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Inculcating Students Civic Awareness through *Friere's* Critical Pedagogy Practice as a Current Alternative Method of Teaching and Learning (PdP)

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ABSTRACT

In realizing the form of education that is compatible with the existent needs of the current generations, this study asserts the significance of the educational transformation according to the suitability of the current educational needs, especially with regard to the teaching strategy in instilling civic awareness in students in Malaysia. Thus, an action research was conducted by a researcher in the effort to identify the potential of Friere's critical pedagogy as an alternative teaching approach in the effort to instill civic awareness among students. Using the model action study methodology by Kemmis & McTaggart (2000), the focus of this study is to identify the capability of the students to reason the events related to the civic issues through the writing of short stories. Related to this, the study outcome finds that Friere's critical pedagogy practice (1976) is able to instill the students' civic awareness, by making a discourse of eight main themes (8) about civic issues inserted in the writing of the short stories. The finding of this study is able to confirm the teaching and facilitating practice (PdPc) in using the critical pedagogical practice that is able to instill the civic awareness affectively among the students of SMK Datuk Haji Mohamed Nor Ahmad, Gelugor, Pulau Pinang.

Keywords: Friere Critical Pedagogy, The 'Problem Posing Education' (PPE), 'Dialogue Methode' (DM), 21st century Learning Concept, Inculcating Civic Awareness.

INTRODUCTION

21st century learning is an education concept that suits the needs of the current generations in third

millinium era. Based on the reviews of the local and international education experts, it is agreed that there should be an educational transformation according to the needs of the current educational context especially to realize the attributes of the students who have strong ethical and spiritual characteristics. On this note, other than depending on the content of the secondary school integrated curriculum that emphasizes on the syllabus leaning on moral, civic and citizenship education, this study asserts that teaching and learning activities also have the tendency to establish the civic awareness discourse ignited by students through theater activities. Through these activities, it is able to encourage students to give their reactions towards civic issues as the social practice. To encourage students to address civic issues using the theater medium, this current study has adopted Friere's critical pedagogy(1972) by applying the '*problem posing education*' (PPE) dan '*dialogue methode*' (DM). The '*problem posing education*' (PPE) approach refers to the education of facing problems. The teaching and learning process really encourages students to explore into a topic by way of highlighting the issues through two-way communication and by doing so interactively with the teacher. Meanwhile *dialogue method* (DM) refers to the discussion activities by interacting between the student and teacher, and between student and another student. Through the DM method, it can support the PPE method by helping the students to channel their relative views about the civic issues that are included in the writing of short stories or playwright.

In brief, the teaching and learning application using the PPE and DM methods are expected to be able to stimulate students to highlight dialogues about civic issues by way of writing short stories. Through the activity of composing short stories, it can instill and develop the skills of searching for, interpreting and applying new information by re-exposing civic issues according to the new discourse. On this vein, SMK Datuk Haji Mohd Nor Ahmad, Gelugor Pulau Pinang is one of thousands of schools in Malaysia which ensure that the intention behind the National Education Philosophy and Malaysian Education Development Plan (PPPM) 2015-2025 can be realized, for students to have strong ethical and spiritual characteristics in school curriculum activities.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Creative Drama is also one of the co-curriculum activities that is often organized by schools in Malaysia. It is a kind of activity that not only taps into creating dramatic plays, but also it is a potential medium that instills civic and moral awareness among students in Malaysia. Ghazali (2016) pointed out that in the 21st century, the drama activities has been raised as a knowledge discipline that is capable of transforming man into a better person be it intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically. In sum, drama activities does not only assist students in delving into the issues raised by the actors or dramatists, but it is also able to stimulate students' intellectual by relatively re-highlighting critical opinions about civic issues. According to Yvonne & Gail (2016), other than functioning as ritualistic and entertainment events, drama activities also plays the role as the medium of moral education through the activity of chaneling the communication of message between the actor and the audience. Meanwhile, Thambu (2014) asserted that education based on "Teater Forum" is able to develop the aspects of students' reasoning, emotion and moral practice. He further added that the moral reasoning of students undergoes the development of three

reasoning elements namely reasonable moral thinking, careful consideration when making decisions and the justification towards the actions taken.

Thus, based on the pilot study about the educational activities outside the classroom at SMK Datuk Haji Mohd Nor Ahmad, Gelugor Pulau Pinang, it is found that the drama activities are also have been arranged, developed and implemented by the school at several school-, state and national-level cultural events. Through the record of school curriculum activities outside school, the study outcome finds that among students of SMK Datuk Haji Mohd Nor Ahmad have participated in Komsas drama competition and won several best performance categories at Pulau Pinang schools' level. However, in the effort to instill civic awareness cognitively among students of SMK Datuk Haji Mohd Nor Ahmad, the study finds that drama activities are not really support students to address about issues related to civic themes individually or collaboratively. In sum, the study holds the view that the students in this school should be given the opportunity to produce dramatic issues that relate to civic and moral decline. Our study opines too that the students of SMK Datuk Haji Mohamad Nor Ahmad are able to ignite intellectual games by re-highlighting civic issues according to relative views. This is consistent with the opinion held by Rahmah Bujang (2017) who maintained that arts would be inexpressive in a vacuum. The form and content of artistic expressions are derived from the source of events or events that happen in the society including civic issues in certain contexts and conditions. Here, students of this school also have the chance to use the medium of writing short stories or playscripts to produce ideas, views even awareness about civic issues in their learning scope. This is very harmonious with the 21st Century Education concept that stresses on students having critical thinking, collaboration, communication and creativity (4P) with the topics in the syllabus introduced in and out of the classroom. This also supports the 21st Century Education concept, where students are not only assessed from their ability in answering test questions, but also from the extent to which they can master the skills of solving problems and developing their creativity. This is consistent with the proposed Freire pedagogic approach (1972) in helping students to conduit their relative views about civic issues in the short stories that they write.

STUDY OBJECTIVE

This study aims to identify how learning adopts Friere's critical pedagogy (1972) that can instill civic awareness cognitively among students of PBMK/SMK Datuk Haji Mohamed Nor Ahmad, Gelugor, Pulau Pinang. On this note, an action research has been developed to prove the study objective (1) teaching and learning practice (PdP) using Freire's *dialogical method* (DE) that can instill civic awareness cognitively among students and study objective (2) the teaching and learning (PdP) using Freire's *problem-posing education* (PPE) that can instill civic awareness gets to be achieved in this study. Therefore, to realize objective (1), this study encourages students to highlight issues related to civic conflicts by constructing short-story writing. To realize objective (2), this study encourages students to channel their relative views about the issue of civic conflicts to be shared with other students in an interactive way. Based on the framework of the short-story writing, discoursed and shared with students interactively, it is at this point that the study is able to identify the themes surrounding civic conflicts raised by the students based on their reactions towards the world around them.

BENEFIT TO THE NATION

The significance of the study outcome is hoped to be able to benefit students to instill maturity and positive civic awareness by adopting Freire's pedagogic approach (1972) in the form of short story writing. This is important to ensure that the vision of Malaysian Education Development Plan (PPPM) 2015-2025 can be realized by producing students who have good attributes like strong ethics and spirituality, compassion and affection, brevity in making the decisions, appreciation towards sustainable development and healthy lifestyle. The outcome from this action research also supports the aims of PPPM 2015-2016 in producing students with thinking skills with curiosity and innovativeness. They should also be able to apply and generate knowledge to enable them to solve their life issues.

STUDY METHODOLOGY

The action research methodology adopts the Kemmis and McTaggart (2014) model. This selection comes after Friere critical pedagogy approach (1972) by applying the '*problem posing education*' (PPE) and '*dialogue methode*' (DM) which need to be implemented in several cycles to see the effectiveness and suitability of this method in achieving the students' learning goals. This model proposes four steps of action plan based on 2 cycles involving the spiral arrangement as follows: (1) Plan (2) Action (3) Observe and (4) Reflect

STUDY FINDING

This action study's outcome proves that Friere pedagogical approach(1972) using the method of '*problem posing education*' (PPE) and DM method has been able to instill students' civic awareness through the teaching activities in SMK Haji Mohamad Nor Ahmad, Gelugor Pulau Pinang. Based on the research design which is action research conducted in the classroom with 20 students, the study concludes that the creative pedagogical practice is able to instill civic awareness by reasoning the events related to civic issues through the form of short-story writing. Our study concludes that the study participants are able to explain reasonably in interpreting the civic situations in the form of short stories. Through the civic issues discoursed by students on the short-story writing, our study finds that the ideas for the dialogue has been able to reason about the events related to the civic issues. It is further concluded that civic reasoning has been able to expose students' skills to use their cognitive domain collaboratively in giving reasonable excuses, considerations also opinions about civic awareness issues in the form of composing short story narrative. The study finds that civic themes embedded in the content of short stories cover the following theme (1) student gangsterism and blackmailing; theme (2) vandalism that damages public properties; theme (3) the irresponsible act of violating government laws; theme (4) the lack of awareness, care and sensitivity in forming the relationship with neighbours; theme (5) tarnishing the image of the people and the country in the social media; theme (6) the influence of peers through the activity of loitering; theme (7) the attitude of not respecting other people with impolite behaviour; theme (8) distracting the sense of peace of others through snatch-thieving; and theme (9) not respecting the hosts when paying a visit to their homes.

**Diagram 1: Cycle 1 - Action Research Implementation
 Researcher’s Revision Through Kemmis & McTaggart Model**

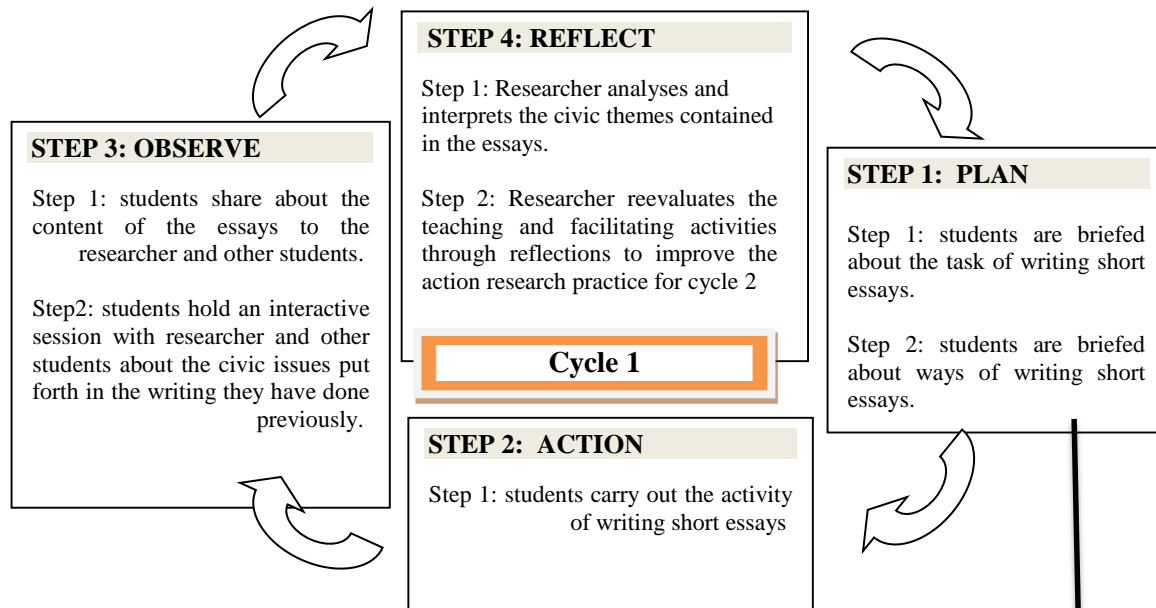
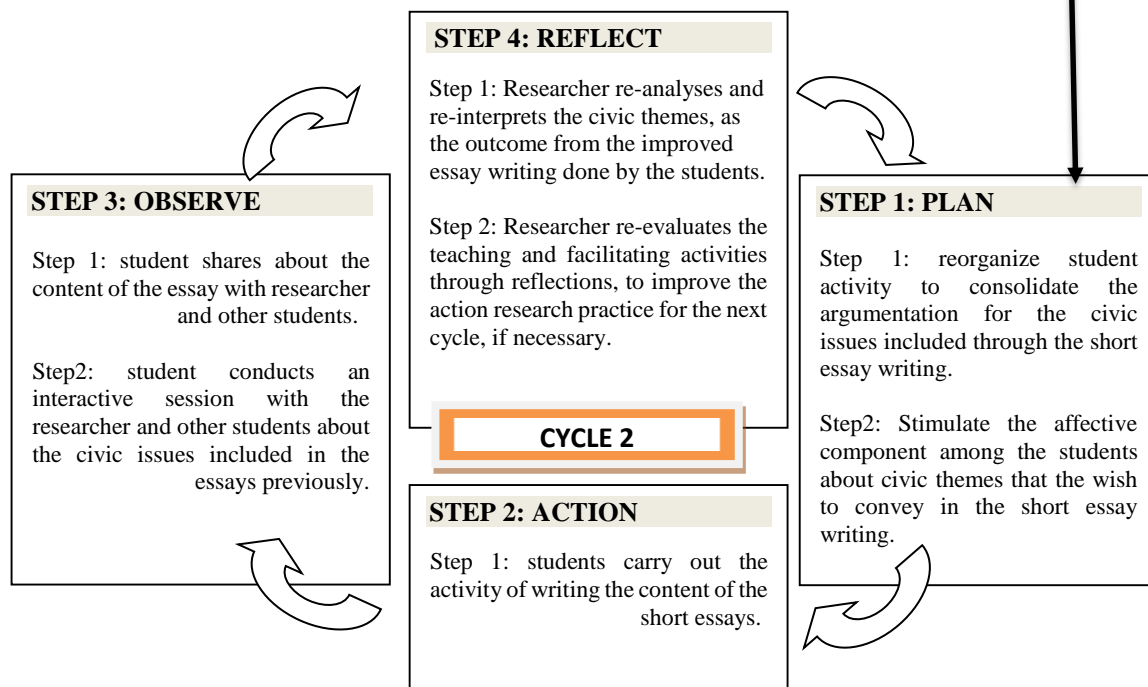


Diagram 2: Cycle 2 - Action Research Implementation: Researcher’s Revision



CONCLUSION OF STUDY OUTCOME

This study asserts that Freire's pedagogic approach practice (1972) using the '*problem posing education*' (PPE) method and the *dialogue method* (DM) is able to inculcate the civic awareness of the students generated through the activity of writing short essays coming from experiences and views of a student about civic issues. This shows that Freier's pedagogic approach practice(1972) using the PPE and the DM methods can serve as an alternative approach in instilling students' civic awareness, by way of revisiting events historically related to civic issues, so it recreates other views about civic issues following students' interpretations in a relative way. Based on the experience gained, in terms of the reality on the surrounding ecology system the study participants will realize about the civic awareness with regard the civic issues ignited from the feelings, instincts or realization about the civic issues.

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