

Teaching Controversy in Social Science Class

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Abstract---The controversy matters in teaching learning process is menacing, because it could be breaking down the unity and social-bounding within community. There is consequence if the controversy subject is given in the classroom. The teacher has to be ready to handle the social-stability that could happen. This research was aimed to describe teachers effort to prepare and carry out social studies learning on controversial material. The research approach is qualitative. The study was conducted on social studies teachers in Pekalongan City, Central Java. The focus of the study is the learning of social studies teachers in controversy material. Data collection is observation, interviews and documents. Data analysis using interactive analysis. The results of the study were the learning of material controversy in social studies has not been well constructed by the teacher. The teacher has not carried out material analysis by separating material that can be developed to grow the critical power of students because it contains controversial material. Thus, the learning that he does also uses a learning model that is not based on material. It happens because the teacher's educational background is monodisciplinary, material analysis does not involve teacher professional groups, and lack of understanding of the material controversy in social studies learning.

Keywords: *social studies, junior high school, teacher, material controversy*

I. INTRODUCTION

Social Sciences (IPS) is often stated as a simplification of social science concepts to be applied in education (Sapriya, 2009: 9). Social Sciences is different from monodisciplinary disciplines. IPS has integration between social science disciplines. Geography provides insight into the region, history provides insight into past events, economics provides insight into human needs, and sociology or anthropology provides insights on values, beliefs, social structures, and political science examining the relationship between citizens and countries, and psychology discusses mental conditions human. Thus, social studies are taught in the form of integrated.

Social studies is taught at the level of junior high school education. The learning pattern of IPS education emphasizes the elements of education and debriefing for students. Emphasis on learning is not on efforts to instill memorized concepts, but on efforts to make what has been learned as a provision

in understanding and playing a role in people's lives, and provision of continuing education to a higher level.

In teaching IPS material, there is material controversy. Controversy is a condition where the material has several contradictory points of view, but those views have the same strong argumentation base. In other words, the controversy material is material that raises a lot of disagreement, so that various views arise. Each version or opinion has a strong foundation. It can be concluded that the controversial issue is "something that is easily accepted by a person or group, but also easily rejected by other people or groups". Some controversy in social studies are human behavior in utilizing resources, Indonesian systems of economics, pre-history material, Hindu-Buddhist, Islam, and the history of Modern Indonesia. The problem is how the controversy material was taught by teachers in the IPS class in junior high schools. Understanding of social studies learning controversy material will provide reinforcement to teachers about the importance of IPS material analysis to foster the critical power of students, in addition to preparing students to function well in citizens' democratic society.

II. METHODS

The research approach is qualitative, with case study design. The research subjects were social studies teachers in junior high schools in Pekalongan City, Central Java with a total of 95 people. They are spread in 38 junior high schools with details of 17 public junior high schools, 10 private junior high schools, 10 Islamic elementary schools, and 1 junior high school inclusion. The school level is divided into three categories, namely reference, model, and impact. Data collection techniques using observations and interviews. Data analysis using qualitative analysis techniques developed by James P. Spradley (1979; 1980).

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Several studies have been conducted in connection with the material controversy in social studies learning. Sarah Philpott, Jeremiah Clabough, Lance McConkey, Thomas N. Turner (2011), Lisa

Brown Buchanan (2011), Jennifer H. James (2009), Thomas Misco (2011), Alan Mc Cully (2012).

Research on the subject of controversy began when Kelly (1986) raised controversy in learning. Kelly's research was then used as a reference for research by Diana Hess (1988, 2001, 2005), Malikow (2006). Kelly (1986) states that controversy is something that cannot be avoided in teaching social science material. Controversy material can improve students' critical thinking. Hess places more emphasis on identifying controversial material and how teachers teach the material to their students. Teachers must be authentic and have opinions but do not need to share them in class. Class conditions must be allowed to develop, not necessarily intervened by the teacher, and let students develop critical thinking. The last Hess study in 2005 stated that a balanced approach from all sides in controversial learning included: denial, privilege, avoidance, balance.

In social studies learning, the teacher is the learning center in the class. The teacher is a learning resource when the learning process is taking place. Students assume the teacher is the person who knows best and understands the material being taught. In learning in schools, most teachers still use the lecture method, because according to them the IPS material will be better understood by using the lecture method. The use of the lecture method is not every time, but also interspersed with other methods such as question and answer or discussion. This makes students not bored when learning. The use of this lecture method is also supported by other media that can help teachers when learning. Nevertheless the lecture remains the most dominant thing to do.

The research that has been carried out states that the organization of material controversy in social studies learning is needed to shape the intelligent and critical character of students. In schools located in urban areas, including Pekalongan City, Central Java, the formation of intelligent and critical characters is greatly assisted by the environment which tends to provide space for children to discuss.

However, the results of the study show that the development of controversial material in social studies subjects in junior high schools in Pekalongan City was not specifically designed by the teacher. The teacher does not distinguish the controversy material and not in the learning. Social studies teachers who are still in a monodisciplinary background are more likely to teach social studies material from a perspective whose material is mostly obtained during college. Teachers who have longer teaching experience also have a tendency to develop social studies material by not distinguishing between subject matter and not. The results of the study can be seen in the following categories.

Table 1. Category of teaching controversy in social science class

Category	Description	Models of Teaching
Background of teachers education	Monodisciplinary	teachers tend to teach what they understand
Teacher teaching experience	10-15 16-20 >20	teacher teaching experience determines the organization of material
School category	Reference, model, impact	adjusted to the teacher's knowledge the teacher does not specifically design controversy material - type of school has no effect

The key to the development of social studies learning one of them seems to lie in the learning model used by the teacher. Research by Henk G. Schmidt, Jerome I. Rotgans, and Elaine HJ. Yew (2011) and Carrano (2013) stated that learning to make citizens who are good in social studies learning is constructive learning with a problem based learning model. With this learning, students with the help of the teacher will get their own long-lasting understanding based on the problems they solve. Thus self direction learning (SDL) or independent learning becomes an important component to provide understanding to students towards the attitude of good citizens.

IV. CONCLUSION

Social studies learning conducted by teachers uses a learning model that is not material based, because it equates controversy with other material. This happens because of the monodisciplinary teacher's educational background and lack of understanding of the controversy in social studies learning. The teaching experience determines how the teacher organizes learning material. The development of material and social studies learning models on the subject of controversy also depends on the ability and experience of the teacher in teaching social studies material at school. The teacher is the spearhead in the renewal of education in the classroom.

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