Teaching for Civic Awareness in Defense Politics Classroom: Achieving the Intended Learning Curriculum Outcomes

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Abstract: To overcome the weaknesses of traditional defense, politics, learning at university, we developed and researched semester learning plan (RPS) in the classroom. In this study, I examine the impact of an RPS designed with the classroom. The objective of the research was to improve civic awareness of national and defense security. The study was conducted using a case study design. Data was collected through interviews, classroom observations and documents. Our findings showed that RPS of defense, politics had efficacy in achieving the intended learning curriculum outcomes.

1 INTRODUCTION

Educating college students to have an effective politic consciousness becomes an elusive objective to universities. Universities very frequently educate students about political knowledge only. These outputs are not translated into disposition and capacity for civic engagement very necessary in post-college years. As a discipline, defense, politics plays an important part in preparing students for civic engagement, because of its subject matter about national security today. Meanwhile, there is a tendency to view national security issues of sovereignty and patriotism aspects, so that we argue that there are more dimensions of civic engagement in which universities or colleges should prepare their students. Students learn not only about content related to security, defense policy, but also about national security issues. An individual is considered as having civic awareness, among others, when he/she can identify national security issues and map factual and potential threats against national security.

Nevertheless, identifying the definition of civic awareness is conceptually not easy. Most political scientists consider civic awareness as an abstract concept. However, it does not reduce the consensus among scientists that civic awareness is urgent in building better life. We argue that there are two conditions in which community has civic awareness level. Firstly, through the limited civic awareness level, there is a risk for the citizen to be affected by political propaganda thereby supporting non-democratic power. Secondly, without high civic awareness level, civic engagement is worried to be lower in post-college years.

Considering an observation on the learning outcome of students in Defense Politics class in previous years, it can be found that civic awareness level of students is low. In the attempt of improving civic awareness level, we always try new learning strategies in the class. Recalling the characteristics of defense, political discipline, our learning materials always change and so do our teaching methods. Civic awareness will never be achieved through unplanned political learning. There are at least two basic challenges in the attempt of building civic awareness. Firstly, the challenge relates to learning strategy. Strategy, according to Kem (1995) is a learning activity the teachers and the students should conduct in order to achieve the learning objective effectively and efficiently. In line with Kemp's opinion, Dick and Carey (1985) mention that learning strategy is a set of learning materials and procedures used concomitantly to result in learning outcome among pupils or students. The attempt of implementing syllabus or learning plan that has been arranged in real activity in order to achieve the specified objective optimally needs a method used to realize the specified strategy. A learning strategy can use several methods, depending on the learning objective. So, strategy is a plan of operation achieving something, while

method is a way in achieving something. To achieve the specified learning objective, teachers can choose an appropriate and efficient learning model to achieve their educational objective. Teachers should take into account some points in choosing the learning model: objective to be achieved (skill competency, and its complexity), learning material (whether it is a fact, concept, law or certain theory), and pupils or students (their maturity level and learning style). Secondly, it relates to program/activity designing aspect. As a long-term project, the attempt of building civic awareness requires policy, program/activity, and clear road map. The prominent drawback existing so far is the absence of clear defense, politics, learning design, becoming the framework of political education in particular. In connection with this, this article describes the repeated design and development of Problem Based Learning that focuses on national security issues. We discuss our process and place them in the broader framework of educational design research and aim to implement defense, politics learning for building civic awareness among students.

2 METHOD

This research is step 6 of a method proposed by Borg & Gall (2003), consisting of: (1) identifying potency and problems; (2) gathering information; (3) model development; (4) model validation; (5) model revision; (6) model trying out; (7) model revision; (8) large-scale try out; (9) model revision (Borg, M. D, and Gall, J. P., 2003). Defense politics, learning specifically focuses on the national security subject matter. The first step is the orientation of students on the problem. In this step, we explain the purpose of starting with the student orientation on the problem, organize students to study, guide individual or group investigations, develop and present the work and analyze and evaluate the process of solving problems. This study was an action research. Defense politics, learning employed student centered approach generating inquiry, discovery, and inductive learning strategies. The learning methods employed were lecturing and debriefing methods, assignment methods such as literature review, interview and field observation methods, class seminar, and small group discussion methods. The implementation of problem-based learning model was conducted in two hours a week for 16 weeks. Data collection method or information collection was a mixture of focus group, observation and

interview. This research studied the effect of problem based learning model on civic awareness. Civic awareness was measured based on the abilities of mapping national security issues, of identifying trend national security issues, of analyzing potential/factual threats against national security, and of giving solution to the problem. Participants consisted of 70 Universitas Sebelas Maret (UNS) students who study Defense Politics.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Having conducted learning using lecturing and debriefing methods, the students were given many assignments. The students were previously directed to be able to classify issues in order to understand them more in-depth corresponding to the study of issues developing within community. The data obtained from literature review assignment, it can be found that the students could map national security issues and group them into five issues: national security issues based on ideology, politics, economics, social-cultural, and security defense. Furthermore, from the result of observation on class and small-group discussion assignments, it can be found that students could identify the importance national of defense issues in community life

From the data collected through interviewing several students as the representatives of groups A and B, it can be found that majority students argued that national security issues are very important, recalling that recently there are so many political issues related to security and defense.

Then, the learning outcome obtained from the result of cognitive evaluation, including mid semester exam and final exams, showed that students could answer the questions and the problems related to the data about recent issues indicating the development of their thinking, reasoning and criticizing abilities in processing an issue, and then could analyze the circulating issues more in-depth and thoroughly. Students elaborated their analysis of potential and factual threats in living within society, nation, and state in this era. The majority students saw that the factual threat in the field of ideology was radicalism and the terrorism movement, and the current factual threat was more directed at the economic sector where foreign domination over the factors of production that were important and affected the livelihood of the people. In addition, Indonesia's economic politics currently lead to capitalism and liberalism and makes use of non-renewable natural resources,

which leads to more destruction of nature. They also saw that the factual threat today is social-cultural issue can result in national integration and disintegration, and that current potential threats were related to current war trends (hybrid, proxy war and asymmetric). It was indicated with the students' response by means of giving some solutions to the problems encountered by Indonesians. Considering the finding above, it could be seen that learning strategy instruction changed the students' belief in defense politics learning. Thus, through applying PBL, Defense politics could improve civic awareness. Problem-based learning (PBL) is an innovation in learning because in PBL the students' thinking ability is actually optimized through a systematic group or team work process, so that the students can empower, sharpen, test, and develop their thinking ability sustainable (Tan, 2008). Margetson (1994) suggests that PBL helps improve the lifetime learning skill in opened, reflective, critical mindset, and active learning. PBL facilitates the successful problem solving, communication, group work, and interpersonal skill better than other models do. PBL innovation combines the use of e-learning access, creative interdisciplinary, assignment, and individual skill development. Knowledge acquired through a collaborative process of social negotiation and evaluation on the existence of point of view.

Literature showed that student centered learning can improve learning outcome. It is clearly in line with the approach applied in defense politics learning. Many of our students understood the concept of politic of defence after we had given lecturing and debriefing about the topics in the class. In line with us, Mckenzie (2015) found that political learning in class can improve political literacy. However, in the presence of the new syllabus and learning strategy, students became very interested in the subject. When the students were engaged with one of discussion activities in the class at that semester, the classroom had dynamic circumstance, much better than the standard lecturing room discussed in the introduction section. Students were moving, posing questions, talking to each other, listening to other students with dissenting opinion, solving problems, and sharing political science. Eventually, they understood the concept of national security, could map and identify the type of potential and factual threats against national security, and could apply this mapping and identifying to the real world case. This finding was in line with Biggs (2003), Hong & Lawrence (2011) who applied an action research as a systematic effort to improve teaching method and to ensure that everything ran properly, so that students had a better learning experience than what they usually had (Bigss, 2003; Hong, C.E & Lawrence, S.A, 2011).

The result of research has certain implications for stakeholders of political education. Lecturers are recommended to equip the students with better learning strategy along with the content of lecturing. It will be useful to the students not only to be "a good politic learner" but also to improve their autonomy and self-efficacy. The message delivered to the lecturers is that civic awareness can be created or recreated when there are meditation instruments such as politic learning strategy. Syllabus designing is also recommended to include learning strategy into the syllabus. If this strategy is reinforced with learning module in all syllabuses, civic awareness will be created and reformed more systematically. It is only this that can revive the expectation that the education system is stepping toward its main objective, to educate the students for the future.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The finding of research shows that the selection of appropriate learning approach, strategy, method, and model can improve learning outcome. Defense politics applying inquiry, discovery, and inductive learning strategies and using such learning methods like lecturing and debriefing methods all at once, assignment methods such as literature review, interview and field observation methods, class seminar method, and small-group discussion method can evidently improve civic awareness. This research was conducted on the students in the same department, so that they have a homogeneous understanding of national security. It means that this research can be a pilot project, because as aforementioned there has been no such study in literature according to the authors' accessibility. In the future, other researchers can be conducted among the students with relatively heterogeneous understanding level in different departments or university.

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