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INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON PRIMARY EDUCATION (ISPE)  
*PGSD and DIKDAS Study Programs*

**EMPOWERING  
THE PRIMARY EDUCATION FOR  
THE BRIGHTER GENERATION**

*PROCEEDING*





FACULTY OF EDUCATION  
&  
GRADUATE SCHOOL

*Yogyakarta State University*

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## Foreword of the Rector

*Assalamu'alaikum warohmatullohi wabarokatuh*

1. The honorable, the invited speakers
2. The distinguished presenters and participants
3. The special guests attending this international seminar

Welcome to the **International Seminar on Primary Education (ISPE 2013)** in Yogyakarta State University.

On behalf of the Yogyakarta State University, I would like to extend my warmest welcome and sincere good wishes to all distinguished participants, especially the invited speakers:

1. Dr. John Hope (Auckland University, New Zealand)
2. Dr. Rajchukran Tongthawarn (Chiang Mai University, Thailand)
3. Prof. Ranbir Singh Malik, M.A, M.Ed, M.Phil, Ph.D (Edith Cowan University, Perth Australia)
4. Prof. Dr. Soedijarto, M.A (Jakarta State University, Indonesia)
5. Prof. Suyata, Ph.D (Yogyakarta State University, Indonesia)

to this international seminar on *Empowering Primary Education for a Brighter Generation*. It is indeed an honor that we have a chance to host the first *International Seminar on Primary Education* in conjunction with the celebrations of our forty-nine (49<sup>th</sup>) anniversary. We are also delighted to welcome again all participants who all share the same commitment to educational development, especially in developing the primary education.

Nowadays, primary education, especially in this new era, has become one of educators' main interests. They are concerned with some current issues of education in the primary level, such as: policy on primary education, curriculum development in primary education, joyful and meaningful learning for children, character building in the early ages, and challenges and opportunities in primary education.

Some possible and appropriate solutions by empowering primary education comprehensively for a brighter generation need to be implemented since there are fast changes in human life especially in this current decade. There are several issues concerning younger generation, such as moral degradations and violence. A comprehensive study related to various efforts in handling some perspectives of primary education is therefore required.

Yogyakarta State University, *as The Leading University in Character Education*, will witness a gathering of key primary educators around the world, including the participants and presenters from Indonesia, New Zealand, Bangladesh, Singapore, India, Malaysia, China, Thailand, and Mexico who attend this seminar. Their precious views and experience, highly valued by people in the field, will be

shared with more than sixty paper presenters from over eight countries together with other seminar participants consisting of foreign and local educators, as well as students. The gathering here this year could be an important step towards the right view and direction of primary education and its ultimate goals. It will be a great opportunity not only for us to learn from each other in the spirit of the field of primary education but also to build those vital links for international cooperation which are fast becoming a necessary part of life.

*Wassalamu'alaikum warohmatullohi wabarokatuh*

Yogyakarta, May 18-19<sup>th</sup>, 2013

Professor Dr. Rochmat Wahab, M.Pd, M.A  
Rector of Yogyakarta State University

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# SOCIOCULTURAL BASED THEMATIC-INTEGRATIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING MODEL FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

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## Abstract

In line with the needs of developing the teaching and learning quality for elementary schools, especially in facing the new curriculum 2013, it is strongly required to upgrade the current theories and redesign the teaching and learning model which is appropriate with the needs of the students. The elementary school, especially in this current era, has become one of educators' main interests. They are concerned with some current issues of education in the primary level, such as sociocultural and moral issues. So, the design of *sociocultural based thematic-integrative teaching and learning model* is proposed to fulfill the teaching and learning needs and to overcome the sociocultural values problem of the students in the early ages such as character and moral decrease and sociocultural awareness problem of the students. The new curriculum 2013 for elementary school will be designed in the form of thematic-integrative model. In addition, the aim of the curriculum is that the students should have several competencies such as competence of attitudes, soft skills, and knowledge. Furthermore, it is promote the teacher and the students to be more creative, innovative, and productive. So that, the students can be succeed in solving their problems and challenges in the future. It needs creativity of teachers to make joyful and meaningful learning for the students. So, there are opportunities for the educators to develop the design of the teaching and learning process, including: teaching materials, lesson plans, methodology and strategies, media and learning sources, and learning assessment or evaluation. The design will provide the students with several competencies which will promote their skill and knowledge of social reconstruction. It means that the model will promote the students to be able to solve and overcome their social problems in their socio and cultural environment during their life. This model is addressed to develop the quality of the teaching and learning process, especially in the primary school level as the basis of building a good foundation of the students in the early ages. Hopefully, it can empower the primary education for a brighter generation.

Key words: Thematic-integrative teaching model, sociocultural, elementary schools

## 1. Introduction

Various efforts have been made by the government to realize the nation ideals into a good and intelligent nation of academic, spiritual terms, and social terms. This is consistent as mandated in Law No. 20 of the National Education System 2003 which stated that the national education serves to develop skills and character development and civilized nation in the national intellectual life, aimed at developing the potential of students to become human with faith and fear of God, noble, healthy, knowledgeable, skilled, creative, and a democratic and responsible citizens.

Responding to the problem, the government as the highest authority aims to make efforts in order to realize the education goals. The new and still live thing is the government plan to make changes to the curriculum, from Education Unit Level Curriculum (KTSP) to Curriculum 2013. We can not deny that today the education has become very influential in all aspects of human life. In order to develop the curriculum 2013, the government has made preparations and conducts a public test before Curriculum 2013 is actually applied in the world of education in the country. One aspect to change included the applied learning models in schools as an integrated thematic model.

In the Ministry of Education (2006: 5) it stated that learning is essentially a thematic integrated learning that uses the theme to tie some subjects to provide a meaningful experience to the students. In the Thematic learning the students are expected to become creative, intelligent, and innovative students. This is consistent with the purpose of curriculum change as expressed by the government, namely:

*"With the thematic -integrative learning competencies it is expected the students will have the better attitude, skills, and knowledge. They will be more creative, innovative, and more productive, therefore, they can be successful in dealing with various problems and challenges into the better future "(Education: 2012)."*

At least the design of curriculum development undertaken by the government is one of the efforts to overcome the problems that hit the nation. One of them is the national character which began to decline. Including socio-cultural values that begin marginalized by cultural values and foreign. This condition is also experienced by primary school in Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY). Therefore, it is necessary to develop an integrative model of

sociocultural -based thematic learning in primary schools in the region.

According to Kyriacou (2009: 7), "effective teaching can be defined as teaching that successfully achieves the learning by pupils intended by the teacher". Effective teaching means a teaching obtained through successful student learning undertaken by teachers. Through the learning model is expected to be developed to the maximum human potential. As well as that expressed by Trianto (2011: 3), I that education is universally understood as planting socio-cultural values in a group of people in order to sustain life and to achieve a live they deserve. In addition, teachers are also expected to deliver the learning effectively.

On the field Perspective, Sa'dun Akbar, I Wayan Utama, and Pujianto, (2006) found higher levels of problems or difficulties in the development and implementation of thematic learning for students grade one and two in East Java. The high level of difficulty is indicated by the average score of the thematic learning implementation for all development and implementation components for year one and two students of 55 and 48%, respectively. Therefore, thematic learning model was developed as a solution to overcome the existed problems. The study results showed that all developed thematic learning themes are valid according to both experts and validator practitioners (classroom teachers).

Similarly, Ming-Chou Liu and Jhen-Yu Wang (2010) revealed that the thematic learning has a positive effect on student learning concept. In addition, this study also found that the thematic learning provides a framework for students who developed from related concepts and a more stable learning model. Furthermore, the study also found that the thematic is fit for the students who have varying abilities.

Furthermore, Kon Chon Min, Abdulah Mat Rashid, and Mohd Ibrahim Nazri (2012) found a higher level of understanding of the integrated life skills teacher to the thematic approach in Malaysia. It was also found that the teachers who understand the integrated life skills are using a thematic approach in teaching the integrated life skills. There is a significant relationship between the teachers' level of understanding of the thematic approach that practiced regularly. Research also shows that the length of teacher experience in teaching was not significantly different in practicing the thematic approach.

## 2. DISCUSSION

### 2.1 The concept of thematic-Integrative Learning

Thematic learning as the instructional model includes a type or kind than the integrated learning

model. Thematic learning model is basically an integrated learning model that uses a theme to tie some subjects to provide a meaningful experience to students (Ministry of Education, 2006: 5).

The integrated learning as a concept is often equated with the integrated teaching and learning, integrated curriculum approach, and a coherent curriculum approach. Thematic learning is defined as a learning which designed and packaged based on certain themes. In the discussion, the themes are reviewed in various subjects. Furthermore, according to Ujang Sukandi (2003: 109), the integrated learning has an actual theme, close to the students' world, and relating with everyday life. This theme became a means of unifying the diverse materials of various subjects. Furthermore, basically an integrated thematic learning-learning combine multiple fields of study into a theme by establishing curricular priorities and find the skills, concepts, and attitudes that overlap in some areas of study.

### 2.2 Benefits of Integrative Thematic- Learning

Thematic learning as part of an integrated learning has many advantages that can be achieved as set out in (KTSP guidelines, 2007: 253) as following: (1) Facilitate a focus on a particular theme, (2) Students are able to learn knowledge and develop basic competencies between the subjects contents of the same theme, (3) a deeper understanding and memorable subject matter; (4) Core competencies can be better developed by linking other subjects with a personal experience of students; (5) More to perceived usefulness and meaning of learning as the material presented in the clear theme context ; (6) Students will be excited about learning because it can communicate in real situations, to develop a proficiency in the subjects and at the same time can learn other subjects, and (7) Teachers can save time because the lessons which presented in thematic way can be prepared at once, and given in two or three meetings, as well as the rest of the time can be used for remedial activities, stabilization, or enrichment material.

### 2.3 The steps of Thematic-integrative Learning

In applying the thematic-integrative learning, the teacher also needs to pay attention to the steps that must be done in designing thematic-integrative learning models. The purpose of following these steps is that the learning is conceptualized well and can run smoothly. The stages are as follows:

#### 2.3.1 Planning Phase

The planning stage is the beginning of the process in designing the thematic learning model. At this early stage the concept began to take shape and to be in the learning to implement implemented. At the planning stage includes several parts:

a. Selection of Themes

Basically the theme selection is the main focus in the thematic learning. Whereby the theme will accommodate materials and a variety of subjects to be delivered in a single theme. However, some requirements to consider in the theme selection on Thematic learning model (Trianto, 2011: 155) as follows: (1) theme should not be too wide, but integrating many subjects, (2) must be meaningful themes; (3) the theme should be adjusted to development level of children psychology, (4) theme should be developed to accommodate most of the children interest, (5) the chosen theme should pay attention to the events that occurred within the span of authentic learning time; (6) theme should notice Applicable curriculum and expectations of society (principle of relevance), and (7) the theme should also consider the availability of learning resources.

b. Determination of Subject

The subjects Characteristics also become important to note. Whereby the competency standards should also be developed in accordance with the chosen theme. According Fogorty in Trianto (2011: 168), this type of social learning and language skills can be combined with thinking and social skills.

c. Selection of Material Assessment, Competency Standards, Basic Competence and Indicators.

At this step the teacher should determine the sub-sub skills of each skill that will be integrated in a learning theme.

d. Determining the Combined Sub-Skills

It Need to be considered in combining the skills that will be integrated in a single theme. In general, the skills that must be mastered are thinking skills, social skills, and organizer skills.

e. Formulating learning outcomes Indicators

Based on the developed basic competencies and sub-skills then it need to select the indicators of success in learning achievement. Whereby in formulating the indicators should be based on the writing rules included: audience, behavior, condition and degree.

f. Determining the learning stages

Learning stages are required for teachers to integrate and organizing learning into a structured order.

### 2.3.2 Implementation stage

The learning stage must be implemented by following the learning scenarios as designed.

### 2.3.3 Evaluation stage

Evaluation stage is the stage where teachers can gather information and assess the successful learning process. Where the evaluation is conducted

in the form of evaluation process and evaluation of learning outcomes is useful to give feed back to the Teachers in improving and refining the programs and learning activities. According Zaenal Arifin (2010: 2), he describes the evaluation as one of the essential components and steps to be taken by the teacher to determine the learning effectiveness.

## 2.4 Implications of Thematic- Learning Integrative

As a model of innovation, thematic learning model is not easy to implement, because it requires adaptation and a willingness to adapt. Given that the thematic learning model combines multiple disciplines and requires complex management. Based on these reasons the thematic learning which applied to the early grades of primary school or madrasah bring some implications that must be realized by all parties.

### 2.4.1 Teacher Existence

Thematic learning is a combination of various fields of study, for example, science, mathematics, religious education, social studies, and others, the implementation is no longer isolated but rather into a single unit (holistic) and integration (integralistic). This provides implications for teachers who teach in the classroom. According to the Ministry of Education (2006), that the thematic learning requires both creative teachers in preparing activities or learning experiences for children, as well as in choosing the competence of various subjects and set it to make the learning becomes more meaningful, interesting, fun and intact.

The thematic learning principles are not simple, and complex which tend to require higher teacher's creativity in preparing the activities or learning experiences for students. Teachers must be able to improvise in any encountered terrain, e.g. to face the varying abilities of students, subject matter or materials scattered in several sources and compile the competencies or indicators to be achieved by students. As proposed by the Education Ministry above, so this thematic learning brings a heavier burden to teachers and more than the conventional learning.

### 2.4.2 Student knowledge

Increased burden on teachers will also have implications for the students. Set of teacher preparation should be followed by the students carefully. By using thematic learning model, psychologically, students were led to think widely and deeply to capture and understand the conceptual relationship as presented by their teacher.

Furthermore, students will be accustomed to thinking in focused, organized, complete, thorough, systemic and analytic way. Thus the thematic learning model requires the ability to better student

learning, both in terms of intelligence and creativity. Thematic learning needs to be done with a variety of methods to prevent boring. Learning activities should be more student-centered in order to develop their potential.

#### **2.4.3 The Needs of Instructional Materials, Infrastructure Support, Learning Resources and Learning Media**

In the thematic learning, various facilities and infrastructure are basically the same relative to the other learning, just it has own peculiarities in some respects. In thematic learning, teachers must choose observant media to use, in this case the object should have usability to implement in variety of fields and of course integrated. Because the learning concepts glued together by theme, the use of a learning means can be more efficient than splitting field a part.

In order to obtain valid concepts and principles, thematic learning need to utilize a variety of learning resources either designed for learning purposes of implementation (by design), and the available learning resources in the environment to be used (by utilization). Learning resources are all things that exist around the functional learning environments to help optimizing the learning outcomes.

#### **2.4.4 Room Arrangement Model**

In the implementation of thematic learning activities it need to make arrangements so that a fun learning atmosphere. Setting this room include: (a) space with a styled tailor to the theme being implemented, (b) bench composition of the students can be adapted to changing needs ongoing learning, (c) students do not always sit in the seat but can sit on the mat or carpet, (d) activities should be varied and implemented both in the classroom and outside the classroom, and (e) the classroom walls can be used to display the students' work and learning resources.

#### **2.4.5 Methods Selection Strategy**

In accordance with the characteristics of thematic learning, then the practiced learning is prepared with a variety of activities by using multimethod, e.g. a teaching method that uses more than one method.

### **2.5 Sociocultural -based. Thematic-Integrative Learning**

Sociocultural or social cognitive theory emphasizes how a child or learner attach the culture in reasoning, social interaction, and understanding themselves. Santrock (2009:323) suggests that the social cognitive theory plays an important role in learning e.g. social, cognitive, and behavioral. Cognitive factors include the student's expectations to succeed while social factors include the

observations of students' achievement behavior on their parents.

Sociocultural theory or social cognitive learning proposed by several experts including Piaget who argued that learning is determined as the mean of individual initiative comes from individual knowledge. Students interact with their peers, e.g. social environment than adult. The main determinant of Learning is the individual factor (students) while the social environment is secondary factor.

Student activity becomes the major determinant and guarantees of successful learning, while the arrangement of conditions merely facilitates learning. Cognitive development is a genetic process that followed the biological adaptation to the environment resulting in equilibration. To achieve the equilibration it required a process of adaptation (assimilation and accommodation).

Later, the Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky also gave his thoughts in terms of socio-cultural theory. Vygotsky describes in his writings in 1920s and 1930s and emphasized how the interaction between children and adults will contribute to the skills development. According to Vygotsky, adults with sensitive attention to children's readiness for new challenges, they can arrange appropriate activities to help the children to develop new skills. Adults serve as mentors and teachers, encouraging the children to the zone of proximal development in Vygotsky's term for the range of skills that can not be done by the children without the help of the adult experts. Parents can encourage simple number concepts, for example, by calculating the cocoa bean seeds with their children or measure the rice to be cooked, and fill in the numbers that children did not remember. When children participate in such day-to-day experience with parents, teachers, and other people, they gradually learn to practice the skills, and cultural values (Trianto, 2011: 67).

When Vygotsky emphasizes the influence of adults in learning, Albert Bandura (2006, in Santrock, 2009:323) emphasizes that the influence of environmental experiences and behaviors are very important, when students learn, they are cognitively able to represent or transform their experiences. Furthermore Bandura developed a model of reciprocal determinism which consists of three main factors, namely, behavior, environment, and people or cognitive. Environmental factors may influence behavior; behavior affects the environment, people (cognitive) influence behavior, and so on. Cognitive factors included expectations, beliefs, attitudes, strategies, ideas, and intelligence.

Application of socio-cultural theory in education. Implementation of socio-cultural theory in education can occur in 3 types of education, namely: (1) informal education (family), (2) non-formal education, and (3) formal education. Socio-

cultural theory application in formal education can be seen from several aspects, as below :

### 2.5.1 Curriculum

Especially for Indonesian education, the curriculum enforcement under the regulation number 24 of 2006 concerning the implementation of the KTSP, Ministerial Decree No. 23 of 2006 concerning Competency Standards, and regulation number 22 of 2006 concerning standards of competence and basic competences, it is clear that education in Indonesia has provided the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to children to study both socio-cultural society of Indonesia and international through subjects that have been established, including: civic education, social science, local content, art, and sport.

### 2.5.2 Students

In KTSP learning, the children experience learning directly or through recordings. Therefore, the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes is not something that is verbal, but the child has the learning directly. In addition, the learning gives children the freedom to develop according to their talents, interests, and environmental achievements competency standards that have been set.

### 2.5.3 Teacher

Teacher is not everything Resource, but in learning he has a role of facilitator, mediator, motivator, evaluator, instructional designers and tutors. There are many other roles, therefore in the learning, the students active role is expected, while the teacher helps the student's behavior which has not appeared in the form of self-enrichment and remedial learning.

Based on the theories of Piaget, Vygotsky, and Bandura will obtain some advantage from sociocultural theory, among others: (a) children should have ample opportunity to develop the proximal development zones or potential through learning and development, (b) learning needs to be linked to the level of potential development than the actual level of development, (c) learning is more focused on the use of strategies to develop skills rather than intramental ability, (d) the child is given ample opportunity to integrate declarative knowledge with procedural knowledge for tasks or problems solving, (e) the learning process is not transferal but constructing, that is the process of constructing new knowledge or meaning jointly between all parties involved in it.

### 3. Conclusion

The design of *sociocultural based thematic-integrative teaching and learning model* is appropriate course design to fulfill the teaching and learning needs and to overcome the sociocultural values problem of the students in the early ages

such as character and moral decrease and sociocultural awareness problem of the students. So, it will promote the teacher and the students to be more creative, innovative, and productive. So that, the students can be succeed in solving their problems and challenges in the future. It needs creativity of teachers to make joyful and meaningful learning for the students. The model will provide the students with several competencies which will promote their skill and knowledge of social reconstruction. It means that the model will promote the students to be able to solve and overcome their social problems in their socio and cultural environment during their life.

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