

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURE-BASED INTEGRATED LEARNING
MODEL TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' APPRECIATION
ON LOCAL CULTURE
(The Study of Elementary School Social Study Subject)**

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Abstract

Current practices of social studies at elementary school tends to be partial. The concept of social studies which is close to environment, especially local culture, has not been optimally used in the learning process so that students don't really appreciate their own culture. This study is to develop a model of social study learning for elementary school that can help students master subject material as an effort to improve their appreciation on local culture, using R&D approach modified into three steps; preliminary study, model development and model validation testing. The subjects of study were teachers and students of elementary school in Bengkulu province, Sumatra. The result of study showed that Culture-Based Integrated Learning Model (MPTBB) is an appropriate learning model to help students master subject material as an effort to improve their appreciation on local culture. MPTBB is a learning model focusing on cultural themes developed on the basis of prior knowledge of students' culture. MPTBB has been significantly proved more effective in improving students' appreciation on local culture simultaneous with their mastery of subject material than the currently existing learning model used by teacher.

Keywords: Learning model, social study for elementary school, culture appreciation.

INTRODUCTION

There are two important reasons underlying this study; the challenge faced by elementary education institutions in global era and the partial national educational system which does not really make Indonesian people appreciate their own culture.

First, global era has made the attainment of educational goals in elementary education, to emphasize independent life, more complicated. Tilaar (2006) stated three great powers that will influence the individual life of Indonesians in this global era; civil society, nation-state and globalization. To avoid the negative impact of these powers, Indonesian people should have and practice their own values represented by Pancasila. The values of Pancasila are the synthesis of local culture values that are initially known by every Indonesian. These values emphasize the importance to preserve and develop local culture as an integral part of our national education, especially the learning at elementary school, to avoid up-rooted young generation.

Second, the conception of social study is initially close to environment. To create a more meaningful learning, therefore, the social studies at elementary school should optimally use the potency of environment, which, in fact, Indonesian teachers haven't practiced yet. So far, the social study learning at elementary school tends to be partial. The potency of local environment, especially local culture, has not been

optimally used by the teachers. Learning still focus more on the development of intellectual domain with textbooks or teachers' handbook as main learning sources. Some study findings such as Pargito (2000) in Lampung, Hadi (1997) in East Java, Samion (2002) in West Kalimantan, Sasongko (2004) and Sapri (2000) in Bengkulu, have proved that this practice has made local culture less appreciated.

Appreciation is derived from a Latin word, *apreciatic*, that means respecting or appraising (Suryatin, 1997). Philip and Phil in Wangsih (2002) defined appreciation as understanding and appraisal of a culture or art works and considering its values and reasons. Appreciation means understanding, interpretation and appraisal of a culture or art work. This is in line with Atmazaki's (1992) opinion stating three steps to appreciate culture; understanding, interpretation and appraisal. The appreciation occurs when someone practices an experience, directly or indirectly, in the culture or art work (Rusyana, 1984). Appreciation can be known by observation, direct or indirect question and test.

Learning process to improve students' appreciation on culture emphasizes on meaningful learning. Fink (2003) stated that meaningful learning happens when learning materials has potential to be used in life, either personal or social. Meanwhile, Sayakti (2003) focused on the importance of social study learning of elementary school to make use of environmental concept, especially local culture, as a source to make learning more meaningful.

Meaningful learning is a learning process design to meet students' characteristics. Concrete and realistic thinking which has been the main characteristic of elementary school students should be accommodated in a concrete and integrated learning design. This is in line with the aims of social study subject which should be comprehensive and oriented to the mastery of knowledge, skill, value and attitude so that the students be able to participate in various situations (Schuncke, 1988; Barr, Bart and Shemis, 1978). This aim emphasizes the importance of designing an integrated learning that gives the students a chance to learn through problem solving in their daily life.

Integrated holistic-contextual social studies at elementary school can improve students' appreciation on local culture when its process focuses on cultural themes developed by integrating culture. Cultural integration in learning process needs culture-based learning approach. Pannen in Suprayekti (2004) stated that culture-based learning was a strategy of designing learning environment and planning learning experience that integrates culture as its inherent process. This learning is based on constructivism perspective. In relation to this, Vygotsky (2000) argued that the students constructed knowledge and created meaningful relationship among elements as a result of thinking and interaction in their social context. Culture-based learning emphasizes meaning making in which the students construct their knowledge based on prior cultural experience that they have previously been familiar with.

Culture-based integrated elementary social study learning, which is holistic-constructivist, is derived from cultural themes and was developed based on students' prior cultural experience. Such learning approach is expected to be able to help the students master their subject material as an effort to improve their appreciation on local culture.

These aforementioned perspectives confirmed that there was a problem in social study education in elementary school that needed to be solved. In this case, the problem needed an effort to improve the quality of elementary school social study to make it more meaningful as an effort to improve the students' appreciation on local culture. In terms of improving the quality of learning, Sukmadinata (2006), stated three components influencing the learning process. They are raw input (students' characteristic), instrumental input (policy, curriculum, personnel, facilities and infrastructure), and environmental input (environment. Dunking and Biddle (1974) claimed that the variables influencing learning process in the classroom are presage, context, process, and product. These two perspectives emphasize on the importance of teachers' role in improving the quality of social study learning. Therefore, any effort for improvement should start from the learning process conducted by teachers.

This study was oriented to develop a social study learning model of elementary school that could help students master their subject material as an effort to improve their appreciation on local culture. The main problem was which social study learning model of elementary school was suitable to facilitate students' mastery of the subject material as an effort to improve their appreciation on local culture.

As mandated by the national curriculum of social study for elementary school, local culture should be discussed in forth grade. Thus, this study focused on the curriculum of forth grade social study. Meanwhile, local culture this study referred to is Tabot culture in Bengkulu, in which the study was conducted. Bengkulu people of are Tabot culture community (Norman, 1997).

This study has three main aims; (1) finding out the learning model of social study for elementary school that could facilitate the students' mastery of the subject material as an effort to improve their appreciation on local culture; (2) identifying the effectiveness of implementing this learning model of social study for elementary school and comparing it to the conventional learning model; and (3) finding out the supporting and inhibiting factors of this learning model.

METHOD

This study used research and development approach as stated by Borg and Gall (1989). The implementation of 10 research steps stated by Borg and Gall in this study was modified into three steps of research and development process. They are (1) preliminary study involving literature review, field survey and local culture analysis; (2) model development involving the activity of preliminary model draft design, limited and wider trial; and (3) model validation. The figure below presents the procedure of research and development conducted.

The study was conducted at some elementary schools in Bengkulu Province, Sumatra. Based on the approach and the procedure of study, the location of study was limited to 4 groups. They were (1) pre-survey location, (2) limited trial location; (3) wider trial location; and (4) model validation testing location.

The pre-survey was conducted in 8 sub-districts in the city of Bengkulu (regional sampling 100%). Using simple random sampling, 2 elementary schools were appointed as pre-survey locations in each sub-district. Therefore, there were 16 elementary schools that became the location of pre-survey study. The subjects of

study were principals, social study teachers and forth-grade students in each sample school.

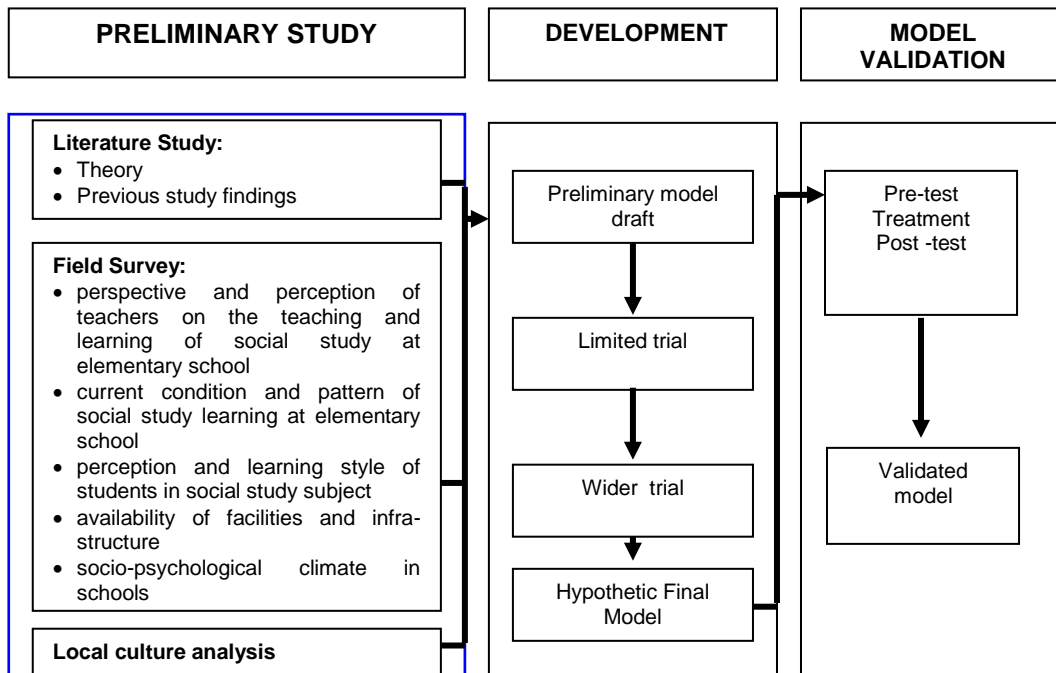


Figure 1. The procedure of research and development

The limited trial was located at 1 elementary school. Again, this decision was made using purposive sampling technique. This technique was used because the researcher had specific consideration in determining sampel according to the aim of study (Sudjana and Ibrahim, 1989). This choice was based on (1) the availability and high motivation of school personnel, especially principle and social study teachers to cooperate with the researcher in developing learning model; and (2) the availability of school facility that fulfilled minimum needs to develop a learning model. The subjects of study were social science teachers and forth-grade students in the selected school.

Based on similar consideration, the location for wider trial was three elementary schools, in which each had good, average and low category, respectively. The selection of this school category was based on the recommendation of local Education Department, national examination score and observation by researcher. The subjects of study were social science teachers and forth-grade students in these aforementioned three schools.

Validation testing was done using experiment. The test used Sumadinata's matching pretest-posttest control group design (2007). The subjects of study were divided into two groups; experiment and control. Each group consisted of good, average and low schools determined based on the abovementioned considerations. The elementary schools (SDN) that were the subjects in validation testing were presented in the table below.

Table 1. The Subject of Study for Validation Testing of Learning Model

| Group | Experiment | Control |
|------------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| School category | | |
| Good | SDN 8 | SDN 5 |
| Average | SDN 4 | SDN 2 |
| Low | SDN 47 | SDN 37 |

The techniques of data collection were observation, interview, questionnaire, document analysis, appreciation instrument and learning achievement test. Two types of data were resulted from this study; qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative data were obtained from preliminary study and model development steps, whereas quantitative data were resulted in development and model validation steps. The analysis of qualitative data was done through direct interpretation, while quantitative data was analyzed by t-test statistic procedure, which was processed using SPSS 15 computer program.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The result of pre-survey showed that most teachers (71,88%) said that social study subject was a subject that students could master only by memorizing. This belief affected the teachers' opinion (78,13%) on the purpose of social study subject at elementary school, namely, mastering a lot of subject materials. Teachers believed that conceptually the social study subject at elementary school, especially forth-grade, is related to local culture, but most of them (75,00%) acknowledged that they did not need to integrate it in their teaching and learning process. Futhermore,, those teacher (71,88%) stated that they had not integrated local culture in their social study subject. Thus, they (75,00%) admitted that their students' appreciation on local culture was still low.

To most teachers (71,88%), lesson plan was only for administrative purpose and a complement because the learning process was more oriented to textbook or teachers' handbook. Teachers did not write their own lesson plan themselves, but they copied it from other schools, especially schools in Java Island which was regarded good ones. Therefore, it is not surprising that teachers did not accommodate local culture such as Tabot in planning the learning at all. All teachers confessed that lecturing was a dominant method in their learning process of social study subject in the classroom. Other methods sometimes used by teachers were question-answer, assignment and group work. Learning evaluation was considered the most important thing to measure their students' mastery of subject material.

Beside teachers, most students (57,14%) said that social study subject was boring and difficult because it has a lot of things to memorize. Their purpose of social study learning they said (69,84%) was to get good score and continue to the next grade. The teaching style of their teachers, according to them (61,90%) was more on explaining the subject material in the textbook. According to most students (67,90%), the learning style they experienced in the classroom was listening to the explanation of teachers and taking a note. In relation to local culture, most students (53,17%), acknowledged that they had ever seen Tabot culture festival and they

were glad to see it because it was interesting and crowded enough (93,65%). Only a few students (20,25%) stated that they only knew Tabot from their teachers' talks in the classroom. The aim of Tabor culture festival, according to most of students (45,36%) was community entertainment. Almost all students (92,06%) stated that they did not know the history origin of Tabot culture.

All schools have already been equipped with complete media that could support the integration of Tabot culture in the learning of social study of elementary school, especially traditional music instrument of Dol, the pictures of Tabot festival and symbolic things related to Tabot traditional ceremony. So far, these cultural instruments were only used to help develop the extracurricular programs. Meanwhile, the policy of school principal, the socio-psychological belief of school and the perspective of Bengkulu community figures were highly conducive and supportive for developing the model of social study learning at elementary school to improve the students' appreciation on local culture.

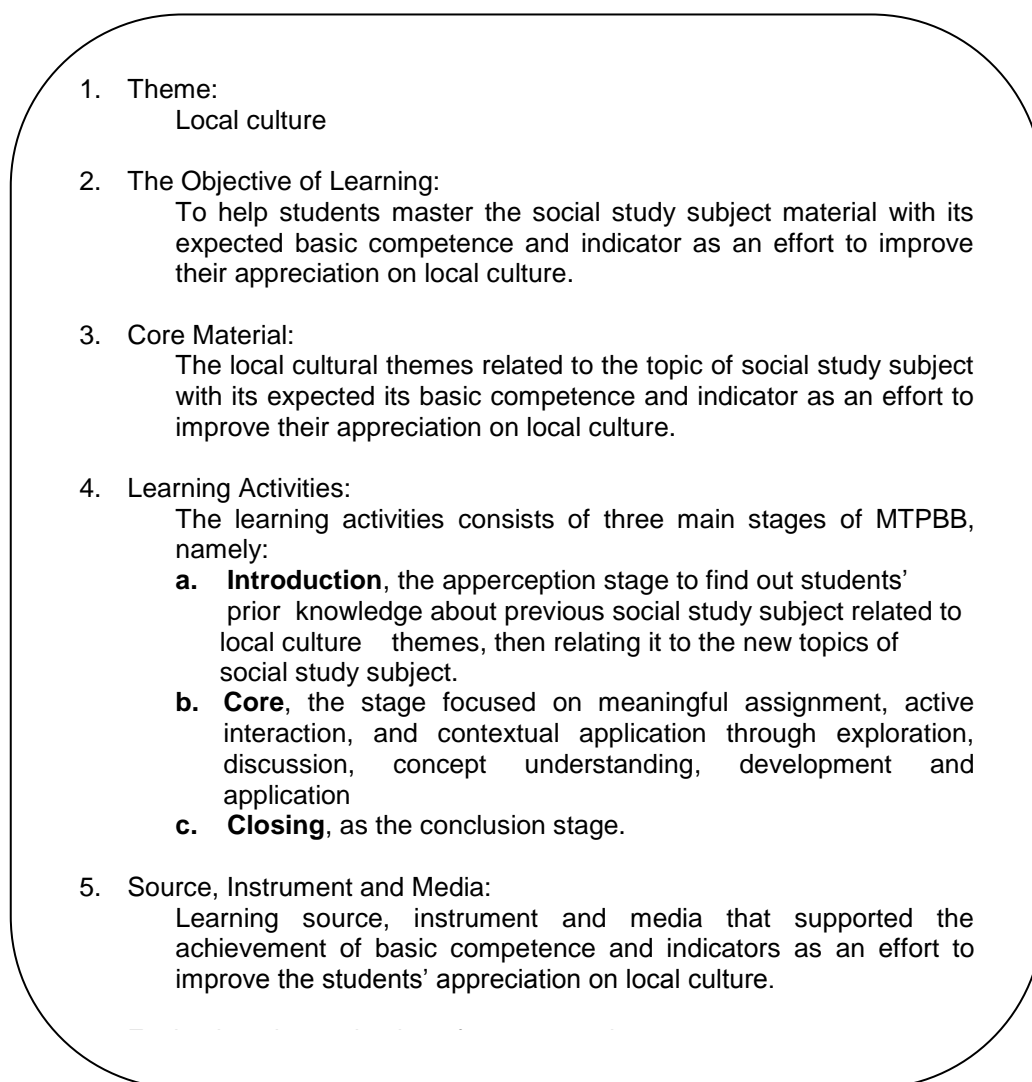


Figure 2. Preliminary model design of planning for culture-based integrated learning

Based on the abovementioned theoretical review, pre-survey study and discussion result with teachers as study subject, a preliminary model design of culture-based integrated learning planning was developed as presented in Figure 2.

MPTBB undertook a limited trial designed to help the students' master their social study subject material as an effort to improve their appreciation on local culture. This trial aimed to develop preliminary model draft that had already been designed.

This limited trial was done in three cycles. The number of cycles was determined on the basis of teachers' success in implementing MPTBB in line with the determined aims. After 5 cycle of limited trial, the designed learning model that was considered adequate enough. As the result of development in limited trial, MPTBB had significantly change compared with its preliminary draft, especially its learning activities. One the changes was that each learning stage contained more specific steps.

The introductory stage comprised cultural simulation, culture-based apperception and socialization steps. This stage included development, either in the phase of exploration, discussion or concept understanding, as well as development and application. Exploration phase was more specific and detail, in which students (1) listened attentively and responded to teachers' explanation about the cultural theme related to the topic of social study subject, and ended by assignment given for meaningful group discussion relevant with social study subject; (2) found out and read source book, including supplement specific-MPTBB source book; and (3) had group discussion that was facilitated, guided and monitored by teachers.

Other phases in core stage of already-developed MPTBB were discussion and concept understanding consisting of two steps; (1) the students presented the result of their group discussion and gave their opinion on other groups' result; and (2) listened attentively and responded to the feedback and explanation given by their teacher. Meanwhile, development and application phases consisted of one step, where the students did their development and application assignments. The learning process of MPTBB that had been developed in limited trial stage was completed with a closing stage consisting of two steps; drawing conclusion of learning result that had been passed through, and giving follow-up for the students to prepare for their next learning topics.

After conducting limited trial, MPTBB undertook several wider trials so that it could become a standard learning model and be implemented in every school of different categories; good, average and low. In wider trials, not only was the learning process of MPTBB analyzed to develop an ideal model, but also its learning outcome. Before conducting wider trial, workshop was conducted for the teachers involved. This workshop aimed at equalizing the teachers' perception, either conceptually or operationally, about MPTBB. Wider trial was done in three cycles. It was based on the belief that MPTBB, either based on observation or qualitative-quantitative calculation, could have been developed and considered adequate in line with the pre-determined aims.

The result of wider trial showed no principle improvement of MPTBB. Stages of model development that had been resulted in limited trial were considered sufficient as a learning model intended to help students' master their social study subject material as an effort to improve their appreciation on local culture.

Introductory phase was a conditioning stage. Its aim was to create conducive prior condition of learning that has cultural nuance to encourage students' active participation in the process of constructing new meaning. This stage emphasized the construction of students' skill in establishing meaningful relationship between culture and social study concept developed based on students' prior experience as the members of cultural community. Meanwhile, closing phase was a consolidation stage. In this stage, teachers and students consolidated their learning outcome and follow-up.

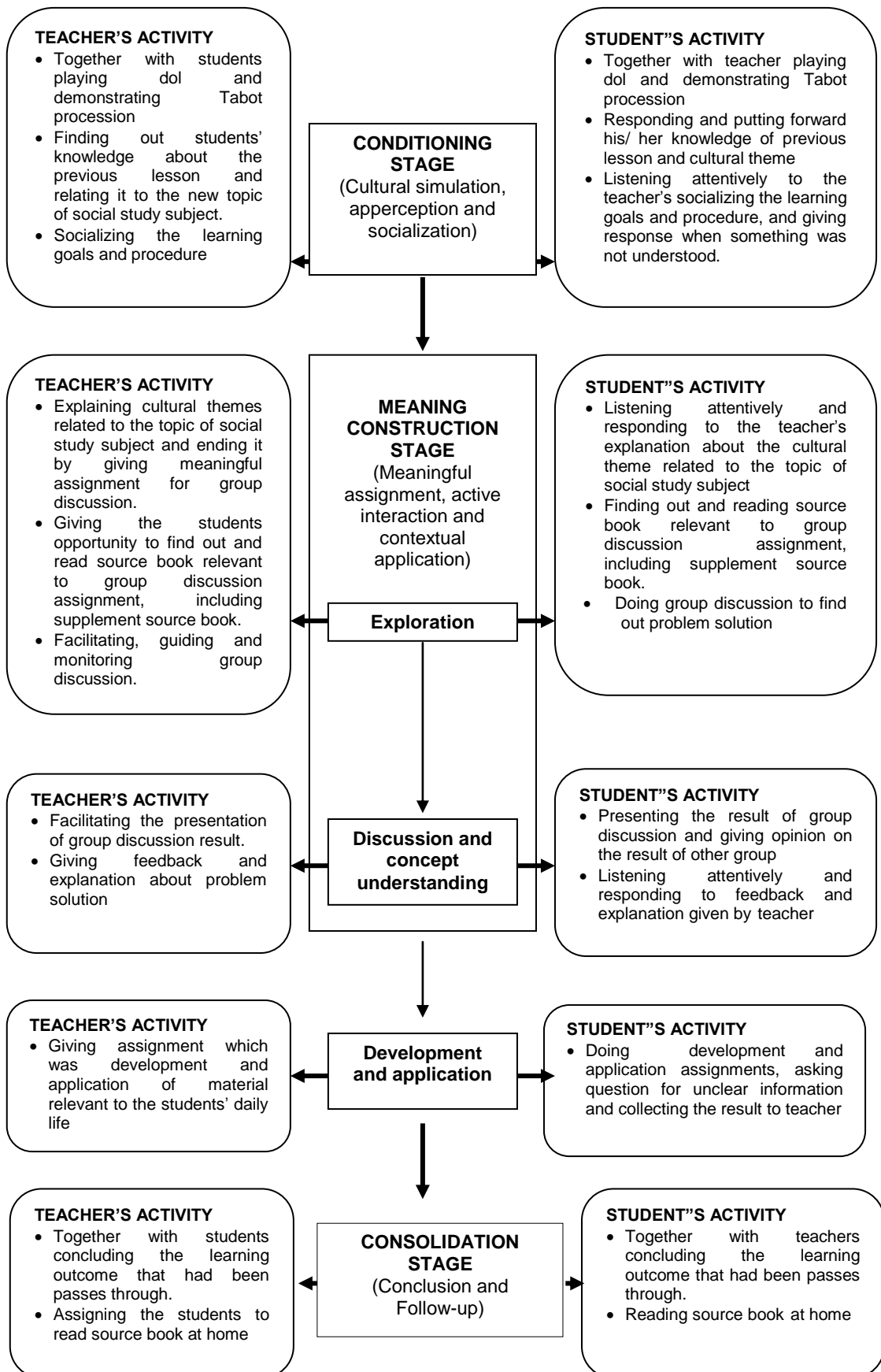
The improvement of model in wider trial focused more on the implementation aspect by the teacher in each stage to add the clarity and sharpness of the developed model. This improvement was more on evaluation design aspect. Evaluation design of MPTBB was done in two forms; process and outcome. Process evaluation was integratedly conducted with learning process by observing students' appreciation on Tabot local culture and their activities in group or class discussion. Meanwhile, outcome evaluation was done through group discussion and individual assignment of LKS (exercise book), development, application and test.

All in all, the MPTBB designed to improve the students' appreciation on local culture ready to be validated was as follows:

a. Design

1. Theme:
Local culture
2. The Objective of Learning:
To help students master the social study subject material with its expected basic competence and indicator as an effort to improve their appreciation on local culture.
3. Core Material:
The local cultural themes related to the topic of social study subject with its expected its basic competence and indicator as an effort to improve their appreciation on local culture.
4. Learning Activities:
The learning activities consists of three main stages of MTPBB, namely:
 - a. **Introduction**, the apperception stage to find out students' prior knowledge about previous social study subject related to local culture themes, then relating it to the new topics of social study subject.
 - c. **Core**, the stage focused on meaningful assignment, active interaction, and contextual application through exploration, discussion, concept understanding, development and application
 - c. **Closing**, as the conclusion stage.
5. Source, Instrument and Media:
Learning source, instrument and media that supported the achievement of basic competence and indicators as an effort to improve the students' appreciation on local culture.
6. Evaluation: the evaluation of process and outcome

b. Implementation



c. Evaluation

This is the evaluation of process and outcome. The evaluation of process was in the form of observation of students' appreciation on local culture by using rubric and format of appreciation observation; and observation of students' activities in discussion by using rubric and format of students' activity observation. The evaluation of outcome was done through group and individual discussions of LKS (exercise book), development and application, and learning outcome test.

Figure 3. Culture-based Integrated Learning Model (MPTBB)

that was ready to be validated

The result of validation testing proved that the use of MPTBB in social study subject in elementary school showed that not only had it positive effect on the improvement of students' appreciation on local culture but also on the improvement of students' mastery of social study material. More detail information is presented in the following table:

Table 2. Average Gain in Validation Testing

| School category/ aspect | n | Mean of Gain | | Testing Result | | Note |
|---|-----------|--------------|------|------------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| | | Exp. | Ctr. | T _{cal} | T _{tab} | |
| | | | | | | (two tail) α 0,05 |
| Good: | 64 | | | | | |
| Appreciation (understanding) | | 3,88 | 1,30 | 9,32 | 2,00 | Significant |
| Appreciation (interpretation and appraisal) | | 9,26 | 3,03 | 13,73 | 2,00 | Significant |
| Learning outcome | | 5,94 | 3,23 | 9,68 | 2,00 | Significant |
| Average: | 59 | | | | | |
| Appreciation (understanding) | | 3,35 | 0,95 | 8,95 | 2,02 | Significant |
| Appreciation (interpretation and appraisal) | | 7,33 | 2,56 | 13,72 | 2,02 | Significant |
| Learning outcome | | 5,58 | 2,82 | 12,69 | 2,00 | Significant |
| Low: | 81 | | | | | |
| Appreciation (understanding) | | 3,10 | 0,95 | 8,95 | 2,00 | Significant |
| Appreciation (interpretation and appraisal) | | 7,33 | 2,56 | 13,72 | 2,00 | Significant |
| Learning outcome | | 5,08 | 2,46 | 13,84 | 2,00 | Significant |

Note: Exp. : Experiment Group
Ctr. : Control Group

Validation testing showed that while pre-test found no significant difference between experiment and control groups, post-test showed that experiment group gained higher result. This difference occurred in all school categories of good, average and low. The gain of experiment group in the school category of good, average and low was good for appreciation aspect (understanding, interpretation and appraisal) and learning outcome and was significantly better than that of control group.

The concept of MPTBB in social study learning was substantially developed on the basis of holistic integrated learning principles and constructivist culture-based learning. Holistic approach in learning was based on Gestalt's theory. The word Gestalt was derived from German, which means whole configuration. This approach emphasized that new understanding development was a form of whole individual development, pattern, unity and totality involving all aspects in children's life. Sukmadinata (2005), related to Gestalt's concept, stated that "... learning was the process of insight or new understanding development... understanding occurred when individual found the new way in using elements in environment.

The perspective of holistic approach above showed that holistic approach focus on intact, comprehensive and concrete learning. Learning design cannot be separated and is always viewed as an object in its unity and entirety so that it enables the students to learn meaningfully, authentically and actively. In its application, Gestalt's theory emphasizes the acquisition of insight, in which the students have competence to know the interrelationship of the elements of an object or event.

In its application, holistic approach was implemented through integrated learning model. According to Fogarty (1991), integrated learning model as the realization of integrative approach was a continuum starting from a traditional curriculum, in which all subjects were taught separately, to a model oriented to comprehensively-integrated subjects. In this case, MPTBB, was in line with the characteristics of social study subject that integrated various disciplines, oriented to a webbed model, commonly known as thematic approach. This model has been familiar to most elementary school teachers in Indonesia. The implementation of this model begins from a theme constructed by the teachers alone or together with their students, based on their students' interest, needs and surrounding environment.

Beside that, MPTBB was also developed on the basis of constructivist culture-based learning principles. This constructivist approach was developed by Vygotsky in Suprayekti (2004) (social and emancipatory constructivism). This approach emphasizes that 'students constructed knowledge or meaning as the result of thinking and interaction in social context'. Constructivism was also developed by Piaget. Piaget in Richardson (1997) stated that before starting the learning process, students have already had prior conception and knowledge that should be improved, modified and changed based on new information they obtained in learning process. Culture-based learning emphasizes the meaning construction process, in which Krajcik, Czerniak and Berger stated that it has such some components as meaningful assignment, active interaction, development and application of contextual science, and using various learning sources.

The abovementioned discussion shows that MPTBB is the development result of a learning model different from other currently existing learning models. The aim of MPTBB is to improve the students' appreciation on local knowledge as an effort to improve students' mastery on social study material. This aim is clearly different from the currently existing social study learning aim that emphasizes the mastery of various materials of social study. Such conventional aim did not accommodate the richness and knowledge of traditional culture and its community. Therefore, MPTBB was developed on the basis of factual problems and needs of the field by focusing on the aims, which were not only to improve the mastery of social study material, but also to be a learning model that could improve students' appreciation on their local

culture. MPTBB claims both aims; to improve the appreciation on local culture and the mastery of social study material; were two equally important to gain throughout the learning process.

CONCLUSION

Based on the abovementioned discussion, this study draws the following conclusions. **First, Culture-based integrated learning model (MPTBB)** is developed to improve the students' appreciation on local culture with three sections; (1) its design is derived from local culture themes and developed based on students' prior cultural experience. This design components consisted of local cultural themes, integrative aims, learning material integrated with relevant local culture, culture-based integrated learning activities, instrument-media, various and contextual sources, and evaluation components; (2) its implementation consisted of three stages; conditioning, meaning construction and consolidation stages; and (3) its evaluation included process and outcome.

Second, MPTBB was proved significantly more effective in improving the students' appreciation on local culture simultaneous with the mastery of subject material compared to other currently existing learning models used by the teachers.

Third, the factors supporting the success of MPTBB developments were (1) teachers' willingness and motivation to change; (2) teachers' ability to facilitate learning; (3) the support of school principal; (4) the support of other interested subject teachers who; (5) students' enthusiasm; (6) the availability of supporting facilities and infra-structure; and (7) local government's support and enthusiasm.

The conclusion above has a number of implications as follows; (1) the change of teachers' role in learning process from material presenter to facilitator; (2) teachers' needs for preliminary training; (3) the optimal use of available instrument, media and source at school; (4) school administrator and committee's need for orientation to understand and actively provide continual support and source for culture-based integrated learning process done by the teachers; and (5) communication and socialization to students' parents and community.

In addition, the findings of study created the following propositions: (1) students' appreciation on local culture improved when learning focused on the theme developed on the basis of students' prior cultural experience; and (2) learning outcome improved when learning integrated culture.

Having drawn some conclusions, this study puts forward the following recommendations. First, MPTBB can be used as one of social study learning alternatives in elementary school. Second, school principal should facilitate the development and implementation of MPTBB conducted by teachers to create conducive situation that make the teachers comfortable in developing their innovation, especially in implementing MPTBB. Third, the support of local Education Department through policies which enable the creation of conducive situation for teacher in developing and implementing MPTBB. Forth, LPTK (teachers' college) can consider MPTBB as an in-depth review of material for the betterment of teaching and learning, or even for the development of science and knowledge. Fifth, the next researchers can conduct the research and development on culture-based integrated learning with the cultural subject in other different communities.

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