

Interview by Jemma Purdey with Hendy Hendrata, Melbourne, 12 May 2014

Engineering, University of Sydney, 1950s cohort

[00:00:15]	<p>Early life was mainly in Semarang and Solo, and a little bit in Surabaya. Came to study in Australia in 1955. Born in 1934 and went to a Dutch kindergarten in Semarang. When the Japanese invaded Java, Pak Hendy's father moved the family to Solo. His mother died when he was six, just before the Japanese occupation, so he and his older sister were raised by extended family in Solo. They moved back to Semarang in '48 when it was controlled by the Dutch, Pak Hendy's father worked for the Dutch railways. During the occupation, his father ran a family business, a bakery. Pak Hendy went to a Chinese school. Japanese was compulsory and Dutch forbidden but their father engaged a clandestine tutor and they learnt Dutch and French. They also learnt Indonesian at school.</p>	<p>Family background; Childhood</p>
[00:04:30]	<p>When he went back to Semarang he rejoined the Dutch system for the start of high school and then an Indonesian school after the Dutch education system stopped. Finished school in 1954 and went to Airlangga University in Surabaya to study medicine. Money was tight so the Colombo Plan seemed like salvation. During the year at Airlangga he realised didn't want to be a doctor. The scholarship was to help develop Indonesia and medicine wasn't a priority. He was interested in flying and engineering so that's what he applied for.</p>	<p>Early education; Scholarship application</p>
[00:08:56]	<p>In 1955 he came to Sydney and did a bridging program. His English was already pretty good but mostly theoretical. He came on a special plane full of Colombo scholars. There was no pre-departure training. They didn't know which university they would go to, it was decided after they matriculated in Sydney. Pak Hendy was sent to Sydney University.</p>	<p>Arriving in Australia; English language training in Sydney</p>
[00:11:33]	<p>There were no farewell parties before they left but his father came to see him off. Scholars had been promised an airfare back to Indonesia after three years. Felt very excited to be going to study overseas, it was fulfilling a dream. He was the first in his extended family to study</p>	<p>Scholarship experience; Family background; Arriving in Sydney; Living arrangements</p>

	<p>overseas. Sydney seemed too quiet and was a bit racist. The bridging program was for three months. At first they stayed in ex-army barracks, about 60 or 70, mostly Indonesian, students. After that he moved to Mrs Pembury's house in North Stratfield and stayed for two or three years. Two other Indonesians came to live there too. The food was OK, Mrs Pembury tried to cook rice.</p>	
[00:16:14]	<p>After three years studying aeronautical engineering he felt a lack of confidence in higher maths and questioned continuing in that direction. In third year he was approached by a senior Indonesian, Sumadi, to do interviews for Radio Australia, which he did. After a while he applied for a broadcasting job in Melbourne and got it.</p>	<p>Studying in Australia; Work experience; Radio Australia</p>
[00:18:16]	<p>Mr White was the contact at the Department of Education for the Indonesian students. He was good, in the first year Pak Hendy had appendicitis and was sent to a private hospital in Sydney for more than a week. For summer jobs, Pak Hendy worked as a tram conductor and a coolie at Darling Harbour. He bought a motorbike, had an accident with his friend, Sudirman, riding pillion, and broke his collarbone. He also had a tutor that came to Mrs Pembury's and helped with his studies. The work in Sydney was completely different to what he'd done in Surabaya. There wasn't much one-to-one interaction with lecturers but they all seemed sympathetic to the international students.</p>	<p>Scholarship experience; Living in Australia; Work experience; Studying in Australia</p>
[00:22:19]	<p>There were five Indonesians studying with him. The other four went home and got good jobs, one became director of air safety, one became president-director of Angkasa Pura looking after airports, one joined the Angkatan Udara Banul and the other became director of technical services at Garuda.</p>	<p>Indonesian student community in Sydney; Alumni network</p>
[00:24:05]	<p>Father was a bit of a disciplinarian so in Australia Pak Hendy decided to think for himself and make his own decisions. Went home after three years. Worked the first two summers, got a job as a tram conductor, relieving permanent staff, through the Sydney University employment office. It was challenging going up</p>	<p>Family background; Living in Australia; Work, study and leisure</p>

	and down the stairs all the time. The trams went from Randwick. It was very cold in winter [description of the old trams]. The money was OK and helped supplement the allowance from the scholarship. When they first arrived they were taken to Gowings to buy clothes. Felt well looked after.	
[00:28:56]	He liked the work with Sumadi for Radio Australia and thought it was a good chance to escape from engineering. He had no attachment to Sydney so was happy to go to Melbourne. On his bike went to Newcastle, Wollongong and Canberra and up the coast but never to Melbourne. In Melbourne, met other Indonesian families through work so felt immediately comfortable. He was invited to stay with Rudi in a bungalow in East St Kilda. The job involved some shift work but he liked it and was able to study part time, a Bachelor of Commerce at Melbourne University, at the same time.	Work experience; Radio Australia; Travelling in Australia; Indonesian community in Melbourne; Studying in Melbourne
[00:32:21]	At his stage he was on an employment visa. After a year or two, 1961 or 1962, the Immigration Department invited him to apply for permanent residency or citizenship but for work he needed to maintain a good relationship with the Indonesian Embassy so he didn't accept the invitation. Commerce was easier than engineering and he made friends with Australians. Hadn't mixed with Australians much in Sydney except for going on picnics with Rotary members, the Education Department had introduced them to Rotary Clubs. Had thought of joining clubs at university but few Asians did that.	Visas and permits; Living in Australia; Friendships with Australians
[00:36:40]	Had played badminton and basketball at home but in Sydney felt he had to concentrate on study. Mostly socialised with other Indonesians, there were quite a few. In Melbourne there were fewer Asians, mixed with other Australians also working full time and studying part time. At Radio Australia he regularly translated the news for broadcasting and often had a slot to present something from the ABC's English section. There was a lot of commentary, usually written by an Age journalist, the slant was always the Australian perspective.	Leisure activities in Australia; Indonesian community; Work experience
[00:39:35]	There wasn't much news available from	Radio Australia

	<p>Indonesia, unless you got someone to post magazines. The audience for Radio Australia was mainly young people, university students, people who were interested in other cultures. Sukarno had banned the broadcasting of western music, the only station that young people could listen to was Radio Australia, short wave. A lot of people in eastern Indonesia listened to Radio Australia because reception of broadcasts from Java was difficult. Listeners used to write, usually requesting songs.</p>	
[00:42:29]	<p>Was earning money so could go back to Indonesia every two years or so. Worked at Radio Australia from 1959 to 1967. In 1963 saved £1200 enough to pay for a sea passage to Europe. Left Radio Australia and toured Europe on a vespa scooter for twelve months. Went all over western Europe and Yugoslavia and Greece. Stayed at youth hostels and ate bread and cheese. Spoke Dutch, German, a little French and picked up some basic Spanish. Met lots of people and had a ball. By the time he got to Finland it was very cold. He went to Oslo and sold the vespa to an American who had just arrived. Then he went on a cargo ship to Newcastle, hitch hiked around the UK to London. Had a contact through Rudi at the Indonesian section of the BBC and was invited to work there for a month.</p>	<p>Work experience; Returning to Indonesia; International mobility; Travel overseas</p>
[00:47:34]	<p>All on the Indonesian passport, getting visas for every country. Enjoyed Spain, the south was eerily quiet, just gypsies and few motorists. [Story about trying to find a hotel room in Seville.] People were interested to hear about Indonesia and Australia. Holland felt familiar, almost like coming home, what he'd learnt in kindergarten came to life.</p>	<p>Travel overseas</p>
[00:52:38]	<p>After the month at the BBC he was ready to go home and wrote to Radio Australia. There was a job for him so he went back to Melbourne, rented a room and borrowed a pushbike to get to work. At the end of 1966 he got his commerce degree. In 1964 or 65 Jamie Mackie offered him some part-time tutoring in Indonesian language. (One of his students was Charles Coppel.) In 1967 Jamie Mackie offered him a senior tutoring position, funded by The Herald Sun for three years. The funding was probably organised by</p>	<p>Working overseas; Radio Australia; Work opportunities in Australia</p>

	Jamie and John Hoffman, a Herald journalist who was studying Indonesian.	
[00:57:00]	The students were very focussed and dedicated, there were 30 or 40 in lectures. Many chose Indonesian to teach it or to join the Department of Foreign Affairs. They hadn't been to Indonesia but went during the course. The work was more challenging than at Radio Australia, which was a bit like following orders, but it gave him the chance to develop the Indonesian course and write books, with Pieter Sarumpaet. After three years, in 1970, Reverend Archie Crowe, chaplain at Scotch College and Indonesian teacher, invited him to teach at Scotch College.	Teaching Indonesian in Australia
[01:01:50]	It could have been horrific but Scotch College had very good discipline. Pak Hendy learned on the job how to teach children. He and Pieter Sarumpaet had self-published their Indonesian textbooks and promoted them through VILTA (Victorian Indonesian Language Teachers Association). Publishers weren't interested because they didn't think there was a market but they filled a gap. VILTA had about 50 core members, all very active and dedicated.	Teaching Indonesian in Australia
[01:05:04]	Pak Hendy was involved in the AIA (Australia Indonesia Association) and Ikawiria (Indonesian Community Association in Victoria Inc). There were very few Asian students at Scotch College. Pak Hendy didn't realise Scotch was so establishment. Found the tradition and culture of Scotch quite interesting. Stayed there for five years, until 1975, then got a job teaching Indonesian at Prahran College of Advanced Education (later became Victoria College, then amalgamated with Toorak Teachers College and finally became part of Deakin University). Pak Hendy resigned in 1990, just before the amalgamation with Deakin. Student numbers fluctuated, maximum was 40 or 50. The numbers increased later.	Indonesian community in Australia; Teaching Indonesian
[01:10:38]	In 1985, he was teaching at Prahran and self-publishing the books and heard Susan Ryan announcing that fee-paying international students could attend Australian universities. He saw an opportunity to act as a bridge between Australian and Indonesian universities. Established EdLink to market Australian	Teaching Indonesian; Professional networks

	education to Indonesians. It was difficult then because some universities were resistant to the fee-paying culture and Indonesian parents did not think of Australia as an education destination.	
[01:15:01]	An Indonesian businessman who lived in Melbourne but had an office in Indonesia gave Pak Hendy office space in Indonesia. Then he recruited a graduate of Atma Jaya University and trained him to recruit students. Swinburne and some TAFE colleges were keenest, they provided bridging courses for Indonesian high school graduates. Melbourne University was a bit slow, Curtin University was an early adopter. Also government high schools.	Professional networks
[01:18:13]	Promoted Australian education as good quality, close to home and affordable. At first, in 1986, the Australian government gave Austrade the job of selling Australian education and they had exhibitions in Jakarta and Surabaya. After a couple of years the government stopped paying Austrade to do it, IDP started doing it, as an agent of the Australian government but Pak Hendy had already started having his own exhibitions. And there was a lot of interest.	Professional networks
[01:22:23]	It was tough for the first three years, he had a huge overdraft and would have had to sell the house, despite having a lecturing income and his wife working as a specialist teacher. It started to make some money after the third year and started to make serious money after the fifth year. That's when he left teaching. Indonesians who were willing to pay Australian university fees were wealthy families, the growing middle class and senior public servants. They saw English as an important language for their children and recognised the value of overseas education.	Career
[01:25:24]	In 1989 Pak Hendy got a big break through a contact who worked for Bappenas [Ministry of National Development Planning]. Bappenas were planning to centralise the management of the overseas education for public servants across Indonesia and Pak Hendy got the contract for that. A lot were sent to do short courses e.g. to learn about law of the sea, export markets, public health. That involved negotiating with the	Professional networks

	universities to tailor courses to meet specific needs. Then there were post-graduate students.	
[01:29:05]	As a result of this contract he got a second contract with the education sector and, over three years, facilitated about 120 university staff to do post-graduate study in Australia. The focus was on the small universities and funding came from the World Bank and Indonesian Department of Education. Australian universities increased the fees as demand increased, now they are guaranteeing no fee increases and giving partial scholarships. A huge plus, compared to America, is that Australia is close to Indonesia.	Professional networks; Connections with Australia
[01:32:53]	The business is smaller now, Indonesian universities negotiate directly with Australian universities. Bank Rakyat Indonesia wants to send 50 employees a year to study overseas and EdLink has tendered to do the job. Twelve months ago they did a big project for BT Tel Indonesia, preparing 100 senior staff to go overseas: English, IELTS and GMAT preparation, then placing them in overseas universities. EdLink has offices in 23 cities in Indonesia. They've also started enhancement English classes in schools run by Telecom.	Professional networks
[01:37:44]	Also involved in twinning arrangements between Indonesian and Australian universities and hoping to help with the New Colombo Plan. [Discussion about opportunities arising from the boom in the private university sector in Indonesia, the new Colombo Plan and the new Australia Awards programs.]	Professional networks; Connections with Australia
[01:46:20]	Do the ups and downs of the Australia–Indonesia relationship affect EdLink business? It hasn't affected the flow, other factors like currency fluctuations, the Indonesian economy and political instability seem to have more influence. 1998 was a boom year. Overseas education is popular for many reasons and political issues don't seem to affect that. Lots of parents like to come and visit when their children are studying here e.g. during lebaran.	Australia and Indonesia relations
[01:50:25]	EdLink has been operating for 29 years and in some families have helped three generations to study in Australia. They have a good reputation compared to Coffey and IDP. Most of the	Professional networks

	EdLink staff have Indonesian degrees, only some are overseas graduates. EdLink doesn't use a sales model in their business. Most students come from the big cities, scholarship recipients are often from more remote places. EdLink doesn't keep in contact with their graduates, sometimes they come back and are employed as interpreters.	
[01:56:08]	Pak Hendy married an Australian, got divorced in 2004. They had three children, the two daughters are married, the son isn't yet. [Photos of grandchildren.] They all live in Melbourne but like to travel. Visited Indonesia often when they were growing up. The family didn't speak Indonesian at home. The eldest, Melanie, works for the Department of Human Resources managing new hospitals; the second, Chris, works for Australia Post doing mergers and acquisitions; the youngest, Riati, is doing blood transfusion research after trying a few different career paths.	Family
[02:04:10]	When he left study to work for Radio Australia he was released from his bond to the Indonesian government because other Colombo scholars, who had gone home couldn't get a job. [Discussion about how some people get out of their bond but others can't.]	Scholarship experience
[02:06:44]	Media interest in Colombo scholars? They were interested in the 'stars'. Idul Suparman was named the 1000th Colombo student and made a star, photos were taken of Tan Soen Houw. This didn't happen to Pak Hendy.	Scholarship experience
[02:08:34]	Experiences of racism? Remembers standing in a queue and being passed over but not blatant verbal abuse. Thinks the academic environment was a bit protected and when he worked as a labourer most of the employees were migrants. Sometimes got preferential treatment, as an Asian student, from the supervisor or depot management.	Living in Australia
[02:11:04]	Business wasn't something he ever planned to do, the opportunity was just too good to miss and he wasn't risk averse. It was scary but he was willing to take the risk. Feels proud of the contribution he has made to the Australia-Indonesia relationship. Thinks the decline in Indonesian language in Australia is sad, can't	Career

	understand why more Australians are not interested in learning languages. Depending on people outside Australia speaking English means that Australians can't get into those people. It can also set up a power imbalance. [Discussion about the importance of language e.g. bahasa Indonesia and Javanese.]	
[02:18:34]	EdLink deals with Australian immigration on behalf of their clients, sometimes it's difficult. Pak Hendy got an Australian passport, about 25 years ago, after having trouble leaving Bali after a family holiday. Has an APEC card so he can stay longer in Indonesia and doesn't have to pay for a visa each time.	Australia and Indonesia relations
[02:22:43]	Had a business partner in Singapore but it didn't work out so he only does business in Indonesia now. [Story about a business opportunity boarding Indonesian students in Singapore.]	Professional networks
[02:26:42]	Education consulting and recruitment is getting crowded so EdLink are diversifying into English courses in schools and partial foundation courses to try to funnel high school students to them. Also getting involved in international accreditation via workplace competency-based assessment.	Professional networks
[02:31:38]	Pak Hendy's own children don't know enough about Indonesian culture, customs and bureaucracy to be able to work for EdLink. Melanie was interested but Pak Hendy told her he didn't think it would work. Pak Hendy goes to Indonesia four times a year, enjoys the business, not ready to retire yet.	Family
[02:35:15]	Pak Hendy's sister lives in Holland, she's coming to Melbourne for a visit.	Family; international mobility
[2:37:00]	END	