

THE PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATION OF THE SCHOOL LITERACY MOVEMENT IN INDONESIA

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***Abstract:** The School Literacy Movement (SLM) was launched in 2015 by the Indonesian government in response to the concerns of many parties regarding the readiness of the Indonesian young generation to face the challenges of the 21st-century. This paper examined the philosophical foundations of SLM by scrutinizing the School Literacy Movement Master Design published in 2019 as the object of study. This study was a descriptive qualitative study, using the inferential content analysis method. The findings were: (1) the philosophical foundation of SLM that is portrayed in the object of study are essentialism, perennialism, progressivism, existentialism, and critical pedagogy, and (2) the object of the study is strongly influenced by the philosophy of progressivism since the writers of the SLM Master Design were more focused on the effort to prepare the students to face the 21st-century challenges.*

***Keywords:** Indonesia, inferential content analysis, philosophical foundation, School Literacy Movement, 21st-century*

Abstrak: Gerakan Literasi Sekolah (GLS) atau *The School Literacy Movement* (SLM) atau dicanangkan pada tahun 2015 oleh pemerintah Indonesia, sebagai jawaban atas keprihatinan banyak pihak terkait kesiapan generasi muda Indonesia menghadapi tantangan abad 21. Tulisan ini mengkaji landasan filosofis SLM dengan menelaah Desain Induk Gerakan Literasi Sekolah terbitan 2019 sebagai objek kajian. Penelitian ini adalah penelitian deskriptif kualitatif yang menggunakan metode analisis isi inferensial. Temuan penelitian adalah: (1) Landasan filosofis SLM yang tergambar dalam objek kajian adalah esensialisme, perenialisme, progresivisme, eksistensialisme, dan pedagogi kritis; dan (2) Objek kajian sangat dipengaruhi oleh filosofi progresivisme karena penulis Desain Induk SLM lebih fokus pada upaya mempersiapkan siswa untuk menghadapi tantangan abad ke-21.

Kata kunci: Indonesia, analisis isi inferensial, landasan filosofis, Gerakan Literasi Sekolah, abad 21

INTRODUCTION

The 21st-century is a civilization full of challenges, and the world was marked by the rapid development of science, information, and technology so that the world seemed to no longer consist of barriers. Therefore, all countries must prepare themselves to face this era. The young generation is the generation that is expected to be able to answer 21st-century challenges, such as "globalization, technology, migration, international competition, market changes, environmental challenges and international politics", (Mahanal, 2014). The 21st-century skills itself is a combination of knowledge, special skills, expertise, and literacy needed to achieve success, both at work and in a broader perspective. In other words, this skill is more than just technology literacy, because it includes skills in critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, and teamwork (Ledward & Hirata, 2011).

The Government of Indonesia is one of the parties that continues to struggle in shaping the nation's golden generations who are capable of conquering the challenges of the 21st-century. The issue of literacy becomes important because, in social life, students are required to be able to coexist by understanding what their rights and obligations are (Abduh & Taniredja, 2017). Therefore, to improve someone's literacy skills, it is necessary to do a habituation activity (Subandiyah, 2016). Various programs were developed to provide sufficient provisions for the next generation of the nation. One of the programs initiated by the government is the School Literacy Movement (SLM). It is one of the government's programs of habituation that can help students in mastering literacy. This movement was launched in 2015 by the Ministry of Education and Culture as part of the National Literacy Movement (NLM).

The Ministry of Education and Culture supports both the NLM and SLM, as a form of the implementation of the Ministerial Regulations of The Ministry of Education and Culture No. 23 of 2015 concerning the growth of character. In addition, the program of SLM is intended as a medium for strengthening the 2013 Curriculum for all subjects by applying literacy strategies in learning that refer to Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS), 21st-century competencies, and strengthening the character education (Literacy Movement Task Force of the Ministry of Education and Culture, 2019: iii). Moreover, the existence of SLM is expected to provide positive changes in the development of the skills and competencies of the Indonesian young generation. This is because this movement is expected to become a means for the application of 21st-century learning that puts forward critical thinking through the literacy movement, which enables young people to cultivate their ability to access, understand, and use information intelligently (Mustadi & Senen, 2018: 357). The launch of this program was marked by a books grants program for 20 schools in DKI Jakarta (Indonesia), as the model for literacy activities at schools. In the implementation of the program, it is a must for every student to spend 15 minutes each day to read a non-textbook before the learning hours begin (Tempo. co, 2017).

Various studies were carried out on the implementation of the SLM program. For example, Wandasari, *et al.* (2019) evaluated the Ministerial Regulations of The Ministry of Education and Culture No. 23 of 2015 in Penukal Abab Lematang Ilir (PALI) State High School. The findings showed that the SLM program in this school should be continued. The study also explained that the program was supported by, first, PALI's human resources, such as teachers, school staff; and second, the school policies to promote activities, namely reading group, morning motivation, reading corner, and library procurement.

In another study, Syawaluddin and Nurhaedah (2018) explained the impact of SLM on the literacy abilities of students. They conducted research on fifth-grade elementary school students in Gunung Sari I Public Elementary School, Rappocini sub-district, Makassar City. Their research showed that there was an influence of the SLM program on students' literacy skills. It is shown from the increase of the students' average pre-test and post-test scores.

On the other hand, Puspita, *et al* (2017) conducted a study aimed at examining the effect of integrated thematic learning as a means of improving the reading ability of grade 5 elementary school students. Their research used the SLM program as a means of developing the reading and writing habits of elementary school students. The results of the research showed that there was a significant influence of integrated thematic learning in improving the reading comprehension skills of the 5th-grade elementary students.

Based on the existing previous researches, the topic of the philosophical foundation of the School Literacy Movement (SLM) has not been discussed, especially from the perspective of inferential content analysis study. As explained by Magnis-Suseno SJ (2020: p.4), "Philosophy is essentially the science of critique." Moreover, philosophy has a close relation to education, therefore, it is understandable if philosophers should give critiques and inputs to the issues of education (Al Faris, 2015). Thus, this study tries to describe the philosophical foundation of the SLM with an inferential content analysis approach, so that the movement initiated by the Indonesian government can be understood in greater depth.

Education, philosophically, can be seen as a result of the civilization of a nation. Thus, education needs to be developed so that the nation can achieve what has been aspired by the founders of the nation (Tilaar & Nugroho, 2009). The discussion of the SLM program in this study is related to one of the studies of philosophy since it tries to discuss the philosophical foundation of SLM. Several philosophical schools are commonly used as references in education, namely essentialism, perennialism, progressivism, existentialism, reconstruction, and the pedagogy of critics (Alwasilah, 2014). In the following section, this study will explain the philosophical schools based on Alwasilah (2014) explanation:

- a. Essentialism is one of the philosophies of education that seeks to foster students' understanding of the essence of science and strive to develop student character through education. This type of philosophy sees education as a medium to teach students to comprehend the world through scientific experimentation and knowledge of natural sciences (Alwasilah, 2014).
- b. Perennialism is a type of philosophy of education that sees school as an institution that is obliged to foster students' intelligence. Therefore, education needs to develop general, liberal, and humanistic subjects to build a type of learning which must be mastered by all human beings.
- c. Progressivism views and respects every individual and science, and accepts changes with open arms in accordance with the existing developments. It encourages schools to develop curricula that are appropriate to the needs and interests of students.
- d. Existentialism respects each individual as a unique person. Therefore, in education, this type of philosophy allows students to develop into themselves by providing various forms of exposure and paths that they can take. Moreover, it allows for the development of humanities subjects.

- e. Reconstruction has its roots in the philosophy of existentialism but has a progressive outlook. It urges for a cultural transformation based on an analysis of injustice practices and mistakes that have occurred in education so far.
- f. Critical pedagogy allows students to have the ability to think critically and be able to solve problems. The emphasis lies in the effort to empower students.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study is a descriptive qualitative study, using the inferential content analysis method. This type of study is different from descriptive content analysis research because this study involves the "withdrawal of inference" (Zuchdi & Afifah, 2019: 43). To be able to analyze this type of content, the study must pay close attention to the context of the data being examined, which will then appear in: (1) The manner of analysis of the data in which it is attempted to not reduce the symbolic meaning of the data; and (2) The use analytical constructs that provide a clear picture in the context of the data (Zuchdi & Afifah, 2019).

The focus of this study is on the philosophical foundation of the School Literacy Movement (SLM) which is depicted on the data source, namely the *Desain Induk Gerakan Literasi Sekolah (Master Design of School Literacy Movement)*, Edition 2, which is published by the Directorate General of Primary and Secondary Education of the Ministry of Education and Culture in July 2019. Data from this study are in the form of expressions, both denotative and connotative expressions, which relate to the topic being discussed. Data sourced from research objects are needed to analyze topics that have been predetermined.

The analytical procedures in this study include: (1) The procurement of data by describing the philosophical foundation of the chapters/sub-chapters that exist in the object of research; (2) Data reduction; (3) Inference, in which the reduction of the symbolic meaning of the data is attempted to be prevented, and use analytical constructs that can help the research process; and (4) Verbal symbol analysis in the form of communication content.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Master Design of the School Literacy Movement (*Desain Induk Gerakan Literasi Sekolah*) is divided into 5 chapters, namely the introduction, basic concepts, implementation of literacy in schools, monitoring, and evaluation, and finally the closing chapter. The chapters are further divided into sub-chapters in which the contents detail the ideas that the author wishes to convey.

1. The Interpretation of the Philosophical Foundations of the Master Design of the School Literacy Movement

The results of the interpretation of the philosophical foundation of the Master Design of the School Literacy Movement show that it reflects several philosophical perspectives in education, as shown in the Table 1.

Table 1. The Interpretation of the Philosophical Foundations of the Master Design of the School Literacy Movement

Category	Sub-category	Philosophy of Education	Indicator
1. Introduction	Background	Progressivism	SLM is developed according to the needs of the 21 st -century era
		Critical Pedagogy	SLM is developed as a basic means for students to be able to understand texts analytically, critically, and reflectively
	Philosophical and Law Foundation	Progressivism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Acknowledging the existence of hundreds of languages, - Affirming the importance of language learning in national education, - As a medium to face the fast stream of information and technology.
2. Basic Concept	Purpose and Target	Perennialism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School is seen as a cultural literacy learning institution. - Schools try to form literate school members. - The SLM is targeting primary and secondary school students.
		Progressivism and critical pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The literacy term continues to evolve over time, - In the SLM program, literacy does not only include knowledge and literacy skills but also includes numeracy, science, digital skills, financial skills, culture and citizenship knowledges which are applied in daily life activities.
	School Literacy Movement	Perennialism and Progressivism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SLM is a participatory program. - SLM is a social movement. - School is an institution where citizens are lifelong learners, - SLM is an important part of humans' life in which the citizens are lifelong literacy learners.

Category	Sub-category	Philosophy of Education	Indicator
	Literacy's Component	Progressivism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Literacy is more than just reading and writing, - Literacy includes 21st-century skills, such as informational literacy.
	About literacy in schools	Progressivism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Literacy activities do not only focus on students, but also the teachers as facilitators, - Literacy development should follow the learners' stage of development, - A good literacy program is balanced, integrated with the curriculum, developing an oral culture, developing awareness of diversity, and carried out reading and writing activities are at any time, - Literacy activities combining 21st-century skills and develop learners' character development.
3. Implementation of literacy in schools	The design of the school literacy program and the role of the stakeholders	Existentialism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The success of a program requires the active participation of all parties, which can only be achieved if each party has sufficient capacity
	The Implementation of SLM	Existentialism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The SLM program considers school readiness in conducting the program.
		Progressivism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The program is in the form of reading habits that arouse interest in reading to improve literacy skills.
	The strategy and capacity building	Progressivism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity building in all aspects, - The success of SLM is determined by the support of all parties.
	Achievement target	Essentialism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This program is expected to create a literate school ecosystem,

Category	Sub-category	Philosophy of Education	Indicator
4. Monitoring dan evaluation		Existentialism	which ultimately fosters students' character. - The implementation monitoring and evaluation in stages based on their respective roles.
5. Closing		Existentialism	- The primary design of SLM is the foundation and conceptual direction of the running of the SLM program at all levels, - The design is expected to be able to develop creatively and innovatively.

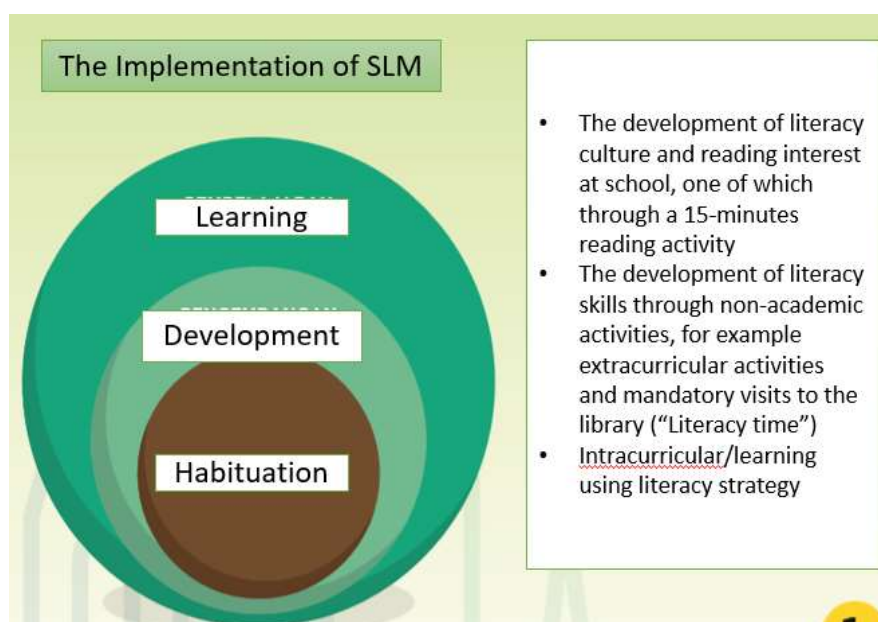
2. The Discussion of the Philosophical Foundations of the Master Design of the School Literacy Movement

The results of the interpretation of the School Literacy Movement (SLM) program illustrated in the Master Design of School Literacy Movement show that this program is based on 5 (five) philosophical perspectives on education elaborated by Alwasilah (2014), namely essentialism, perennialism, progressivism, existentialism, and critical pedagogy. Based on the results of inferential interpretation, there is no evidence that SLM leads to the philosophy of reconstruction. One thing that must be underlined is that based on the existing exposure to the object of study, the philosophical perspective that gives color to the program is the philosophy of progressivism because it corroborates every element of said program which include respecting each individual involved, accepting changes, and allowing development plans which are appropriate to the needs and interests of students.

As it can be seen in the introduction of the Master Design of the School Literacy Movement, this program was developed by the Indonesian government without ignoring the importance of primary and secondary school students' abilities in dealing with 21st-century developments. As it is widely known, Indonesian students are expected to have the ability to understand texts and adapt to the rapid development of technology. This is in line with what is stated in the Prague Declaration (Unesco, 2003) which puts forward the importance of information literacy, which then can provide benefits for someone's personal life and surroundings. The mastery of 21st-century skills is needed as they are a combination of knowledge, special skills, expertise, and literacy required in the working environment and everyday life (Ledward & Hirata, 2011). Therefore, students must be able to master them to win the competition in this century.

In sub-chapters that are related to the basic concepts, again, nuances of philosophical thought of progressivism can be found. Progressivism itself views humans' development is achieved because of their ability in developing various kinds of sciences, such as social, cultural, and natural sciences (Al Faris, 2015). Ornstein and Levine (1985) add that progressivism views in education can be explained in brief as a practice of

education that allows the students to develop naturally, to get attention which is based on experience, to learn from their teachers as their first source of learning, and in which school is seen as a laboratory for educational reform and a place to experiment. Thus, in the explanation's section of the definition of literacy, the authors of the School Literacy Movement's Master Design, are fully aware that the definition of literacy has evolved in accordance with its era. So they put forward several definitions of literacy that fit their respective contexts. For example, in Indonesia, at the beginning of its development, literacy is defined as "the ability to know words" and then it is defined as "literacy or the ability to understand" (Satgas Gerakan Literasi Sekolah Kemendikbud, 2019). This reflects the perspective of progressivism that "accepts the change based on its development" (Alwasilah, 2014: 104). The philosophy of progressivism is influenced by the basic concepts of the philosophy of pragmatism, which believes that humans have to survive facing all the problems in their lives and have to think pragmatically (Al Faris, 2015). In addition, as explained by Yuliantoro (2017), pragmatism has a strong influence in the 20th century. Some of the thinkers are, among others, Charles S. Peirce (1839-1914), William James (1842-1920), and John Dewey (1859-1952).



Picture 1. The chart of SLM implementation in the Master Design of School Literacy Movement (Satgas Gerakan Literasi Sekolah Kemendikbud, 2019)

The SLM program itself was launched so that students would love to read more (Satgas Gerakan Literasi Sekolah Kemendikbud, 2019: 29). Also, in line with the thought of Dewey (2004) who says that education should stimulate students' curiosity and initiative, the SLM program is done through several kinds of activities that can arouse the curiosity and initiative of the students by conducting, for example, a 15-minutes reading activity in school, which can be connected to the perspective of progressivism in seeing school as a real representation of social life (Al Faris, 2015). Similarly, Schilpp (1951) explains that education is a process that human has to undergo in their life, and it is not a form of preparation for their future life. Therefore, the school has to be able to stand as the representation of real life, and it should be able to simplify the existing form of social life.

The above facts show that the Indonesian government, as the one who proposed the program, has come to an understanding that there is a need to plan activities that can arouse the desire of students to know and learn various kinds of things deeper. So it is clear that the example above reflects the influence of the progressivism point of view because in relation to education, this philosophical school provides signs that the teaching and learning process in the classroom must be marked by, and one of which is the well-planned activities that can stimulate the interest and curiosity of students (Alwasilah, 2014). Moreover, as it is known, progressive education always emphasizes on how to solve problems in real life. In a way, this type of philosophical school is trying to develop students' initiative and also confidence, which then they can use in solving the problems that they have to face in their lives (Al Faris, 2015).

Thus, based on the findings, it can be said that progressivism influences the writing of the object of study. This can be seen as the strength of the School Literacy Movement's Master Design because, during its production, the SLM task force is aware of the demands of the 21st-century, which will continue to burden the young generation if they do not possess and master the skills required by this era. However, as it is shown in the table, the main design writers have not yet focused the SLM program on developing critical literacy which is also one of the skills that should be mastered by the young generation. The development of critical pedagogy is only seen in chapter 1, the background section, and some part of chapter 2, which explains the basic concepts of SLM. It was explained in chapter 2 that the literacy referred in the SLM program does not only cover knowledge and literacy skills but also includes numeracy, science, digital skills, financial skills, culture, and citizenship knowledge which are meant to be applied to the learners' daily life (Satgas Gerakan Literasi Sekolah Kemendikbud, 2019). However, the way of thinking and further discussion of the relationship between SLM and critical pedagogy is not sharpened in other parts of this master design.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that the School Literacy Movement (SLM) program depicted in the Master Design of School Literacy Movement is based on 5 (five) philosophical perspectives in education, namely essentialism, perennialism, progressivism, existentialism, and critical pedagogy. However, one can capture the nuances of the philosophy of progressivism which gives strong influence in the process of writing of this master design, because the writers seem to emphasize their program on preparing students to face the challenges of the 21st-century.

In-depth research on the SLM program through the study of the Master Design of the School Literacy Movement is still widely open. Therefore, as a suggestion, the author of this study encourages other researchers to deepen the study, for example by discussing why the philosophy of reconstruction does not appear in the master design which becomes the object of this study. Another thing that can be learned deeper is about the implications of this philosophical foundation in the implementation of the SLM program.

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