

School Culture: Values within School in Promoting Students Foreign Language Habit at School

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Abstract: As school culture has an important role in an educational reform (Jusaite-Harbison & Rex, 2010), investigating its elements in encouraging students achievement is essential. This study aimed at revealing school cultural values held by the school members as well as factors underlying *their school cultural values behind* their efforts in promoting students foreign language habit at school. In-depth interviews with school principals and teachers were conducted in collecting data of this study. In addition, the results of classroom observations completed the data obtained from interviews. The results show that the school members put high values in the role of foreign language mastery in preparing future generation with global perspective, good personality and independence. Finally, high global competitions, educational policy and society demands are some factors underlying their school cultural values which, in turn, motivate them to promote students foreign language habit at school.

Key words: *School Culture, Values, School Members, Foreign Language Habit.*

Introduction

School is one of the institutions to instill values, motivations, habits and culture in the society¹. Through its formal status, compared

¹ Kholis, N., Zamroni, Z., & Sumarno, S. (2014). Mutu sekolah dan budaya partisipasi stakeholders. *Jurnal Pembangunan Pendidikan: Fondasi dan Aplikasi*, 2(2).

to other institutions, school has the power to “enforce” daily habituation to the students. School principal, homeroom teachers and teachers have such a power and potential to teach, to familiarize knowledge, attitudes and behavior that are in line with the binding social values and religious teaching. In its development, teaching, education and habituation held in school can be internalized by the students in their daily life. Thus, the power and potential of schools to instill values and life spirits can be utilized for the development of an improved life for children in the future.

Foreign language skills are the important instruments to master so that students can live within socio-cultural complexity in the global community in this disruption era. Previous studies show that students with foreign language skills have more self-confidence², are capable of working with diverse community³ and success in career.⁴ Today, foreign language skills are the instruments at school, social interaction and career. All job vacancies require the ability to use foreign language, the ability to work in team, having good personality, critical, creative and dedicated.

This study aims at knowing and analysing: 1) what are the school cultural values do the school members have in fostering foreign language habit at SDI ZS? What are the factors underlying the development of school culture in fostering foreign language culture in SDI ZS? The results of this study are intended to contribute scientifically in developing foreign language culture in formal education institutions. The authors argue that a good culture in school will be able to establish an effective school. Students' achievements at school are mostly supported by the habituation, diligence and discipline of each student. Hence, the study of foreign language habit in elementary schools becomes interesting to construct tiny theories in the joint effort to develop effective schools and the

² Lewthwaite, M. (1996). A Study of international students perspectives on cross-cultural adaptation. *International Journal of the Advancement of Counseling* 19 (2), 167-185

³ Kohonen, V. (1992) Experiential Language Learning: education: Second Language Learning as Cooperative Learning Education. *Collaborative Language Learning and Teaching*, 1439

⁴ Dunkel, P (1991). Listening in the Native and Second/Foreign Language: Toward an Integration of Research and Practice. *TESOL Quarterly*, 25 (3), 431-457.

development of international language culture as the equipment of children in upsurging their existence in the future.

Research Method

This is a qualitative research using case study approach. The deepening of the case is conducted in order to know foreign language speaking culture and its relation to the determinant factor. The research was conducted at SD Zumrotus Salamah, Tulungagung. The research data includes: the school's cultural values owned by the school members in developing the foreign language speaking culture and the factors underlying its growth at school. The subjects of this research are the school principal, vice principal, teachers and students. Data are collected through in-depth interview, documentation and observation. In-depth interviews are the major data collection technique, however, observation and documentation techniques are used to deepen the findings of the data. Measurement of data validity uses examination technique: credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability. Data analysis is done in stages and interrelated between data reduction, data presentation, conclusion and verification.

Result

Values and spirit underlying the Zumrotus Salamah elementary school (SD ZS) in developing an English-speaking culture in schools, according to the research subjects, are to produce a generation that has a nice personality, global perspective and independence.⁵ The founder believes that the value and spirit of development at that time are da'wa and eagerness to contribute directly in the process of nation building. The same as other education and religious institutions, SD ZS is dedicated to better human resource development. Besides, taking the dynamics and times into accounts, the option to develop a foreign-language based school at SD ZS remains relevant throughout the ages.

Practicing languages (including English) is a means to educate children in order to have an attitude of mutual respect and kindness. According to the one responsible for English language habit, children are accustomed to say "excuse me", "sorry", "what can i do for you", and

⁵ Interview with the research subject on Januari and Februari 2018

"thank you". Furthermore, he mentions that at school the students are emphasized to use those expressions consistently on daily basis. Besides, habituation to share kindness and mutual respect among the students can be developed through daily language implementation at school. Therefore, by using those expressions, students automatically practice the pattern of courtesy and mutual respect between friends.

Good personality is characterized by a good soft skill. Soft skill is reflected in the mindset, attitude, and behavior patterns in the learner's daily life. *To support foreign language programs should be based on the cultivation of Islamic values, for example: the value of discipline, cooperation, the spirit of learning and social courtship.* Such values are instilled through teaching and learning, as stated below, "we integrate the planting of Islamic values based on learning and school culture".⁶ Learning to implement polite and courteous language is done in the classroom or outside the classroom during break times. In a large school, all children are required to use good and polite language.

The dynamics of society has accelerated to the industrial revolution 4.0 (RI.4.0). It is characterized by digitization, information technology, and globalization of all aspects of people's lives. Schools have an important role to prepare for a generation with global insights and perspectives. Such an awareness, in the founder of this school's opinion, can be initiated by teaching and familiarizing foreign language speaking at school.⁷ Based on the observations that researchers do, before entering the classroom children memorize English vocabulary and sentences and memorize short letters in al-Qur'an in group. Such activities are done every day, and there should be an addition of two to five new sentences as weekly target. Such exercises are intended to familiarize children with English in their daily life with the guidance and monitoring of teachers.

The founders' and management's hope that the graduate of SD ZS must be willing and able to cooperate. The skill to cooperate, in their opinion, is an important ability to exist and develop in the globalization era. There is no "superman" in the era of globalization,

⁶ W.SW01.NBA01.22042018

⁷ W.SW02.NBA01.12042018

everyone is required to work on achieving their goals or mutual goals. Future employment is increasingly specialized in certain fields, no one is able to do it alone, since he/she needs others to complete the work. Therefore, according to the board, SD ZS should be directed to prepare a generation that has the ability of cooperation at the early stage. Cooperative skills developed include cooperation in learning (inside and outside the classroom) doing classroom work, practicing language skills and maintaining cleanliness of class and school. According to the classroom teacher, the ability of cooperation is taught in the form of direct theory and practice in learning, doing school tasks, and memorizing in groups.⁸

No one can predict the situation and conditions of society in future. Therefore, preparing the ability and basic skills in order to exist in the future as early as possible is the right choice. Young people with global capacity should be cultivated through educational institutions, as the founder of the school said, "*we are aware that competition is increasingly complex. It requires global competence and skills. Therefore, since the beginning, this school uses two languages (Indonesian and English) so that children can live worthy.*"⁹ According to school founders the main instrument to face globalization is the mastery of international languages. Therefore, the choice of foreign language-based schools is highly relevant to the dynamics and trends of community development.

Learning a language of another nation is also learning its culture. The culture of a nation can be recognized through its language. One's attitude can be understood from the use of the language use, the intonation of speech, and the way to express it. Early on, based on the narrative of students of SD ZS, learning the language, practicing and expressing feelings and attitudes can be learned through the style of language.¹⁰ At least there are three important points to prepare for the global competition, namely: language skills, substance of matter and soft skill. Foreign language habituation, should be done as early as possible for children. Substance of matter can be studied and taught at schools and through the students' daily

⁸ W.SW02.NBA03.27022018

⁹ W.SW02.FPBBA01.16022018

¹⁰ W.SW04FPBBA01.11022018

practice, while soft skill can be familiarized in daily critical communication with regard to custom and politeness applied at school.

Coincidentally when SD ZS was established, the ministry of national education (Kemendiknas) issued an international school policy (SBI). According to the principal, it was initially difficult to obtain an operational permit because the policy was only applicable to public schools.¹¹ However, based on the documents that researchers learned, since the initial application of SD ZS permit has mentioned the use of English as the language of instruction to certain subjects. SD ZS is one of the fostered schools of the state university of Malang laboratory (UM) for the implementation of the Cambridge curriculum. The graduates of ZS primary school have two diplomas, namely the certificate issued by the Ministry of National Education and Cambridge. The competencies acquired by SD ZS graduates are different from other elementary school graduates. These competencies are the addition of knowledge competence and foreign language skills

The public awareness on the importance of foreign language mastery for their children has increased. This phenomenon is seen from the increasingly high demand of the society to foreign language mastery for their children. Schools that use foreign language as the language of instruction is increasingly in demand by the community. According to the guardian's testimony, the villagers have a tendency for their children to have foreign language skills.¹² They start to realize that language is a tool in association, learning, and livelihood. Language is necessary to survive. Therefore, parents are now very observant (critical) in choosing a school for their children. In their opinion, school must present material, habituation, and culture that support the success of their children in the future.

Table 1: Research Findings

Cultural Values	Supporting Factors
Good personality	Global
Global perspective	Education policy
Cooperative capacity	The society demand

¹¹ W.SW01.FPBBA02.17022018

¹² W.SW02.FPBBA03.18022018

Discussion

The word value is derived from French language, “*valoin*” and in English it is “*values*” which means a valuable idea.¹³ Value is a belief about truth, goodness and ideas that serve as the basis of behavior in a community. Value is something that is maintained to be respected and defended by individuals and / or groups. One’s appreciation with others is relative. Such as a person's view that the car is a valuable item and is therefore desirable and fought for, while others think the car is not valuable in life. So is the case with education, law, and certain behavior might be considered as something valuable but not for others. Views, attitudes and behaviors of individuals are based on their values consciously or unconsciously. The reference of values held by individuals in the community are religious teachings, social norm, or regulation agreed upon smaller groups.

Each community has certain values that become the basis of common life, whether they are written or not. The values are considered to be able to synchronize the diversity of purpose, desire, character and way of life of community members. Without values, differences in age, socio-economic background, perspective and attitudes may result in a break in the community. For a community, values can serve as group cohesiveness, so as to unify the vision and mission of the group. Cohesiveness allows groups to achieve goals effectively and efficiently. Thus values are the spirit and binding of individuals in the group for the effectiveness and efficiency to achieve community goals.

There are not many elementary schools that use English as the language of instruction in the classroom in Tulungagung. The excellence of the SD ZS compared to the existing school is on the students’ ability of to speak English. Since its establishment, English became the language of instruction, mainly for subjects of science and mathematics. The use of English is intended for the students to master English from an early age. The graduates of ZS primary school have the advantage and confidence since they have special skills than other children. As stated by the vice principal, that is based on reports of

¹³ Akdon. (2006). *Manajemen Strategi untuk Manajemen Pendidikan*. Bandung. Alfabeta. P.100

graduates of SD ZS, the graduates of SD ZS are accustomed to be appointed of their new school in debate or speech competition.

The formation of personality character and skill soft skills of children in SD ZS can be done through a good communication pattern. The democratic and interactive communication patterns will ultimately determine the success of the socialization process to the children. Socialization process becomes important because within the process positive values are transmitted to the child.¹⁴ The transmission of value can also be done by integrating various subjects such as foreign language skills and recognizing foreign cultures that can be developed by training children every day, providing worship facilities, language and culture laboratories and supported by various school programs ranging from extra-curricular, development of school culture.¹⁵

Upgrading knowledge, ability, skills, soft skills and foreign language in SD ZS is based on awareness of urgency and the complexity of competition at work and life. The children's' competitors at work are not only fellow job seekers in the country, they will also compete with foreign workers. Some previous studies have shown that soft skill's ability contributes greatly to one's career success.¹⁶ substantive knowledge/material without the support of soft skills, such as communicating and good attitude is difficult for the person to succeed.¹⁷ Besides, team work ability is needed in improving

¹⁴ Setyowati, Y. (2013). Pola Komunikasi Keluarga dan Perkembangan Emosi Anak (Studi Kasus Pola Penerapan komunikasi keluarga dan Pengaruhnya Terhadap Perkembangan Emosi Anak pada Keluarga Jawa). *Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*.2(1). Pp 67-78

¹⁵ Putri, N.A. (2011) Penanaman Nilai Nilai Pendidikan Karakter melalui Mata Pelajaran Sosiologi. *Komunitas: International Journal of Indonesian Society and Culture*, 3 (2). 205-215.

¹⁶ Mustikawati, R.I, Nugroho, M. A., Setyorini, D., Yushita, A.N., & Timur, R.P. Analisis Kebutuhan Soft Skill dalam Mendukung Karir Alumni Akuntansi. *Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan Akuntansi Indonesia*, 14 (2), 13-20

¹⁷ Mitchell, G.W., Skinner, L.B., & White, B.J. (2010) Essential Soft Skills for Success in the Twenty-First Century Workforce as Perceived by Business Educators. *The Journal of research in Business Education*, 52(1) 43

performance.¹⁸ Such habits will be the factors forming personality, which is certainly beneficial for children in the future.

Today the dynamic trend of both local and global society is increasingly fused be at the level of culture, art, economy and social. Such dynamics require individuals to master international language as a means to master the skills knowledge and traits relevant to the demands of the global community. Awareness of the urgency of international language mastery are common attitude of society, so it is natural that today's society expect their children to have knowledge and skills in foreign languages. Foreign language is no longer a trend but a necessity for every individual to enable them to exist, evolve and follow the dynamics of a global society whose development is increasingly accelerated. Such community demands ultimately require policy makers at both government and school levels to undermine schools that ensure their graduates have foreign language skills

The government gives flexibility to each level of educational unit to provide or develop the curriculum according to the needs and local potential of each. The freedom to develop the curriculum should be based on a critical study and be committed to the interests of school stakeholders comprehensively as well as the national education competency standard. Educational institutions also need to establish excellence and or distinction so that parents have the flexibility to choose and determine in accordance with the expectations and goals of the school for their children

Conclusion

The school members have a high value to the importance of the role of foreign language mastery to prepare a generation with a good personality, global perspective and independence. Factors that underlie foreign language culture in SD ZS are global competition, education policy and public demand.

¹⁸ Seisbert, S.E., 7 Kraimer, M.L., (2001). The five factor model of personality and career success. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 58 (1), 1-21

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