

# Culture-Sensitive Pedagogies for RSBI Schools in Indonesia: A Globalization Challenge

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## **ABSTRACT**

*Globalization of educational methods, standard, and curriculum has manifested through the enactment of UU Republik Indonesia No. 20 tahun 2003 on National Education System. The act obligates both centre and state government to create at least one unit of school with international standard or Rintisan Sekolah Berstandar Internasional (RSBI). The challenge for RSBI program is to provide high quality of educational program with international standard without sacrificing cultural tradition, religion, customs, and patriotism. Research and studies on pedagogies to empower local wisdom and patriotism in the globalization has been poorly investigated. Among the few, Elwyn Thomas (1997) has giving a glint of hope by proposing a culture-sensitive pedagogy to cope with globality, nationality, and local wisdom. Pedagogical models consist of four components: knowledge base; process of planning, managing, executing and evaluation; socio cultural context; and personalistic component. A culture-sensitive pedagogy consisted of four of the components in integrated structure. This paper draws on open ended interview method to understand whether there is a culture-sensitive pedagogy during the implement-tation of SBI program. Drawings on the work of Elwyn Thomas, this paper suggest that RSBI Schools in Indonesia is in the early process of recognizing a culture-sensitive pedagogy in educational process.*

**Key words:** culture-sensitive pedagogy, RSBI, globalization

International Relations (IR) Field accommodates various perspectives in studying about the identity of a nation, and how the entity interact with extra national identity. While conventional field has focused on structural-positivistic versus wisdom-historical approach, it however, evolves on new ground of ethical-critical and postpositivism understanding.

While conventional IR had focused on peace and war or the conduct of state diplomacy, recently experts in the study have been giving magnificent and more democratic elaboration works of academy, state, and society.

For example, IR in the early decodification only talked about state, conduct of state diplomacy to other state during World War II, on military colonization and decolonization. Now, the study has evolved on postcolonialism. The last is investigating on new model of power domination, or when it take it into more simple language, is new colonization.

Another example, is that nowadays IR experts work on constructivism to bring seemingly different pole of rationalism and critical theories into a solid understanding and explanation. From Internationalism, nowadays they talk about integration and disintegration within global reach in every aspects of lifes. Within the pole, it is quietly relevant for IR student also to discuss the connectivity between local, national, and international system of education.

Globalization of educational methods, standard, and curriculum, has manifested through the enactment of Act No 20 of 2003 on National Education System. Article 50 paragraph 3 of the act states that national and/or local government menyelenggarakan at least one education unit at all levels to be developed as international standard education unit. The act obligates both national and local government to create at least one unit of school with international standard or Rintisan Sekolah Berstandar Internasional (RSBI).

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In accordance to this act are Act No 17 of 2007 on 2005-2025 National Long Term Development Plan, Governmental Rules No 19 of 2005 on Educational National Standard, and Ministry of Education Rule No 78 of 2009. Article 61 paragraph (1) of the Governmental Rule No 19 of 2005 states that the national and local governments menyelenggarakan at least one school of the basic level and of the secondary level to be developed as International Standard School (Sekolah Bertaraf Internasional, or SBI).

### **Constructing Pedagogy via Conversation Analysis**

The most compact way to describe Constructivism on IR studies, is it approach the national identity formation, and the conduct of such identity toward other, whether ally, close friend, or enemy. In 2003 Ernst B. Haas proposed an approach of pragmatic constructivism. The philosophical basis lies on combination of materialism and idealism. This approach argues that institution is the main catalyst of change. Institution exercises role as an actor as well as area in promoting idea. For example epistemic community in 1972 was successful in shaping state policy to be more appropriate with ecological doctrine.

Constructivism finds its philosophical root in Hegelian theory which argues that the desire for recognition between individual leads to complex pattern of societal development. An example is the work of Alexander Wendt on his theory of recognition, that the states' struggle for recognition leads to the formation of an overarching collective identity encompassing the states in question that in turn causes the very states interest to integrate (Greenhill 2008).

Hadiwinata (2009) provides example for constructive project in making of common regional peace security within ASEAN. ASEAN is based on principles of national resilience, deliberation, and consensus, and non interference. But how ASEAN maintains these principles in avoiding military conflict despite many disputes and confrontations in the past?

The disputes mainly are resolved by prolonged negotiation and tacitly among the leaders. The leaders construct and ideal interdependence economy for the pacific resolution of every territorial dispute. For example, Riau, Singapore, Johor are integrated as a transnational area between Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia.

Henceforth, an educational system such in Indonesia is willing to sacrifice to meet the aim of recognisance from external users for the outcomes of the education. This paper draws on open ended interview method to understand what degree the new pedagogy applied within RSBI program which comply to the recognisance of others.

The challenge for RSBI program is to provide high quality of educational program with international standard without sacrificing cultural tradition, religion, customs, and patriotism. Research and studies on pedagogies to empower local wisdom and patriotism in the globalization have been poorly investigated. Among the few, Elwyn Thomas (1997) gives a glint of hope by proposing a culture-sensitive pedagogy to cope with globality, nationality, and local wisdom. Pedagogical models consist of four components: knowledge base; process of planning, managing, executing and evaluation; socio cultural context; and personalistic component. A culture-sensitive pedagogy consist of four of the components in integrated structure.

The strength of qualitative methods such as interview lies in its ability to directly examine what person in charge in the program really do rather than commenting. Qualitative interview best practiced when voices and experiences of the subject participant is widely misinterpreted. According to constructionism, interviewer and interviewee are actively engaged in constructing meaning. As constructivist method, the assumption on Conversation Analysis (CA) is based on the assumption that talk is action, action is structurally organized, talks creates and maintains intersubjective reality, and understanding is publicly displayed (Silverman 2006).

I present myself as a young scholar in International Relations. It is easier to interact with interviewee since I teach in Airlangga University, which is near and familiar to the interviewee. I actively listen during interview, makes nods, laughs, and smiles, and makes the process enjoyable. As interviewer I chose to be less active to give greater freedom for the interviewee. Interviewee

participant is head master or teacher in charge for initiating program in RSBI Senior High School in Surabaya.

The basic question during interview evolved on five topics: What is RSBI? How does it evolve? What is pedagogy? How is new pedagogy in RSBI? How does it evolve? Is it sensitive to local-national culture. How you measure it?

### **Integrative Pedagogy**

Eight public and three private senior high schools are programming the Initial International Standard School (Rintisan Sekolah Berstandar Internasional, RSBI) on the way to the international Standard School (Sekolah Berstandar Internasional (SBI) in Surabaya by the guidance from *Direktorat Pembinaan SMA Kementerian Pendidikan Nasional* (DPSMA). The eight public high schools are: SMAN 1 Surabaya, SMAN 2 Surabaya, SMAN 5 Surabaya, SMAN 13 Surabaya, SMAN 15 Surabaya, SMAN 19 Surabaya, SMAN 20 Surabaya, and SMAN 21 Surabaya. The three private schools are: SMA Khadijah, MA Muhammadiyah, and MA Al Hikmah.

RSBI program is still new in Surabaya. SMAN 2 Surabaya is in its third year, has started the program since 2009. SMAN 1 Surabaya, SMAN 19 Surabaya, SMAN 20 Surabaya, SMAN 21 Surabaya, and MA AL Hikmah have recently started since 2010, so they are still in their first year. While SMAN 5 Surabaya and SMAN 15 Surabaya, MA Khadijah and MA Muhammadiyah have been more mature than other, since they are in their fourth year.

To become SBI, RSBI shall take gradual process within five year program adjustment. DPSMA does monitoring and evaluating both public and private schools twice a year. DPSMA grants main financial need only for the public schools. While the private schools are supported by their own sponsorship.

To support the program, school are motivated to cooperate with International Schools nationally and internationally. In the second or third year, school are able to establish cooperation with foreign institution in form of standardization or certification such as Cambridge University, and also in the form of sister school.

When asked about what RSBI actually is, most participants describe that RSBI is different to what public believe. RSBI, program aiming to fulfill eight components standard, and giving appropriate interaction with stakeholders. DPSMA already has eight standards which are distinctive to other country, such as process and facility. Within the program, LCD and other facilities are provided. The teachers should hold master degree, and have English certificate. It would be already great, if just eight standard can be implemented equally throughout Indonesia.

There used to be another misintrepatation of RSBI, that RSBI is expensive and exclusive. Actually it is not. Because the tuititn fee from elementary level until senior high school level is free in Surabaya.

The ultimate goal for the program is to improve quality of service with international standard. So, it is not enough only with the eigh standard. Curriculum standard is taken from the developed country. From governance, also oriented toward achieving similar activity as in developed country. Adoption also include on how to acquire facilty with high technology. It only can be achived by colaboration with extra sources such as through sister school. Through the program, school are required to manage events in preparing learning outcome whom having competency with national and international standard.

RSBI Marginal utility is that teacher motivated to be independently adopting the new education methods and facility, not from the government. After learning foreign curriculum, then the school decide whether the very unit could adopt or not. From those investigation, teacher could be aware of the distinctive feature of national curriculum standard. Curriculum which Indonesia have and foreign does not have, could not be deleted. In here, the RSBI school could choose to add and forbidden to delete national curriculum. RSBI school is then formulating *Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan* (KTSP). School is allowed to add and henceforth adapt the methods or content into local condition. There always consciously and unconsciously awareness to adopt content which could be accepted with local or school condition. Through the programs, interviewee expect improvement in national school quality, so, student does not need to travel abroad only to continue their education.

When asked about pedagogy, subject participant generally said that there is not much different between RSBI and regular school. Pedagogy is generally understood as science on educating. Pedagogical methods and learning media, and also ways to manage students. Nowadays teachers, about 90 percent of children, teachers are only mentors. Teachers are not one of the sources.

Three distinctive features of pedagogy in RSBI are, students are highly motivated and taught, and trained to be experts in English. Second, students are having foreign or English textbooks and other forms of resources. The source can be printed from the internet. Third, in RSBI also contains material which is an international adoption. Cambridge curriculum, which is usually. Language of instruction is Indonesian and English. Especially for the Indonesian language, Civics, Religion associated with the nationalism that still use the Indonesian language. When the provision of content should be that the Indonesian language. To preface, is using English but then for content of Mathematics and Science, Bahasa Indonesia is being used in order to avoid misunderstandings.

Curriculum of RSBI school in Surabaya are mostly copied from Cambridge. Almost the bulk of RSBI, adopted curriculum. Though most of participants expected to have a Sister School abroad so they could see the learning process takes place there.

Two interviewees have managed study tours in certain schools in Singapore. They observed reading culture in Singapore and finally decided to adopt the culture in their schools at home. Each morning students are obligated to read. In the current holy month of Ramadhan for most Indonesians, students are obligated to read holy books according to their religion. For example, read Quran, Bible, every morning. The interviewee also found for several curricula and methods, Indonesia turned out better material than in Singapore. When their students are put into a foreign classroom in a school. RSBI students could actually follow, because all the lessons are the same together. If outside, the infrastructure is not playing. Infrastructure, there are three MIPA labs. It contained more depth.

Tests were also conducted with oversight from Cambridge University in the fields of language, Mathematics, and IT. The test conducted in East Java with main organizers in SMA 5 Surabaya and SMA Darul Ulum Jombang, which is the center, which has been entrusted to carry out tests or examinations are standardized by the Cambridge system. Cambridge makes the matter evaluation. While the Center: SMAN 5 Surabaya and SMA Darul Ulum Jombang act as organizers.

Interviewees generally hide or rather prefer to say that they do not feel on an arrogance of international into their domestic sphere. Since mapping of student competency is required, among other things, which targets to be achieved. This is a form of mapping as well. Not much different, the children would face the test of national examinations. Since the adoption of Cambridge. Cambridge certification exam is being taken as mapping process for student competency. Mostly believe, that as a nation, Indonesia can not stand alone. But it is also necessary assistance from other countries. Because now there is free trade. So the resources in particular need to be prepared for graduates RSBI could face the free market.

Other than above opinion, all participants share united opinion that in some other cases, education methods in Indonesia is rather better or more neutrally said is rather different. Indonesian schools used to provide 16 subjects while most foreign schools offer only five subjects. The limit of the subjects allow foreign schools to have more deeper understanding.

One of participants said, in fact this program does not have to be labeled RSBI course, if already fulfill the standard eight is enough. Today tried to introduce to the learner. It's instilling pride, turned out in Indonesia are also not left behind.

When asked about how the program evolve, what difficulties and so on, all participants shared opinion that the main problem is the management of its resources. Human resources, namely teachers and students. Therefore trying to plan a training program for teachers in formulating curriculum. The program expected to help teachers preparing learning process. Secondly, children need to realize that the teacher as facilitator. Students shall be more active. Teachers act only as facilitator, meant to guide and train. The method move from teacher to student center approach. Other than teacher-student, stakeholders or parents need to understand this.

Another difficulties is on teacher ability to speak English language. To provide training for teacher is also difficult to be managed. When there is a program for them, The impact could be because of the time, physical condition, or schedule adjustments. So like training, sometimes not all can participate.

Other example of human resources problem is about the age. Many colleagues is not comparable with the demands of this program. For example for preparing English language courses, it is irrelevant to to give the train for colleague whihces ages are more than 50 years old, and was about to retire, so why should the training. The possibility to gain mastery of foreign languages has been heavy. Therefore, the program focus to teacher staff who are less than 50 years old. However, there still no warranty that, they will take advantage of this training.

One participant recommend that, if DPSMA want RSBI-SBI program to be success, it shall taking care seriously quality of human resources relating to pension and new entry which is in conformity with RSBI. Selection for admission of students from the requirement Permendiknas, there is a test of all. There are three lines in Surabaya. Students in participant school are still mixed, there are children of high ability, quality, students without a test.

To adjust to the ability of teachers expertise in English, finally through Circular of Mendiknas No. 553/D.D2/MN/2011 stipulates that teachers are not obliged to use the language of instruction in English in Math and Sciences. For Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan dan Bahasa Indonesia should be conducted in Bahasa Indonesia. Science Teacher can use English language, provided eligibility requirements with English certified.

When asked about how sensitive their pedagogies with cultural value, one of participant shared his experience being protested by colleagues, particularly from the History Teacher, that this program will attenuate a sense of nationhood. Therefore, to maintain nationalism, students are required to wear pin of Indonesia flage: red and white. The school aslo maintaining extracurricular batik making, and dance. The school played national songs every morning.

To form a formidable personality and friendliness, other participant has managed to educate the students through working group. While nationalism is learned in program activities such as commemoration of national holidays, religious etc.

## **Conclusion**

Many activities are assessed through a new language of International Standardization. The main difficulties inhibitting progress largely are in managerial and human resource related issues. Interviewee feel that they need to improve educational quality, and for that they need assistance from abroad. The betterment of quality education is for that acknowledgement from external. In the same time, most teachers are proud of their local and national wisdom and hope that they should be entrenched always in the education system. However further research should be conducted to elaborate more in this theme.

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