

# Professional Standards Project

L A N G U A G E S



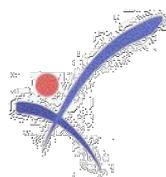
## Teacher participant investigation

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**Indonesian, Years 2 to 7**

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and Cultures**

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## TEACHERS' CLASSROOM-BASED INVESTIGATIONS

Welcome to the examples of teachers' classroom-based investigations that have been drawn from their work in the Professional Standards Project. Teachers were asked to conduct an investigation into their own practice based on their work with the Standards.

A range of investigation topics and processes from across the states and territories of Australia have been chosen, although not all investigations that teachers provided have been posted on this website. These examples are provided for you to consider and use, while expanding your own understanding of the Standards and their use in the teaching and learning of languages.

However, you will not find examples of programming or practice that you can instantly adopt and use in your teaching. That was never the intention.

Furthermore, you will not find 'best practice' or exemplars of definitive investigations of languages teaching and learning.

So, what kinds of materials can you expect?

- You will find ideas about practice that teachers have investigated. You can use these ideas to stimulate further thinking when working in your own context.
- You will find some outstanding approaches to thinking about practice that advance our understanding of how to make teaching and learning languages a rich and effective learning experience for students, and a satisfying professional experience for teachers.
- You will also find professional educators striving to make sense of their work in teaching and learning languages. You will find a great deal from which you can learn.

What these programs show are 'teachers at work', examining their practices and pedagogies in relation to the Standards. The teachers responded to their particular contexts, the curriculum and assessment frameworks in which they work, the particular demands they and their students face in languages education, and their own 'learning-by-doing' from using the Standards in teaching and learning languages. The details about the specific context and the elaboration of the teachers' investigations give professional insights into the interaction of thinking and practice.

Reading across the full set of investigations you will get a sense of the ideas and issues that the Standards raise about languages teaching for teachers, for students, for whole schools, and for communities, across languages and age groups, and in the range of contexts in which languages are taught in Australia.



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## PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS PROJECT CLASSROOM-BASED INVESTIGATION REPORT

TEACHER	SCHOOL	LANGUAGE	YEAR LEVELS
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### CONTEXT

I chose two classes taught via distance education through the School of Isolated and Distance Education (SIDE) in Leederville, Perth, WA. The Year 6–7 cohort comprises eighteen primary school students from a wheat belt region. They are beginning language learners who have studied Indonesian for 2\_ terms. The Year 3 group combines four Kimberley School of the Air (KSOTA) students, living on vast stations and an Indigenous community, and one student from a small primary school in the south-west of WA.

Students engage in Indonesian language lessons through Centra, a synchronous, online learning environment. Although learners can often see me via a small video camera, I cannot see them, and they simply appear as a list of names on my computer. I can speak to them, and they to me when I allocate an electronic ‘microphone’ to them. They can ask to speak by raising an electronic ‘hand’. Although this mode of delivery can still be interactive, the sense of being far removed from my learners is high, and getting to know my learners much slower. Learning materials are created before the beginning of each term, and are sent to learners in hard copy and also used online.

### AREA OF INVESTIGATION

Having recently returned to teaching via distance education after teaching in a face-to-face mode for three years in the north-west of WA, I was very aware of the limitations of the former when it comes to knowing my learners, both in an educational context and in a social and personal context. Module 3: Learners and their Life Worlds caused me to reflect on the importance of this knowledge, particularly as my learners represented vastly different cultural ‘life worlds’, and that I was not adequately catering for the necessity of acquiring this knowledge early on in their learning journey with me.

I planned to create an activity that would be incorporated in the curriculum materials given to distance learners of Indonesian. I envisaged that different versions of this activity would be used at the beginning of each term. The activity would encourage learners to write about themselves, and this would build a picture of the learner, his/her likes and dislikes, home and school environments, and also an indication of their level of Indonesian language use. I hoped to enlist the help of an Indonesian Language advisor to participate and provide stimulus for intercultural considerations. In one activity I planned to provide an opportunity for learners to share something of their 'life worlds' with me, to illustrate their language competency and to engage in intercultural reflection.

## CLASSROOM PRACTICE

I asked for digital photographs of the students to be emailed to me. I then used these to create a personal online activity that could be used in a Centra lesson called *Tentang Saya* (About Me). Learners were required to write about different categories of their lives *Rumah saya* (My home), *Sesudah sekolah* (After school), *Di Sekolah* (At school), and *Keluarga saya* (My family).

The students were at a very early stage of their language learning; however, the Year 6–7 group could write about their family in Indonesian, as they were currently engaging in this theme.

Although the Year 3 group wrote in English, they will revisit the activity after completing their next unit of study, *Keluarga Saya*. This activity will then also be used as evidence of language acquisition.

Learners were encouraged to use Indonesian wherever they could. I used the 'break out room' facility of Centra, which allows each learner to work on their own task at the same time. The *Tentang Saya* task took 2 x 40-minute lessons to complete.

Learners were invited to talk about what they had written and it was shared online with other group members. This approach generated discussion, particularly with the KSOTA classes, about how each learner's life was similar to and different from the others, an initial look at varying cultures within our own class. Learners in the Year 6–7 group used this opportunity to speak about their families using bahasa Indonesia. The activity became an oral language task as well as a written one.

I asked an Indonesian Language Advisor, Pak Budi, who was working at SIDE, to also complete the task, both in Indonesian and in English, and to write about his life as a child. He was able to share this with the Year 3 group when he joined our online class. I shared his work with the Year 6–7 group as Budi was unable to participate. This group also completed the *Menurut Pendapat* (in my opinion) activity where they reflected more formally on the similarities and differences in Budi's life and their lives.

## DATA OR INFORMATION GATHERED

**Year 3** Before the activity I led some discussion about the lives of my learners. We found where they lived on Google Earth Maps and the Year 3 group sent photographs of themselves and where they lived. I made a PowerPoint presentation of these and added my own photographs. I led a discussion that focused them on the cultural and geographical diversity within our own group. Three of my students lived on cattle stations in the Kimberley, one in a remote Aboriginal community, and one on a farm in the south-west of WA. They participated enthusiastically and relished the opportunity to tell me about their lives.

They completed the *Tentang Saya* activity online. This was mostly written in English; however, we are soon to revisit it and complete the section about their family in Indonesian. We shared what each had written with the whole group, and discussed it. The following lesson they were introduced

to Pak Budi. They read about his life as he spoke about it. They asked questions about his life in Indonesia. They especially liked hearing about what he did after school as a child, and loved that he liked to do the same sorts of things they do, especially that he played chasey. I led discussion that compared and contrasted their lives and his, and reinforced what we had already learnt about the differences and similarities in their own lives.

**Years 6 to 7** This group completed the activity but were already able to write about at least one category in Indonesian. They were keen to use as much Indonesian as possible and managed to ‘pepper’ Indonesian words throughout the other categories. Within Centra I am able to ‘visit’ each learner electronically as they work individually. I can see their work, and interact with them. I had separate discussions with each about their lives, in Indonesian as much as possible.

I then shared individual work (with permission) with the group and we discussed similarities and differences. We then looked at Budi’s work. Initially we looked at his writing in Indonesian. Learners worked with a partner to pick out known words and to report back to the group. They were able to read and make meaning from the work about his family. I then showed them his activity in English. This prompted much discussion — again looking at similarities and differences. They completed the task *Menurut Pendapat Saya* where they reflected on the similarities (*sama*), differences (*berbeda*), and aspects that were surprising (*tahu-tahu*) of Budi’s life.

## FINDINGS

Before these activities I knew little about my students, and felt this lack of knowledge keenly. I did not feel I had much of a relationship with them. This focused me on gathering the sort of data I needed to develop this relationship, which impacted on the social interaction of our classes and also on my planning for their learning.

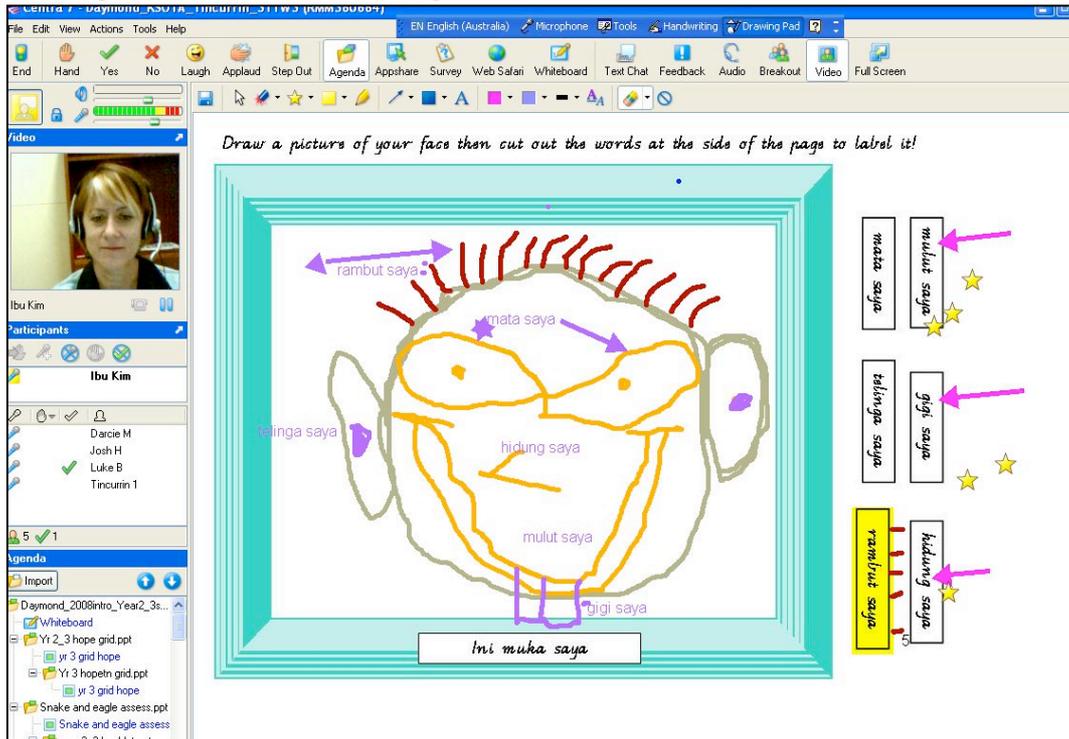
I learnt that my students were keen to share knowledge of their lives with me and appreciated my sharing my life with them. I learned that almost all my Year 3 group chose art, craft, and ‘hands on’ type activities as those they most liked to do at and after school — leading to my planning more language activities that incorporate these tasks.

I learnt to appreciate the depth of diversity of the Year 3 group. I had a much better understanding of the lives of these children, that they may finish their lessons in their school of the air school room on the station and then go mustering cattle in their Dad’s helicopter. One of my Indigenous students would spend the weekend fishing and catching ‘bungarras’ (monitor lizards) to cook and eat over the camp fire (he sent a photo of a big one he caught himself!).

This diversity is not as great with the Year 6 to 7 cohort, but they are a much larger group and therefore even more difficult to get to know in this learning environment. Before this activity I did not even have photographs of them. I now feel I know and relate to these students differently, and know them better. I also have evidence of their language acquisition to this point.

I learnt that these students were open to, and interested in, learning about the cultural aspects of the language they are learning. They were all open to concepts of difference as being just that — different — but without the often associated negative judgments.

# MATERIALS AND EXEMPLARS



The interface of a Centra lesson. This is what I see.  
 Under my video image is a list of student names. This is my class.  
 On the right is an online activity.

Tentang saya



**Sesudah sekolah**

After sekolah saya like to play with my anjing dan adik perempuan. Saya like to play Hockey, Basketball and saya like swimming. Saya like to play dan hang out with saya teman.

**Keluarga saya**

Ada empat orang-orang in my family. Ada Ibu, Bapak, adik perempuan dan myself. Ada also satu anjing nama Brambi. He is sebelas bulan.

Dia punya so cute dan fluffy. Saya love him so much.

**Rumah saya**

Dia punya an old style house with empat bedrooms. Dia punya satu budgie nama Aussie, lot's of Finches Dan satu anjing.

Dia punya a new kitchen dan shower.

Dia punya a besarbackyard. Saya punya saya own room.

**Di sekolah**

Di sekolah saya like to play with my teman. We learn LOTE, S+E, English, Math, Science dan Computing. We also do Art, Sport dan T+E. Saya love Art dan Sport. Saya Ibu is a teacher at this sekolah. Saya adik perempuan also goes to this sokolah too.

Saya love sokolah because it's fun dan cool.

Tentang saya activity — Year 6 to 7 beginning student.

Tentang saya



sesudah sekolah

After school i like to like to ride the horses.  
I also go out on mill runs with dad.  
  
I like going to Rexs place.

Keluarga saya

Mum, Dad, Lachie, Jack, Lucy and Me  
Mum is my school room teacher.  
Dad runs the station.  
Lachie rides the horses.  
Jack punches me.  
Lucy is at school.

Di sekolah

At school i like science and Art.  
  
in art i like painting and sketching.  
I alsoow like making things.

rumah saya

Munro Springs Stn is a cattle station  
150 km south of Broome.  
There are tiga houses and lima dongas.  
We have stables and a campdrafting arena.  
we have a red helicopter and a air strip.

Tentang saya activity — Year 3 KSOTA beginning student.

Tentang saya



sesudah sekolah

Pada waktukecil, saya suka bermain di sawah sesudah sekolah. Saya suka memancingikan, bermain layang-layang dan bermain kejar-kejaran

keluarga saya

Ada enam orang di keluarga saya. Ada nenek, bapak, ibu, satu kakak laki-laki, satu adik perempuan dan saya sendiri

di sekolah

Dulu sekolah saya di desa Kalisari. Ibu saya adalah guru di sekolah itu. Kami tidak membawa makanan ke sekolah, tapi kami membelinya dari penjual makanan di depan sekolah. Kami belajar matematika, IPA, IPS, bahasa Inggris. Kami bermain lempar kartu pada waktu istirahat

rumah saya

Rumah saya di Magelang, Jawa Tengah, Indonesia. Rumah saya dari kayu dan batubata. Saya punya dua anjing. Namanya Ciripa dan Semut

Pak Budi's activity in Indonesian and English.

Tentang saya



**keluarga saya**

There are six people in my family. There are grandma, dad, mum, an older brother, a younger sister, and myself

**sesudah sekolah**

When I was little, I used to play in rice field after school with my friends. We like playing soccer, fishing, flying kite and playing chasey.

**rumah saya**

I live in Magelang, Central Java, Indonesia. My house is made of wood and brick. I have two dogs. They are Aripa and Semut

**di sekolah**

I went to a primary school in a village called Kalisari. My mum is a teacher in that school. We did not bring our lunch or snack to school, but we bought them from the food sellers around school. We learnt math, science, and English. We used to play cards at recess time.

## Menurut pendapat saya



Tentang saya

**Pak Budi – Tentang saya**

*What did you find the same and different about Budi's life as a child? What was surprising? What had you imagined?*

**Sama**

^\_^ i have 6 in my family including my nana and i have 1 cat and 1 dog and my brothers play footy and or soccer at school we learn math sose and english and my house is made wood and cement^\_^

**Berbeda**

^^ my mums not a teacher we dont play cards at lunch and i dont by my lunch and recess everyday and i dont play in a rice field and i dont have two dogs^^

**Tahu-tahu**

^^ i thought people in Indonesia would be poor and and would have no dogs or school  
^^

Year 6 to 7 formal reflection of associated discussion.

## EVALUATION

I will use activities similar to *Tentang Saya* at the beginning of each unit of work, as an explicit tool to get to know my learners' 'life worlds' more quickly. I will alter them according to themes and language content covered and ensure each provides personal information about my learners as well as being a record of language acquisition.

I will weave intercultural considerations throughout, and use them as a 'diving board' for intercultural discussion and concepts.

I will use the information gained from them to inform my future planning.

## REFLECTION

This project has caused me to reflect on what has been disquiet on my return to distance education. After 3 years, back in a face-to-face classroom, in a small town, where getting to know my students was made easier by the cross-contextual ways we would interact, returning to teaching via distance was difficult. I felt even more disconnected from them.

Rather than simply bemoaning this reality, this aspect of the PSP has caused me to reflect on my lack of appropriate planning for getting to know my learners in the distance learning context. Although this is more difficult, it simply requires tools such as the *Tentang Saya* activity to be explicitly employed, and the acknowledgment of the importance of this process.

I have shared this task with colleagues at SIDE and they plan to make use of the concept to overcome this basic difficulty.