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Indah Wahyu Puji Utami

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ABSTRACT

History does not only teach about certain facts or events that occurred in the past but also teaches about empathy since it emphasizes every aspect of human life. Students could learn about historical empathy trough reflective learning. This research explains teaching historical empathy trough reflective learning, especially teaching social history course. This research was conducted by a qualitative method using a case study design. The researcher collected the data through observation and documentation taken during the Social History Course in the 2016/2017 academic year. Those collected data were then analyzed using a Miles and Huberman interactive model. Based on this research, reflective learning is a model that can be used to teach historical empathy. The role of a lecturer is necessary to promote historical empathy, especially in helping students to make an affective connection to the past.

Keywords: empathy, social history, reflective learning

ABSTRAK

Sejarah tidak hanya mengajarkan tentang fakta atau peristiwa tertentu yang terjadi di masa lalu tetapi juga mengajarkan tentang empati karena itu menekankan setiap aspek kehidupan manusia. Siswa dapat belajar tentang empati sejarah melalui pembelajaran reflektif. Penelitian ini menjelaskan pengajaran empati sejarah melalui pembelajaran reflektif, terutama mengajar kursus sejarah sosial. Penelitian ini dilakukan dengan metode kualitatif menggunakan desain studi kasus. Peneliti mengumpulkan data melalui observasi dan dokumentasi yang diambil selama Kursus Sejarah Sosial di tahun akademik 2016/2017. Data yang dikumpulkan kemudian dianalisis menggunakan model interaktif Miles dan Huberman. Berdasarkan penelitian ini, pembelajaran reflektif adalah model yang dapat digunakan untuk mengajarkan empati sejarah. Peran seorang dosen diperlukan untuk meningkatkan empati sejarah, terutama dalam membantu siswa untuk membuat hubungan afektif dengan masa lalu.

Kata kunci: empati, sejarah sosial, pembelajaran reflektif

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INTRODUCTION

Historical learning is not only extended from the genuine understanding of history. It also deals with many aspects of human life, including emotions, logic, and so forth. It is important for students to understand why and how people in the past made decisions or acted upon several circumstances in the way they did (Harris, 2016). To do so, students need to empathize. In historical learning, to empathize usually means to understand the perspectives and values of people in the past through consideration of the circumstances they faced (Cunningham, 2009).

Scholars pointed that empathy is essential in history. Jensen (2008) states that historical empathy is an important skill for students to learn. Lee (1983) indicated that empathy is central to history. Furthermore, historical empathy is important since it plays a role in the process of adductive, inferential thinking that allows historians to make sense of past actions (Yeager & Foster, 2001). However, there is no single definition of empathy in the term of history.

Barton & Levstik (2004) proposed that historical empathy involves using the perspectives of the people in the past to explain their actions. In this term, historical empathy referred to the perspectives takings (Jensen, 2008), which is considered as an important part of historical thinking (Wineburg, 2006). On the other hand, Garvey & Krug (2015) proposed the importance of imagination to empathize in history. Students ought to imagine the historical events and think with empathy, which means placing oneself imaginatively into a historical situation. Such processes will allow students to see the past as a whole. However, empathy does not only deal with imagination.

Yeager & Foster (2001) states that historical empathy should not simply base on practices in imagination, overidentification, or sympathy. Additionally, they proposed that "a fundamental characteristic of the idea of empathy concerns the use of hindsight as a way of understanding the past in a meaningful way" (Yeager & Fos-

ter, 2001, p. 14). Moreover, Jason Endacott and Sarah Brooks (2013) states that historical empathy is the process of students' cognitive and affective engagement with historical figures to better understanding and contextualize their lived experiences, decisions, or actions. Also, they state that historical empathy involves understanding of how people from the past thought, felt, made decisions, acted, and faced the consequences within specific historical and social contexts (Endacott & Brooks, 2013). In this view, historical empathy is a dual-domain construction, namely cognitive and affective.

Empathy characterizes historical thinking that results in enriched understanding within some contexts that include intellectual and emotional dimensions (Davis Jr., 2001). Intellectual dimension relates to the cognitive domain, while emotional dimension relates to the affective domain. To better understanding and to empathize, students need to understand the facts and details of past events. They also need to develop perspective taking and rational understanding that are considered as a part of cognitive acts in historical learning. Historical empathy also requires an affective connection to the past that is shaped by a cognitive understanding of the past. The affective connection to the past enables students to view historical

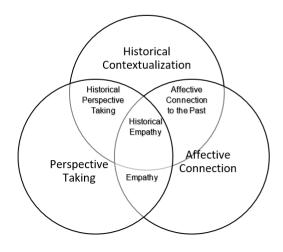


Figure 1. Visual Conceptualization of Historical Empathy (Endacott & Brooks, 2013)

figures as human beings who face various human experiences or circumstances, and it would lead to a richer understanding than perspective taking alone (Endacott & Brooks, 2013). Furthermore, they propose that historical empathy requires three interrelated and interdependent endeavours, i.e., historical contextualization, perspective taking, and affective connection.

As stated above, historical empathy is a dual-domain construction consisting of cognitive and affective. Reflection is required to relate the "cognitive understanding" and "affective connection." Reflection activities will help students in finding past situations that are similar to present circumstances (Endacott Brooks, 2013) since reflection is a dialectic process that integrates experiences and ideas (Dewey, 1933). In this term, students need to contextualize the past and learn from it. The importance of reflection in learning is also stated by Bubnys (2010) as follows.

Reflection should be integrated into entire education process by not separating it from self-education objectives. A reconstruction of experience is central and should be performed continuously. To achieve such aims, students should make reflections by analyzing their values, attitudes, and emotions, which then will change the meaning of an idea with a new meaning by connecting it to their previous knowledge and information. Reflection, when learning from a personal experience, stimulates the taking of responsibility for one's actions and decisions.

Therefore, teaching historical empathy can be done by reflective learning model. Reflective learning integrates the cognitive and affective domains. In this model, students do not only learn about the historical facts of events but also reflect on it and relate it to their daily experiences and to take the right values and apply them in



Figure 2. Reflection on Historical Empathy

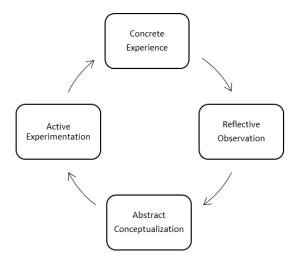


Figure 3. Kolb's Experiential Learning Model

their future lives. Without reflection, students' knowledge or learning experiences will be less meaningful. Reflective learning is not merely done to link historical events with students' lives, but also to understand the inner aspects of human, i.e., mind, heart, and emotion (Utami, 2015). Thus, a reflection will be significant.

Research in historical empathy is relatively new in Indonesia. Susanto (2015) proposed a theoretical framework to develop historical empathy in learning. To do so, he suggested several learning models as alternatives, namely a reflective learning model, documentary study model, role-playing model, historical inquiry model, and so on. In this research, the researcher focused on the reflective learning model used for teaching historical empathy because reflective learning could integrate the cognitive and affective domains.

John Dewey developed reflective learning model in 1933. This model consists of four interrelated stages in a cycle, namely experience, reflection, conceptualization, and experimentation, and then the cycles shall be repeated. Dewey's reflective learning model was later developed by Kolb (1984) and called as experiential learning as seen in figure 3.

According to Kolb (1984), learning is a continuous process that is based on experience. Learning is a process of constructing and transforming experiences

into knowledge. In addition, Bigge (2004) states that reflective learning always involves problem raising and problem-solving processes. Therefore, on my previous research (Utami, 2015), I proposed a reflective learning model as seen in figure 4. In this research, I apply reflective learning model as seen in figure 4 to foster students' historical empathy. In this model, students do not only learn about certain historical events but also engage with the historical actors in the past.

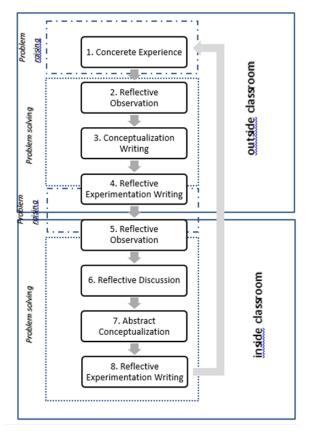


Figure 4. Reflective Learning Model (Utami, 2015)

In order to engage in historical empathy, students need to explore historical contexts, historical perspectives and affective connections with the life experiences of a historical figure or a group of people (Endacott & Brooks, 2013). To do so, students should explore their previous experiences and perform a reflective observation on historical sources and then write their abstraction and conceptual understanding in a reflective essay. During such activities, students need to reflect on their previ-

ous experiences that might relate to the topic that will be explored. Students also need to utilize their affectice responses to reflect and engage with a historical figure that might have different perspectives.

The lecturer also needs to ask several essential questions to students that could encourage their engagement with the historical figure. For example, while discussing the social crime in Java, the lecturer could ask "Why those people chose social banditry as a way against the colonial government? Would you do the same if you face a similar problem? What would you do if you are a local leader under the colonial government? What would you do if you are a colonial official?". By those questions, students are asked to discuss and to consider different perspectives of the historical figures using their cognitive and affective skills. The lecturer also needs to provide several historical sources that might help the students to engage with historical figures' perspectives in the past. Students are later asked to write their abstract conceptualization based on their reflective discussion.

The last stage of historical learning model is reflective experimentation writing. Endacott & Brooks (2013) propose that reflection activities can facilitate the students to focus on finding past situations that are similar to and therefore might help explain the present circumstances. On this stage, they state that reflection activities should invite students to form opinions about the historical perspectives, feelings, actions, and circumstances that they have closely examined.

The key concepts of historical empathy in this research refer to Endacott & Brooks (2013) stating that cognitive and affective engage with historical figures and understanding as well as contextualizing historical events based on the context. To relate the cognitive and affective aspects in the historical empathy, I use a reflective learning model. Therefore, this research tries to describe the practice of teaching historical empathy trough reflective learning.

RESEARCH METHODS

descriptive case study approach (Creswell, 2015) was employed in this research. This research was conducted in the Social History Course in Universitas Negeri Malang (UM) in the 2016/2017 academic year. This course is compulsory for students taking History Education undergraduate program. Social history course examines various aspects of human life. The course is organized on different themes or topics related to social aspects of human life, especially in the Indonesian context. Furthermore, this course is potential to encourage students' historical empathy since social history also associates with the affective aspect. At the time of data collection, this course was taken by 34 students consisted of 17 males and 27 females. They are in their 3rd year. The data were collected in this research by observation and documentation of the learning activities about the history of Dutch East Indies society in the XIX-XX centuries. Such topic was carefully selected to engage historical empathy. Those collected data were then analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Indies is a vague topic in Indonesian history because it is associated with the history of Dutch colonialism. For many Indonesians nowadays, the Dutch colonialism is seen as a dark period in the history of Indonesia. The Indonesia-centric historiography sees the Dutch as vicious colonialists. Therefore, the Indies society, which resulted from an acculturation of the Dutch and the indigenous society, is never been taught in Indonesian schools. However, this society was a part of the Indonesian history.

Promoting historical empathy to students is a challenging attempt. As a lecturer, I asks my students to search for any problems related to the Indies society that might relate to their daily lives or experiences. For example, students might observe an Indies building on Ijen street which is located near with the campus. Some students found an interesting prob-

lem, such as "Why does that Indies building differ with today buildings? How did people in the past build such a strong and long-lasting building? Who lived in that Indies building?", and so on. This stage is the first stage of the reflective learning model for a social history course, which is also called as a concrete experience.

Students were also asked to provide answers to those questions through a reflective observation, which was the second stage of the teaching model. In this stage, explored various students historical sources, either primary or secondary source, related to the history of Indies society, to solve the prior problem raised in the first stage, I asked the students to search for primary sources about the history of Indies society from kitlv.nl website that provides many pictures, documentary movies or documents from the Dutch colonial period. The secondary sources of the Indies society history can be found from several online open-access journals, or books such as "Kebudayaan Indies" by Djoko Soekiman (2011), "Dutch Culture Overseas" by Gouda (2007), "Recalling the Indies: Kebudayaan Kolonial dan Identitas Poskolonial" by Joost Cote (2004), and so on. Students need to carefully consider, read, and observe the historical sources and associate them with their prior experiences or knowledge resulting in richer knowledge.

The knowledge needs to be later abstracted by the students. Students should write the abstraction of their conceptual understanding of the context of the history of Indies society in the form of a reading report or essay. It is the third stage of the learning model called as conceptualization writing. On this stage, the cognitive understanding of the students is displayed in the form of a reading report or essay.

The reading report or essay does not merely display the students' abstraction of conceptual understanding but also their reflection about the historical context of the Indies society. In this reflective experimentation writing, students utilized their affective responses. Thus, this reflection



Figure 5. Picture of Pietermart couple with Miss Mulder on the veranda of their house at Kalibagor Sugar Company 1905 (Source: Tropen Museum, Netherland)

became meaningful. Students must bring their reading reports or essays to the classroom and discuss it.

During the course, I, as the lecturer, raised problems that are related to the topic. The lecturer was started by showing the primary sources of the indies society history taken from tropen museum collection as can be seen in figure 5.

The lecturer then asked the students "What is interesting in that picture?". Students' responses were diverse. Some students were interested in the house architecture and associated it with the house architecture around Ijen street which is located near the campus. On the other hand, some students were interested in the women's outfit: batik sarong and kebaya. They thought that the outfits are strange. One of the students asked "Why did white women wear batik sarong and kebaya at that time? I thought that kebaya and batik were only worn by Javanese women."

Such question indicated that the

student felt the sense of otherness. To answer this question, I asked the students to observe another picture as presented in figure 6 without giving any captions about the picture.

One of the women in the portrait is a Javanese woman dressed in a batik sarong and kebaya with a white girl also dressed in the same way. I then asked the students "What do you think about this picture? Who might the Javanese woman be? What is her relationship with that little white girl?." The students then started to discuss the questions. They started to associate the picture with their reading reports. For example, one of the students said, "I read Djoko Soekiman's book about the Indies culture. He mentioned in his book that Indies families used to have many baboe (maids) in their houses. So in my opinion, the Javanese woman might be the baboe in the child's family". In response, I asked the next question, "Are there any possibilities that the woman



Figure 6. Portrait of a white girl and a baboe (maid), both dressed in sarong and kebaya in 1920 (source: Tropen Museum Netherland)

might be the child's mother? You know, in the Indies society, it was really normal for a white man to have a mistress that is called as *Nyai*, and they might have children from that relationship." I tried to mislead them to test whether they might already take a careful consideration about the primary source given to them. It took a while until Zafriadi, one of the students who was critical enough in the class, responded

Well, if we pay more attention to the dress and compare it with the previous picture about a family in the sugarcane company, we might conclude that the Javanese woman is a maid. Her kebaya is not as beautiful as the girl who stands next to her. The girl's kebaya and sarong look better, just like the outfit of two white women in the sugarcane company. Moreover, we might see that



Figure 7. A Family portrait of a Dutch East Indies family with a child nurse drinking tea in the garden on June 14th, 1922 (source: Tropen Museum Netherland)

the girl wore shoes while the Javanese woman is in barefoot. So, in my opinion, the Javanese woman might have a lower social status than the girl. Therefore, I think that the woman is her maid, not her mother. Moreover,... about the Nyai, I have ever read Regie Bay's book about Nyai, and he stated that a *nyai* is well dressed, a nyai wears a beautiful kebaya and batik sarong."

Zafriadi response showed a reflective observation of a historical source. He carefully observed it and associated it with another source to answer a question.

The response also shows a cognitive understanding of the past. However, not all of the students gave good responses, so I asked them to observe another picture about Indies family as shown in figure 7.

The students quickly realized that the children have different skin tone with the man, yet they dressed like European. I asked them to identify who the people in the picture might be. They quickly responded that the man might be the father, the woman sitting in the chair might be the mother, three children in the picture are their children, while the woman with sarong and kebaya might be the maid. Dedi, one of the students, said

I think that the mother is an Indo. His father might be a white man, while her mother might be an indigenous woman. Look, her face is typical of the Indo face, like many actresses that we can see in Indonesian drama on TV. However, her skin tone is brighter than in-

digenous people but not as white as the man. While the children...their faces are also typical of Indo faces, as well as their skin tone.

Also, Nining stated that "I agree with Dedi. I also notice that people in the Indies society might dress in different ways. Some people dressed like local people, while the others dressed like European." In addition, Feby responded "I think that because people in the past tried to adapt to the situation. Therefore, like Soekiman mentioned in his book, Indies culture is a form of cultural acculturation between the east and the west." The students were able to construct their conceptions and understanding of historical context. However, it is essential that they build an affective connection with the people in the past. Therefore, I gave the students a short reading and worksheet about the Indies society and asked them several questions.

I carefully designed the reading and worksheet to promote affective connection with the people in the past and to provide different perspectives, especially about women and children because the topic rarely comes up in Indonesian historiography. I tried to raise a problem about different women's positions and roles in the Indies society: the white women, the Indo women, Nyai, and baboe. I also raised a problem of Indo children status in the Indies society. I asked the students to carefully consider and to build different perspectives of the past. Students discussed the problems in pairs for 30 minutes before they discuss them in a class discussion.

The class discussion was fruitful with many different perspectives. They realized that even though the roles of women in the Indies society are important, their position is lower than men, especially the white men. They also noted that this view of women role and position in the society still exists in some societies. The Dutch colonial practice puts women in a low position. European women are more respected in the Indies communities, but they are also helpless when their hus-

bands choose to have concubines in their household. The fate of indigenous women, both *nyai* and *baboe*, is certainly worse than European women's.

Students concluded that the Indies society is vague. It cannot be seen in black and white perspectives. Indies society experienced some ambivalence that we may still experience today. To the reflective activities, students said that they could see the past from various points of view. Indigenous women often became Nyai not because of their desire. Other indigenous people disparage them for having a concubinage with European men that is considered as a sin. Meanwhile, the European community also disparages them for not being white. However, many European men still needed them, either to meet their sexual needs, to take care of their households, or to teach local languages and cultures. In the Dutchman's perspective, having a concubine is considered safer than using prostitutes. Meanwhile for indigenous women, when they become baboe, they are in a weak position in the colonial system so that when her master takes her into a Nyai, she cannot refuse. Moreover, the Nyai position is higher than a baboe in Indies household. There are also women who were deliberately 'sold' by their families to become Nyai. The Nyai had to fight to defend herself in the society that was not friendly to her. The present standard of morality is certainly not applicable in the past because of the different historical context. In this case, students have been able to build affective connections with historical actors in the past that were faced with some difficult options the Indies society.

CONCLUSION

This research confirms prior claims that reflective learning could be used to teach historical empathy (Susanto, 2015). By this model, students are required to build their understanding of historical contexts based on their prior experiences as well as historical sources. In order to promote the affective connection with the past based on the historical understanding, the lectur-

er holds an important role. A lecturer must be able to design interesting learning media, to find a problem that makes students think and imagine if they were historical actors, and to lead a fruitful discussion. By a reflective learning, students can take a valuable lesson from the past and see from various perspectives. However, further research on other learning models to teach historical empathy need to be conducted.

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