

Culture-Based Social Studies Learning Model in Developing Student Multiculturalism

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Abstract

This study aims to describe a culture-based social studies learning model to foster student multiculturalism. Research and Development design was employed, with junior high school students in Sumedang Indonesia as the subjects of the research. The proposed model is a strategy for crafting a learning environment and experience that integrate culture as inevitable part of the learning process. The teaching materials encompass the diversity of Indonesian cultures. Culture-based learning steps manifest in multiculturalism class contracts, delivery of introductory materials, library inquiry, demonstration of cultural performance, modeling/guest teachers, and value clarification technique (VCT) cultural value analysis, material review and reflection of multiculturalism values. The model significantly influenced the development of student multiculturalism.

Keywords: *social studies, culture-based learning, multiculturalism education, multiculturalism, student, junior high school, Indonesia*

Introduction

Indonesia is a country endowed with 300 ethnic groups with their own cultural uniqueness. This signifies that Indonesia is a multicultural country—a country consisting of a rich variety of cultures, which must be equally recognized. Therefore, it is imperative for Indonesian people to foster multiculturalism. Multicul-

turalism is the wisdom to see cultural diversity as a fundamental reality in social life. The wisdom arises if one opens up to live a life together by seeing the plural reality as a natural necessity of life, both in one's multidimensional life and in the more complex life of society, and hence a realization emerges that diversity in the dynamics of life is an indispensable reality that cannot be rejected, denied, let alone destroyed. Thus, multiculturalism is a must to construct a peaceful and harmonious society, which consists of a wide variety of cultural backgrounds (Fay, 1996; Jary & Jary, 1991; Kymlicka, 2010; and Mahfud, 2011).

Today, among many critical problems faced by the Indonesian youth, there is the shifting of ethical values in the life of the nation and state, the waning of the awareness of the nation's cultural values, and the horizontal conflict owing to the diminishing awareness of Indonesian diversity. Therefore, multiculturalism among the younger generation needs to be developed by way of various channels, including formal education. Schools, as formal educational institutions, play a strategic role in the process of developing multiculturalism of the young generation through multicultural education (Barakoska, 2013; Saripudin & Komalasari, 2016a). The overall goal of multicultural education is world harmony, an understanding that will enable them to coexist in the world with diverse people. Without true understanding from all sides, there will inevitably be wars, more specifically, the primary aim of multicultural teaching is to develop the awareness of all human beings with similar needs and aspirations (Tiedt & Tiedt, 2010).

What kind of multicultural education does the school offer? According to Saripudin and Komalasari (2015) concerning the implementation of character education models in schools, in developing multicultural education the following characteristics are to be met: First, multicultural education should be value-based. Second, multicultural education should be based on school culture, Third, multicultural education should involve aspects "*knowing the good, desiring the good/ loving the good and acting the good*" (Lickona, 1991).

All characteristics of multicultural education as character education should be integrated in core learning activities in schooling. The integration of multicultural character in the learning process in the classroom is to be done on the whole learning component including materials, methods, media, sources, and evaluation (Komalasari & Sapriya, 2016). One of the subjects closely related to the development of student multiculturalism is social studies because "The primary purpose of social studies is to help young people develop ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world" (National Council for the Social Studies, 1992). The integration of multicultural education in social studies learning can

be realized through a culture-based learning model, which utilizes the diversity of Indonesian cultures to be studied, internalized and demonstrated in learning.

Culture-based learning makes students focus on “learning from experience” activities integrated in the classroom and within the community of indigenous peoples. A culture-based learning model is a form of contextual learning based on the values of local wisdom. It is a strategy for creating learning environments and designing learning experiences that integrate culture as part of the learning process (Harrison, 2008). Such learning is assumed to nurture multiculturalism, a crucial element to build the unity of Indonesia in the frame of “Bhinneka Tunggal Ika” (unity in diversity). Therefore, what is of immediate interest are studies based on research and development on a simple scale to produce a culture-based social studies learning model, which is assumed to effectively develop student multiculturalism.

Research Problem

Based on the background of the problem as outlined above, this research seeks to address the following questions: (1) what is a conceptual model of culture-based social studies learning for the development of student multiculturalism? (2) How to implement the learning model for the development of student multiculturalism? and (3) To what extent does the application of the proposed model affect the development of student multiculturalism?

Research Methodology

Research General Background

The presented research was conducted by adopting Borg and Gall’s (1989) research and development design to produce a culture-based learning model for the development of student multiculturalism. This research is exploratory in nature, which is aimed at finding a model and an experimental method to test the influence of the model on the development of student multiculturalism.

Research Sample

Participants in the introduction study were students of Junior High School (SMP), teachers of Social Studies as practitioners, and lecturers who are experts in social studies learning. The participants in the experiment study were students of the eighth grade in Tanjungsari Junior High School (Sumedang Regency, West Java Province, Indonesia) of social studies subjects of Cultural Diversity of Indo-

nesia, comprising 38 students in the experimental group and 36 students in the control group.

Instrument and Procedures

The data collection instruments used in this study included: (1) observation sheet, (2) documentation study, (3) focus group discussion, and (4) attitude scale. The attitude scale was tested for validity with Pearson's product-moment correlation, and its reliability was tested with Cronbach's alpha (Shadish, et.al, 2002). The research procedure "Research and Development," according to Borg and Gall (1989), was adapted, comprising four stages, namely: (1) preliminary study, (2) compilation of a conceptual model, (3) validation and revision of the conceptual model, and 4) model implementation.

Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis was carried out with the following steps: (1) conducting data reduction by summarizing field reports, taking notes on the main points relevant to the research, (2) arranging data systematically based on certain categories and classifications, (3) presenting data in the form of tables or drawings so that emerging patterns from the data could clear and complete, (4) conducting a cross-site analysis by comparing and analyzing data in depth, and (5) presenting findings, drawing conclusions in the form of general trends and their implications, and recommendations for development (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1993). Analyzing quantitative data was performed for the data collected through attitude scale by using different test analysis (gain score) and t- test (Shadish, et.al, 2002).

Research Results

A Conceptual Model of Culture-Based Social Studies Learning

Based on the preliminary study and focus group discussion with experts (lecturers of learning model and cultural material of Indonesia) and practitioners (social studies teachers), the learning model in question was conducted in three major frameworks:

1. Learning about culture. Placing culture as a field of science. The topic under discussion was on the diversity of Indonesian cultures. Of the many local cultures in Indonesia, these cultures, the cultures of Aceh, Sunda, Java, Bali, Lombok, Flores, Dayak, Bugis, Ambon and Papua were selected.

2. Learning with culture. At this stage, the students take advantage of various forms of cultural manifestation. Culture and its manifestations serve as learning media and provide the contexts for the concepts or principles in social studies subjects. In the learning situation under study, the students wore cultural attributes, such as ethnic clothing and exhibited certain local cultures of Indonesia.
3. Learning through culture. In social studies subjects, learning methods provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their level of understanding through a variety of cultural manifestations. Learning through culture is a form of multiple representations of learning or assessment of student understanding in various forms. For example, students do not need to take a test to explain Indonesian culture, but rather make creative cultural material and a show of a local Indonesian culture (singing, food, dance, clothing, traditional ceremonies, etc.). By analyzing the cultural products the students produced, the teachers could assess the extent to which the students had exhibited an understanding of the topics of Indonesian cultural diversity and how they had internalized the topic. Learning through culture allows the students to pay attention to the depth of their thinking, their understanding of the concepts or principles they learned, and their creative imagination in expressing their understanding.

The Implementation of The Culture-Based Social Studies Learning

The learning model was implemented in eight meetings through the following steps:

1. A study contract and “multiculturalism class” contract, and division of student groups based on major Indonesian cultures;
2. Brainstorming and Value Clarification Technique (VCT) value analysis for the delivery of introductory materials on Indonesian cultures through the following: (a) the students listen to the material on the structure of Indonesian cultures in PowerPoint, (b) the students inquire about the nature of Indonesian cultures, (c) the teacher elaborates the material, and (d) the teacher and students reflect on the values within the Indonesian cultures and actual/current value actualization.
3. Library inquiry to write a paper on the cultures of Indonesia and preparation of cultural performances: (a) the students review various learning resources related to certain regional cultures in Indonesia; (b) the students write a paper related to certain regional cultures in Indonesia with reference to various available learning sources.

4. Paper presentation and Indonesian cultural performances: the students in groups present a paper on local cultures in Indonesia, analyze the values contained in the local culture, and display a sample form of the local culture in question. The steps include: a) presentation of a paper with creative multimedia (concepts, films, drawings, songs, etc.), b) exhibition of a sample form of local culture of Indonesia (attribute of ethnic clothing, art, food, dance, equipment, etc.), c) presentation of group yells for group motivation and dynamics, d) other students' response by asking questions (chaired by the teacher), and e) the teacher's deliberation on the material/the issue being discussed.
5. Modeling by inviting people from indigenous communities in Indonesia (Papua, Bali, and Dayak) as guest teachers in the learning activities. The learning steps are as follows: a) the guest teachers convey materials related to their respective local culture along with local wisdom contained in it, b) the students ask questions related to the local culture presented by the guest lecturers, and c) the teacher deliberates on the materials and reflects on the application of local wisdom values contained in the culture.
6. VCT cultural value analysis through the following steps: a) the teacher with the students explore the values of multiculturalism in the diversity of Indonesian cultures, and b) the teacher with the students explore the values of local wisdom that must be nurtured and applied to everyday life.
7. Reflection and Evaluation: a) the teacher with the students reflect on the learning process and the extent to which multiculturalism and the value of local wisdom can be applied to student everyday life, and b) the students take a test.

The Effect of the Application of the Learning Model on Student Multiculturalism

Based on the test results of paired samples t-test, Sig. (2-tailed) is $0.000 < \alpha$ (0.05). It means there is a difference between the development of the students' multiculturalism at the beginning of the measurement (pretest) and the final measurement (posttest) in both the experimental and control groups. The obtained scores of the control and experimental groups show significant differences in the development of the students' multiculturalism formation between the group that used culture-based social studies learning (8.21) and the group that used conventional social studies teaching (0.58). Student multiculturalism in the group that integrated culture-based social studies learning is higher than that of the group that used conventional social studies teaching. Thus, the culture-based

social studies learning model evidently developed student multiculturalism. The average scores of the pretest-posttest and the obtained scores of the control and experimental groups are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Average scores of pretest -posttest and obtained scores of control and experimental groups

Classroom Data	N	Mean	<i>Standard of Deviation</i>	<i>Variants</i>	Gain	N Gain	Asymp Sig
Control Pre-test	36	17.72	5.10	12.82	0.58	0.03	0.000
Control Post-test	36	18.30	4.17	13.58			
Experimental Pre-test	38	13.47	3.97	10.36	8.21	0.36	
Experimental Post-test	38	21.68	4.92	16.57			

Aspects of multiculturalism developed through this culture-based learning include: (1) an understanding of the diversity of Indonesian ethnic groups, religions and religious beliefs, social and economic classes, gender, life tools and technology, professions, social system, languages, arts, and knowledge system, (2) realization of the alignment of diverse cultures, (3) recognition of Indonesian local cultures; (4) loving and preserving diversity of Indonesian cultures, (5) taking pride in diverse Indonesian cultures, (6) learning the diversity of Indonesian local cultures, (7) gratifying the cultural diversity as God's blessing, (8) living in peaceful coexistence, (9) exhibiting tolerance and reducing prejudice against different cultural groups, (10) resolving conflicts due to existing differences, (11) refraining from doing discriminatory acts to others, violent acts to the minorities, upholding excessive fanaticism, and (12) respecting differing opinions among community members.

Discussion

Empirically, the results of this study suggest that the application of culture-based social studies learning model plays a significant role in the development of student multiculturalism. The results and findings of the above research can be analyzed using various theories and views.

First, culture-based social studies learning is not just transferring or conveying culture or cultural embodiment but it uses culture to allow students to make meaning, penetrate the limits of imagination, and creativity to achieve a deep

understanding of the material they learn. Thus, the three strategies in culture-based learning, i.e., learning about culture, learning with culture, and learning through culture were implemented in their entirety (Goldberg, 2000). This culture-based learning was applied through the integration of contextual learning with value learning. The learning model developed is value clarification technique (VCT) of cultural value analysis with contextual learning inquiry (literature, demonstration, and modeling/guest teachers). Culture-based learning can offer meaningful and contextual learning strongly related to cultural communities and make learning interesting and fun (Saripudin & Komalasari, 2016b). Learning conditions that allow for the creation of contextual meaning are among the basic principles of the theory of constructivism of thought as proposed by Vygotsky (1978) ("*Social and Emancipatory Constructivism*") and Piaget (1970) ("*Piagetian Psychological Constructivism*").

Second, the development of multiculturalism in cultural-based lessons emphasizes the cultivation of a respectful, tolerant, democratic way of life to the diversity of learners and the creation of a conducive and non-rigid, non-exclusive, and unbiased learning environment for the existence of all forms of difference (Naim & Sauqi, 2010). Culture-based learning provides an understanding of multiculturalism in building the life of the nation and state of Indonesia, which is composed of a rich variety of cultures. Cultural learning fulfills several dimensions of Banks' (2002) multicultural education: 1) content integration: integrating various cultures and groups to illustrate fundamental concepts, generalizations and theories in social studies learning. Students learn the various cultures of Indonesia theoretically with the aim of forming "human culture" and creating "a civilized society", 2) knowledge construction process: making students understand the cultural implications into the subjects of social studies. Students try to internalize and demonstrate the diverse regional cultures in the classroom, 3) an equity pedagogy: adjusting the teaching method by means of student learning in order to facilitate the academic achievement of students whose backgrounds vary in terms of race, culture, culture or social backgrounds. This type of learning uses a form of active, creative, effective, and fun learning, and 4) prejudice reduction: identifying the characteristics of ethnicity and race of students and determining the method of learning. A contextual approach was used by considering diverse student entry behaviors.

Thirdly, in culture-based learning, teachers should have the ability to be: (a) student guides, negotiators of meaning, student mentors in exploration, analysis, and decision-making, (b) self-controllers, not as authoritarian figures or the sole source of information for students, (c) active, creative, and interesting learning

process designers, (d) creative designers of the strategy in order to identify a full range of abilities and skills that each student achieves, (e) strategy designers that allow the student to get used to thinking scientifically, expressing ideas, explaining rationally, arguing, and producing scientific work, and (f) taking advantage of the uniqueness of students' prior knowledge and experience in the learning process. Cultural learning places students in strategic positions in the learning process, and teachers as creative designers and actors. It is certainly a challenge for teachers in a culture-based class to be able to design learning that allows students to optimally display all their creativity and abilities (Goldberg, 2000).

Fourthly, based on the results of the research, culture-based learning has a significant effect on the development of student multiculturalism. The results of this study indicate that culture-based learning implements multicultural education, i.e., education on cultural diversity that contains the introduction and understanding of Indonesian cultures, and appreciates cultural differences. Multicultural education should be a strategy in managing culture by offering a powerful cultural transformation strategy, i.e., through the mechanism of education to respect cultural differences (Mahfud, 2011). Culture-based social studies learning as part of multicultural education provides an understanding of the acceptance of human differences as a matter of necessity. Multicultural education imparts equality, justice, plurality, nationality, race, ethnicity, language, tradition, and religious respect. It requires a balanced, harmonious, functional and systematic lifestyle and discourages the occurrence of discriminatory acts against humanity and democratic values required in various social activities (Kymlicka, 2010).

Conclusions

Cultural-based social studies teaching is a strategy for crafting and fostering learning environments and experiences that integrate local culture within the overall components and learning stages. Cultural learning meets the dimensions of multicultural education that include content integration, the knowledge construction process, an equity pedagogy, and prejudice reduction. The learning model was conducted through the following steps: a) learning contracts to build a "multiculturalism class" commitment, b) group sharing and delivery of cultural introductory materials through brainstorming and value clarification techniques (VCT), c) delivery of introductory materials, d) culture-based learning (library inquiry, demonstration, modeling/guest teachers, and VCT cultural value analysis), and e) reviewing material and reflecting on values. Implementation of the

culture-based social studies learning model significantly influences the development of student multiculturalism. Therefore, this culture-oriented learning model is recommended to be applied to other subjects in school, by taking into account the characteristics of the subject matter.

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