The Implication of Students' Misperceptions of Philosophy for the Educational Philosophy Curriculum Development

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Keywords: Implication, Students' Misconception of Philosophy, Curriculum Development.

Abstract: Using a descriptive method, this research was aimed to describe: 1) students' misperceptions about philosophy that became an inhibiting factor for them to study the philosophy of education and 2) the implication of students' misperceptions about philosophy for the development of educational philosophy curriculum. The research subjects were students enrolled in the Primary School Teacher Education Program (PGSD) of Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UPI). The data were collected through questionnaires and interviews. The data analysis was carried out through: data reduction, data classification, data interpretation, implication analysis, and conclusion drawing. The result showed that there were misperceptions of PGSD students about philosophy. In their perceptions, philosophy was deemed as: 1) not applicable to the everyday life practice, as irrelevant knowledge, and too mysterious or mystical, 2) difficult to learn, 3) a dangerous knowledge that could lead to apostasy, 4) unnecessary and not having any actual benefits for everyday life, 5) useless because it did not provide technical problem-solving guide. The implication for the educational philosophy curriculum development is that the lecturer should first introduce the nature of philosophy to the students before teaching them various schools of educational philosophy. This included teaching them the definition of philosophy, the characteristics of philosophy, the difference between philosophy and science, religion, and arts, and the benefits of philosophy for everyday life. This way, their misperceptions about philosophy could be eliminated, and so were the inhibitors in learning philosophy.

1 INTRODUCTION

Prospective educators need to study the philosophy of education because it is the basis of educational practice. The objective of this course is to enable students to understand various educational philosophy schools, criticize them, and understand the assumptions of Pancasila-based national educational philosophy. The last one is crucial because the basis of national education is Pancasila (Article 2 of Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 20/2003 on National Education System).

The philosophy of education is a compulsory subject for PGSD students. Ideally, every student could meet the course objective in accordance with the quality standards set out in the PGSD curriculum. However, PGSD students' achievement in this course indicated that their absorption rate had yet to be improved. Last year, it was around 68%. Based on the reflection about the results of teaching process and students' achievement, there are two things that are recommended for improvement. First,

it is necessary to select and apply a more effective teaching model than the usual discussion method. Second, efforts should be made to overcome the learning barriers experienced by students that stem from their misperceptions of philosophy.

The second recommendation is the focal point of this research, and hence the research problem is formulated as follows: What is the implication of students' misperceptions about philosophy for the curriculum development of the philosophy of education? This problem is then elaborated in the following research questions:

1) What kind of misperception becomes an inhibiting factor for the students to study the philosophy of education?

2) What is the implication of students' misperceptions about philosophy for the curriculum development of the philosophy of education?

Generally, this research is aimed at getting feedbacks in the curriculum development of the philosophy of education course as an effort to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of PGSD

students' learning process. Specifically, this research is aimed at:

1) Identifying PGSD students' misperceptions about philosophy that become inhibiting factors in learning the philosophy of education.

2) Describing the implication of PGSD students' misperceptions of philosophy for the educational philosophy curriculum development.

The result of the research is particularly useful to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the teaching and learning process of the philosophy of education. In addition, lecturers also may get feedbacks in the curriculum development of the philosophy of education course. The result of this research also may facilitate students in achieving the course objectives of the philosophy of education.

2 MANUSCRIPT PREPARATION

In philosophical systematics, the philosophy of education belongs to special philosophy or applied philosophy. It is special because it has a special object, namely education. At the same time, the philosophy of education categorized as an applied philosophy because it is the application of general philosophy in order to solve various problems associated with education. The philosophy of education applies two things of general philosophy: 1) general philosophical thinking method and 2) general philosophical thinking outcome.

Since the philosophy of education is an application of general philosophical method and general philosophical thinking outcome, we will figure out that there is a logical consistency or logical coherence between theories or thoughts of general philosophy with theories or thoughts about education when we learn the philosophy of education. Thus, logically there will be a consistency or coherence between the thoughts or theories in the field of metaphysics, epistemology, and axiology with thoughts or theories in the field of education, such as those associated with the educational purposes, curriculum, educational methods, roles of educators, etc. (Kneller, 1971; Power, 1982; Callahan and Clark, 1983). In this respect, the mindset of the philosophy of education presentation put forward by the philosophers can be visualized in the following figure:
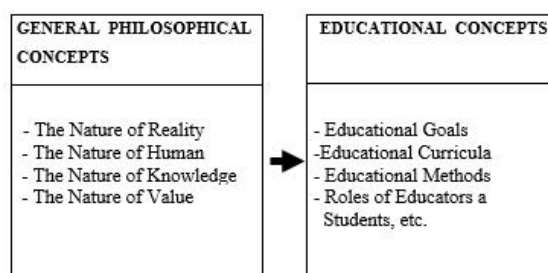

Figure 1: The Mindset of the Philosophy of Education Presentation.

The philosophy of education can be thought of as both a thinking process and outcome (Mudyahardjo, 1995). As a thinking process, it can be defined as a process of reflective, systematic, and contemplative critical thinking to produce a system of thought or system of theory about the nature of education comprehensively. As a thinking outcome, the philosophy of education is a group of theories or system of thoughts about the nature of education as it already exists and is embedded in the culture of mankind. The system of thoughts or system of theories about the nature of education previously mentioned can be read in many books such as Plato's Republic, Stella Van Petten Henderson's Introduction to Philosophy of Education, and John Dewey's Democracy and Education.

Like general philosophy, philosophy of education also consists of various schools such as idealism, realism, pragmatism, scholasticism, existentialism, constructivism, progressivism, essentialism, perennialism, and reconstructionism (Butler, 1957; Frost Jr., 1957; Kneller, 1971; Power, 1982; Callahan and Clark, 1983; Ozmon and Craver, 1981; Ornstein and Levine, 1985; Amien, 2005).

Syaripudin and Kurniasih (2008) put forward the functions of educational philosophy for the prospective educators and/or for educators as follows:

1) Providing comprehensive concept about the nature of education.
2) Providing assumptions for educational practice
3) Providing guidance to where education should be directed, formulated in educational objectives.
4) Building a critical attitude and intellectual independence amidst the various educational schools and practices.

Perception can be defined in many ways, some of which are suggested by Page et al (1978:25) and Chaplin (1972:51). From various existing definitions, it can be concluded that perception is an awareness, response, impression, and meaning that someone gives to an object as a result of the process of observation of the object in question. Thus, one's

observation of philosophy will produce a perception about it.

One's perception is influenced by variables. According to Krech et al (1962), there are two variables that influence perceptions

1) Structural variables, which refer to factors present in physical stimuli and neurophysiological processes;
2) Functional variables, which refer to factors attributive to the observer such as needs, mood, prior experience, and other personal attributes (Sarwono, 1983:94).

One's perception about particular object is subjective. Krech et al (1962: 51-60) suggest that there are five factors that may cause the first misimpression (perception):

1) Insufficient information.
2) Wrong instruction.
3) Stereotyping.
4) Logical fallacy.
5) Halo effect and devil effect.

Misperceptions about philosophy may also happen because of one of these factors.

This research used a descriptive survey method. The subjects were 94 PGSD students attending the philosophy of education class. The data were collected through questionnaires and interviews. The data analysis was carried out through:

1) Data reduction.
2) Data classification.
3) Data display.
4) Data interpretation.
5) Conclusion drawing.

In addition, an implication analysis was also carried out to figure out the implication of students' misperceptions about philosophy for the curriculum development of the philosophy of education. The implication is denoted by the symbol: p q (if p then q). The truth criteria are as described in the diagram below.

Table 1: The Truth Criteria of the Implication.

p q	Then	p $\longrightarrow$ q
i i		i
i o		o

Note: i = true statement.

o = false statement.

Students' Misperceptions about Philosophy that Become Inhibiting Factors in Learning the Philosophy of Education. There were five misperceptions about philosophy that become inhibiting factors in learning the philosophy of education as follows:

1) Some students deemed as not applicable to the everyday life practice, as irrelevant knowledge, and even too mysterious or mystical.
2) Generally, they viewed philosophy as difficult to learn. This misperception happened because the concept of philosophy of education were frequently delivered using big words and not simplified.
3) Some students reckoned that philosophy was unnecessary and even dangerous. This was due to the idle gossip that some people became mentally ill and even became infidels after learning philosophy.
4) Some thought philosophy was unnecessary and not having any actual benefits for everyday life.
5) Some other stated that philosophy was useless in problem solving. Unlike science and technology in a sense that they could provide practical and technical benefits, it did not provide any technical problem-solving guide.

The Implication of Students' Misperceptions of Philosophy for the Educational Philosophy Curriculum Development. The causes of the aforementioned misperceptions could be identified as follows: First, students did not really know what philosophy was. The still mixed up philosophy with other types of knowledge, even with mystical things. Second, they were not aware that all people–including they themselves–actually had a philosophy of life. Third, they were misinformed that philosophy was dangerous and useless. Fourth, they could not tell the characteristics of philosophy from those of religion, science, and arts.

Their misperceptions about philosophy made it difficult for them to learn the philosophy of education. There are things to be made to cope with these misperceptions. One of them is that students should be introduced to the nature of philosophy that includes:

1) The definition of philosophy (Page et al, 1978).
2) The characteristics of philosophy (Mudyahardjo, 1995; Rapar, 1996).
3) The difference between philosophy and other types of knowledge (Henderson, 1959; Mudyahardjo, 1995).
4) The role and benefits of philosophy for everyday life.

Facilitating this understanding is deemed to be able to eliminate students' misperceptions about philosophy. The implication is that all barriers in learning the philosophy of education can be dealt with.

There are various barriers to learning facing students in the framework of learning philosophy of education. Barriers to learning are among others due to misunderstanding of students about philosophy

and its sources. In connection with this matter, in the framework of lectures of educational philosophy, at the beginning of the course it is recommended that the lecturers facilitate the students to obtain clarity about the nature of philosophy. Understanding the nature of philosophy includes at least four things, namely: the definition of philosophy, the characteristics of philosophy, the comparison of philosophy with other knowledge systems, as well as the role and benefits of philosophy in life.

The definition of philosophy includes: 1) the definition of philosophy etymologically and its illustrations, 2) lexical or dictionary definitions and their illustrations, and 3) operational definition. The definition of philosophy operably includes the definition of philosophy as a process of thinking and as a result of thinking with clear examples. Understanding the definition of philosophy will clarify the nature of philosophy as a system of knowledge and as a worldview. With this, students will be able to realize that philosophy is real in everyday life.

Understanding the characteristics of philosophy will be able to reduce students' misconceptions about philosophy. Therefore, students need to understand the characteristics of the object of philosophical study, the study process or philosophical way of thinking, the characteristics of philosophical outcomes, the characteristics of philosophical truth, and the characteristics of the presentation of the system of philosophical knowledge. To complete an understanding of the nature of philosophy, the lecturers are then recommended to educate students so that they understand the comparison between philosophy and religion, the comparison of philosophy with science, and the comparison of philosophy with art. Furthermore, students need to be facilitated to understand and believe in the role and benefits of philosophy in life. For that we need to present the data or historical examples of the role and benefits of philosophy in the development of human life or civilization.

The perception that philosophy is a secret, mystical, and strange thing is wrong. Quite the contrary, philosophy reveals the truth about what lies behind that secret, vague, mystical and strange thing. Example: in ancient times people lived confined in a tradition filled with myths, myths, and superstitions that are completely vague, secretive, and strange. To uncover what is really from what is behind it all, philosophers think radically and freed man from the confusion of mystical and secret things. Finally, humans look at nature rationally and think rationally. The false notion of philosophy as revealed earlier, probably caused by ignorance of the people about philosophy. They cannot distinguish between philosophy and the mystique or astrology,

etc. Therefore, the non-philosophical (mysterious, mystical, and strange) knowledge is perceived as philosophy. To overcome such misconceptions, students need to be facilitated to understand the characteristics of the object of philosophical study, the study process or philosophical way of thinking, the characteristics of philosophical outcomes, the characteristics of philosophical truth, and the characteristics of the presentation of the philosophical knowledge system. To complete an understanding of the nature of philosophy, the lecturers are then recommended to educate students so that they understand the comparison between philosophy and religion, the comparison of philosophy with science, and the comparison of philosophy with art.

The perception that philosophy is difficult to learn needs to be criticized, even if it is true that philosophy needs to be learned through "serious" thinking. As a system of thought or theory, philosophy is the result of rational, coherent, consistent, radical, and so on. Therefore, as long as the person who studies philosophy is doing it seriously, philosophy will not be difficult to learn. Philosophy is the result of thinking of philosophers, the philosophers are human, and because we are also human beings we will certainly be able to understand the mind system of the philosophers. The difficulty in studying philosophical books or listening to descriptions of philosophy may be due to the presentation of philosophy in the book or in a less systematic way, the language is incompatible with the level of ability of the reader or the person who listens, and the illustrations or examples are incompatible with the context (condition) of the reader or listener. To overcome this problem, lecturers are encouraged to systematically study the students' philosophy, using language that students can understand, and using contextual examples.

"Because learning philosophy of people's minds becomes strange, and some even become kafirs. Therefore, philosophy does not need to be studied ". So dangerous is philosophy? We need to question it: why did it happen and what really happened? In relation to the above problem, the lecturer needs to explain that anyone who will study their philosophy should pay attention to the following:

1) Recognizing the existence of various schools of philosophy, as for the content of the teachings of the flow of philosophy that one with the content of the teachings of other philosophical schools are different.

2) Recognizing that the content of the teachings of every philosophical school is logically consistent or coherent. But if we use other criteria to judge, we will be able to assess whether or not the content of the teaching is

correct. The teaching of a philosophical school that is coherent and plausible may be true may also be wrong, may or may not be acceptable or acceptable.

3) People who study philosophy need to be critical, do not just take the content of the teachings of the philosophers. Ask again whether the content of the teachings of philosophy he studied is true or not? Which part of the whole teaching of philosophy he studied is acceptable and which part must be rejected or possessed merely as knowledge alone?

The benefits of philosophy in life are unclear. Philosophy is useless to solve problems, because philosophy does not provide technical guidance as to science and technology. This is another example of a student's misunderstanding of philosophy. To overcome these problems in the development of educational philosophy curriculum, lecturers are recommended to teach students about the role and benefits of philosophy in life. Need to present data or historical examples of the role and benefits of philosophy in the development of life or human civilization. About the role of philosophy in the history of human thought, among others, can refer to the work Rapar (1996), namely: as a breaker of tradition and customs, liberators from ignorance, and mentors to think rationally. The usefulness and usefulness of philosophy in the development of science and technology can refer to the work of Rapar (1996). Rapar concludes that: "The infinity of philosophy .... is very useful for science. That's because the infinity of philosophy is not only useful as a liaison between disciplines of science. However, with its infinity, the sangugup philosophy examines, evaluates, corrects, and further refines the principles and principles underlying science ".

Philosophy does not provide technical guidance as science does, but philosophy guides us to practical understanding and action, shows the basis and purpose, develops critical attitudes and intellectual independence, and tolerance. It is recommended to be developed in the educational philosophy curriculum.

3 CONCLUSIONS

There were five PGSD students' misperceptions about philosophy that become inhibiting factors in learning the philosophy of education. These misperceptions included viewing philosophy as:

1) Not applicable to the everyday life practice, as irrelevant knowledge, and too mysterious or mystical,

2) Difficult to learn,
3) A dangerous knowledge that could lead to apostasy,
4) unnecessary and not having any actual benefits for everyday life,
5) Useless because it did not provide technical problem-solving guide.

The implication for the educational philosophy curriculum development is that the lecturer should first introduce the nature of philosophy to PGSD students before teaching them various schools of educational philosophy. This included: the definition of philosophy (etymological, lexical, and operational), the characteristics of philosophy (object, process, result, and nature of truth), the difference between philosophy and other systems of knowledge (science, art, and religion), and the role and benefits of philosophy in life. This way, their misperceptions about philosophy could be eliminated, and so are the inhibitors in learning philosophy.

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