

Website Wanted: Personal Case Study in Building the Bridge of Multi-Interest

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Abstract

This presentation is devoted for those who believe that personal journey is one of the treasures that make the destination worthwhile. It is a personal case study in creating a website as a core-document of a PhD research, and as a bridge in connecting multi interests.

“Where are you from?” is a rather easy question for most people to respond. But it is not for me, especially at international conferences. The difficulties have already started when filling up the participation form. There is always further clarification needed. I cannot just write or say that I’m from Indonesia as I don’t live there anymore. And a simple word Paris poses more questions when people realize that I fly from Sweden instead of France.

A long geographical way from the research base triggered the thought of creating a website. But then confusion arose. The background disorder made it hard for me to regulate how the website should look. I was determined to write the main pages in French as I was registered under Hypermedia Dept. Université de Paris-8. I also planned to make English translation for not only that it is considered an official language for global communication but also because the co-advisor, an Information Ethnographer from Indiana University (USA), didn’t speak French. And the desire to share knowledge with friends back home insisted me to also have Indonesian pages.

Setting foot in fieldwork, the mess of creating a website in three languages was predictable but had I known what I was getting myself into, I might have made a better plan. Instead, I put myself in a deeper inconvenience. Besides the time I should spend more on computer rather than on site, technical matters were also at stake. My old Apple of iBookG4 with French keyboard did not seem to communicate well with the English speaking Windows and Linux in my surroundings. And it appeared that the common French

server I used to store my website could not be accessed from outside France.

Getting ahead, personal matters followed to be considered. Moved permanently to Sweden I therefore had a Swedish advisor for my academic activities, now performed from Media and Communication Dept. of Lund Universitet, yet the administration was still under Université de Paris-8. This means that I now had three advisors to discuss with. All three lived in different locations. All three would like to follow progress of my research. All three had their own interest. I was fortunate that all three had agreed that the research was my work so it would be my thoughts that mattered.

There is nothing fancy about the research subject I approach. It is a simple cyberculture observation on penetration of the Internet in Aceh. However, this simple issue grants me full work when it comes to consider that 1) Aceh allows me a complex socio-cultural data as it had suffered from civil war and the tsunami, not to mention the Islamic law they apply, 2) each of my three advisors has their own eyes to look at my study – one on hypermedia, one on information ethnography, one on media and communication, and 3) I have a website (and dissertation) that I should address my attention too.

The work is still ongoing. I believe I’m rich with contents as I’m contended with rich surroundings and environments but creating an open content and open access site is very much easier if we work in a team. I don’t. I therefore feel uncertain on when the site could be declared as ready to launch but anyway... enjoy...!

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