



PROCEEDINGS

The 3rd International Language and Language Teaching Conference
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English Language Education
Sanata Dharma University
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Proceedings

THE 3rd INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE AND LANGUAGE TEACHING CONFERENCE (LLTC 2016)

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Preface

The Organizing Committee are delighted to present the proceedings of the Third International Language and Language Teaching Conference (LLTC 2016). The main of the conference is: Pursuing Meanings in English Language Teaching. This year's proceedings contain 64 full papers, covering various topics in language learning-teaching, linguistics and literature.

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LEARNING IN THE SPIRIT OF A DIGITAL ERA

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Abstract

Each era has its own unique spirit. Such a phenomenon is true for all human enterprises, including for education. Today's digital era has been responded differently by different parties. On the one hand, some pessimistically view today's digital age a great disadvantage for current generation. Young people are seen to have been indulged by a variety of facilities. A lack of delayed gratification and increasing speeds in both technologies and services have made them more and more spoiled. On the other hand, others view that it is not enough to deplore all those challenges. Digital products and facilities are viewed to have yielded a wider horizon of possibilities to anticipate. According to the later perspective, learning is better viewed within the perspective of such a horizon. A growing body of literature suggests that learning is a complex enterprise, forcing us to attend to a great variety of theorizations beyond philosophy and psychology to better grasp its complexity. Recent studies on behavioral economy, life sciences (i.e. hormonal, genetic, and synaptic), research on expertise, and collaborative inquiries provide a better outlook of what learning is all about during this digital age.

And what motivates people are the bonds and loyalty and trust they develop between each other. What matters is the mortar, not just the bricks.
Margaret Heffernan (2015)

Introduction

We are now living in an era where our future is largely unknown to any of us (Lichtman, 2013). In line with skeptic empiricist perspective, our incapability to know our future has unavoidably situated us to embrace a higher level of appreciation towards uncertainties (Taleb, 2014). It is within this frame of thinking that anyone is supposedly welcome to embrace a multi-disciplinary orientation to better understand to complexity of our educational enterprises. From the history of instructional methods, upon the demise of uniquely proposed methods era back to the 1970s and the 1980s, the 1990s witnessed the emergence of post-method conditions in of English learning (Kumaravadivelu, 1994). In short, English learning will be impoverished if we only draw merely from English teaching literature. In this paper, I set out to share my personal journey as a teacher, who has drawn much from a number of both disciplinary and methodological orientations, during the last 17-year of my teaching career. I've learned how to gather different perspectives to inform my own practices.

Being fully aware of heading to unknown territories means that we are supposedly ready to live in and embrace the trajectories of an era of high unpredictability. Most of today's teachers are digital immigrants, while our incoming students are more and more savvy with digital gadgets. Humans make technologies to facilitate our livelihood. In the meantime, humans are also formed and reformed by the technologies. A growing body of literature on education in the 21st century suggest that we are called to prepare students to be more self-evolving (Lichtman, 2013).

My viewpoints with regards to education are not necessarily situated within a small enclosure of our own, i.e. individual classrooms. Educational enterprises never

become an isolated journey. They are basically shared endeavors, inviting all like-minded people to gather and get united in holding visionary outlooks of what educational, learning organizations will look like. Accordingly, the idea of self-evolving nature of learning is not necessarily limited to the individual teachers. Much more importantly, we are supposed to manage our shared practices into self-evolving organization. Self-evolving education is intended for the future, not for the past. Just like what has been reminded by John Dewey, who has taught us, "If we teach as we taught yesterday, we rob the children of tomorrow"

Today, the greatest challenge of our educational enterprises is how to teach the unknown. The best formula to represent our future is the fact that we are unable to predict. The best strategy seems to be the high degree of humility on the part of us, lecturers and teachers, to maintain the basic attitude of teaching the unknown. For what reason? That is to induce self-evolving learners, as well as self-evolving organizations.

Reflective pedagogy: A conceptual framework

A growing body of research in learning communities and sustainable institutions suggest the importance of collaborative culture (Peterson & Deal, 1999; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Rogoff, Turkianis, & Bartlett, 2002; Hill, Brandeau, Truelove, & Lineback, 2014; Heffernan, 2015). The conceptual framework shared in the institutional level is used as a starting point. Research in learning communities suggests that what appears to be fundamentally decisive is the shared belief among the community members. It is based on such a perspective that I draw much ideological beliefs to expand my work.

It is my conviction that learning activities are supposedly drawn from such a shared conceptual framework that reflects institutional identity. Sanata Dharma University was established in 1955 as a teachers' institute. It was founded upon the philosophy of anthropological humanism. It is generally agreed that philosophy is a science to develop knowledge and pursue wisdom. Humanist orientation is established on the beliefs that humans are situated at the very center of all things. Humans are subjects, not merely objects of externalities. Central to this belief is the assumptions that humans possess freedom to choose. This anthropological perspective leads to an understanding that humans are continually engaged in meaning-making pursuits.

Examen Conscientiae through GREXT

The philosophy of anthropological humanism is frequently translated into a methodological framework called Ignatian Pedagogy (IP). As a pedagogy, it is formulated into a cycle of five components, namely *contexts*, *experience*, *actions*, *reflection* and *evaluation*. While the five components provide a comprehensive detail of each step, in practice, however, some view them as highly impractical.

My personal experience of facilitating the implementation of IP Grants suggest a number of things. On the one hand, since 2007, Ignatian Pedagogy has been established as a characterizing identity of Sanata Dharma University as a Jesuit institution. The grant, in which lecturers would earn a meagre amount of financial support to implement the method, follows a well-established procedures and mechanism. It was believed that such a grant provision would help the institutionalization of the pedagogy. This grant has successfully met the intended goal, in the sense that regularity of grant provision was found to increase the greater awareness of the pedagogy. In contrast, however, such a grant provision is found to have been too routinized. Little was done to rejuvenate the program. In addition, the implementation was very likely to get trapped in formalist procedures/mechanisms. The biggest challenge was the limited investigation beyond

anecdotal data obtained from the teaching and learning activities. Most grant recipients did not go further to make use of conceptual framework and theoretical expansions.

Despite such challenges, new ways of addressing pedagogies in Sanata Dharma University are explored. One of the simple, but powerful elaboration of reflective practices is a three-step GREXT. To help simplify the stages, a three-step reflective practice is proposed, which includes *gratitude*, *remorse*, and *so what next* (GREXT).

A growing body of literature suggests that reflection is found to play a fundamental role in facilitating the maturity growth of individual persons, which expands into the formation of a better community. In reality, however, such a reflective practice is very likely to land in a highly infertile land. When coming into collaborations with other community members, shared reflective practices are found to create a sense of insecurity. It is not unusual that disclosing our very vulnerabilities would create some personal and social disruptions. It requires a highly nurturing culture of relational trust to allow each participating community members to enjoy the freedom to express themselves. To what extent is Sanata Dharma University community able to nurture such a reflective practice? This question is not easily answered since it requires scientific investigations. In particular, following Gregory Bateson's method of involving autobiographical pieces in his essays, I will certainly respond to the question by asking myself, to what extent am I willing to prepare myself to continually open up my mind and undergo reflective actions on a daily basis?

In my own pursuit of knowledge, I came across Habermas' (1985) Critical Theory. The theory itself covers two kinds of critique, namely critique of ideology and critique of knowledge. The former is known to address external scopes of the people doing the critique. The latter addresses an internal part of our own personal human psyche.

Critique of ideology and knowledge

Mezirow (2000) suggests that ideology critique deals with what happens external to the ones doing the critique. Being said, it is also called objective reframing. When we do critique of ideology, the objects under investigation are the things done by other people, a group of people, or organizations external to us. It is not unusual that we will easily find fault at policies issued by authorities. A case in point, in the first days of his new position as Minister of Education (July 2016), Effendy Muhandjir sent a shocking message. He intended to mandate a full-day school, a replication of some religion-based schools in Indonesia. One might argue that the announcement of his premature thought was targeted as testing waters. However, his premature thought on that issue caught him red-handed in at least three major flaws. **First**, people quickly found that the new Minister's affiliation to a particular religious group was very likely to decrease his capability to operate within a framework of a more encompassing, national agenda. **Second**, his premature thought quickly suggests his lack of knowledge on the existing legislation with regards the maximum number of hours for students to study in school. **Third**, his premature thought also revealed his inability to project the financial burdens of such a policy to relevant stakeholders.

While such an objective reframing serves a good purpose that allows us to understand power relations, in our day-to-day life, it doesn't necessarily improve our quality of life as well our well-being. An overuse of objective reframing is likely to lead to a formation of a finger-pointing habit. Thus, instead of situating ourselves within the scope of being critiqued by our own, a habit of using objective reframing tends to find faults on others. An empirical study on leadership program among Indonesian adult

learners suggests that this type of reframing has led some people to undergo non-transformed learning (Budiraharjo, 2013).

It is the conviction of Sanata Dharma University to keep the balance between an objective and subjective reframing. A knowledge critique deals with the distortion of ourselves. An antidote to finger-pointing habit (I.e., critique of ideology), a thinking tool is offered. It is critique of knowledge. In contrast to objectively find weaknesses on what other people do, a critique of knowledge situates ourselves as a subject of our own scrutiny. Mezirow defines the process as subjective reframing. It is through subjective reframing that each of us is supposed to start to question the validity of our knowledge and assumptions. Brookfield (2009) elaborates the concept of subjective reframing as a thinking tool in a powerful term: *critical self-reflection on assumptions* (CSRA).

In particular, the underpinning principles of CSRA are the high degree of humility among us as fallible human beings. A skeptic empiricist, philosopher Nassim Nicholas Taleb (2001) argues that thinking fallacies are so rampant in the minds of current human beings. Drawing on the long tradition of philosophy of logic, Taleb argues the very vulnerabilities of human thinking and capability to understand a dynamically more complex world. The modernist thinking born in the fifteen hundred had led a great variety of pursuits of human endeavors. As Yuval Noah Harari (2014) notes, the findings of bacteria in a single drop of rain done by Anton van Leuwenhoek in 1674 using his simple and crude microscope had led humans to cope with more than 300 bacteria today. In addition, the quality of health science and services in the past five decades has allowed the world population to increase 14 times. Back to the fifteen hundreds, the human beings (upon the massive death due to the Black Death epidemics that left one-third of European population to survive) numbered around 500 millions. In a course of five centuries, the human population explodes, reaching to some seven billions today.

Despite such a great quality of health science and services, and all strikingly powerful technologies and sciences, each single human being and all homo sapiens who currently walk on our green planet, are still prone to uncertainties. Taleb warns that it is going to be too arrogant to claim that human beings are able to predict how the course of life of humans on earth will proceed. Assume that our great technologies of earthquake were able to precisely predict the huge tsunami that swept the Indian Ocean back to 2004, somebody or a group of powerfully influential people would have managed to remove people in Meulaboh and other cities much before the momentous day of December 26. Assume that great intelligence works of the United States had the capability to foresee what would have happened exactly on September 11, 2001, there would have been formidable preparations from the US Air Force to keep New York safe from terrorisms.

Humans remain to live a huge paradox. On the one hand, we are able to manage our life much better through times. On the other hand, we also need to admit that mistakes and errors are inseparable parts of our true identities as fallible humans. It takes some humility or humble attitude to remain healthy. As Taleb (2011) notes, back to the 1960s, even many physicians held a wrong belief with regards to breast-feeding. It was believed among many physicians that breast-feeding was a primitive thing to do. Substantive research done a few years afterwards eventually disclosed the importance of breast-feeding, which has something to do with our immune system. Breast-fed children would eventually grow less possibility of developing cancerous tissues. Breast-feeding mothers also substantially decrease the likelihood of getting contracted to breast cancer.

A critique of knowledge, which takes the form of CSRA, has a more powerful impact on the personal growth, when it is situated within a therapeutic turn.

Self-agency model: Willingness to take charge

Good teaching cannot be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher (Palmer, 2010). I found Palmer's words so powerful. A growing body of literature on curricular changes in different countries suggest that education is a field with highly contesting parties (Bowles and Gintis, 1976; Oakes, 1985; Kinceloe, 1992; Apple, 1978; Giroux, 1988). The fact that education is a never-ending battleground with contested parties involved is unavoidable. Critical thinkers (such as Bourdieu, Foucault, McLaren, Apple etc) are quickly pointing out the implications of political charges that play a bigger role in determining the direction of the education.

Drawing upon the conviction of teaching as identity and integrity-driven, I hold a strong belief to maintain a sense of self-agency in both my own classrooms as well as in my relationships with other people. A school leadership pundit, Michael Fullan (1993) argues that curricular changes will only take place when top-down policies meet a high degree of voluntarism among people of any level in the school building. Self-agency is defined to be composed of at least three major components. First, there is a growing awareness among people to sense some problems. Second, some voluntary people are moved to develop some ownership over the problems. Third, the ownership is then translated into real actions.

I hold the belief that I have some authority to take some real actions to induce meaningful learning among my students. Four major steps are taken to translate my self-agency to make a difference in my classes. **First**, upon seeing the unfair burdens of learning by the end of each semester, I decided to manage learning experiences. Drawing on Daniel Kahneman's theory of dual selves (i.e. experiencing and remembering), I devised a learning experience where the last one-fourth period of learning becomes a less burdensome for my students. **Second**, realizing that today's world is replete with great digital learning resources, I manage to make use of powerful videos to be significant parts of my class. **Third**, as neuroscience suggests, learning is biological by nature. Addressing the limbic brain (where emotion and decision making are located) is found to have brought significant impacts on the hormonal changes that facilitate learning. Accordingly, I make use of personal narratives to accommodate the emotional part of my students. **Fourth**, I am a true believer of teacher integrity as a foundational component to make up a meaningful experience in learning. I therefore try to maintain personal authenticity by sharing my personal reflections to public.

First step: Managing experiences

In my 17-year teaching experience, I have continuously heard that many students tend to have sleepless nights by the end of every semester. It is just logical to expect that some students are not able to manage their own learning. Instead of distributing their learning experiences the whole semester, some tend to spend their last minutes (by the end of each semester) to study. However, a few students are really good in their time management. They are able to manage time very well. Interestingly, I have continually seen the same issue in every even semester. Most students, seem to get overburdened by learning tasks. It is unusual to find good students to complain about the heavy burden by the end of even semester. What is wrong with this?

This is certainly a mind-boggling phenomenon. I eventually came across with the study done by Daniel Kahneman, the Nobel Laureate in Behavioral Economy, in 2002. In 1970s, he conducted a series of experiments to assess humans' capability to draw meanings out of their life encounters. He was interested in understanding how humans negotiate with painful experiences. He came up with a simple question: what made people suffer more; is it the length of the suffering or is it the degree of the sufferings? If

he was able to answer the very question, he would presumably be able to assess the degree of life quality of humans. Upon his observations of human sufferings and a variety of experiments, he concluded that humans tend to engage in transaction-based experiences. He came up with an idea that humans are of two different parts, one as experiencing self, and the other as remembering self. In short, he was going to assess, which one among the two selves, which really defines human experiences. Which speaks louder, experiencing self or remembering self?

Majority of people will intuitively think that the most determinant is our experiencing self. The longer a patient suffers from an illness, the worse experience he or she will suffer – which certainly deteriorates his or her life quality. However, upon conducting a number of experiments, Danny Kahneman found the opposite to what most people would think. The most determinant is the remembering self. Instead of the length or period of illness, it is how the patient ends the experience of illness itself. The very end of the illness period is called the remembering self. Humans are story-telling animals. Cognitive scientists have found that humans tend to selectively choose the corroborative evidence. In Senge's (1990) observation, humans are found to engage in leaps of abstraction. Instead of critically attending to each detail of the experience, humans tend to draw major take-aways. A psychologist, Daniel Kahneman earned a Nobel Prize in the discipline of Behavioral Economy.

How would this human characteristic be translated in our meaning-making pursuit through our class?

Second Step: A case of Integration

The second thing that I do to create meaningful experiences in my classes is to use a variety of video sources. How do I use them? First, I will get the selected videos embedded in our Learning Management System. Second, I will supply the quiz questions to assess students' comprehension. The quizzes make use of self-auto-grading systems. Once students are done with quiz, they will receive a prompt notification of their performance. Third, the check for understanding through simple quiz questions will be followed by a reflective question.

A case in point, the quiz based on Shawn Achor's speech on TED shows. 16 true-false questions are provided. The average score of the students is 81.85%. The average length of student's responses is 259 words. In response to the following prompt, "*Discuss your personal experiences that correspond to the importance of embracing a new paradigm offered by the positive psychology!*" here is one of the longest response:

I am always amazed by people who can speak flawlessly in front of public presenting a hefty topic in a fun, entertaining way. If the US has Kevin Hart and Indonesia has Panji Pragiwaksono as the talented stand-up comedians, we have to consider Shawn Achor to be our scientific stand-up comedian. At first I wondered how a researcher could be so hilarious like that. His brilliant thought and his positive energy do not only live up the presentation but also inspire us to be positive. I used to be a thinker, in a negative way, when I was just a kid. Seeing the negative thing first had been a pattern of my melancholic side. Now that Shawn Achor has made me more positive, I have two things that recently cross my mind about positive psychology.

First, being positive in the workplace should be started from the very beginning. Shawn Achor had told us how he felt so excited getting the

privilege of being accepted in Harvard. When others were burdened with the competition, the workload, the hassles, the stresses, the complaints, he stayed happy and positive. I have some friends who often meet me and discuss fun, simple things in the workplace. Other than sharing funny stories of our students (we have almost unlimited funny stories of them including a student who likes to guess teacher's age), we usually share how we feel about workload and tasks. We mostly face our tasks as something "wow" or "amazing" since they encourage us to use new method or new technology. While some seniors view those tasks as burdening or wasting time, we see that as something fun since we can also work together, which means also fun because we like to meet each other. We have our catchphrase initiated by my friends, Ibu M* & Ibu L*, that we are proud of: "The Power of Nggumunan" (The Power of Being Easily Amused -- I am sorry I have not found the perfect translation). With this motto, we face almost everything positively, especially when we get what others consider as heavy workload, difficult students, problematic parents (of our students), or even demanding supervisors. One of my friends said, "Disuruh bikin Lesson Plan aja kita gumun dan seneng banget." "We are super excited although it is only to work on Lesson Plans." I believe that this happiness and positiveness can help me and my friends survive.

Second, positivity enhances the energy of learning in classrooms. I have a student who always brings positivity, I call it happiness, to the class. Everyday he has a funny or silly story to tell. He probably does not intend to be funny, but the way he makes an effort to tell stories in proper English and the body language he has are entertaining. This brings happiness and positive energy to his friends and it helps me live up the class. Having lecturers of MPBI who always bring positivity to the class is also a motivation to learn in Sanata Dharma University. Having positive and excited, not to mention funny, friends in class had made me down with regret when I skipped a class one afternoon. A full-day working should be ended up with a fun afternoon in class. Telling random jokes, sharing the infamous snacks, having dinner together, or gossiping about the never-ending worksheets are some activities that unexpectedly trigger us to discuss even more serious topics that lead us to learn something new, as the side effect. I thank you and all my friends in class for such fun atmosphere.

My wrap-up sentence will not be as long as what it is supposed to be. My colleague, Ibu A, had once told me, "Be Good! If not, Be Happy!"

In short, the learning becomes meaningful. In what way?

First, it is done to bring forward the emotional part of the brain. Borrowing Sinek's framework of three circle model of WHY, HOW, and WHAT, I intentionally create a sense of comfort and security. A growing body of literature on learning suggests the importance of emotion and decision making to be foremostly addressed.

Second, one of the most profound critiques on the use of reflective teaching is the lack of credibility and/or accountability. Reflections become so personal, hidden from public radar, and leading to self-indulging attitude. This critique is responded by bringing the reflective pieces into a public readership.

Third, personal reflections will become meaningful only after personal feedback is given. It is true that the feedback is supposedly intended to induce some critical thinking. However, it is going to be much more powerful when the uniquely written responses clearly underscore the compassionate attitude. The responses cannot be judgmental, where the lecturer plays a moral high ground. The clarity of the message must be fully captured. This is the tricky part. It takes a village to raise a kid. A systems thinking is required. The whole is not just the sum of its parts, as Aristotle has taught us.

Third step: Listening to students' authentic voices

I happened to be one of the instructors of *Program Profesi Guru (PPG) Sarjana Mengajar di Daerah Tertinggal, Terdepan, dan Terluar (SM-3T)*. Out of 13 PPG students, 12 are from Kupang. In our recent book (Budiraharjo & Lasar, 2016), it is clear that they were not well-prepared to join the program. Their English commands made them so inferior. Most were unsure whether they would survive in Sanata Dharma University.

The narrative of Astikha Lutfiana



Let me introduce myself. My name is Astikha Lutfiana. I was born in Kudus and was raised in Jepara. Do you know anything about Kudus? Well, this is small city located in between two historic cities, namely Demak and Pati. It is easy to associate Kudus with two big things. The first is that it houses one of the biggest cigarette makers, Jarum Kudus. The second is that it the location of one of the biggest paper companies, Pusaka Raya Inc.

How am I related to those two big things? Well, to tell the truth, I attended Muria Kudus University, majoring in English education. This university was founded by Jarum Kudus, Inc., as one of its corporate social responsibilities. It was certainly a pride to have attended the university.

When I joined the SM-3T in 2014, and I was sent to West Kalimantan Province. I was placed in the regency of Landak and the district of Kuala Behe in Angkanyar village. The first two pictures are snapshots of SMPN 3, Kuala Behe. The school is three km away from its closest neighborhood. So, my friend and I had to walk on foot for about 30 minutes in order to reach the school. As you can see from the pictures, the road is not hardened with asphalt or concrete. When the rainy season comes, the road becomes very slippery. It is dangerous for you to walk on it. When heavy rains come, the muddy road are not passable by vehicles.

My school has six different unit buildings. You can find classrooms (for the seventh, eighth, and ninth graders), library, and school office, as well as toilets. The school buildings are now four years of age already. What might be of interest for you is this: my school is called bukit sinyal. How did people end up naming the place that way? It is so because it is the very spot that you have a relatively good cellular phone signals (although not that strong).

Sony Malua

Let me introduce myself. My name is Mika Sony Malua. I was born in Alor, and was raised in Kupang City. I moved to Kupang City when I started my elementary education. As you may know, Kupang is not popular as Bali. But, most people will come to an agreement, that the most fascinating places to visit are the beaches. There are three popular beaches in Kupang, namely Lasiana, Manikin Beach, and Batu Nona Beach.

I didn't plan to join the SM-3T program. It was upon the urge of my close friend that I got enrolled in it. The selection process was not easy. I thought that I would never be admitted to the program. The tests were difficult. I had made myself sure that I would have failed in those tests. Surprisingly, I was admitted to join the program. I was sent to Deiyai Regency, Papua Province. I was in charge of teaching different subjects, such religion, Bahasa Indonesia, Arts, and Sports. It is true that I was trained as an English teacher. But I found it impossible to teach them English. That is a small piece of information about me and SM-3T program. There are more stories about my experiences when I stayed in Deiyai Regency. But, I will tell more about them in different occasions.

I will turn to the following picture.



A traditional dance for a marriage proposal

The picture depicts a traditional dance called Silat Kampung. It is considered as a sacred dance. Only a few have the authority to perform the dance. I took this picture last

year. It shows one kind of dances from Alor regency, especially from Pura district. It is not frequently performed in the area. Pura Island stands on its own. It takes about 20 hours on a ship to reach the island from Kupang Port. But, you have an alternative to reach the place by plane, which takes only 40 minutes. The plane ticket is about four times more expensive.

The dance is hardly found anymore. It can only be performed by those mastering traditional martial arts. Usually, only the elderly who master the arts are recruited to perform the dance. Interestingly enough, the dance is specifically performed during the marriage proposal. The rite of passage to conduct the dance is started with the drinking of *sopi* (i.e. a kind of traditional wine made of lontar liquid).



I was born in Timor Leste, but I am now an Indonesian citizen. My birth of place was a small village called Lachubar. It is a sub-district from Manatuto district, one of the most isolated areas in Timor Leste. That small town is surrounded by high mountains. So, imagine a huge bowl. Our village is located just at the very center of its lowest, internal part of the bowl.

I'm telling you the truth, Laclubar was very left behind when I was a child. In my childhood, you wouldn't find many luxurious houses. Some good houses dated back to the era of Portuguese reign. But they were no longer cared or maintained due to political and social unrests back to the 1999 referendum. During that period, along the roads, you could only find traditional houses made of bamboos or woods and the roofs were covered by coarse grass.

Back then, even though our houses were made of those traditional and local materials, we were very comfortable to stay in them. I remembered day after day I had to walk about 5 km to school without any shoes or any sandals through stony and muddy roads as you can see in the pictures. It was far from being modernized. In there also I got many unforgettable childhood moments.

My experience of joining SM-3T program had changed my perspectives. I thought that the place I was born, and the area where I grew up, were so bad. One of the SM-3T teachers, I was stationed in Mappi District, Papua Province. I was struck by the fact that Papuan children were far left behind in comparison to my own folks. Even their mastery of Bahasa Indonesia was still very poor. No matter how hard I tried to teach them English, they barely knew even few vocabulary. Once I offered a free English course outside of school hours, nobody showed up.

One of the heart-breaking experiences was when I learned that my students were absent from my class. I quickly learned that they were foraging for food. They lived in a temporary shelter, made by their own, close to the school as one big group. They did not stay with their own parents, so they had to find their own food.

Biographical narratives, where we set out our own personal narratives, serve a powerful way of learning. British anthropologist, Gregory Bateson (1904-1986), was found to have largely drawn his own personal, autobiographical pieces to include in his essays. Personal stories are inevitably an inseparable part of our human endeavor. Here are excerpts that I wrote to illustrate how I managed my own life.

Fourth step: All start from within

I do hold a belief that all things that we ask others to do will only become consequential when we demonstrate the capability of accomplishing the task. It is true that writing has been my passion. Writing personal reflections for the purpose of presenting in a public is an uneasy endeavor. It took me years and years of practice. The following is an example of my own personal reflection entitled *Seven painful stitches on the right forehead (September 15, 2015)*. It discusses an accident close to a burial ground. I shared the reflective note to all faculty members. Some sympathetic comments from my colleagues were so encouraging.

Five days before his eleventh birthday, Rio earned two things - which were so contradictory to each other by nature. The first was a fascinating one. His parents decided to buy him a Yamaha organ. After two years joining Pusat Musik Liturgi, Rio demonstrated a great progress in his musical skills. It was just natural that both his parents intended to give him a memorable birthday gift. The brand new organ is certainly not cheap. It's not difficult for Rio to get the message: his parents have made such a great sacrifice to get him the musical instrument. Rio has learned that his parents are not wealthy. His father is a college teacher whose salary is not that high. His mother is a full-time house wife. Thus, his father is the sole breadwinner for the family. In short, the birthday gift is of great value.

The second thing that Rio earned on that day was just the opposite to the first. It was one of the most painful things that he has undergone so far. The story goes like this. At four p.m. Rio and his daddy took their bikes. They were about to enjoy their prime time, i.e., riding their bikes around villages of their neighborhood. The first destination was the sculpture studio at the outskirts of Kadirojo area. It is currently preparing to build a 7-meter statue of Jesus. They sometimes visit to see how the statue progresses. They learned that the bronze-based statue will be taken to Maybrat, Sorong, Papua. When they reached the studio, it was clear that there wasn't any visible progress yet. They headed north, and then east. Neighborhood villages are always an amazement for them, especially after Rio started to enjoy riding a bike three months ago. This evening, they reached a new village called Bojan Somodaran. Both quickly noted a drastic change in their feelings upon leaving this village. They passed a concrete path leading to a bridge over a river.

Shortly, they reached Kedulan Temple. They spent about half an hour to study the site. The Hindu temple was filled with mud and sand a thousand years ago. The temple complexes are filled with at least four independent temples. It was a joyful moment for both of them. They learned from a security guy in charge. The site was discovered in 1993. Unfortunately, time seemed to speed up on that evening, especially when you enjoy your time. The sun was quickly hiding on the horizon. It was getting dark. They rushed back. The journey back home to the south was an easy one. The landscape of the area

allows them to enjoy effortless riding. The northern part of Yogyakarta is higher than the southern.

About two kilos from home, Rio's daddy offered him to take a lead. Rio has been familiar to the neighborhood. He must have known the route to get home. He agreed. Then, Rio was in front. His daddy was behind. In less than three minutes, such a decision turned out to be a disaster. The incident took place quickly. Rio sped up, wildly swerving to the left and the right. He seemed to be overjoyed! The diameter of his bike wheels is pretty small, making the bike slipped easily. That was what happened. He crashed! It was getting dark. At their right, flowing water into man-made ponds made soothing sounds. At their right, dark tombstones silently sent a strong sense of fear. Yes, it was maghrib, and it was just right to the spooky area: Tundan Burial Ground.

Rio landed harshly on the hard asphalt. His glasses broke. The wound on his right forehead was quickly visible. It was so painful to watch him. The blood flew from the wound. His tearful eyes told how painful the wound was. His daddy was speechless. It was easy for him to realize that it was his own mistake that had led to this accident.

"The kid is amazingly cooperative," the young female physician told Rio's parents after she finished stitching the wound. "He is so cute, so different from other kids of his age. I made seven stitches, and all of them were well-done."

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