

Improving Students' Learning Outcome on History Instruction Through Group Investigation Learning Models

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Abstract: Poor learning outcomes are often occurred on history instructions at school, including in MAN Kota Batu. Among others, students of X-IPS-1 have the lowest learning outcomes. Their final examination grades on history subject were the lowest among other class. To improve this situation, a Group Investigation learning model was implemented in frame of Classroom Action Research (CAR). In this study, researchers collaborated with history teacher of X-IPS-1 MAN Kota Batu in conducting two cycles of CAR including (1) planning, (2) implementation, (3) observation, and (4) reflection. Upon completion of the first cycle, students' learning outcomes were good with the average grade of 79.31. Further improvement were shown on the following cycle with the average grade of 83.33. The result of this study indicates that Group Investigation model on history instruction could help students on improving their learning outcomes.

Keywords: History Learning; Group Investigation; learning outcomes.



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1 INTRODUCTION

Historical learning aims to enhance historical insights by means of systematic and chronological thinking, particularly by studying the events in the past and employing the concept of causality concept to find and to discuss the relationship between the historical accounts and facts (Coffin, 2006; Schaff, 1976; Wineburg, 2010). Philosophically, studying history is similar to studying the communication relationship between the past and the continuous future (Carr, 2018). In term of socio-cultural function, history lessons raises historical awareness which allows us to think and rethink that everything exist today is a product of human activities in the past, both

ideas and psychal activities (Susanto, 2014). The purpose of studying history to give historical awareness, because history instructions discuss the humanity in all of its aspects to generate awareness of the nature development of human culture civilization (Sayono, 2013). In the national level, as suggested by some scholars, achieving the objectives of history learning is important to instill the values of national and identity awareness (Epstein, 2009; Garg, 2007). History contains moral values which are important to shape the knowledge and character of the nation's successors. According to Hasan (2012) history subjects are an important element in education because they are able to develop

students' potential to recognize the national values that continuously survive, change and belong to the nation today. Hence, history education is the most effective instruments to introduce students about his people in the past.

The approaches used in studying history at each level of education are different. In his seminal work, Kuntowijoyo (2005) suggested four historical learning approaches. First, in the primary school level, history should be taught by using an aesthetic approach. It means that history is given to instill values to love the motherland, and the nation by following the examples of the previous struggles of the national heroes. Second, in the junior secondary level, history should be studied by using an ethical approach, which means that students begin to instill an understanding of their position in a cultural community both in the past and present. Third, in the senior high school, history should be studied with a critical approach and begins to be introduced to a new way of thinking using 5W+1H concept. Finally, for university level, history provided with an academic approach. To sum up, in this level the students are expected to be able to employ the causality concept, so that they are able to understand and analyze a historical event starting from the background until the continuity and changes that occur form the historical events (Lévesque, 2008; Ludvigsson & Booth, 2015). Yet, as shown by Susanto (2014), in term of the content taught in schools, history subjects in Indonesia were tend to use the spiral approach. It means that students learns similar topics from primary school to university levels but in different depths. Therefore, it is very common that students need to learn the same historical events over and over again through different levels. Therefore, in an effort to improve the quality of historical learning teachers need to focus learning activities to learners so that they can reconstruct knowledge independently (Mahardika, 2021).

The afformetioned situation in history learning have resulted in the recurring of large ammounts of materials that students should study with a limited weekly time allocation in schools. To make it worse, Sayono (2013) has indicated that expistory model, which tend to be conventional, is a common practice in historical instructions at schools. Thus, it raises a common problem that is often encountered in history learning. Not suprising, in many cases students' learning outcomes are not optimal as

one of the impacts of the lack of learning innovation, particularly in term of learning models implemented (Crick, 2006; Husbands dkk., 2003; Ramsden, 1992). For further reviving an effective learning, it would be better to apply a learning model that could have a postive effect on student learning outcomes and create a more communicative atmosphere so that students could be more enthusiast in participacing in the learning activities (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Slavin et.al., 1985). Even so, there are still many schools that experience problems in learning history, for example MAN Kota Batu.

MAN Kota Batu is one of the favorite schools in Batu, East Java. Administratively, this school is accredited A. Researchers have an interest to solve one of the problems in history learning and deciding MAN Kota Batu for the research subject. After communicating with the curriculum vice principal and the subject teacher concerned, the researchers obtained permission to conduct research in X-IPS 1 because this class had quite severe learning problems compared to other classes. The teacher recommended the class based on the UAS (final exams) score. The student learning outcomes in this class were the lowest among the other classes in the same cohort (see table 1). Based on the teacher's information, the problems encountered when learning history were also experienced by teacher of other subjects (check out the following table).

Table 1.1 Final Exams Score of X-IPS on History Subject (1st semester of 2018/2019)

| o | Classes | Minimum Completeness Grade | Average |
|---|---------|----------------------------|---------|
| 1 | X-IPS 1 | 75 | 62,57 |
| 2 | X-IPS 2 | 75 | 73,12 |
| 3 | X-IPS 3 | 75 | 64,75 |
| 4 | X-IPS 4 | 75 | 66,25 |

Source: Teacher's Document, 2018.

The 1st semester final exams score result showed that the learning outcomes of students in class X-IPS 1 were the least optimal. Therefore, researchers see the urgency to take action in the form of implementing a learning model to improve student learning outcomes in that class. Result in table 1 was used as a baseline for student learning outcomes in this research. We decided not to administer *pre-test* that can be a burden to students.

This research aims to improve the learning outcomes in the history instruction based on the problems that found in X-IPS 1 MAN Kota Batu. The researchers along with the teacher on the respective class decided to apply the Group Investigation (GI) learning model to improve students' learning outcomes in that class. The decision was made not only based on the problems at school, but also guided by the results of previous research with similar problems. To mention some of them, Hartoto (2016) conducted research in class XII IPA SMA Negeri 1 Pugur in academic year 2015-2016. The implementation of the GI learning model was successful to improve students' learning outcomes. In the first cycle, the average of students' grade was 67.7. This result was improving to 73.1 on the second cycle. Finally, in the last cycle, the average grade was 78.15. On their research in SMAN Banyumas, Warkim, Wasino and Nunuk Suryani (2016) also found that GI could improve students' learning outcomes. The average of students' learning outcomes in the first cycle was 72.31, in the second cycle was 78.2, and in the third cycle was 82.68. Both studies indicate that the GI learning model is effective in improving students' learning outcomes.

The good results of previous research were possible due to the characteristics of GI as a learning model conducted in groups. Learning in group allows an exchange of opinions between group members. As explained by Slavin (2015), communication between classmates in small groups allows students to get the good results. The implementation of GI model requires collaboration with each member of the group. Any member in the group is obliged to complete their respective tasks in order to solve predetermined assignments according to topics. Problem topics are selected by the teacher then group members work on the topic. That means, after determining the topic, a discussion will be carried out on the topic. The steps for applying the GI learning model according to Slavin (2015: 218) include: (a) identifying topics and organizing students into groups; (b) planning the material to be studied; (c) doing the investigations; (d) prepare a final report; (e) present the final report.

The GI learning model emphasizes group discussion and the investigative process. Both of

them will encourage students to try express their opinions and be able to learn independently. In addition, this model is able to train the students to be responsible for the tasks that have been determined in the group. GI type cooperative learning technique will be able to help achieve learning goals, especially will be able to maximize the student's potential and then they can collaborate with their teammates (Slavin, 2015).

If a group member wants to achieve her goal, it can be done together with other group members. In cooperative learning, students who have higher learning achievement will have the opportunity to provide assistance the other students who have lower achievement. Likewise, GI could enhance students' motivation to complete fairly in group activities. That means the students will be motivated to participate actively in learning, so the implementation of GI can also increase student participation. On the other hand, the implementation of the GI also has limitations. Learning with this model is only suitable to be applied in higher classes, because GI requires a higher cognitive level. The contribution of low-achieving students becomes less and students who have high achievement will lead to disappointment, this is because the role of clever group members tend to be more dominant. There could be a conflict between groups that have higher scores and group that have lower scores. To complete the subject matter with cooperative learning will take longer than conventional learning, even the material to not be adapted in the existing curriculum if the teacher is unexperienced. Teacher need careful preparation to be able applying the GI type cooperative learning well (Sharan & Sharan, 1992).

There are several components to implementation of GI learning model. The first component is investigation. Basically, investigation refers to the organizations and procedures to direct the implementation of classroom learning as a form of the investigation process. This activity begins with the identification of teacher's and students' instructional orientations towards the learning process. The orientation of all the components of this class then gives the possibility that the other three components of the group investigation method will successfully. The next component is interaction, which allows

students to make personal and collective identification as a dimension of learning communication among other group members. Good communication between group members will stimulate individual efforts to find the meaning behind information they get, so this is the third component, which is related to interpretation. The final component is intrinsic motivation, which refers to the nature of student's emotional involvement in the topics they are studying in order to build their own knowledge. The goal is to stimulate student's interest in finding information as a reference to understanding the topic.

Each of the learning model has advantages and disadvantages in its implementation. Each model must face the able problems to maximize the advantages of each model (Schiering dkk., 2011). The GI model basically intensifies students to find problems and try to solve them. Maximizing the application of GI model must be accompanied by efforts to minimize the gaps. The efforts to maximize strengths and minimize deficiencies can also be done to be able to process the class well. In addition, the role of the teacher in managing the classroom also very important. Based on this, it can be concluded that the implementation of GI learning model has advantages and disadvantages so that the way teachers manage the class must pay attention to these two things in order to maximize the advantages of this model.

2 METHOD

This research employed CAR (Classroom Action Research) method conducted in class X-IPS 1 MAN Kota Batu. CAR is an examination of learning activities in the form of an action, which is deliberately raised and occurred in a class (Arikunto et.al., 2014). This research activity is carried out as a reflective research on classroom condition in learning activities. Problems that seen in learning activities are point in this research, so that researchers can find solutions to problems found in order to develop the quality of learning.

The research process was carried out systematically. Naturally, there are two cycles in this research to measure the predetermined variables. However, if one cycle the desired variable has been achieved, the CAR is considered successful. There are four stages in the

implementation of the CAR include: (a) planning; (b) implementation; (3) observation; (4) reflection (Arikunto dkk., 2014).

The first step in this research, researchers and the teacher determine the steps that would be carried out to solve the problems that occur in X-IPS 1. Plans that have been prepared by researchers and teacher were implemented in classroom. The actions was taken by applying the GI model to improve students' learning outcomes. Observation process was carried out by using research instruments to record teacher's and students' activities in the implementation of the GI learning model. The last activity was reflection that was carried out by researchers and teacher to review various phenomena that occur during the implementation of the learning model. The results of the reflection were used as a reference for implementing actions in the next cycle.

Some of the instruments used in this research included: (a) field notes; (b) the learning model implementation sheet; (c) multiple choice questions for the post test. The data required are qualitative data in the form of notes on student activities during the learning process by implementation the GI learning model, as well as quantitative data in the form of the results test which be used as a reference to measure the level of learning success. All research instruments were prepared by teacher and researchers, so that then the data obtained could be objective.

3 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Researcher have conducted a CAR which consisted of two cycles. The research subjects were 35 students in the class of X-IPS 1 MAN Kota Batu. The problem in this class was that student learning outcomes were not optimal as reflected from the final examination scores for the 1st semester of 2018-2019 Academic Year. Prior to the action research, researchers conducted preliminary observations on January 12, 19, and 26, 2019. Preliminary observations were carried out to determine the condition of the class in the form of student activities during the learning activities. During observation, researchers used field notes to record phenomena that occur during learning activities, and distribute learning response questionnaires to find out students' testimonials on learning conditions. In addition, researchers also conducted interviews with teachers and

some students to get further information regarding existing learning conditions.

Based on the results of the questionnaire that had been filled in by the students, the researchers concluded that students wanted more innovative learning activities using certain learning models. In line with this, the problem related to the lack of optimal student learning outcomes can be assumed due to student saturation in learning activities that are too monotonous. This is a classic problem that is often encountered in history learning as mentioned by Sayono (2013). Thus, the researchers offered an alternative solution to overcome this problem by applying the GI learning model to the Indonesian History instruction with the aim of improving student learning outcomes. The decision was made collaboratively by subject teacher and the researchers.

After all the plans were prepared by the researchers and teacher, then the actions were carried out by applying the steps of the GI learning model during the learning activities. In implementing the action, the researchers acts as observers to record everything that occurred during the learning activities, and to observe the activities of teacher and students during the application of the learning model. This research consisted of two cycles to ensure that this learning model is suitable for use in history learning.

In the implementation of the first cycle, the composition of the students was incomplete because there were 13 students who were unable to participate in instructional activities for certain reasons. Even so, the learning process went quite well. The teacher provided instructions properly when applying this learning model. Students also follow a series of learning in accordance with the steps of the GI. However, in the reflection activity the teacher gave some notes to the researchers for input on the action plan in the next cycle. The teacher said that the time allocation needed to implement this learning model must be longer, if the time allocation used remains the same in the first cycle, the learning activities would not be optimal. As occurred in the first cycle, the limited time allocation made students rushed in doing the assigned tasks, so that it has an impact on post test scores that were not too optimal. So in the second cycle, we planned 3x45 minutes of learning activities.

The second cycle was carried out to ensure that the GI learning model is suitable for use in history instruction, especially the Indonesian History subject. Based on the plan prepared by the researchers and the teacher, activities in the second cycle were carried out with a longer time extension than the first cycle. At this session, the class composition was quite complete compared to the previous meeting, because there were only 2 students who could not participate in learning activities. Technically, the steps in the GI learning model run well in this cycle, especially when the teacher provides clearer directions. Class conditions were quite conducive when the core activities took place, students seemed participative in discussion activities to presentation activities.

The learning outcomes of class X-IPS 1 students seemed to have increased, although in cycle I many students were unable to participate in learning. Learning outcomes in this case are patterns of actions, values, understandings, attitudes, appreciation and skills (Suprijono, 2015). Learning outcomes can be in the form of cognitive, affective and psychomotoric. In this study, the measured learning outcomes are mainly cognitive learning outcomes that are easier and faster to observe. The cognitive learning outcomes of the X-IPS 1 class students can be seen from the average value.

The class average score in the first cycle was 79.31 with the percentage of students who took the test as much as 62.85%. There was an increase in the second cycle with a student average score of 83.33 with the percentage of students who took the test as much as 91.42%. In the first cycle, not all of the students took the test, so that it affected the class average score. However, the second cycle showed that students who took the test actually got quite good scores.

The level of implementation of the GI learning model which is calculated based on the observation sheet of teacher's and students' activities showed an increasing level. The results of the observation of the first cycle, teacher's activities in implementing this learning model reached 89.47% and students' activities reached 91.66%. After reflection at the end of the first cycle and the revision of plan, there was an increase in the second cycle, namely teacher activities reached 93.42% and

increased student activities to 98.33%. This can be a valid benchmark for analyzing the improvement of student learning outcomes in the first and second cycles. This data shows that if the learning model is carried out in accordance with the syntax with adequate time allocation, it will have a significant influence on students.

Communication and cooperative interactions among classmates are best achieved in small groups, where exchanges between classmates and cooperative attitudes persist (Slavin, 2015). Increased learning outcomes can be achieved when the interactions that occur in the learning environment between teachers and students, as well as between students and other students, go well. The GI learning model has provided clear evidence that cooperative learning can have a positive impact on student learning outcomes. The obstacles that arise in the implementation of the first cycle of action in the form of a less conducive learning environment and a lack of allocation time for action can be evaluated carefully by the teacher. So then when teachers and researchers plan for the implementation of the second cycle, some of the notes that have been collected during the first cycle can be used as a reference for plan improvement.

The GI learning model in this research allows students to be more participatory in learning activities, because this learning model emphasizes the cooperative attitude of students during learning activities with the discussion method so that students have sufficient knowledge and are accompanied by good social skills. The successful implementation of the previous GI demands training in skills and social communication (Slavin, 2015).

There are several things that can be used as notes after this research was carried out are. *First*, the teacher can apply this learning model to the following materials because theoretically this learning model supports students to think systematically in line with historical thinking. *Second*, a long allocation of time is needed in the application of the GI learning model, although in this study the time allocation determined is only one meeting according to the teacher's teaching schedule. However, in the next topic which has a long enough time allocation, the application of this learning model can be broken down into several meetings, provided that each meeting still follows the steps of the learning appropriately

and gradually. The stage of this learning model that takes a long time is the investigative stage. In this stage the group carries out the plan that was formulated previously. Although students may indeed be given a deadline for processing, the exact number of sessions they will need to complete their investigation is not always certain (Sharan & Sharan, 1992). *Third*, the teacher's attention to students in core activities is needed because there is a weakness of this learning model called the "free rider" effect. The free rider effect occurs in cooperative learning, where a student works hard to complete group assignments while other students are engrossed in activities that are not assigned (Sumarmi, 2012: 131). This means that students have the opportunity to be lazy when discussion activities take place and tend to shift their responsibility to other group members. However, researchers did not find this when the implementation of the action for two cycles were carried out by the teacher. Students who take part in learning activities were quite active during the stages of the GI learning model, so that this has a real impact on their learning outcomes.

Based on the data afformetioned, the researchers would argue that the GI learning model can be used in historical instruction to improve students' learning outcomes. The steps in this learning model are not too difficult to do, so that the teacher can apply this model in the classroom according to the time allocation. This learning model can also support student learning activities (Slavin, 1991).

4 CONCLUSION

Innovative history learning will help achieve the goals of learning history itself. The learning outcomes obtained by students are one form of historical learning achievement, in accordance with applicable standards. The problems that arise in class X-IPS 1 MAN Batu were the examples of common problems that still often arise in learning history. These problems can then be overcome by applying the GI learning model to improve student learning outcomes. These achievements can get maximum results because teacher and researchers work together in planning everything related to learning needs.

In one way or another, a learning model will be used appropriately if the problems that arise in learning are adjusted to the conditions of the class concerned. However, a learning model cannot be applied effectively if it is not in accordance with the learning needs in a class. Therefore, observation is very important for teachers and researchers to observe the initial conditions of learning in a classroom as an effort to understand the problem and find the right solution. CAR is an alternative solution to be carried out as a medium for developing the quality of learning.

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