Teachers' Simulation on Developing Problem Solving-Based Mathematics Textbook in Vocational Senior High School Mathematics Teaching in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Providing books or textbook is one of the crucial policies to improve the quality of teaching learning processes i.e. improving problem solving skills. The ideal program for providing the needs of the books containing problem solving approach should not in the means of monopoly by one or some institutions, but let the schools to choose their own needs of textbook to be used at schools. It was also to be suggested that the students have their right to select and by their own books without much intervention by the teacher or by the school. However, the situation is that it is still far away for the teachers to produce their own books. One of the reasons is lack of skill to write and produce good quality of textbooks i.e. the books that containing problem solving approach. However, there are fundamental problems for the teachers to develop such a book due to the understanding of the concepts of problem solving and how to implement them into the teaching learning of mathematics. The results of teachers' simulation lead directly to the competences and readiness to publish problem solving-based mathematics textbook.

Key Word: problem solving, mathematics textbook, vocational senior high school

A. Introduction

The currently studies (Marsigit, 2010) on mathematics education in Indonesia have the indication that children's achievement in the subjects of mathematics and Science is low, as indicated by the result of the National Leaving Examination year by year both in Primary and Secondary School. Children's mastery on mathematics concepts and mathematics process skills is still low. This fact may be as the results of: (1) the shortage of laboratory activities; (2) lack of teachers having mastered science process skill approach; (3) contents on Mathematics and Science curriculum too crowded; (4) too many time consuming administration stipulation for teachers; (5) lack of laboratory equipment and laboratory human resource. The study also indicates that mismatch among the objectives education, curriculum, and evaluation system which can be identified by the following: (1) National Leaving Examination assess the children's

ability cognitively only; (2) Streaming in Senior Secondary School starting at grade 3; it is argued that the implementation of this system is late and consider individual differences inappropriately; (3) University Entrance Examination System is considered to trigger Elementary and Secondary School teachers apply goal oriented rather than process oriented in teaching Mathematics and Science, (4) many teachers still have difficulty in elaborating the syllabus, (5) a number of mathematics topics are considered to be difficult for teachers to teach; (6) a significant number of children consider some mathematics topics as difficult to understand, (7) teachers consider that they still need guidelines for conducting teaching process by using science process skills approach.

In our School-Based Curriculum, it was stated that mathematics in primary and secondary school should encourage the students to think logically, analytically, systematically, critically, creatively and be able to collaborate with others. The implementations of primary and secondary mathematics curriculum in class-rooms need to develop problem solving skills covering both closed and open problems. In solving the problems, students need to creatively develop many ways and alternatives, to develop mathematical models, and to estimate the results. Contextual and realistic approaches are recommended to be developed by the teachers to encourage mathematical thinking in primary schools. With these approaches, there is a hope that the students step-by-step learn and master mathematics enthusiastically. To make their teaching learning of primary mathematics more effective, teachers also need to develop resources such as information technology, teaching aids and other media.

The curriculum outlines the aims of teaching learning of mathematics are as follows: (1) to understand the concepts of mathematics, to explain the relationships among them and to apply them to solve the problems accurately and efficiently, (2) to develop thinking skills to learn patterns and characteristics of mathematics, to manipulate them in order to generalize, to proof and to explain ideas and mathematics propositions, (3) to develop problems solving skills which covers understanding the problems, outlining mathmatical models, solving them and estimating the outcomes, (3) to communicate mathematics ideas using symbols, tables, diagrams and other media, and (4) to develop appreciations of the uses of mathematics in daily lifes, curiosity, consideration, and willingness to learn mathematics as well as tough and self-confidence. Vocational Education prepares students for mastering a number of specific vocational skills.

These vocational skills are needed for employment. Vocational Senior High School offers threeyear programs; these consist of about more than 40 subject lessons including Mathematics, which gives priority to expand specific occupational skills and emphasizes the preparation of students to enter the world of work and expanding their professional attitudes (Unesco, 2010)

B. Problem Solving Approach in Teaching Learning of Mathematics in Vocational Senior High School

For a certain program of improving the quality of teaching learning mathematics in senior high school, research evidences indicated that it was take time for teachers to shift from teachercentered to student-centered. Teachers developed teaching methods based upon more hands-on activities and daily life utilizing local materials. It needs time to encourage students to be active learner and involve in problem solving activities. Small group discussions were useful to share ideas on problem solving activities. To promote problem solving activities the teachers need to en-culture their efforts in innovating teaching learning processes which meet to academic students needs, encouraging students to be active learners, developing various strategic of teaching, developing various teaching materials, and developing teaching evaluation.

Specifically the teachers need to: plan the scenario of teaching, plan students activities, plan teachers' roles, distribute the assignments, develop assessment methods, and monitor the progress of students' achievements. By developing teaching materials teachers could encourage the students to do problem solving more efficiently. Students enjoyed their problem solving activities because they were involved in observing and doing things. The teachers perceived that in order to promote problem solving activities more effectively, they expected still to have a need: (1) to make good atmosphere for teaching and learning, (2) to promote to implement various teaching methods and teaching learning resources, (3) to give the chances for their students to perform their initiatives, (4) to promote cooperative learning, and (5) to support the students to be the active learner.

In the international perspectives, specifically Isoda Masami (2007) indicated that mathematical thinking has been described in the context of problem solving. For example, from the viewpoint of representation, the permanence of the equivalence of form is a way of extending mathematical form which is trying to keep the mathematical (or algebraic) structure. Representation is also a key window. He stated that in the problem solving approach for mathematics teaching, the students meet an unknown problem which can be solved with previously learned mathematics. Students represent their own ideas, which they then discuss with each other. A solvable or approachable unknown problem for students is an important condition of problems in a lesson. Even if most of the mathematics problems that mathematicians encounter may take years to solve, they are solved based on what is already known.

Meanwhile, Polya (1957) outlined the steps of problem solving activities as follows: (1) Understand the problem, (2) Devising a plan, (3) Carrying out the plan, and (4) Looking back. He suggested that the students should have to understand the problem, to identify the unknown, to collect the data, to understand the condition. The students also need to know whether it is possible to satisfy the condition; whether the condition is sufficient to determine the unknown; whether it is insufficient or redundant, even may be contradictory. In devising the plan, the students need to find the connection between the data and the unknown. They may be obliged to consider auxiliary problems if an immediate connection cannot be found. They should develop a plan of the solution. When the students carrying out the plan of the solution, the teachers may check each step as well as examine the solution obtained. Polya and Pasmep (in Fajar Shadiq:2004:13) developed the strategies to problem solving activities as follows: (1) Trial and Error, (2) Making diagram, (3) Trying the simple problem, (4) Making Table, (5) Finding the pattern, (6) Breaking down the goal, (7) Considering the possibilities, (8) Thinking Logically , (9) Reversing the Order, and (10) Identifying the impossibility.

C. Textbooks-based Problem Solving in Vocational Senior High School Mathematics

Thirty Vocational Senior High School Mathematics teachers from thirty different schools in the Province of Yogyakarta, have perception that good textbook for Vocational Senior High School mathematics should be understandable, meaningful, and contains of good examples. Most of them expressed that good textbook should use simple, communicative and standardized language. More than a half of them indicated that good textbook for Vocational Senior High School mathematics should be comprehensive in term of mathematical content and students' competencies (affective, psychomotor, and cognitive). Small number of them indicated that good textbook of mathematics should meet the following criteria: it should be systematic; it should be completed by good exercises; it should be completed by good assessment system; it should be interesting in display, performance and good illustration and good layout; it should be relevant and applicable to daily life; it should be contextual textbook; it should be curriculum-based textbook; it should contain good problem solving; and it should promote active learners.

1. Teachers' Perception on Good Textbook for Vocational Senior High School Mathematics

In relation with the supported textbook for problem solving approach, teachers' perceptions consist of 12 (twelve) aspects as the following:

- a. It should motivate the students to learn mathematics
- b. It should develop students' oriented teaching learning of mathematics
- c. It should support of achieving learning objective
- d. It should employ flexible teaching learning method
- e. It should facilitate students' need to learn mathematics
- f. It should facilitate the students to do exercise mathematics
- g. It should dealing with the students' difficulties in learning mathematics
- h. It should consist of summary
- i. It should as a communicative writing
- j. It should develop the cognitive schema of learning mathematics
- k. It should be as a students' learning oriented
- 1. It encourage the students to solve mathematics problems

2. Teachers' Perception on the Strategies of Problem Soling that can be developed in the Textbook for Vocational Senior High School Mathematics

In relation with the strategies of problem solving that can be developed in the textbook, teachers' perceptions consist of 10 aspects, as they were outlined by Polya:

a.	Trial and Error	f.	Break down the goal
b.	Make diagram	g.	Consider possibility
с.	Try for simple problem	h.	Logical Thinking
d.	Make Table	i.	Reverse Order
e.	Find the pattern	j.	Identify impossibility

3. Teachers' Simulation in Developing Textbook

Thirty mathematics teachers of Vocational Senior Secondary School simulated how to develop problem solving-based mathematics textbook. The activities were conducted as part of developing teaching learning resources in the Certification Program of the year 2011 at Faculty of Mathematics and Science, Yogyakarta State University. The supervisors, which were also the researchers, consisted of Dr Marsigit M.A and R. Rosnawati, M.Si. In order the teachers were to simulate the textbook production, the researcher developed and provided: (1) the questionnaire of teachers' perception about good mathematics textbook , (2) the questionnaire of teachers' perception about good mathematics discussion, (4) small group discussion, consisting of three teachers, to review and simulate the books, (5) published mathematics textbooks for Senior High School.

The procedure for the simulation consists of the steps as follows:

a. Whole-class Lecturing

In the whole-class lecturing, the researcher presented the theories of teaching learning process, developing curriculum and syllabi, developing teaching learning recourses, developing problem solving activities, and developing textbook. The presentation was supported by reviewing the models of teaching learning mathematics and plying some related videos. It was followed by question and answer activities.

b. Reviewing the Developed Text Books

The teachers got mathematics textbooks to be reviewed. The books were authorized by Dr Marsigit M.A., and they were published by Yudhistira Publication, 2008.

c. Small Group Discussion

In small group the teachers conducted the reviewing activities and discussed among the members of the group.

d. Teachers' Presentation

Some teachers presented their results of review and discussion in front of the class. They show and explain the models of problem solving activities and supported part of the books. It then followed by question and answer activities.

e. Whole-class Discussion

The researcher led the whole class discussion to get their conclusions or summaries.

f. Teachers' Filling in the Questionnaire

The questionnaires needed to be filled by the teachers consisted of teachers' perception of the criteria of good textbooks and suggested problem solving activities.

g. Teachers' Reflection

The teachers reflected their results of the review and wrote them following the criteria of the strategies of problem solving outlined by Polya (1957)



Picture 1: Mathematics Textbooks to be Reviewed



Picture 2: Teachers' Activities in Group Discussion



Picture 3: Teacher's Presentation of the Results of Discussion

D. The Results of Simulations and Discussion

1. Simulation on the Criteria of Good Mathematics Textbook

In order to motivate the students, the teachers perceived that mathematics textbook should have a good lay out, supporting references, clear cognitive scheme, clear applications of mathematics, examples of daily life, and history of mathematics. The teachers indicated that mathematics textbook should be based and oriented on students' learning activities; therefore, they suggested that it develop student's autonomous, mathematics drill, and problem solving. It is important that it also should be based on school-based curriculum. Further, such a textbook should support the students in achieving their competencies.

Relating to the needs for developing flexible teaching learning method, the teachers perceived that such a textbook should facilitate all students without any exceptionally. It should be used by the students both individually or collaboratively. Furthermore, it also should make the students feel confident and joyful. To make it happens the textbook should be arranged hierarchically and supported by on line internet resources. Step by step of finding the formulas may fulfill the students' need to learn mathematics. However, it is important to note that it provides various quiz and enough exercises and story problems. To make the students feel more confident it should contain answers for each problem.

It is realistic that every developed single book should deal with students' difficulties in learning mathematics. To overcome such condition, such a book should provide various ways to solve the problems. It was suggested that it provides such a space to get students feedback in order to communicate their ideas with their teacher. Therefore, the teachers though how to develop communicative textbook. The writer of textbook should consider how the students are able to understand the procedures. Short and not long sentences can be employed. The combination of good developed teaching content, curriculum based cognitive schema and the clear of the guidance make the students have their ability to develop their cognitive schema in learning mathematics.

The further crucial point of developing mathematics textbook is about its orientation. Presently, there is no further important point to be considered except that the textbook should be based on students learning activities. To meet this criteria such a textbook should employ realistic approach in which the students learn mathematics from the concrete daily life to get direct experiences and useful schema to prepare their activities in developing various model and mathematical procedures. However, there is still an ultimate question on how the textbook do encourage the students to solve mathematics problems? The teacher then recommended that such a textbook should provide: (1) trial and error schema, (2) activities of making diagrams, (3) activities of manipulating the tables, (4) finding the pattern, (5) breaking down the goal, and (6) considering possibilities.

2. The Criteria of Developed Problem Solving

The entirely of the simulation processes the teachers produced the criteria of the recommended problem solving activities should developed in the mathematics textbook, as follows:

a. Trial and Error

 It is useful to solve the problems 	– It needs of manipulating concrete objects
 It is useful to get the best solution 	 It is useful to find the mathematics
– It means of finding the method of solving	pattern
the problems	 It is a speculative method
 It is useful to get the right answers 	 It is construct theories
 It should under the teacher's guidance 	 It needs teaching aids

 It involves drawing activities It is useful for the teacher to motivate the students to solve mathematics problems It is useful to find the formulas It involves mathematical activities It based on individual ways and experiences
experiences

b. Making diagram

-			
-	It is useful to record the data	—	It is useful to relate two or more
-	It is useful to illustrate the situation		mathematical ideas
-	It is useful to get mathematical concepts	-	It is useful to organize possibilities
-	It is relevant to realistic mathematics	-	It is useful to produce summaries
-	It is useful to illustrate the solutions of	-	It is useful to compare mathematical ideas
	problems	-	It is useful to classify the data
-	It is useful to solve the problems easily	-	It is useful to visualize mathematics
-	It is useful to show students' competencies		procedures
-	It employs various diagrams	—	It is useful to make rough notes
—	It is useful to record experiment activities	-	It is useful to the prove the formula
-	It is useful to interpret the data easily	—	It is useful to produce further diagrams
-	It is useful to communicate/share	—	To make diagram is to solve the problems
	mathematical ideas	-	It is useful to indicate the degree of
-	It is as a teaching media		achievement

c. Trying the simple problem

_	It should from the simple problems to the complex one	_	It is useful to make mathematics concepts more realistic
_	It is useful to get prerequisite understanding	_	It is useful to comprehend mathematics
_	It is a mathematical method		competencies
_	It needs of applying the formula for the solution of the simple problems	—	It is useful for the teacher to facilitate his/her students
_	It is useful to breakdown the complex problem into the simpler one	—	It is useful to make the students understand about mathematical procedures
-	The simple problem should be taken from daily life	_	It needs to be supported by the use of teaching aids
_	It is useful to evaluate the students' competencies	_	Trying the simple problems need observation activities, recording, and conclusion It is useful to make the abstract mathematics
			be more concrete one

d. Making Table

_	It needs to be supported by the using of teaching aids It is useful to summarize the data	_ _ _	It is as the method to solve the problems It needs students' skill to read the table It is closely related to experiment activities
_	It is as a tool to solve the problems		
_	It needs students' skill to make the table		

e. Finding the pattern

—	It is a continuing process from the previous	—	Finding pattern is a natural way of life
	step to the next step in order to solve the	-	It is an abstract method
	problems	-	It is relevant with experiment method
—	It should be supported by the use of Students	_	It is repeated procedure
	Work Sheet	_	It consists of possible other small patterns
—	It can be an individual activity	_	The students should find it
_	It should lead to the finding of the formula	_	The students can use one pattern to find other
—	It is the method to solve the problems		pattern
—	It moves from the simple problems to the	_	The pattern makes mathematics be more
	complex one		meaningful
—	It finds the rule	_	It is more effective way to solve mathematics
—	It is the pattern of methods		problems
_	It is the pattern of problems	_	It consists of mathematical concepts
_	It finds the relationship	_	The pattern is a repeated certain change
—	It finds the repeated procedures	_	It is useful to find the characteristics of
_	It leads to generalization		mathematics problems
	-		•

f. Breaking down the goal

_	It means solving the problems step by step	_	It means breaking down the procedures
_	It means getting the different goals	_	It means identifying the appropriate
_	To solve multiple problems		procedures
_	It is supported by the use of Teaching Aids	-	It is useful get the shorter procedures
	and Students Work Sheet	—	It is useful to make priority of doing certain
-	It means solving a big (general) problem		procedure
	through solving the smaller (specific)	—	It appropriates with small group discussion
	problems	—	It means classifying the mathematics
-	It means solving the longer term problem		problems
	through solving the shorter term problems	—	It means breaking down the problem into the
			unit problems

g. Considering the possibilities

_	It should be facilitated by the Students Work Sheet	-	It is useful to clarify the mathematics problems
_	The teachers need to uncover students' thinking	_	It is useful to classify the mathematics problems
_	It is more related to experiment activities	-	It is useful to anticipate the unpredicted solution
_	It is the possibility of students' different	_	It is useful to predict the correct or wrong
	answers		answers
—	It is useful to uncover the risks and benefit of	—	It means of identifying all possibilities
	any activity	_	It means of considering the possibilities to
—	The possibilities need to be recorded		apply a certain procedure to a different
—	It means of the flexibility of mathematical		problem
	procedures	_	It is useful to examine the strong (more
_	It means of the possibility of the existing		effective) or the weakness (less effective) of
	solution		a certain procedure
		_	It is useful to provides non-routine problems
		_	It means the students' creativities

h. Thinking Logically

	It means of expressing logically		It is useful to think effectively
_	It means of expressing logically	_	It is useful to unlik effectively
—	It is contextual	—	It is useful to think realistically
-	It is situational	—	It is useful to think rationally
_	It is about understanding	_	It is as an if-then thinking
-	It is about logical based thinking	—	It is useful to develop analyzed-based
-	It is useful to think clearly		thinking
—	It is useful to think rigorously	—	It is useful think contextually
—	It is useful to get prior experiences thinking	—	It is useful to develop experienced-based
-	It is useful to think systematically		thinking
—	It is useful to think coherently	—	It is useful to relate problems that has similar
—	It is useful to think scientifically		characteristics

i. Reversing the Order

_	It is useful method to employ prerequisite	_	It is useful to learn different procedures
	understanding	_	It is useful to examine the concepts
_	It is useful method to produce the reasons	_	It is useful to relate some procedures
-	It is useful method to examine the results	_	It means of predicting the results first then
-	It means reconstructing the mathematics		thinking the procedure later.
	procedures	_	It means copying the procedures
_	It is useful to produce explanation		
_	It is useful to review the methods		
—	It is useful to reflects the process		

j. Identifying the impossibility.

-	It is useful to learn why a certain procedure doesn't work It is useful to clarify why a certain procedure is work affectively.	_	It is useful to examine the teaching contents/teaching materials It is useful to find the new methods
_	It is useful for the teacher to observe his/her	_	It is useful to solve the problems
_	students works It is useful for the teacher to motivate his/her students to develop mathematical procedures	_	comprehensively It is useful to examine the procedures

E. Conclusion

The teachers delivered unstructured indications of the constraints for developing textbook for Vocational Senior High School mathematics. The most difficulties they feel to face if they should develop textbook for junior mathematics is about their lack of skill and knowledge of writing mathematical textbook. The others big problems are the difficulties in managing and allocating the time. They indicated others constraints as: it needs a budget; it is not easy to determine the theme of the book; it is not easy to collect supporting data; it is difficult to develop interesting and good illustration textbook; it is difficult to dig up the idea or concepts of textbook and its paradigm; it is not easy how to develop curriculum-based textbook; it is difficult to develop comprehensive textbook; and, it is not easy how to use simple, communicative and standardized language. Small of them indicated that they still have difficulties in developing thematic textbook; difficulties in developing textbook as students' guide to learn; difficulties in developing problem solving activities; difficulties in promoting students as active learner; as well as, it is not easy how to adapt psychological aspect of students learning mathematics e.g. students' motivation.

The efforts of developing textbook for Vocational Senior High School mathematics should always put the concern of the criteria of good textbook. Specifically, for the needs to develop textbook for junior mathematics we need to have a clear picture on how to plan and implement activities in the classroom the following: problem solving activities, reasoning and proof, mathematical communication, mathematical connections, mathematical representation, the role of technology, content arrangement and skills development, content appropriate and relevant, wide range of student interests and abilities, and materials easy to follow and understand. In the case of developing the layout or design of textbook we may consider the following: the objectives given for each section; exercises and activities relevant to learning objectives; developing the relevant and useful graph, tables, charts, visuals; cross-curricular learning exhibited; clearly and appropriately defined some key terms; and reading level and language use appropriate to students. The problem solving based mathematics textbook in the Vocational Senior High School can be developed based on the criteria outlined by Polya and Pasmep that are: (1) Trial and Error, (2) Making diagram, (3) Trying the simple problem, (4) Making Table, (5) Finding the pattern, (6) Breaking down the goal, (7) Considering the possibilities, (8) Thinking Logically, (9) Reversing the Order, and (10) Identifying the impossibility.

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