totally changed. The changes caused the snow on top of the mountains to gradually melt. The flatted areas were fully covered by water. This phenomenon resulted in the cutting off the island from Australia. The culture in the area drastically changed at that time, moving towards Melanesian. Melanesia is a Greek term meaning “dark island” referring to the dark native people along the Pacific Ocean. At that time Melanesians changed their lifestyle from hunters to gardeners. They planted different kinds of food from Asia such as banana, sugar tree, yam, taro, etc. Eric (1990) points out that at about 300-400 years ago, sweet potatoes were introduced to the island by outsiders. Therefore an American anthropologist gave the name to this food as “revolutionary crop” because it grows better in this area than other crops. This food is now considered a staple food for the people in the highlands of Papua. Another point is in 1492 Columbus, the founder of America, made a trip to Europe with sweet potatoes. This food was brought to Moluccas by European traders who were travelling to this island. Then, Moluccas traders transferred it to Papua. The introduction of this food gave a great possibility for other people from other areas to spread all over the island.

Bellwood (1984), in his book, *Man's Conquest of the Pacific*, has his own point of view about the history. He says that, about 9000 years ago, Polynesians (those from the eastern islands of Australia) were highly skilful in navigation, and moved to Papua seeking for new dwellings. They brought different kinds of animals such as dogs, pigs, rats as well as other kind of food such as yam, taro and cassava to this island. At that time, people found difficulty moving from one place to another because of the highly mountainous area, big rivers, wild forests, jungles, or swampy areas. The life at this time, according to Bellwood, had a great impact on building up different ethnic groups with different cultures and languages. Bellwood (1984) supports the idea that Melanesian was the result of the movement of Asian people to the Pacific islands with no African influences. Another recent view from Muller (2008), who supports the idea of Wollaston (1912), uses the term ‘Papuan’ to refer to today’s indigenous inhabitants of the island of New Guinea. There has been a mixture of two waves of migrations; one group came from Africa and the other one who travelled from Taiwan. These people are called the Melanesian. He further

highlights that the literary meaning of the term ‘Melanesian’ is “black inhabitants of island” (Muller, 2008:8). Muller (2008:8) made an interesting statement that “all Papuans could be called Melanesians, (but) not all Melanesians are Papuans” (Muller, 2008:8), which is absolutely true. However, those views are still mysterious as there has been no empirical evidence as a proof of this etymology.

Cultural differences in Papua basically result from the different ethnic groups who maintained their traditions, languages, and dialects. “*Adat*” (customary law) is strongly held by people, and it differs from one area to another. In fact, civilization is just an external layer for people who live in cities. The culture in the highland is substantially different from that along the coastal area. Take the “Dani”, a tribe of NAN from the highland, as an example. People in this area still believe in spiritual world. For example, on the ritual death, if someone dies, bows and arrows are the important elements in the funeral ceremony; the funeral guests kill pigs, collect the bows and arrows and bring them to the funeral. The slaughtered pigs are arranged in front of the men’s house and shouted over so the spirits will take notice and be pacified. Then, ears and tails of the pigs are cut off. Commonly the ears are grilled and eaten; the tails are kept as miraculous ornaments. By steaming via the heated stones, the pigs are then prepared and served for the funeral guests. On the other hand, the Waropen people (AN), for example, along the Geelvink Bay (northern coastal area) have their own way of doing that. As soon as the relatives believe death to be near, they begin to withhold the patient from his intentions by means of louder expressing of grief. The mother takes her dying child (son or daughter) on her lap and she cries out to show her love for the child. That is the way she shows her grief. Thus, usually the funeral guests cry out their grief, desperately lifting up their arms to heaven.

It is not possible to describe all the Papuan customs or traditions, but basically the people of Papua are racially and culturally related to the neighboring parts of Papua New Guinea and other Pacific countries such as Vanuatu, Fiji. A recent study conducted by the Lowenstein Human Rights Clinic at Yale University (*Kabar-Irian*, 2005) supports the idea that Papuans’ cultures are merely Melanesian in descent. This study suggests that Papuans’ cultures are pretty much different from those of other parts of Indonesia.

With regard to the Papuan languages, AN in New Guinea (the whole Papua Island) are much lower than the former (NAN) in the number of speakers, number of languages, and the areas where they are spoken. New Guinea has

more or less one thousand languages consisting of approximately 750 Papua New Guinean and 250 languages in Papua, so about one-fifth of the world's languages are spoken in the Island of New Guinea (Ajamiseba et al., 2001). It is also a fact that in this one province of Papua, these languages are spoken over one third of all the languages in Indonesia which are Papuan and Non-Papuan languages. Thus, there is a linkage between Papuan languages and Non-Papuan (Wurm, 1982 cited in Purba, 1994). Greenberg, for example, states that there is a sign of interrelated symbols between Papuan languages and Tasmanian languages; however, it is lacking evidence. On the contrary, Wurm argues that the link is closely related to Andaman rather than to Tasmanian languages. It is due to the similar lexical and structural aspects and typological grounds between Andaman and Papuan phylum languages. Laycock (in Purba, 1994), on the other hand, points out interrelationships between Burmic language (South-East Asia) and Sko Stock language (Jayapura) since they both have tonal features, complex verb morphology, and heterorganic consonants. From the illustrations, it is assumed that Papuan languages might have originated from Andaman and Burma.

Purba (1994), in his article on the description of Papuan languages, claims that there has been a lack of adequate knowledge on the status of New Guinea's languages. Humbolt quoted by Purba (1994) discovered in 1839, that the Polynesian language is in some forms related to Indonesian language. Sydney (in Purba, 1994) discovered the existence of Non-Austronesian and asserted that Non-Austronesian was the original version of New Guinea languages. Sydney maintains that Austronesians first travelled from the West, continued their adventure over the North of New Guinea to Salomon. The AN speakers occupy only coastal areas except in few areas. It can be concluded that the AN speakers are immigrant rather than indigenous (Capell, 1978: 6 in Purba, 1994). Thus, the Papuan languages are divided into two major classifications: Non Austronesian (NAN) and Austronesian (AN). It is estimated that the users of Non Austronesian exceed those of Austronesian in number (Purba, 1994). The following sections discuss the characteristics of both NAN and AN and their cultures.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LANGUAGES AND CULTURES OF NAN AND AN

The Characteristics of NAN: Its Linguistic Aspects and Cultures

NAN has its own linguistic characteristics. Capel (1965) and Foley (1986) in Purba (1994) states the characteristics as follows: 1) they do not have articles; 2) numbers and case may be marked in nouns; 3) some languages have gender and noun-class systems; 4) singular, dual and plural forms of pronouns may be found; 5) subject, direct and indirect objects are often incorporated into the verb, which is extremely complex; 6) number systems vary, often based on 2,3,4, or parts of the body; 7) the word order is usually subject, object, verb; 8) they use postpositions instead of prepositions; 9) their verbal systems may be extremely elaborated; 10) they have great variation in structure and vocabulary 11). some of them are tonal languages; 12) nasalized vowels occur in some languages; 13) some of them have complex clusters.

With regard to the culture of NAN, Muller (2001:5) provides an illustration of the origin of highland people. The first small groups of Papuans probably arrived by raft some 50,000 or more years ago, with other groups drifting in from the west at times when world-wide glaciations reduced sea levels to as much as 150 meters below current level. At that ice age, Arafura Sea became dry; Australia and New Guinea were connected by land. Physically, at 8,000 to 10,000 years ago, the native of Tasmania had tightly curled hair similar to ancient Papuans, unlike today's Tasmanians who have straight and wavy hair. All of the Papuans, who arrived up to some 6000 years ago, spoke languages grouped into the non-Austronesian collection. Later arrivals, originated from China, entered gradually through Taiwan, the Philippines and Indonesia. There had been a great assimilation, at that time, with these groups of people who shared very different features of new Papuans with a new language called Malayo-Polynesian or Austronesian. These people had light brown skin, with straight hair. They brought with them new technology, such as canoes and pottery. Non Austronesians were the earlier settlers in inland valleys, and began with the taro-based agriculture. It is likely that these people moved inland due to the high incidence of malaria.

John Ellenberger (in Muller 2001), in his doctorate dissertation on the "Damal World View", demonstrates similarities in tonal language which comprises "four register tones: high, mid, low and glide from mid to low tone". El-

lenberger states further that “Amungkal has a well developed tone system and an immense 30% at least contrast in single syllable words”. He also differentiates the Amungkal-Damal language into five mutually intelligible dialects: Hilop kal in Ilaga Valley, and Beoga kal in Beoga Valley, which are spoken in the north of the mountains. Ninu kal is spoken in the higher valleys (above 1400 meters), which is very closely related to Hilop kal or the dialect of Ilaga area. Onikal, literally meaning “the mouth of the river talks” is spoken in the lower valley. Aroa kal is the most different dialect, with a great number of lexical transformations and overturned tone patterns. The tonal system of this language leads to a highly complex linguistic system.

The highland people have very distinctive residential patterns. Beanal (1997) provides a factual illustration of Amungme residential patterns of NAN tribe. A village consists of 15 to 20 family houses “*onggoi*”, and 5-8 men’s houses. The occupants of the family house are mothers, small children and unmarried daughters. During the day, the father stays with the family; at night he returns to a men’s house. The men’s house is bigger than the family house. Women are not allowed to enter men’s house as it is considered sacred. All the sacred objects are kept here including the sacred traditional rituals. This type of house is used as a guest house for male visitors, and as a venue to discuss any issue on socio-economics and politics. It is also used as a training centre for younger generation. In the highland society, any division of tasks must be based on gender. Physically, men do heavy works such as opening new gardens, enlarging the construction of the village, building house, building a rattan bridge, and slaughtering pigs. Women’s tasks include raising children, growing vegetables, and weaving. Children are allowed to stay with their parents in the family house.

Most of the highland people are agrarian people. They prefer to grow banana trees, corn, sugar trees, red fruit (*buah merah*), and other medical plants outside their houses. They grow crops in fields, on mountain hills and on a small plot of land between the mountains. Their basic crops are sweet potatoes and taro, and yam, but they also grow vegetables, such as carrots, cucumbers, fruits, such as bananas, snake beans, peanuts, and corns. In addition, they raise livestock “pig” using traditional technology; they usually put pigs in the cages or let them run around in the village searching for foods. In trading system, people apply a complicated way in exchanging goods for goods, but they also use *eral* (money) as an official means of exchange. The form of money accepted by the society is the shell of *bia* (mollusk shell). This system has a great im-

pact on their change of life style. Public products which are commonly traded in the traditional market are pigs, bow and arrow beads, solid salt, stone axes, traditional cigars, red soil, and others.

Just like NAN, AN also has its own characteristics, cultures and linguistic aspects as presented below.

The Characteristics of AN: Its Linguistic Aspects and The Cultures

The Capel's Survey of New Guinea Languages (1969, in Purba, 1994) indicates the characteristics of Austronesian (AN) languages as follows: (1) phonemic patterns of AN languages are not complicated; (2) most have a five-vowel system, except some languages in Papua New Guinea, which have even vowels; (3) generally, they have few or no clusters, except in Numfor-Biak and neighbouring areas in Geelvink Bay; (4) voiceless fricative consonant is usually labiodental /f/, but the voiced fricative is bilabial /v/; (5) pre-nasalization in some areas is normal; (6) stress is usually predictable; (7) they have a simple consonantal system; (8) glottal stops and velar nasals are rare, and velar fricative /g/ is common in a large number of Islands Melanesians languages; (9) noun phrases with an adjective modifier are constructed by placing the modifier after the head; noun phrases with a numeral are constructed likewise; numeration is usually quinary, based on five; (10) verbal phrase is fairly simple; verbal is usually preceded by a subject marker (person and number), even if the sentence has noun subject; it can also have an object and/or a tense marker; (11) passive form is rare; (12) some have tenses, but they are not emphasized; (13) word order is SVO and they have prepositions instead of postpositions; (14) all are event dominated, the interest is on what happened, when and how it happened, rather than in people or object involved or the place of the occurrence; (15) degree of complexity of morphological structure of the verbs ranges from west to east; the farther east along the north coast, the more complex they are; this apply not only to the north coast but also to the Island groups and the mainland; (16) some of those characteristics only appear in the Austronesian type which has SVO and preposition, but they do not exist in the Austronesian type which has SOV and preposition.

The users of Austronesian have their own typical history and cultures which are still in bond to the history of the linguistic designation and division discussed earlier. Briefly, Austronesian, a following group after the first inhabitant in New Guinea Island called 'Papuan', is said to be originated from Chi-

na, continued migrating to Taiwan about 5000 to 6000 years ago, and then, extended their journeys to the South (Muller, 2008). Muller thanked the proof of the outrigger canoe and the sail. The groups made their journey in small numbers. A small group travelled and arrived in the Northern part of the Philippines, then formed two directions to the South; a group travelled to the southwest (Borneo), Malaysia, Sumatra and Java (ancestors of Malay and Western Indonesia today). The other group went through the South-East, through Halmahera to the Northern coast of New Guinea (the island of Bismarck Archipelago), the Solomon Island, Vanuatu, New Caledonia, and Fiji, finally they made further trip to the East, arrived and posted there as the people of Polynesia. The evidence can be seen through their advanced water craft, navigation, and sailing techniques (Muller, 2008).

From the above description, the Austronesian, by its name, is not related to Australia especially to the Aborigin of this continent. As Muller states, “the term ‘Austronesian’, a language designation’ can create a confusion as it is close to ‘Australia’ but has nothing to do with the Aborigin of Australia” (Muller, 2008:48). Thus, the story of the journey of the Austronesian is more likely to be the proof of the Austronesian in Papua today who are dwelling along the coastal areas and some small islands on the Northern parts of the Island (see the map). The Austronesians live in houses with legs made of wood. These people share similar life styles and traditions, such as: daily job, wedding, government, religion, music and arts as illustrated below.

The majority of Austronesian work as fishermen and gardeners. They usually use a canoe which is decorated by traditional crafts as a symbol of “power”, for fishing, travelling or going for war. The way they catch fish is by using fishing nets and diving. For traditional wedding, bride price is very important to the man if he wants to marry a woman. A man’s parents should have a deal with woman’s parents through a traditional transaction called “bride price”, which can be in the forms of antique Chinese plates, money and housing facilities. In relation to traditional government, the users of Austronesian are strictly bound to the traditional kingdom system of *Raja Ampat* islands. The traditional system of the head of tribes are popular in the Eastern parts, such as Biak, Serui, Sarmi, and Yotefa (Jayapura) in which the traditional terms of “Ondoafi” (head of tribe) or “Mambri” (head of war) were applied. With regard to the music and art, Austronesian has traditional dances with art decorations and fresh flowers or leaves over their bodies. The traditional music and songs are very

much Melanesian-based cultures using traditional music instruments such as drums “tifa” and guitar “ukulele”.

Based on the above description on languages and cultures in Papua, it is necessary that the implementation of EFL programs in Papua take into account its uniqueness in order to plan the curriculum, teaching material and teaching method that are relevant to the context of the people of Papua. The linguistic and cultural variation (NAN and AN) must be reflected in planning for the EFL program in all schools throughout Papua. As previously described, Papua has distinctive cultures and languages, and this has a negative effect on educational development including the TEFL.

TEFL IN PAPUA: ONGOING CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES ON LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

There have been some related controversial issues from the late 1980s up to the present day on the effect of the linguistic and cultural diversity in Papua in relation to the educational development including the TEFL in Papua as presented below.

The Linguistic/Cultural Variation and EFL Curriculum

Linguists and anthropologists argue that the linguistic barrier and the lack of cross-cultural understanding are the primary issues (Burung, 1990) in TEFL. In fact, EFL teachers and other teachers of different disciplines have a problem conversing with their students due to language obstruction (Yembise, et al., 2009; 2010). Language barrier and lack of cross-cultural awareness may bring complications for students and teachers. It is rather challenging or demanding for Papuan, as education should be positioned as first priority. With the special autonomy granted by the government of Indonesia, fair opportunities are offered to Papuans in planning their own education system which takes into account the sociocultural aspects of the people which belong to NAN and AN cultural and linguistic background. The latest curriculum “KTSP” is considered to be valid enough to accommodate the students’ needs in terms of the difficulty level of the materials, and the sequence. It might be relevant to the daily life of students, yet the question is whether or not the new system could answer the existing problems in Papua. There has not been much done by the government to adapt teaching plans to the local situation in Papua. All students, regardless

of ethnic and regional differences, received the same kind of standardized education (Ajamiseba, 1987; Burung, 1990; Mandowen, 1990; Tethool, 2001; Erari, 2003; Yembise, 2007).

The crucial concern is on the linguistic point of view. NAN and AN have their own grammatical structures that differ from one another. The situation provides insights into what the actual EFL situation in the highland of Papua looks like. An Amungme student, in the highland of Mimika, for example, learns English as a compulsory subject using BI as the medium of instruction. The teacher is not from the same cultural and linguistic background, and the student might find it difficult to follow the lesson effectively because neither of them shares similar cultural-linguistic background. Burung (1990) questions, "how could an EFL teacher with AN background teach students from Parim (NAN) who speak the language with more than seven tenses and very much a tonal language". How could s/he build communication with students from Balim Valey (NAN cultural background) who tend to use the types of sentences or phrases that are changeable according to contexts and pressures? No wonder, one of the school principal of junior secondary schools in the highland said "we usually ask helps from gardeners as interpreters whenever there is communication breakdown" (Yembise, 1997:6-7).

The EFL Teaching Materials

The teaching of English as a foreign language (TEFL) is for the purpose of the development of science and technology or worldwide knowledge, so reading might be considered the first priority. Unfortunately, all the instructional materials which have been published are based mostly on contents which reflect the dominance of certain cultures in the country. These materials reflect no special attention to the huge variety of different existing cultures in Papua. The consequences lead to a negative image from outsiders that Papuans are intellectually weak (Yembise, et al., 2009; 2010). Mandowen (1990) stated that such materials oriented to majority cultures have caused complications for teachers, and low-quality achievement is the final outcome of this situation. Moreover, Yembise (1997; 2007) indicated that a large number of teachers are textbook-oriented. It supports the idea that most EFL teachers centre their lessons on textbooks. These types of texts are still being produced as commercial materials which are designed based on the author's cultural background. Marcellino (2008) affirms that most of the students' values, norms, and traditions

are still directed towards the dominant cultures in Indonesia. There have been no constructive changes on the nature of language being taught in relation to local context. Thus, language researchers, language teachers, and curriculum designers need to revise the nature of language, the question of *what is learnt* and *how it is learnt* for learners to explore culture through new types of skills. Culture needs to be integrated into the teaching of all language skills to enable children to be competent in written and spoken forms no matter what culture is taught since the basic goal of language teaching has not changed (Crozet & Liddicoat, 2000, Pattiwael, 2005, Luciana, 2005; Yembise, 2005). However, there are some crucial issues in Indonesian English text books. Yembise's (1997) study indicated that a large number of teachers are textbook-oriented. Susilawati (1991/1992, cited in Yembise, 2007) supports the idea by stating that most EFL teachers centre their lessons on textbooks. Textbook dictates the teachers to follow whatever instructions stated in the book. Unfortunately, the situation does not guide teachers to be competent, active and creative, particularly in developing productive instructional materials.

The EFL Teaching Methodology

Another issue to be considered is the application of CA or other related contextual approaches with communication as the main target. While teachers are still having problem using BI as a medium of instruction to communicate effectively with their students, they are facing problems with how to use those approaches in teaching students who are still struggling with BI (Yembise, 1997; 2007; Yembise et al., 2009; 2010). Thus, the situation becomes more complicated. These issues highlight a critical problem with the existing curriculum, which must not be ignored. For example, high schools belong to NAN cultural background on the highland of Papua have reported their concerns with the variety of the teaching methods and techniques found in the curriculum which are advocated by the Communicative Approach. They pointed out that the methods and techniques are founded upon an external, rather than internal, view of the situation (Yembise, 1997). More specifically, no analyses have been conducted to determine if these techniques can be effectively employed in Indonesian schools. As stated by a principal of one of the Junior Secondary Schools, "we do not believe in current theories of teaching methods to be implemented here". Teachers are not advocating "considerable teaching methods

and techniques” that meet local customs and can be applied effectively with local students who have low levels of basic competence (Yembise, 1997; 2007).

Yembise (1997:8) noted that teachers are not equipped with knowledge on “effective or meaningful integration of underlying theory of Communicative Approach and its relevance to classroom practice”. Lack of opportunity to become familiar with this approach may be a primary reason for the predominance of linguistically and communicatively incompetent language teachers. Susilawati (1991 and 1992) suggests that this approach cannot be used in classroom situations. The main issue concerns with teachers’ attitude towards methodological innovations of rapid movement from the audio-lingual method to communicative language teaching approach and other contextual approaches affect teachers’ belief and value of what they should and should not do in classroom practice. Employing the CA in areas in which facing large class size, lacking qualified teachers and low students motivation, may be an unreal expectation.

The EFL teachers in the highland of Papua are not adequately equipped with current knowledge concerning the effective or meaningful concept of the CA and other approaches, methods and techniques relevance to classroom practices (Yembise, 1997; Yembise et al., 2009; 2010). What they believe and value, in terms of the setting, the learner, and the target language, does appear to have direct impact on their teaching. In other words, they know the situation best, thus, they strongly believe in their own teaching directions to suit their learners’ needs. In fact, grammar-based approach as a traditional way of teaching is still being exercised by most of the teachers in preparing students for the final exams. The nature of the assessment is also grammar-based exam for measuring reading comprehension and grammar not for testing student’s communicative competence. So, no matter how good the CA is, it probably would not work effectively in particular settings without considering any collaborative techniques or strategies.

The National Language *Bahasa Indonesia*

Students (NAN and AN cultural background) who are not fluent speakers of BI continue having problems communicating and understanding some of the words or phrases. Yembise (1997) in her classroom observations revealed that, in teaching English, students have difficulties comprehending simple sentences due to their constraints understanding certain words and phrases which the

teachers interpret using BI. Using BI is assumed to be a constraint to the educational development in the society. Regarding the language barrier, the study (Yembise, 1997; 2007; Yembise et al., 2009; 2010) indicates a large number of teachers continued employing BI in teaching, while only a small number of teachers utilizing English in their classrooms. BI is utilized as a language of instruction because it is assumed that all citizens speak and understand it. In addition, observational data (Yembise, 1997; 2007) revealed that teachers sometimes have difficulties understanding words and phrases spoken by the students in the students' L1. This seems to support the notion that the multiplicity of languages in the classroom is a barrier to the teaching and learning of English.

Teaching reading comprehension is still a dilemma for teachers and students in remote areas. Yembise (1997:180) revealed through her study that "students are struggling to learn phrases or words, such as by rote learning or sounding out words of BI", the language of instruction. Consequently, when learning English, students have even more difficulties learning the words, attempting to pronounce the words without the slightest knowledge of their meaning. Classroom observations (Yembise, 1997; 2007) also indicated that students have problems understanding some words and phrases in textbooks due to abstract nouns, things that they have never seen and experienced in their daily life. This provides some insights into how materials can be best developed and exploited based on the relevant context that meet learners' needs. I had an experience visited a school in Mimika district in which all students are from 8 ethnic highlander groups who belong to NAN cultures. When I conversed in BI, they were not able to get clear understanding of my message, in contrast, when they responded back to me in their BI highland version I hardly understood. How could we communicate effectively in BI or in English if language barrier remains a critical issue?

The EFL Teachers

The major problem in the Teaching of English as Foreign Language in the highland Papua is the language barrier between the teaching staff and students. Ajamiseba asserts that one of the foremost difficulties in understanding Papuans is the fact that there are so many distinct languages and ethnic groups (Buring, 1990; Mandowen, 1990; Yembise, 1997; 2007). Another big issue is that all school-age children go to school and that not all schools are in position to function as they should, due to a shortage of teachers. Most teachers prefer to

stay in cities instead of spending most of their time living in isolated remote areas. Teachers get their incentives and salary once in three months even in a year. Transportation also remains a big issue due to huge geographical areas. Segregation, lack of services and lack of familiarity with the local languages and customs are obstructions to employing teachers.

Yembise (1997; 2007) observed that most of the EFL teachers teaching in schools with NAN student cultural background studied English as their major subject both in 1) Teacher Training and Education at University and College or In-service Teacher Training; (2) teachers who do not have English subject background, but are from disciplines other than English such as history, geography, etc., are nevertheless interested in English; (3) teachers who had much personal experience with English, and who, therefore, exercise their teaching based on that experience having lived with foreigners, or having worked as guides or interpreters as these areas are considered to be tourist destination. These types of teachers must deal with students who have weak schooling background due to the language barrier and sociolinguistic constraints (Yembise, 1997; Yembise et al., 2009; 2010).

ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS AS REFLECTED IN PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

With the support of the Special Autonomy provided by the government of Indonesia, Papuans hopefully will or should have freedom to make educational changes within the region. The local government is responsible for all the educational planning by providing chances for every Papuan to be educated. The liberty is also supported by the establishment of MRP (Papuan People's Assembly) which was officially declared on the 31st of October 2005. It has been selected by Papuans for Papuans to be responsible for the rights and aspirations of the people of Papua. The Special Autonomy under the Republic of Indonesia Constitution, No 21/2001 on Special Autonomy Regulation for Papua Province, Chapter XVI, Education and Culture, Article 58, Point 2 guarantees Papua has lack of restrictions to plan for an appropriate system of education. It implies that EFL specialists and teachers are nowadays being positioned as agents of change in planning for their TEFL programs for the sake of accommodating and inspiring Papuan students to be better educated.

With regard to pedagogical implications as solutions to the TEFL in Papua, serious reflections were focused on three major aspects in TEFL: Curricu-

lum, Teaching Material, Teaching Methodology, EFL Teacher, Teacher Training College or Institution and Government.

The EFL Curriculum

In planning better education system for Papuans, it would be beneficial to integrate learners' cultural and linguistic aspects into the National Curriculum. Teaching learners' local culture is paramount (Tethool, 2001; Erari, 2003; Yembise, 1997; 2007). It is suggested that all schools starting from primary schools up to tertiary level of education should be given subjects on local culture, cross cultural understanding, and global cultural understanding for students as a bridge to explore the outside world. In the teaching of English as a Foreign Language, Papuan learners' local culture must be reflected in the instructional material as a basic concept to further advance their general knowledge to grasp messages outside their cultural boundaries. Thus, the curriculum designers ought to in every respect tolerate learners to open their eyes to learn, experience and acknowledge other cultures.

With regard to a well-designed appropriate curriculum for an effective program, it is indispensable to instigate a need analysis for observing the learner, the setting, and the nature of language being learnt. Thus, to lessen the constraints, the school EFL curriculum or syllabus must be flexible to meet local students' needs. Since reading is the first priority in TEFL for particular settings, for example in Papua, it is worth integrating learners' cultural aspects into the teaching of reading. Hence, in the teaching of reading, EFL specialists must consider how meaningful the material is to the students' daily lives based on their cultures both NAN and AN, for example, providing words, phrases, or simple sentences which they can use in their daily lives and apply this knowledge to learn others. The curriculum should allow teachers to understand how to create more contextualized activities for their classrooms based on reading and talking about objects (arrow, bow, stone axe) and activities (watching over sacral objects, opening gardens, building houses) which are common to the highland (NAN cultural background).

The EFL Teaching Material

There are several aspects to be taken into consideration particularly in planning to utilize the culturally familiar material. Nunan (1991 in Yembise, 2007) states one of the characteristics of the CA is accepting learners' own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom teaching. Thus, the instructional materials should be adjusted to learner's cultural aspects to develop their communicative or intercultural competence. It is suggested that all schools starting from primary schools up to tertiary level of education should be given subjects on local culture, cross cultural understanding, and global cultural understanding for students as a bridge to explore the outside world. With regard to EFL setting with multicultural settings, cross-sociocultural reflections should be displayed in textbooks. Yembise (2007) suggests that cross cultural materials is to be designed for Papua due to its 250 ethnic groups of NAN and AN, plus more than 200 ethnic groups of Non Papuan. The notions of the redefinition of the communicative approach (CA) and English as an International Language which is simplified in Kramsch and Sullivan's motto "*think globally, act locally or global thinking, local teaching*" (in McKay, 2005) implied that EFL teachers need to have global thoughts as references to activate their reflection on local needs and desire of their students.

To develop cultural material EFL settings, again a crucial question to be answered is "Whose culture to teach?" Cortazzi and Jin (in McKay, 2005) distinguish three types of cultural information that can be used in language textbooks and materials: 1) target culture material is the type of material which uses the culture of a particular country in which English is used as L1; 2) source culture materials refers to learner's own culture as content; 3) international target culture material, that use variety of cultures in English and non-English speaking countries. Smith suggests that one purpose of an international language is to explain one's culture to another, a source of culture focus in materials, assisting students to acquire English as needed (McKay, 2000; 2005). Analyzing the type of materials mentioned above in conjunction with a country like Indonesia that covers hundred of minority groups, is another crucial issue. If the material type 1 is applied in this country, it is absolutely against the Eastern cultures' norms and values. A possibility of using material type 2 is recommended; however, it probably leads to exercising dominant cultures without considering minority groups' cultures, even though it is said to be based on the learner's cultural background. Material type 3 is very much international and

extremely broad to be applied also too complicated to design. Based on this analysis, the appropriate material for Papuan society is the material called “cross-cultural material”, which contains learners’ cultural aspects as a basis for learning about, acknowledging and comparing with other cultures.

The EFL Teaching Methodology

The implementation of CA or other contextual approach should be culturally appropriate to Papuan students. An effective CA syllabus should be produced which integrate learners’ cultural aspects into the teaching program since the goal of CA, which is communicative competence, is considered too ambitious or idealistic (Tan, 2005). This goal would be an issue for Papuan students since they are, in fact, instrumental in motivation, and are from a multi-linguistic background, and have low levels of English proficiency. Besides, the CA requires teachers, who are fluent in English. In fact, not all teachers in the highlands have high level of proficiency. Thus, a more structured approach needs to be available for teachers to use until they acquire greater proficiency in English. Curriculum developers need to develop bridging-the-gap materials which would assist teachers whose English proficiency is limited.

The CA was developed in second language, rather than foreign language settings, thus, it depends heavily on the use of the authentic materials. No such materials are available in the rural setting of the highlands. Thus, the best thing to do is to help teachers understand how to create more contextual activities for their classrooms, based on reading and talking about objects and activities that are common to the highlands. For example, traditional ornaments such as arrows and bows, stone axe, pig tail and other sacral objects can be utilized in the design of the material. Thus, in order to reach an effective result, there is a need to combine teaching strategies supported by effective locally designed materials based the CA tenets to suit particular culture. Moreover, the local languages and BI from NAN and AN Malay dialects can be used as a medium to support the CA.

The EFL Teachers

It is the teacher's responsibility to determine what is best for his or her students. No one can determine for them if the Communicative Approach or the Audio Lingual Method or other method or technique is best. Teachers are the only individuals who are aware of the events occurring in schools, the setting, the learner's background, and other related factors. Thus, teachers must be critical when selecting the methods/techniques or strategies to be employed in their classrooms. In a classroom experiment, Yembise (2007) observed that EFL teachers no matter s/he is NAN, AN or Non Papuan, with well-educated background, familiar with local language and culture or custom are fitting well with Papuan students.

There are several major steps for EFL teachers to be implemented to solve the above issues as follows: 1) presenting materials from familiar to unfamiliar or from known to unknown within topic or theme related tasks/activities; 2) practicing sounding out key words through dialogue within topic- theme related tasks/activities; 3) clarifying major grammatical aspects within topic or theme related tasks/activities; 4) presenting a simple topic or theme related reading text after students get sufficient knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. To implement the appropriate method, teacher should consider the following suggestions: 1) teachers should be familiar with local cultures; preferably local teachers or teachers who speak students' local languages/ dialects and who are familiar with the cultures; 2) teachers should be critical of the learning situation, and to be ready to act as "agents of change"; 3) teachers should act as facilitators, and model the teaching and learning process; 4) teachers should create a friendly and informal atmosphere in classrooms; 5) teachers should provide rewards for students; 6) teachers should conduct action research or ethnographical research on their own teaching and learning situation.

In the classroom, students from the same language background should be grouped together. As Papuan students come from multi-linguistic background, it might be possible to put students whose languages are mutually understandable in the same class. Special treatment should be given to students whose languages are totally different, focusing more on learning BI as a communication device among students. Another issue concerns with putting dominant culture groups with local students. Teachers should consider whether it is possible to work effectively with both groups in the same class or whether they should be separated. The selection of mixed textbooks is a complicated process. Hence,

teachers and educational specialist must carefully and critically evaluate the cultural material before adapting them to the proficiency levels and needs of their students as it is set in the curriculum goal.

The Teacher Training Institutions or Colleges and the Education Department

Student teachers must be trained to be critical of their own situations particularly in facing any cultural issues in schools. Considering this, student teachers or teacher trainees should be given opportunity to conduct small surveys, special projects, case studies, or action research to investigate any cultural conflicts in schools. For example, some small scale studies can be conducted to examine the mixed students between the dominant cultural groups and the local students to examine whether there is any problem if the two groups are joined together. This kind of study provides school students with knowledge on cross cultural awareness and differences and how to deal with students from multi-cultural and different linguistic background. The results of the study can be presented in small group seminars. Concerning material development and teaching methodology, student teachers should learn how to design culturally contextual materials. They need to be sent out to their communities to collect some simple stories or narratives from different cultures in Papua for the purpose of designing appropriate material based on the learner's background culture and daily life. They can also be trained to be critical when selecting techniques, methods, teaching facilities or teaching aids to support the teaching and learning process.

There is a need to invite EFL teachers to take part in in-service teacher training courses, and provide further studies to high levels of education. These opportunities will increase their knowledge of educational theory in general, and related basic teaching skills or methodology, instructional designs, material development, curriculum and syllabus design, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, ethnographic and anthropological perspectives and general knowledge of linguistics. Thus, financial support for research purposes and in-service teacher training is highly required. In addition, there has been evidence indicating that EFL teachers' understanding of the current approach with other related teaching methods and techniques is exceedingly unsatisfactory (Yembise, 1997; 2007; Yembise, et al., 2009; 2010). Thus, these teachers need to take part in

various in-service-teacher trainings at the regional, national or international level, which require greater amount of finances from the government.

Moreover, the Regional and Central Department of Education should pay special attention to involve learners' cultural aspects in the curriculum. English teachers need to be equipped with related knowledge of their students' cultural background, and cross cultural understanding in general. It is worth establishing "action research" programs for teachers to encourage them to reflect on their teaching experiences, as well as the controversial issues which they encounter and how to deal with those issues. This system will encourage researchers to further investigate the controversial issues in the remote areas of Papua. Moreover, the curriculum and syllabus for secondary schools need to be flexible enough in order to meet the needs of the students, particularly in the highland or remote areas. It is recommended for curriculum researchers, language educators, material designers, and EFL specialists to go directly to the mainland to investigate the sociolinguistic constraints which hinder the implementation of the EFL programs in remote areas. There should be related-research project on the ethnography and anthropology which can contribute to the educational development as a whole including the TEFL program in this region.

An observation from the classroom experimentation (Yembise, 2007) showed that at the early stage the most powerful language used was the dialect which is mutually intelligibly among learners. The dialect is the highlanders' version of BI, thus, some exceptions need to be made for Papuans to use this dialect in language teaching classroom. Thus, bilingual education can be implemented at early stages to make it easier for learners to comprehend the general knowledge within their boundaries prior to moving up deeply to advanced levels of information outside their cultural boundaries. Yembise (1997; 2007) conducted a study for high schools students with NAN background which provides some valuable insights on the utilization of BI in schools. It is recommended that BI must be taught well in the primary level as a solid foundation from which the linguistic knowledge for mastering foreign language skills at the secondary level can be built.

CONCLUSIONS

The above description illustrates the uniqueness of languages and cultures both NAN and AN in Papua. The impact of the linguistic and cultural diversity has influenced the educational development in this province in which people are still not well developed and educated and absolutely it is hard to reach the national standard of education. Several obstacles need to be taken care seriously by the government. Accordingly and importantly, the Papuans' cultures and languages both NAN and AN should be reflected in the EFL curriculum starting from the early education up to the tertiary level of education.

Developing language skills in learning a foreign language implies a degree of intercultural understanding through instructional teaching materials. In this learning situation, students may be aware of their own culture, in the process of learning about another, and being in a better position to develop intercultural skills. Teachers and students, who are not from the same cultural contexts, should be aware of their own cultural background (NAN and AN) since Papua has 250 languages and cultures. Students do not only bring different cultural experiences and expectations with them as content, but also as a medium of cultural ways of learning all subjects, including foreign language. Considering these, a type of bilingual education program should be introduced starting from early education up to high level of education to help resolving practical issues such as communication breakdown between teachers and students or vice versa. Finally, the Papuan Provincial Government should be responsible for all the educational planning in granting opportunities for every Papuan to be educated. It is time for the Papuans to plan for their own educational program in which these concepts can be integrated into the national educational program. The freedom is also supported by MRP (Papuan People's Assembly) to accommodate all the needs, desires and aspirations of the people of Papua. Thus, Papua has freedom formulating a conceptual plan for an appropriate system of education which include the sociocultural aspects of the native people in the curriculum. It implies that EFL specialists and teachers and other related stakeholders are nowadays being positioned as agents of change to make a difference for the future of the TEFL programs in Papua.

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