

International Training Program(ITP)

On-site Education of Practical Languages for Area Studies

Report in 2012

-Indonesian, Hasanuddin University, Indonesia, Term(e. g. 7 Aug. 2012-14 Oct. 2012)-

Year of Enrollment:2012
Graduate School of Asian and African Areas Studies
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On My research theme and Language Training(about 400 words)

Throughout Austronesian societies, the wide spread use and social significance of botanical metaphors and the concept of “trunk” have been reported. My research is focused on the Iban people who reside both in West Kalimantan, Indonesia and Sarawak, Malaysia. The Iban are categorized as an Austro-Indonesian people. Among the Iban, the use of botanical metaphor and the concept of trunk (pun) in relation to social organization are observed especially in the context of religious rite. The purpose of my research is to elucidate how Iban people conceptualize their social relations by means of botanical metaphors and the concept of trunk. My research tries to clarify this point through careful reading of ethnographies of the Iban and to compare the Iban with other ethnic groups in Sarawak and Kalimantan. Furthermore, I am going to research how traditional organization of the society works in the era of decentralization of Republic Indonesia.

During ITP program I studied Indonesian (Bahasa Indonesia) at Hasanuddin University for about two months. Indonesian is the national language of Republic Indonesia. Linguistically speaking, Indonesian is one of Austronesian languages. The 1945 Constitution of Republik Indonesia enacts Indonesian as the national language. However, most of Indonesian people speak local languages as their mother tongue and speak Indonesian as secondary language.

In Indonesia teaching staff of Hasanuddin University taught me Indonesian and correct my Indonesian in non-organized discussion about area studies and anthropology as well as everyday-life contexts. In addition I attended some Indonesian classes at Makassar National University because they offered Indonesian class for foreigners. I have already learnt basic Indonesian grammar and vocabulary at undergraduate school. My focus during my stay in Indonesia in the ITP program was to improve my language competence in Indonesian and start to learn the Iban language. When I visited West Kalimantan, I learnt the basic grammar of the Iban language and collected its vocabularies relevant to my research theme.

By the end of the training I felt my Indonesian improved enough to obtain basic information in the field, although my Indonesian needs much more improvement to conduct fieldwork for future research. Thus I still need to keep practising Indonesian.

