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# Multicultural Education: its implication to teaching material and teacher's attitude

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## Abstract

Konsep pendidikan multikultural sebagai dimensi praktis dari multikulturalisme berakar dari konsep relativisme budaya. Tujuan utamanya adalah menyiapkan siswa dan guru agar melekat budaya sehingga mampu berfungsi secara efektif dalam budaya yang beraneka ragam. Perspektif multikultural menekankan enam level nilai: toleransi, penerimaan, penghormatan, afirmasi, solidaritas, dan kritik. Sementara itu, banyak sekolah hingga saat ini hanya sampai pada tingkat "penghormatan" pada budaya lain.

Beberapa penelitian terkait menunjukkan bahwa bahan ajar siswa masih mengandung bias etnis, agama, dan jender, sehingga tidak mencerminkan keragaman budaya siswa serta tidak mendukung perubahan sosial yang lebih menghormati keanekaragaman budaya. Keanekaragaman budaya hanya menampilkan pada "multikulturalisme turis", pengetahuan tentang nama, tempat, peristiwa dan pernak-pernik budaya.

Dalam bahan ajar, tampak bahwa bias budaya meliputi: (1) tidak ditampakkannya budaya (2) stereotipi (3) selektivitas dan ketidakseimbangan (3) tidak sesuai kenyataan (5) fragmentasi dan isolasi, dan (6) bahasa yang muncul dalam berbagai bahan ajar di sekolah. Pendidikan multikultural juga berdampak pada sikap guru: peduli dalam membantu siswa yang berbeda latarbelakang budaya untuk mengembangkan pemahaman diri dan konsep diri yang baik, peka dan memahami orang dengan berbagai budaya yang berbeda. Setiap matapelajaran yang diberikan untuk merefleksikan realitas akan keberbedaan budaya di dalam negeri maupun dalam dunia internasional.

**Keywords:** multicultural education, cultural relativism, teaching material, teacher's attitude.

## 1. Introduction

In a multicultural society as in Indonesia, multicultural education is a necessary condition. This has been acknowledged in the 1945 Constitution. This is also illustrated in the Indonesia symbol, the *Garuda Pancasila* with its motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, Unity in Diversity. However in reality the concept of

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multicultural education still need to be struggled for due to some conflicts based on prejudice and differences. This paper describes the philosophy and the concept of multicultural education, how it has been developed in other countries and in Indonesia with reference to some researches, its implication to teaching materials and teacher's attitudes, promoting multicultural education by awareness activity, and some thoughts about multicultural education in language teaching.

## 2. The Philosophy and Concepts of Multicultural Education

The way to start discussing multicultural education may be putting forward such historical roots of the concepts such as culture, plurality and multicultural. This way can make us understand about the roots and the philosophy which might be the background of multicultural education.

Culture is a way of perceiving, believing, evaluating, and behaving (Goodenough, 1976 in Gollnick and Chinn, 1983). Culture provides the blueprint that determines the way an individual thinks, feels, and behaves. Culture is so much a part of us that we do not realize that we might behave differently from others. Culture gives us our total identity through acceptable words, actions, postures, gesture, tone of voice, facial expressions, handling time, space, materials, way we work, play, express love, and defend ourselves. Culture is not only reflected in our behavior but it also determines the way that we think and feel. Culture is not innate, it is learned.

Relating to culture, there is a principle called *cultural relativism*, an attempt to understand other cultural systems in their own terms, not in terms of one's own cultural beliefs (Miller 1979 in Gollnick and Chin 1983). This ability becomes more essential than ever in the world today in which various countries and cultures are becoming more independent on the resource of others. Cultural relativism would suggest first that people need to know more about their own culture than is commonly required. Second, they need to know much more about other cultural groups.

Multicultural denotes several cultures exist in a society. Bikhu Parekh suggest that the term multicultural has three components. First, it has to do with culture. Second, it points to a plurality of cultures. And third, it refers to specific manner to responding to that plurality. Although it is debatable and not very satisfactory as a definition, what precisely constitutes a culture, if pressed, is those who use the phrase would probably speak of cultures as referring to a language, history, religious beliefs, and moral values, and a shared geographical

origin, all of which taken together define a sense of belonging to a specific group (Sunarto et. al. 2004).

Multiculturalism is based on the belief that all culture is are equally good, that there are no intercultural or universal standards or moral judgment, and that no cultural practice may be criticized, however offensive it might seem to outsiders. Then multiculturalism is based on cultural relativism.

Multicultural education might be seen as a practical dimension of multiculturalism. It is a set of concept, behavior guidance, and arena which might officially be formulated through education matters (regulation, teaching-learning methods, teacher competency, and school and society relationship) in multicultural terms. So multicultural education indicates that multicultural education (or multiculturalism in education) is an implementation dimension of multiculturalism. It is through multicultural education process that is long-term continuously implemented in different levels of schooling the expected outcome of somewhat cultural integration of the society may be accomplished.

Scholars like Banks (1989), Davidman and Davidman (1997) (in Therik, 2004) traced the historical roots of multicultural education to the struggle of oppressed groups in 1960s (particularly the African American) that challenged discriminatory practices in public institutions. One of the institutions targeted that clearly marked the enactment the discrimination act was education. In the so called civil right movement, parents and community at large called for action and reform against various forms of racial inequality faced by the blacks and other colored people. In the context of education, the movement addressed several issues such as equal opportunity and equal access for both men and women to schooling system, the acknowledgement of racial diversity and existence in education, and the claim for social reform. The feminist movement of 1970s joined the action claiming that education practiced systemic sexism, that there was no equal opportunity for women employed in education institution, that women paid less than men, and there was a lack of focus on the histories and experiences of blacks and other colored people.

Experts in multicultural education tracing the philosophy of multicultural education mentioned two great philosophers, John Dewey and John Rawls from Harvard University (Tilaar, 2004:75; Lei and Grant, 2001). John Dewey exposes cultural pluralism in the early decades of the 20th century. The presence of pluralism in culture has to be maintained on the education landscape. Dewey believes that democracy is more than a form of government, it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience.

The other philosopher, John Rawls, in his book titled "A Theory of Justice" (1972), provides a solution to the problem of political obligation, or, to put

in another way, to explain how it is and under what circumstances citizens are obligated to obey laws that the states creates. According to Rawls, a just society not only ensure "the greatest good for the greatest number" which is well known in the democracy principle. In this book Rawls stress in the importance of "self interest" of each person in a state. He provides the basic principle of justice. The first principle is: each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive basic liberty compatible with a similar liberty for others. Second: social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that (a) offices and positions must be open to everyone under conditions of *fair equality of opportunity* reasonably expected to be to every one's advantage, and (b) they are to be of the greatest benefit to the least-advantaged members of society (Rawls, 1972: 303 in Suseno, 1991: 75). His thought that first was for political and law matters has spread to other fields of life, including education.

Multicultural education is a concept, a framework, a way of thinking, a philosophical viewpoint, a value orientation, and a set of criteria for making decision that better serve the educational needs of culturally diverse population (Frazier, Garcia, Grant, in Tilaar 2004). Gorski (Budianta, 2004) defined multicultural education as a progressive approach for transforming education that holistically critiques and addresses current shortcomings, failings, and discriminatory practices in education. It is grounded in ideals of social justice, education equity, and a dedication to facilitating educational experiences in which all students reach their full potential as learners and as socially aware and active beings, locally, nationally, and globally. Multicultural education acknowledges that schools are essential to laying the foundation for the transformation of society and the elimination of oppression and injustice.

A major goal of multicultural education is to prepare culturally literate student who can function effectively in their own cultural milieu, the macro-culture, and other macro-cultures (Banks, 1981 in Gollinick and Chinns, 1983). The ability to function effectively in multiple culture is desirable. For a teacher, this ability is essential in helping all students reach their physical and intellectual potentials. We live in a world that is becoming increasingly interdependent on other cultures with most of us are culturally illiterate. Thus it is both desirable and essential that we become culturally literate and learn to prepare students to function effectively in multicultural settings.

Nieto (1992, in Good and Brophy 2005:562) argues that a multicultural perspective is consistent with the pluralistic value of society. However, he emphasizes that a multicultural perspective can be analyzed from at least four different levels: tolerance; acceptance; respect; and affirmation, solidarity, and critique.

The first level, tolerance is the capacity to endure something while not necessarily embracing it. What is tolerated today may be rejected tomorrow. Thus tolerance is the lowest level of multicultural education in the school. It suggests that linguistic and cultural differences are tolerated as the inescapable obligation of a culturally pluralistic society.

Acceptance is the next level dealing with diversity, and it suggests that at a minimum we acknowledge differences without denying their importance. If schools accepts diversity, programs acknowledging students' language and cultures would be visible in the school (e.g. perhaps a transitional bilingual program that uses students' primary language) and acceptance might suggest that some differences are celebrated (e.g. multicultural fairs, cookbooks)

Respect is the third level of multicultural education. When diversity is respected, it provides an organizing base for much of the school program. For example, teacher might offer program of bilingual education using students; native language not only as a bridge to English but also throughout their education. Students' values and experiences would be used as a basis for literacy development and students would be exposed to different ways of approaching the same reality.

Affirmation, solidarity, and critique together are the highest level of multicultural education. According to Nieto, it means accepting the culture and language of students and their families as legitimate and embracing them as valid vehicles for learning. It also means understanding the culture is not fixed or unchanged, and thus one is able to critique its manifestations and outcomes. Because multicultural education is concerned with equality and social justice for all people, and because basic values of different groups are diametrically opposed, conflict is inevitable. Passively accepting the status quo of any culture is inconsistent with multicultural education.

There are five concepts of multicultural education put forth by Paul Gorski and Bob Covert (Therik, in Sunarto 2004):

- 1) Every student must have an equal opportunity to achieve her/his full potential.
- 2) Every student must be prepared to competently participate in an increasingly intercultural society
- 3) Teachers must be prepared to effectively facilitate learning for every individual student, no matter how culturally similar or different from her or himself.
- 4) Schools must be active participants in ending oppression of all types, first by ending oppression within their own walls, then by reducing socially and critically active and aware students.

- 5) Education must become more fully student-oriented and inclusive of the voices and experiences of the students.

### 3. Multicultural Education in Other Countries

Multicultural education needs a throughout study regarding the concept and praxis of its performance. Yet, since we do not have the experience to develop this multicultural education, we have to study various aspects of its philosophy, methodology, its content and its challenge in its performance. Many countries in the world have started to carry out multicultural education. It is best to learn from the experiences of those countries such as the US and South Africa in carrying out multicultural education in a pluralistic society in the global era at present.

Multiculturalism cannot get rid of the social context. In the USA, for example, multicultural education is growth because of the unsatisfied feeling in the segregation practices and race discrimination growing there. In the USA, the field of multicultural education began in the 1960s and in the mist of social protest over civic and economic inequality for segments of the population who have consistently faced structural and cultural discrimination based on their religion, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. The landmark decision of Supreme Court started to abolish segregation in the school and by the issuing of Civil Right Bill in 1964 there is no racism in American society.

Multicultural education as an educational movement, sought accordingly to transform the existing educational structure to provide equal access, representation, and outcome for all students. Since its inception, multicultural education has continued to be surrounded by controversy, criticism, and conflict. It may seem odd, especially in a country known for its ideals of liberty and tensions and attacks. This paradox points to the need to disentangle the various meaning of *equality* and *equal education* (Lei and Grant, 2001).

During the decade of the 1980s, a second generation of multicultural education scholars were completing their graduate programs, taking university and college jobs, and beginning to contribute to the scholarship of multicultural education. Additionally, although there was still opposition to multicultural research for professors seeking promotion and tenure, this opposition slowly began to lose its force and there was a decided increase in multicultural curriculum materials and text on multicultural education. Furthermore, teacher candidate were completing coursework that included some attention to multicultural education.

During 1980s, there was an increase in urban school districts's demand for attention to multicultural (race, class, gender) issues in textbooks and other

curriculum materials. In addition, a growing number of teachers were more tolerant of and were requesting staff development on multicultural education. For many of these teachers, the changes in students demographics, the need to bridge the cultural differences between them and their students, the need to better manage their classes, and the need for employment demanded that they give multicultural education a chance.

In the USA the primary model to do multicultural education is the revision of textbooks to be more inclusive of the contributions of diverse cultural groups (Budianta, in Sunarto et al., 2004). Nevertheless, how successful this program of textbook revision in adhering to multicultural perspective is still to be seen. A number of critics have pointed out that the curriculum revision done in multicultural education in Britain, Australia, and Canada, is limited to adding information about minority group. The new information also reveals ethnocentric biases of the dominant culture in perceiving minority culture as "exotic" (Budianta in Sunarto et al., 2004).

The second model of multicultural education concerns not only with revision of teaching materials but also with total reform of the whole education system. In the U.S, the policy of affirmative action covers the selection of students to the recruitment of teachers and staff in order to correct structural inequality in society. Cross-cultural sensitivity workshop is done inside as well as outside schools for the larger public in order to enhance tolerance and to reduce inter-group prejudice.

In Japan, human rights activists engage in political activism to revise Japanese history, especially period that deals with Japan's role in the WW II in Asia. They insist on revising text book materials for students. Although this effort is still met with much resistance, by the Japanese government as well as from many conservative groups, the controversy has helped to introduce a more reflective perspective on war and the exploitation of women as Iugun Ianfu (Grant and Lei 2001)

In South Africa, multicultural education is growth because of the reaction to the anti-racism implement by apartheid policy of the government. South Africa is a multicultural society. However, before the 1994 transition to democracy little account of the multiethnic, multilingual, and multicultural nature of South African society. Indeed, the state catered almost exclusively to the White, Christian, and Afrikaans. It is not surprising therefore, that South Africa was a highly polarized and divided society. Many people had been disposed of their land, had had their language and culture marginalized, and had suffered gross human rights violations Divisions existed stressed between black and White. Inequality was raised because of the color discrimination (Sarkin in Grant and

Lei, 2001). Just in 1994 a National of Ministry of Education was established to administer a unitary school system. The new system made education compulsory for all children for the first time, without discriminating students based on their color and race.

#### **4. Multicultural Education in Indonesia**

##### **4.1 Indonesia' s policy on multicultural education**

Where is the place of multicultural education in the framework of education in Indonesia? To answer this question, first we have to study whether the 1945 Constitution has a guideline to develop multicultural education. Furthermore, we also have to study the framework of implementing Law No 20 of 2003 concerning National Education System, whether it has also a guideline to the development of multicultural education.

Scrutinizing the 1945 Constitution, it is found that the relation between education and culture is apparently written in one chapter (Chapter XIII) with two articles, article 31 and article 32. It is written in the explanation of article 32 that national culture is the crown of the cultures of the local cultures. From both articles and their respective explanation, the importance of culture in education is clearly acknowledged.

In the 1945 Constitution the diversity of Indonesian people is acknowledged. This is also illustrated in the Indonesia symbol, the Garuda Pancasila with its motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, Unity in Diversity. However in reality what at present tendency is emphasizing the diversity while less attention is given to unity of the Indonesian society. Between diversity and unity a harmonious and balanced relation has to be developed so that we do not fall into extremes paradigm which give priority to either diversity for unity. Harmony between the two poles can only be overcome through the process of education planted into the young generation. The planting of harmonious attitude can not be done by introduction but has to be done through a process of a change in attitude through awareness and knowledge of cultural values in one's own environment which is then upgraded by knowing culture of various communities and in the end knowing and being aware towards togetherness of the values owned by the Indonesian people as a whole.

In the Law No. 20/ 2003 on National Education System, it is found that there is no article stating the necessity for multicultural education. In the formulation, in the foundation, goals, as well as the function of article 2 and 3, the necessity to know and maintain diverse cultural values in the Indonesian society is not exclusively stated.

According to Tilaar (2004), only the intelligence of Indonesian people is able to develop an intelligent Indonesian society. This is in accordance with what has been explained above regarding the objective of education, which is to create intelligent Indonesian people. Multicultural Education means to develop intelligent personalities who can take the right and effective decision in the diverse communal life in the Indonesian society. Without personalities who possess a tolerant attitude, democratic, acknowledge human rights or value the dignity of man, it is impossible to materialize a just and prosperous society.

#### **4.2. Research and practices on multicultural education: some examples**

- a. A research conducted by Saifudin in 2002 at 30 SMP located in 5 provinces found that students who shows that textbook, course outlines as well as items in the national final examinations, we indeed find indications pointing to the need for multicultural education. The content of these materials often show ethnic, religious, and gender biases on the part of the author. We often find, for example, religious or ethnic bias in the choice of names in the texts and illustrations, gender bias in the depiction of roles, and urban regional bias in the depiction of events, places and organizations. (Sunarto et al., 2004)

There are indeed indications that the authors of past and present teaching materials have shown concern for society diversity. The materials contain, for instance, call for inter-religious tolerance. On the whole, however, the information about cultural diversity is limited to knowledge about names, places, events, and cultural items, such as the names of regional kingdoms and their rules, dates of regional revolts against Dutch colonial rules, names of traditional dresses and dances. This is a form of multicultural education labeled by Derman – Sparks as “tourist multiculturalism” (Aldridge, Calhoun and Aman, 2000 in Budianta, 2004). Whereas Banks called it as “contribution approach.”. Contribution approach focuses on heroes, holidays, and discrete cultural elements. According to the Banks’ classification, this approach is the lowest level in a four-level approach toward multicultural education reform.

- b. In Indonesia, some school experiment with short-live in programs to allow students, especially from the more privileged classes, to experience and interact with communities of different background. The Iskandar Muda Integrationist School in Medan facilitates the interaction of students from different cultural backgrounds and introduces a program that encourages foster parents to sponsor students from different group. This practice is an example of the second model of multicultural education, total reform of

the whole education system, not only reduced the concept as “ a set of teaching materials with pedagogical program”, but also comprehend the concept of multicultural education as “a philosophy, a methodology for educational reform” (Budianta 2004). The model shows the important role of educational institutions as a medium for change.

- c. Project by Universitas Atmajaya Jakarta. *Pusat Kajian Pembangunan Masyarakat (PKPM) Universitas Katolik Atmajaya*, with fund aid from US Embassy has developed Multicultural Education Model in primary school level. There are 8 primary schools as examples: 4 state primary school and 4 religion-based primary schools (Islam, Catholic, Protestant, and Buddha). The materials used are books and film serial from Pustaka Anak Nusantara which is designed to do multicultural education by *Visi Anak Bangsa*. The students are asked to watch documenter film about the life of other children from other tribe/ethnic. After that, they are asked to discuss, making hand-made accessories, singing, and retell the story they have watched. The result is, the knowledge and attitude of students changes. They show new values in viewing difference ([www.atmajaya.ac.id](http://www.atmajaya.ac.id)).

## 5. Implication for Teaching Materials and Teacher's Attitudes

What was more difficult than defining multicultural education is determining how to do multicultural education? “Celebrating diversity” was a more appealing and acceptable way of doing multicultural education. Many schools do celebratory activities in schools, and usually take a “tourist” approach of only focusing on foods, holidays, and clothes. But according to Banks (1989, in Therik 2004), the shaping of multicultural education should begin with creating a multicultural environment in which policies, teacher's attitudes, materials, counseling and teaching styles should be transformed for the benefit of all groups in the school. By doing so, a multicultural education system is promoting social change.

In this paper, without neglecting other aspect that promote multicultural education, I only focus on doing multicultural education in teaching material and teacher behavior, as well as teaching-learning activities. The other aspects (such as multicultural environment, counseling and teaching styles) will be better written after doing site visit at some schools.

Why teaching materials I discuss here, because there is a wise words: “you are what you read”. If students are provided with books containing biases (class, gender, ethnicity and religion), then they will grow as a human with prejudice and negative thinking to other people who are different to them. Di-

iversity and richness of culture are not enough when they are covered in cultural symbols such as clothing and arts.

The reason of discussing teacher attitude in promoting multicultural education is, that teacher is the most important person in teaching-learning activities. Especially for students in primary and secondary school, their attitude would be a "model" for the students.

### **5.1. Implication for teaching materials**

One of the problems in depending so heavily to the textbook for classroom instruction is that many educators never suspect the validity of its content. We read the information as if it were unquestionably accurate and usually are not encouraged to question its validity. Consequently, it is difficult to begin reading critically for multicultural content and sensitivity. To provide multicultural education, educators first need to examine critically the materials used in the classroom. We must be able to recognize the biases that often exist in such materials and develop instructional strategies to counteract those biases. Sadker and Sadker (1978) identified six biases in classrooms materials. These biases include: (1) invisibility, (2) stereotyping, (3) selectivity and imbalance, (3) unreality, (5) fragmentation and isolation; and (6) language.

The first biases, invisibility, means that certain microculture are underrepresented in materials. This omission implies that these groups have less value, importance, and significance in the society (Sadker and Sadker 1976 in Gollnick and Chinn 1983).

The second bias, stereotyping, assign traditional and rigid roles or attributes to a group. It denies a knowledge of diversity, complexity, and variety of individuals. Stereotyping occurs across cultural groups. Probably the most common occurrence is in the area of vocational and career choices, especially for men, women, and handicapped individuals.

The third bias, selectivity and imbalance, occurs when issues and situations are interpreted from only one perspective, usually the perspective of the majority group. Such biases prevent all students – majority and minority, male and female – from realizing the complexity of historical and contemporary situations and development.

The forth bias is unreality. Textbooks frequently present an unrealistic portrayal of our history and contemporary life experiences. This unrealistic coverage denies children the information needed to recognize, understand, and perhaps someday conquer the problems that plague our society. When sensi-

tive or unpleasant issues, such as racism, sexism, and prejudice. Discrimination, intergroup conflict, divorce, and death, are not included in instructional materials, students are not provided guidance in handling such complex issues. Contemporary problems faced by the handicapped or aged are often disguised or simply not included. American Indian for example, in discussion and illustration are often pictured in historical rather than a contemporary context.

The fifth bias, fragmentation and isolation, is the way in which some publishers include some of micro-cultures in instructional materials. Issues, contributions, and information about various groups are separated from the regular text and discussed in a section or chapter of their own. The same phenomenon occurs when members of specific micro-cultural group are only illustrated interacting among themselves and having little influence on society as a whole. Society is multicultural and it is important that the materials and textbooks reflect diversity as a part of the total text rather than discussing micro-culture in a separate section. The sixth bias is language. Examples of linguistic bias in materials include the use of masculine pronouns or only Anglo names throughout the book (in England, many materials are lack of Spanish, Polish, African, and other non-Anglo names).

Here are the alternatives for some common words and phrases:

Common words-phrase	Alternative word-phrase
Mankind	Humanity, human beings, human race, people
Primitive man	Primitive people, primitive man and woman
Man-made	Artificial, synthetic, manufactured
Congressmen	Member of Congress, representative
Businessmen	Business executive, business manager
Fireman	Fire fighter
Mailman	
Salesman	Sales representative. Salesperson, clerk
Insurance man	Insurance agent
Statesman	Leader, public servant
Policeman	Police officer
Chairman	Presiding officer, chair, head, leader, coordinator, chairperson, moderator.

The emphasis on the selection of multicultural materials is extremely important. It means exposing students to the nature of this country. All students—regardless of where they live or their religious or ethnic background—should know that other individuals come from different cultural background. Unless they help students understand the multicultural nature of a society, educators are not being honest about the world in which the students live.

## **5.2. Implication for teacher's attitudes**

The development and use of multicultural materials and curriculum are important and necessary steps toward providing multicultural education. Alone, however, these steps are not enough. A teacher's behavior in the classrooms is the key factor in helping all students reach their potential, regardless of sex, ethnicity, age, religion, language, or exceptionality.

To prepare culturally literate students, teachers must be concerned with helping students to develop (a) good self concept and self-understanding; (2) sensitivity to and understanding of others, including cultural groups in a nation and other nation; (3) the ability to perceive and understand multiple, sometimes conflicting, cultural and national interpretations of and perspectives on events, values, and behavior; (4) the ability to make decisions and take effective action based on a multicultural analysis and synthesis; (5) open minds when addressing issues; and (6) understanding the process of stereotyping, a low degree of stereotypical thinking, and pride in self and respect for all people (Gollnick and Chinn, 1983:30).

As educators, teachers face a tremendous challenge in the next decade to effectively use the cultural diversity brought to the classroom by the students. Every subject area can be taught to reflect the reality of cultural differences in this nation and the world. Skills to function effectively in different cultural settings can also be taught. For students to function effectively in a democratic society, they must learn about the inequities that currently exist.

Teachers must teach all children. The ultimate goal of multicultural education is to enable educators to meet the individual learning needs of their students so that they can progress to their fullest potential. This goal can only be accomplished by understanding the cultural strengths brought to class by students from diverse cultural backgrounds and using these cultural advantages to develop effective instructional strategies.

In addition, the teacher who is enthusiastic about multicultural education will be more likely to use multicultural materials and encourage students to

develop more egalitarian views. In a project designed to promote sex equality in kindergarten, researchers found that teacher enthusiasm was a key factor in affecting attitudinal change of both boys and girls at all levels (Guttentag and Bray, 1976 in Gollnick and Chinn 1983). Other studies have found that warmer and more enthusiastic teachers produce students with greater achievement gains. These teachers also solicit better affective responses from students, which leads to classrooms with more positive atmosphere than others. Warmth of the teacher seems to be especially important with disadvantage students and students who are targets of prejudice and discrimination. Educational research also shows that minority students, particularly Blacks and Mexican Americans, sometimes are treated significantly different from white students by their teachers. White students receive more opportunities to participate in instructional interactions and receive more praise, encouragement, and reinforcement than minority students. Minority students receive fewer opportunities to participate, and the opportunities usually are of a lesser substantive nature (Brophy and Good, 1974 in Gollnick and Chinn 1983).

Brophy and Good (1974) describes six attributes of good teachers:

- 1) They enjoy teaching
- 2) They view their main responsibility as teaching
- 3) They know that critical aspects of teaching are task presentation, diagnosis, remediation, and enrichment
- 4) They expect all students to meet at least the minimum specified objectives
- 5) They expect students to enjoy learning
- 6) They expect to deal with individuals, not groups or stereotypes.

These six characteristics are essential in multicultural teaching. In order to provide the greatest assistance to all students, teachers will not be able to provide the same treatment to each student, since the teacher should be working toward meeting individual needs and differences. However, teachers must be sure that they are not treating students differently because of students' membership in certain micro-culture.

The suggestions above were designed to help teachers become more aware and sensitive to the importance of their behavior in the provision of equitable education. By eliminating bias from the teaching process and becoming a proactive teacher who seeks ways to best meet the needs of individual students, the classroom can become a stimulating experience for most students, regardless of their cultural background and experiences.

There are a number of actions that teachers should undertake to prepare themselves to provide multicultural education in the classroom. First, they should

know their own cultural identity and the degree to which they identify with the various micro-cultures of which they are members. Second, they should be able to accept the fact that they have some prejudices that may affect the way they react to students in the classroom. When they recognize these bias. They can develop strategies to overcome or compensate for them in the classroom.

Teachers need to learn about cultural groups other than their own. They might (1) read about different cultural groups (2) attend ethnic movies or plays (3) participate in ethnic celebrations (4) visit different ethnic community. And (5) interact with members of different group. If teachers enjoy reading novels. They should select ones by authors from different cultural backgrounds. The perspective presented may be much different from one's own. Novels may help the reader to understand that other people's experiences may lead them to react to situations much differently than the reader would. It is often an advantage to discuss one's reactions to such new experiences with someone else in order to clarify one's own feelings of prejudices or stereotypes.

Teachers should make an effort to interact with persons who are culturally different from themselves. Long-term cultural experiences are probably the most effective means for overcoming fear and misconceptions about a group. One must remember, however, that there is much diversity within a group. One cannot generalize the characteristics of a few persons to the total group. In direct cross-cultural contacts one must learn to be open to the traditions and perspectives of the other culture in order to learn from experiences. Otherwise, one's own traditions, habits, and perspectives are likely to be projected as better than just different. If individuals can learn to understand and empathy with a second culture, they will have had a valuable experience. If they learn to live multiculturally, they are indeed fortunate.

Teachers face a tremendous challenge in the next decade to use effectively the cultural diversity brought to the classroom by students. Knowledge in every subject area can be taught to reflect the reality of cultural differences in this nation and the world. Skills to function effectively in different cultural settings can also be taught. To help students to function effectively in a democratic society, they must learn about the inequities that currently exist. Otherwise, our society will never be able to overcome such inequities.

## **6. Promoting Multicultural Education by Awareness Activity**

According to Anita Lie (Kompas, September 1 2006), multicultural education is begin with knowing, aware, respect and appreciate of oneself (includ-

ing the institutions which forms the "self", such as family and the closest environment). Step by step, according to the development of children and education level, the respect to the self will be enlarged and developed to the respect to other people.

Awareness of oneself, recognizing oneself is an important step and must be done with honesty. If this step cannot be done safely, and the environment doesn't support this step (still prejudice and discriminatory), one will undergo a mentally unsatisfactory. It will go deeper until one becomes adult person.

One of a touchy experience would be quoted here, from a book written by a famous writer, Sindhunata, which its titled is *Kambing Hitam, Teori Rene Girard*. In this book, the writer reflects his experience of being prejudiced and discriminated because of his ethnicity (Chinese).

*Saya Cina tapi asing terhadap Cina. Saya merasa sangat sepi, karena saya merasa, aya pun terasing total dari lingkungan Cina yang sekarang ini ada di sekitar saya.... Saya merasa tersiksa dalam batin karena menjadi Cina dan lebih parah lagi, saya terasing dengan diri saya sendiri karena kecinaan saya itu.. Dengan bimbingan seorang professor teologi Yesuit, saya mulai sadar selama ini saya tidak bisa menerima kecinaan saya, sebab saya tidak bisa menerima ketidakadilan yang ditimpakan kepada saya.*

*Wajah saya adalah wajah Jawa. Kumpul dengan Jawa, saya dianggap Jawa. Mereka menjelek-jelekkkan Cina di hadapan saya. Mereka tak tahu bahwa saya Cina, mana dengan seenaknya mencaci Cina. Tapi saya tak bisa menyalahkan mereka, karena mereka tak tahu siapa saya. Lebih tidak enak lagi, ketika mereka kemudian tahu bahwa saya Cina, padahal di hadapan saya, mereka telah menjelek-jelekkkan Cina. Mereka kemudian punya perasaan bersalah padahal mereka tidak bermaksud menyakiti hati saya.*

*Kumpul dengan Cina, mereka tidak bisa menerima saya sepenuhnya, seperti kalau mereka menerima orang Cina sesama mereka. Saya sendiri adalah Cina, mengapa mereka tidak bisa menerima saya sepenuhnya? Naluri kecinaan saya menjeritkan tuntutan itu, tetapi sesama saya yang Cina tak memenuhi tuntutan itu, tak bisa menerima saya sepenuhnya, karena saya yang Cina ini dianggap Jawa. Betapa menyedihkan penolakan ini. Dengan kelompok Cina yang tahu bahwa saya ini Cina, mereka secara terang-terangan menjelek-jelekkkan Jawa. Ini pun menimbulkan rasa sedih tak terkira, karena makian itu tak seluruhnya benar. Banyak orang Jawa yang baik,*

lebih baik dari orang Cina, jauh lebih pasrah dan tidak seserakah Cina.

*Lalu apa yang harus saya perbuat? Saya berpendapat, entah Jawa atau Cina, kalau mereka merasa diri sebagai manusia yang baik, tentu mereka harus menerima diri saya apa adanya, tanpa harus terlebih dahulu memperkenalkan diri bahwa saya ini ini Cina, supaya saya bisa diterima oleh Cina di satu pihak atau disalahpahami oleh Jawa di lain pihak. Maka saya tak peduli lagi: orang tahu saya Cina, terserah. Orang tidak tahu saya Cina, ya sudah. Untuk sampai pada kesadaran itu, tentu saya memerlukan proses yang panjang, hampir sepanjang hidup saya. Saya berpaling ke dalam, mencari diri saya yang sesungguhnya. Dan ternyata di dalam hati saya ada harta yang tidak bisa diukur dengan Cina atau Jawa. Harta itu adalah cinta Tuhan terhadap saya, lepas dari apakah saya Cina atau Jawa....*

The activities below are some examples of awareness activities to promote multicultural understanding for multicultural education:

- a. **Exchanging Stories – Names.** This activity works toward bringing stories of individuals to the fore of multicultural experience. Participants are asked to write short stories about their names, including: who gave their name, why; what is the ethnic origin of their name, what they do prefer to be called and why.
- b. **Sharing stories : prejudice activity.** This activity' objectives are to help individuals explore how they first become conscious of prejudice and discrimination and the feelings associated with it; and to make participants aware that everyone has experienced prejudice and discrimination and that it comes in a variety forms (not just racial).

The teacher's role is important to the affective activities in promoting multicultural education. Teacher should be free to reveal their feelings and opinions in the discussions. However, Simon, Howe, and Kirschenbaum (in Richard-Amato (2003), believe that these revelations should occur only at certain times, preferably at the end of the discussion, after students have had a chance to think things through and express their own points of view. Teachers should share their values but not impose them. In this way, teacher present themselves as adults who prize, choose, and act according to the valuing process. Teachers have same opportunities to share values as any other members of the class. The particular content of teachers' values holds no more weigh than that of others.

## 7. Multicultural Education in Language teaching

As far as I have searched for, researches on multicultural education have been done in general, not focused in English teaching. So, I have rather difficulties in relating multicultural education and language education, especially in English education. However, in my opinion, language is a part of culture, and many aspect of language can be observed from multicultural point of view. Here I try to deal with only two aspects of language: 1) communication and 2) materials in teaching language.

Communication as a part of language expression might be studied in a multicultural point of view. Even this is a very important aspect of language in a pluralist society. Indonesian students, most of whom are already proficient in a particular language by the time they enter school, appear to adapt themselves to the nationally standardized curriculum of to the use of the Indonesian language with relative ease. Most students are multilingual in the sense that, except in the early stages at elementary school where ethnic language can still be used, the Indonesian language is used as the medium of instruction at all educational levels, while in high school they also required to master at least one foreign language. However, a number of observers of multicultural education have observed that problems of intercultural communication tend to develop whenever students and teachers come from different social or cultural backgrounds. The problems are often of a cultural nature (differences in language use, intonation, etc).

Difference ways of communicating emerge as an impact of different cultures. Some ethnic groups may, for instance, speak rapidly, loudly with a high intonation and "impolitely", while others may speak softly, slowly, and "politely". Different ways of communication are common in society. The differences in intonation, speed, and diction produced by sub-tribes are mainly influenced by the origin of the settlements or regions. In Dayak (*orang laut*) communities for example, their habit of speaking out loud or fast developed when they had to speak to each other while rowing their boat. Because the sound of flowing water is noisy they have to speak loud so they can hear each other. In some regions or parts, on the other hand, the Dayak (*orang ulu*) speak softly, rythmly, and politely. These groups usually come from the coastal areas or downstream areas.

Communication is significantly different between different culture group. The different ways of conveying massages in each ethnic group may be regarded as impolite or insulting for another ethnic group. It can be proven that some of the social conflict in Kalimantan Barat were caused by misinterpreta-

tion in communication It has been observed that there have been 14 conflicts, 12 conflicts are between Madurese-Dayak, and two conflicts are between Malay-Dayak ((Sada in Sunarto et. al. 2004). A social conflict between Dayak and Madurese (1993) for example, was caused by a joke between two boys who were in fact friends. One felt so insulted by the other boy that he stabbed the other boy with a knife. Thus communication, if interpreted by a person from a different culture, can be socially biased.

Communication through language, as one aspect of culture, should be managed properly and accurately. "Friendly" communication between ethnic group from different cultures should be nurtured. Dealing with English education, English as second language, communication among different students from different background (ethnicity, social economic status, etc) should be encouraged in a risk-free environment where student's experiences and contributions are respected. When students feel good about themselves and their relationship with their peers and the teacher. It is the collaborative social environment that supports language development.

Dealing with materials in teaching language (Indonesian language and English language) in school, there are still many biases in the materials. Concerning with gender as a matter of diversity (male and female) – whereas multicultural education respects for diversity – it is found that there are gender biases including: role division, male dominance, profession separation, stereotyping. Especially for English materials for Elementary School at the 3rd grade through 5th grade, it is found that role division (ex: men's profession as a doctor, police; female's profession as a nurse, housewife) is 75 %; stereotyping (male is seen from the strength, woman is seen as her beauty is 16 %; and male dominance (male as the owner of property) is 9%. (Djiwandono and Imaningrum, 2001).

## **8. Conclusion**

Multicultural education in Indonesia is still facing many challenges. It is needed more researches about what strategy might be best done in the context of Indonesia. Also in language education, there still many chances to be researched, as language is a part of culture. Teachers and administrators need to become aware that students they instruct come from diverse cultures and that individual development both within family and within schools is heavily influenced by the community context in which the students socialized. The way the school deals with student diversity in culture and language has important implications for students' affect and school performance.

Teachers can do a great deal to promote student growth by accepting student diversity in their classrooms. They must foster freedom of expression in learning process. In English course, for example, while it is necessary that all students learn how to express themselves through the use of Standard English in speaking, they should be encouraged to engage in various means of expression which may reflect individual or cultural strength.

Some books (novel, essay, poem) written based on the same experience can be analyzed as examples of doing awareness activity in multicultural education perspective, from the point of view of the person undergoing such experience. In literature course for example, teachers can provide books containing experience in being prejudiced and discriminated. For example, a novel written by Elie Wiesel ("Night") that has won nobel prize which told the discriminatory behavior of Nazi to Jews, books written by Pramudya Ananta Toer ("Bumi Manusia", "Soal Hoa Kiau di Indonesia"), "Kambing Hitam, Teori Rene Girard", by Sindhunata, or other famous writers who live in mixed culture and have deep concern in this matter (such as the writers above), can be provided as the materials for doing awareness activities.

Other course such as PKN (Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan) is certainly a good means to develop multicultural education. In this course the teachers should be creative in teaching-learning activities. Not only teach the concepts of diversity and multiculturalism in every aspect, they also should show willingness and understanding in their student's cultural diversity.

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