Pesantren Literature: Products and Creators of Literacy Culture in Indonesia Education

Joko Widodo

1Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

Background. Pesantren literature is a literary product written by pesantren people or about the phenomenon of pesantren life.

Purpose. This study aims to see the implementation of the independent curriculum on the principles of the Strengthening the Profile of Pancasila Students (P5) Project through pesantren literary writing.

Method. The learning method used is critical cooperative with the aim of improving aspects of critical thinking skills. This type of research is qualitative with a case study approach. This research was conducted at SMA Al Maahira IIBS Malang. This research involved students as students. Each student in a small group has a pesantren literary writing project.

Results. The pesantren literature written is based on the values of pesantrenan that they have learned. The results showed that there was a process of internalizing the value of pesantren to students. The results of the internalization are explored to be used as a source of ideas. The results showed that there are ethical and political implications in learning pesantren literary writing. The aspect of ethical implications shows that pesantren literature has benefits in developing students' critical thinking skills. In the political aspect, pesantren literature is a cultural product as well as the creator of pesantren literacy culture in Indonesia.

Conclusion. Thus, Indonesian education has great potential in utilizing the phenomenon of pesantrenan or the like to be applied in the independent curriculum. The pesantren literary writing project with a critical cooperative method contains speaking, reading, and writing skills.

KEYWORDS

Culture, Education, pesantren

INTRODUCTION

The introduction is a little different from the short and concise abstract. The reader needs to know the background to your research and, most importantly, why your research is important in this context. In 2022, Indonesia began implementing the Merdeka Belajar curriculum. One of the implementations is the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) (L. R. Putri dkk., 2023). This profile is a character that is built and brought to life in students' daily lives (Johanna dkk., 2023). The growth of character is carried out through intracurricular, extracurricular, and co-curricular learning (Andra dkk., 2023). The five important elements in the profile are 1) Faith and Fear of True Source, 2) Global diversity, and 3) critical reasoning.
Education academics and practitioners in Indonesia have worked to realize the curriculum, for example 1) character change in the implementation of the independent curriculum (Kurniawan dkk., 2023), 2) implementation of subject-based curriculum (Susanti dkk., 2023), 3) differentiated learning (Saputra dkk., 2023), or 4) the application of the PjBL method in curriculum implementation.

Basically, one of the objectives of the implementation of the independent curriculum is to increase literacy. Increased literacy is related to a person's ability to understand problems in the environment and solve them (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2016) (Sari dkk., 2023). The results of the 2018 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) survey, Indonesia is a country with low literacy quality when compared to other ASEAN countries. It was found that students who were included by teachers in reading activities had 30 points higher than students who were not involved. In addition, students who spend a lot of time reading as entertainment in their spare time achieve PISA scores 50 points higher (Lasmi dkk., 2023). This means that the implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) is the foundation for the growth of student literacy habits in Indonesia.

Based on the orientation of the independent curriculum and literacy conditions in Indonesia, pesantren literature can be one solution. Literature has a role in increasing literacy because it has the basic nature of dulce et utile or delightful and useful, namely literature provides entertainment and education (Diko, 2023). Literature works abstractly in the ideological reader so that it will be stronger in providing character hegemony (Maulida dkk., 2023). Pesantren literature then became interesting because the writing of works was based on the internalization of religious values. This is in accordance with the elements of the Pancasila student profile.

This research is a case study research with student research subjects as students in the process of writing pesantren literature with critical cooperative methods. Activities are carried out with the Project Based Learning (PjBL) learning model (Amri dkk., 2023). That is, students have a project in the form of writing pesantren literature, namely short stories. The critical cooperative method gives students space to provide evaluations to peers (N. A. Putri dkk., 2023). The results of the evaluation will be used as material for the follow-up plan. This method is considered relevant to the elements of the Pancasila student profile, namely critical thinking.

Children's literature is literature that has a story point of view for children and places children as the center of the story (Asman dkk., 2023). Children's literature contains life metaphors that are intended and accessible to child readers (Saxbya, 1991). Children's literature is not only written by children but also by adults but still paying attention to the point of view of child readers. This can be found in Indonesia, children's literati or children's storytellers.

The child as a reader becomes the subject of precedence (B. Beribe, 2023). Child readers will use aspects of thoughts, emotions, or moral experiences to receive the content of children's stories in order to influence children's understanding and behavior, for example for psychological aspects, financial literacy learning, or multicultural insights (Nastiti &; Syah, 2022; Aryanto et al, 2022; Goddess, 2022). Thus, children's literature writing must have relevance to the age and class of the learner (Yeltriana dkk., 2023). The relevance of the age and class of students becomes the background in the preparation of the story (Minarti dkk., 2023). Children's literature then serves to entertain and educate children. However, it does not rule out the possibility that this function can be accepted by adult readers.

One of the subgenres of children's literature in Indonesia is pesantren literature. Pesantren literature can be interpreted as literary works written by people in the pesantren environment and/or works that contain images of life within the pesantren environment (Lumban Gaol, Hansrainer,
Children's pesantren literature can be associated with children's literature with pesantrenan content (Mustajab dkk., 2023). The existence of pesantren literature can be a link between the implementation of an independent curriculum, namely in elements 1) Faith and Fear of God Almighty, which can be seen from the content contained in pesantren literature, and element 2) critical reasoning that can be seen in the process of creating literature, namely the internalization of religious values by the author which is manifested in the form of creative work (Ulim dkk., 2023). Islamic boarding school literature in Indonesia has the potential to be developed massively. It is recorded that in 2023 there will be 36,600 Islamic boarding schools.

The cooperative learning model emphasizes group learning activities to achieve competence (Nurzen dkk., 2022). This learning model not only focuses on achieving goals but also facilitates the socialization process of students at all levels of education. Cooperative learning involves the opportunity of group members to reveal how effective their cooperation is, each member's shortcomings, as well as cooperation strategies for solving problems (Roshayanti dkk., 2023). Such concepts will appear in problem-based learning (PBL) or project-based learning (PjBL). This cooperative learning is believed to improve the quality of student competence (Loes & Pascarella, 2017).

Cooperative learning facilitates the improvement of critical thinking because each member will discuss critically to provide an evaluation of activities and follow-up design (Tan, 2017). Critical thinking skills include training students in compiling arguments, evaluating reliability, identifying reasoning errors and assumptions, using logic, or synthesizing information into conclusions (Pamungkas & Halimah, 2023). Thus, cooperative learning has strong relevance to critical thinking. Therefore, this critical thinking ability is one of the main achievement targets in the independent curriculum.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This research is qualitative research and uses a case study approach. Case studies are studies of the description of situations and conditions of individuals or groups (Creswell, 2015). The subjects of this study were 30 students of SMA Al Maahira IIB Malang. The student is a student. The study was conducted from August to December 2022. Data collection method by means of interviews and/or observations (Fuadi & Mirsal, 2023). The stages of research include (1) Problem Identification, (2) Problem Formulation, (3) Determining Research Objectives, (4) Data collection; Interviews, and Observations, (5) Data Processing and Data Analysis, and (6) Conclusion Making.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

If you are using Word, use either the Microsoft Equation Editor or the MathType add-on (http://www.mathtype.com) for equations in your paper (Insert | Object | Create New | Microsoft Equation or MathType Equation) (Suryaningsih, 2021). “Float over text” should not be selected.

Based on observations and interviews with the school, it can be concluded about the condition of the field:

1. The independent curriculum has not been fully implemented properly
2. The school is still looking for a form of implementation that is in accordance with school conditions, namely pesantren
3. Learning to write literary creative is still conventional
4. The development of creative writing is not based on the potential of religious values taught in pesantran as a hallmark of pesantren
5. Creative writing learning has not maximized activities that can improve children's critical
thinking skills
6. Children's literature references are still very minimal so it is hoped that student work products can be additional references based on religious values
7. Teachers do not yet know and practice the critical cooperative learning model
8. Required development of pesantren literature

The product of written thinking is the result of processing ideas on a topic based on a logical, critical, and objective point of view that is outlined systematically and informatively in writing. This product can be lifted from phenomena or problems that exist in the environment (Mutalib & Dylan, 2021). Each author will have a certain point of view to see the phenomenon.

Learning in the development of critical thinking can be observed from every stage of writing, namely the planning, development, to completion stages. In this case, students are introduced to the concept of pesantren literature (Afifah dkk., 2023). That is, all activity processes will not be separated from the phenomenon of pesantren. It can be said that this phenomenon is a habit of students. This critical thinking learning can be done individually or in groups.

The implementation of cooperative learning prioritizes the principles of 1) positive work between group members, 2) individual accountability, 3) interaction, 4) interpersonal development, and 5) self-evaluation (Yennizar dkk., 2022). These five principles are accepted by students in every stage of activity. The implementation of these five principles is illustrated in every stage of learning to write pesantren literature, both on its ethical and political implications.

First, the ethical implications relate to the value of learning literary writing on speaking, reading, and writing skills (Amirudin dkk., 2022). Writing skills are the main achievement target because the essence of this activity is writing. The synergy between pesantren literary writing skills and critical cooperation can be seen in the following chart.

![Diagram](image)

Fig 1. Implementasi Pesantren Literature for independent curriculum

If you look at the frame of mind as well as the framework of the above activities, it can be seen that critical cooperative activities appear at every stage or turn of the writing stage. Each student in a group conveys the results of work at each stage. In addition, each student also provides ideas, criticisms, or evaluations of other friends’ work (Lumban Gaol, Morales, dkk., 2023). Of course, it is accompanied by logical assumptions. The preparation of logical assumptions is a point of critical thinking.

The activity of conveying the results of work, ideas, criticism, or evaluation is part of the speaking aspect skills (Muhammadong dkk., 2023). This aspect of speaking will continue until the final stage of writing (Pathurohman dkk., 2023). The selection of cooperative methods is very appropriate to achieve the target of speaking skills. Interaction becomes the main principle of the cooperative method.
Pesantren literature became a literary subgenre in this activity. Islamic boarding school values become the source of story ideas. Basically, the values of pesantrenan have been internalized in students. Nevertheless, students need to re-dig and process it as needed (Nida dkk., 2023). The demand for writing pesantren literature is to present daily conflicts wrapped in the nuances of pesantren. It can be said that pesantren literature is contextual literature.

To obtain Islamic boarding school values as a source of ideas, students reread existing references (Zarnuji, 2023). Not only that, teachers are also involved as mentors and validators of the values that will be taken by students (Teguh dkk., 2023). We return to the initial concept of pesantren literature as children's literature, which is to put forward the perspective of children as children. That is, the values to be selected and used must be reachable by the child.

The demand for reading can create seeds for students' habits regarding literacy. The role of the cooperative method at this stage is so important (Farid, 2023). Students exchange ideas and criticisms related to the value of the pesantrenan to be chosen. Not only that, the interaction in the cooperative can provide reading motivation between students in groups. Indirectly, when students exchange results or reading materials, other students will grow their need for reading and exchanging readings.

The ability of the reading aspect is more experienced by students at the planning stage, namely reading references related to the value of Islamic boarding schools. The maturation of ideas becomes very important because it becomes the capital of the whole writing concept. In accordance with the frame of mind chart above, the process of reading the concept of Islamic boarding school will continue to be repeated until the final stage of writing. Thus, indirectly writing activities can increase the quantity and quality of student reading. There is a literacy dynamic in this activity. The three aspects of language skills, namely speaking, reading, and writing, require an element of critical thinking. At the planning stage, the critical thinking process includes research and observation of the value of Islamic boarding schools. Then, the process of processing the results of research and observation in the form of story ideas. In this process, students are given examples of literature so that they have an overview of concepts.

The embodiment of the principle of interaction in the cooperative method becomes the main trigger for students to think critically. The indicator is that each student is able to provide an evaluation with logical assumptions and systematic delivery. Not only that, in groups students discuss to find solutions to the problems of the evaluation results.

Overall, the birth of pesantren literature can be a medium for increasing literacy in Indonesia. These three skills are relevant to the main elements and objectives of independent curriculum learning. Based on the frame of mind for the preparation of pesantren literature, students automatically learn to identify life problems and solve solutions. That is, this learning can be contextual. Second, the political implications are related to the use value of pesantren literary products. Use value relates to the production and marketing of pesantren literature. The production and marketing of pesantren literature cannot be separated from the aspect of reader acceptance. In Indonesia, pesantren literature has become popular because some works are in demand by many readers and even translated into audio visual or film forms. For example, the novel "Negeri 5 Menara" by Ahmad Fuadi, "Perempuan Berkulung Sorban" by Abidah El Khaliqy, "Cahaya Cinta Pesantren" by Ira Madan, and so on.

This decade, literary treasures in Indonesia are enlivened by the birth of pesantren literature. Overall, all pesantren literature elevates life close to the pesantren environment. The values of pesantrenan are so rich. Writers of pesantren literature, whether writers as santri/santriwati or not, experience internalization of pesantren values. On the other hand, this internalization is often not
realized by most students or santriwati. This can be seen from the process of idea discovery by students. They need a long process to concoct the value of pesantrenan in the theme of the story.

Indirectly, the value of pesantrenan is the result of literacy culture in pesantren. Pesantren literature is a product of literacy culture in faith-based schools. This can be seen from the thinking and behavior of students in taking an educational point of view. This point of view is reflected in their pesantren literary works. The products of the work are dominated by their daily stories in pesantren. The conflict that was worked on was resolved with the values of pesantrenan.

On the other hand, when this product is mass-produced and can be distributed massively, then the content in pesantren literature will be read by others. Including related to the value of Islamic boarding schools. Thus, it can be said that the literature of pesantren by students has the potential to externalize the value of pesantren. The values that the reader receives can influence him ideologically and practically. That is, this pesantren literature apart from being a product of pesantren culture also has the potential to be the creator of pesantren culture. Islamic boarding school literacy will continue to revolve, between the product and its creation.

**CONCLUSION**

The implementation of the independent curriculum in Indonesia cannot be separated from the context of potential life phenomena. The application of character values that have been internalized in the curriculum and school culture becomes an important source of learning. Likewise with the phenomenon of pesantren in Indonesia. Pesantren are cultural products of religious aspects. One of its subproducts is pesantren literature.

On the one hand, pesantren literature is a cultural product of the pesantren community. Pesantren literature is written by writers of the pesantren environment or contains about pesantren life. In the process of writing pesantren literature, there is a principle of developing critical thinking skills.

On the other hand, pesantren literary products become cultural creators in the pesantren environment or other environments. Pesantren literature has an entertaining and useful function for the implementation of an independent curriculum. This potential must be developed in Indonesia.

**AUTHORS’ CONTRIBUTION**

Author 1: Conceptualization; Project administration; Validation; Writing - review and editing; Data curation; Investigation; Formal analysis; Methodology; Writing - original draft.

**REFERENCES**


---

**Copyright Holder:**
© Joko Widodo et al. (2023)

**First Publication Right:**
© International Journal of Educational Narratives
This article is under: