



Analysis Study of Paulo Freire's Thoughts and its Application in Elementary Education

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Abstract: The application of Freire's thinking in the context of elementary education can be seen through a dialogical and critical approach in teaching. Teachers not only convey knowledge, but also act as facilitators who help students to think critically and be actively involved in the learning process. The type of research used in this study is library research. Data sources in this library research consist of two categories: 1). Primary Data Sources: The main books written by Paulo Freire, especially Pedagogy of the Oppressed (1970). 2). Secondary Data Sources: Scientific articles, journals and research reports that discuss the application of Freire's thinking in elementary education. The results of the study show that 1). Critical Conscientization in Elementary Education is a process in which individuals understand the social and political injustices around them. 2). Dialogical Education in Elementary Education is a key element in education, where teachers and students learn from each other through two-way communication. 3). Humanistic and Inclusive Education in Elementary Education is where every student is valued as an individual who has the potential to develop, without discrimination based on social and economic background. 4). Implications for Basic Education in Indonesia are that the recently introduced independent curriculum gives teachers and students more freedom to explore subject matter flexibly, in accordance with the principles of liberating and dialogical education as taught by Freire.

Keywords: Paulo Freire's Thoughts, Implementation, Elementary Education

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Introduction

Paulo Freire's thinking in basic education has a significant influence, especially in the context of education oriented towards individual liberation and empowerment. Freire developed an educational approach that emphasizes the importance of dialogue, critical of social reality, and active participation of students in the learning process. In this context, education is not only seen as a transfer of knowledge, but as a tool to free individuals from injustice and oppression. Freire argued that education should encourage students to think critically and participate in social change (Ashar, 2023; Madhakomala et al., 2022).

Freire argued that education should be dialogic, where teachers and students engage in a mutually

beneficial learning process. In his view, good education is education that not only teaches knowledge, but also builds students' critical awareness of their social environment. This is in line with the concept of liberation education promoted by Freire, which emphasizes the importance of students understanding and criticizing existing social conditions (Ashar, 2023; Madhakomala et al., 2022). In the context of primary education, the application of these principles can help students to develop critical thinking skills and social skills necessary to participate in society (Madhakomala et al., 2022; Desstya et al., 2018).

One important aspect of Freire's thinking is the concept of "banking education," where traditional education is often seen as a process of storing

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information into students' minds without actively involving them. Freire criticized this approach and encouraged more interactive and participatory educational methods. In the context of primary education, the application of this method can be done through activities that involve discussion, collaboration, and exploration of new ideas, so that students feel more involved and have a voice in their learning process (Ashar, 2023; Madhakomala et al., 2022; Dessty et al., 2018).

The application of Freire's thinking in the basic education curriculum in Indonesia can be seen in the development of the Merdeka Curriculum, which gives students the freedom to choose the learning method that best suits their needs and interests. This curriculum reflects the educational principles proposed by Freire, where students are given space to actively participate in the learning process and develop their critical thinking (Madhakomala et al., 2022; Dessty et al., 2018). Thus, basic education is not only a place to gain knowledge, but also an arena for developing character and social skills needed in everyday life.

Freire also emphasized the importance of social and cultural context in education. He argues that education should be relevant to students' lives and take into account their cultural backgrounds. In the context of primary education, this means that the curriculum should include materials that reflect students' experiences and realities, so that they can see the connection between what they are learning and their everyday lives (Ashar, 2023; Madhakomala et al., 2022). In this way, education can be a tool to empower students and help them understand their place in society.

Freire believed that education should encourage students to become agents of change in society. In the context of basic education, this means that students are not only taught to receive information, but also to develop the ability to analyze and criticize existing social conditions. Thus, education can serve as a means to build social awareness and encourage students' active participation in social change efforts. Freire also emphasized the importance of reflection in the educational process. He argued that students should be encouraged to reflect on their experiences and relate them to the knowledge they have acquired. In the context of primary education, this can be done through activities that encourage students to think critically about their experiences and how they relate to the material being studied. In this way, students can develop a deeper understanding of the world around them and how they can contribute to its change (Ashar, 2023; Madhakomala et al., 2022; Dessty et al., 2018).

In addition, Freire also underlines the importance of inclusive education, where all students, regardless of their social, economic, or cultural background, have equal access to quality education. In the context of basic education, this means that the curriculum must be designed to meet the needs of all students, including those with special needs. Thus, education can be a tool to reduce social injustice and provide equal opportunities for all individuals to develop (Ashar, 2023; Madhakomala et al., 2022).

Paulo Freire's thinking offers a powerful and relevant perspective for primary education. By emphasizing the importance of dialogue, active participation, and social awareness, Freire provides a framework that can help create a more inclusive and empowering learning environment. The application of these principles in the primary education curriculum in Indonesia, as seen in the Merdeka Curriculum, shows the potential to create a generation that is more critical, socially aware, and ready to contribute to society (Madhakomala et al., 2022; Dessty et al., 2018). Therefore, it is important for educators and policymakers to continue to integrate Freire's thinking in their educational practices, in order to create a more equitable and sustainable education system.

Method

The type of research used in this study is library research. Literature research is a type of research conducted by collecting and analyzing various relevant literature sources, such as books, scientific articles, journals, and other documents. This research does not involve field data, but instead uses written materials to analyze Paulo Freire's thoughts and how they are applied in primary education.

The data sources in this library research consist of two categories: 1). Primary Data Sources: The main books written by Paulo Freire, especially *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970). In addition, works from other authors that directly discuss or criticize Freire's thoughts are also part of the primary data sources. 2). Secondary Data Sources: Scientific articles, journals and research reports that discuss the application of Freire's thoughts in elementary education. This includes literature that analyzes Freire's contribution to education, both in theory and practice in various countries.

The data collection technique in this library research is carried out through several stages: 1). Literature Search: Identifying relevant literature sources through searching academic databases, libraries, and digital platforms such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, and others. 2). Document Collection: Collecting various documents, books, articles, journals, and other

academic sources that are relevant to the research topic and 3). Data Classification: After document collection, the data is classified based on relevance to certain subtopics, such as banking- style education , dialogic education, critical awareness (conscientization), and examples of application in basic education.

Data analysis in this literature study uses content analysis techniques . This technique involves the following stages: 1). Reading and Understanding: Reading in depth and understanding the main works of Paulo Freire and supporting literature related to his thoughts on education and their application in elementary education. 2). Theme Identification: Identifying the main themes of Freire's thoughts, such as liberating education, banking- style education , dialogue in education, and critical consciousness. 3). Classification and Interpretation: Grouping data based on these themes and interpreting to see how Freire's thoughts are applied in elementary education in various contexts, both from primary and secondary literature and 4). Synthesis: Integrating the results of analysis from various literature sources to gain a complete understanding of the application of Freire's thoughts in elementary education.

The technique of testing the validity of data in library research is carried out by : 1). Source Criticism: Conducting a critical evaluation of the credibility and validity of the literature sources used. This includes assessing the authority of the author, the reputation of the publisher, and the relevance and up-to-dateness of the literature used. 2). Data Triangulation: Applying triangulation by comparing various literature sources to ensure consistency and appropriateness of the data. This includes comparisons between primary and secondary sources, as well as analysis from various perspectives to strengthen the validity of the research results. 3). Relevance and Contextual Appropriateness: Testing the validity of the data by ensuring that the data collected is truly relevant to the context of the application of Freire's thinking in basic education, as well as how the concept is applied in various education systems in the world and 4). Theoretical Confirmation: Linking the findings to established theories and academically recognized literature, to ensure that the analysis carried out is based on a valid and accountable understanding..

Result and Discussion

Paulo Freire is known as one of the most important figures in the world of education who popularized the concept of liberating education. His main ideas, especially those contained in the book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970), have inspired various pedagogical approaches throughout the world,

including in primary education. Freire's thoughts in primary education are as follows:

A. Critical Conscientization in Elementary Education

One of Freire's key concepts is conscientization , or critical consciousness. This is the process by which individuals become aware of the structures of social and political injustice that exist around them. Freire believed that through critical consciousness, students can understand the oppression they may face in their lives and prepare themselves to challenge it. Education is not just about mastering basic skills such as reading and writing, but also about understanding the broader social context and contributing to societal change. Application in Primary Education: At the primary level, critical awareness can be introduced through teaching methods that encourage students to question the social situations around them. For example, instead of simply memorizing historical facts, students can be encouraged to think critically about why certain historical events happened, who benefited, and who was disadvantaged. In some schools, topics such as diversity, social justice, and human rights have been incorporated into the curriculum, providing space for students to understand the world more deeply from an early age .

Critical awareness or conscientization in basic education is a very important concept for forming students' character and understanding of the social and legal environment around them. Civic Education (PKN) in elementary schools plays a strategic role in instilling moral values and legal awareness needed to build a better society. According to Nurlita, legal awareness must be instilled early on through PKN learning, which teaches students about obedience to the rule of law (Nurlita, 2024). This is in line with Fadilah's view which emphasizes the importance of collaboration between educational institutions and families in shaping children's moral awareness (Fadilah, 2024).

The application of a critical educational approach is very relevant. Freire, as a key figure in critical pedagogy, emphasized that education should be a tool to liberate individuals from oppression and increase their critical consciousness (Manullang et al., 2021). This can be achieved through interactive and participatory learning methods, as proposed by Gustianingsih et al., who applied participatory action research in art practice to increase individual consciousness (Gustianingsih et al., 2021). Thus, education does not only function as a transfer of knowledge, but also as a process of liberation and development of critical consciousness.

Research shows that the application of constructivism theory in learning can improve

students' critical thinking skills (Subarjo, 2023). This is important because critical thinking is a skill needed to analyze and evaluate information, and make the right decisions in everyday life. The inquiry learning model has also proven effective in improving students' critical thinking skills, as explained by Azisah et al. (Azisah et al., 2023). By integrating these methods into the PKN curriculum, students can more easily understand and internalize the values taught.

Environmental awareness is also an important part of basic education. Ludiya emphasized that PKN education can form an environmentally conscious character in students, which is part of a broader social awareness (Ludiya, 2024). By teaching students about environmental responsibility, basic education can help them become more aware and responsible citizens.

Thus, critical awareness in basic education not only involves understanding law and morals, but also includes the development of critical thinking skills and environmental awareness. Through the right approaches, such as problem-based and inquiry-based learning, and collaboration between schools and families, basic education can be a strong foundation for forming individuals who are critical and care about their society and environment.

B. Dialogic Education in Elementary Education

Freire emphasized the importance of dialogue in the educational process. According to him, education should be a two-way communication process, where teachers and students learn from each other. Teachers should not be considered the only source of knowledge, but rather facilitators who help students discover their own knowledge. In this dialogic process, students are valued as individuals who have experiences and knowledge that can enrich the learning process. Application in Elementary Education: In elementary education, the application of dialogic education can be in the form of more dynamic interactions between teachers and students. Instead of one-way lectures, teachers can provide more opportunities for students to discuss, ask questions, and explore new ideas. Teachers can facilitate activities that involve students in the decision-making process or joint problem solving, so that students feel responsible for their own learning.

Dialogic education in primary education is an approach that emphasizes active interaction between teachers and students, as well as between students themselves. This approach aims to increase student engagement in the learning process, which can contribute to better academic achievement and the development of social skills. In this context, several studies have shown that the use of interactive learning

methods, such as collaboration and the use of technology, can strengthen dialogic education.

One way to implement dialogic education is through the use of interactive worksheets (ISW). Anwar et al. explained that ISW is designed to facilitate student interaction with teaching materials, improve conceptual understanding, and train students' learning independence (Anwar et al., 2019). With ISW, students can learn at their own pace, which supports more personalized and effective learning. In addition, Azrimaidaliza et al. showed that collaborative learning methods combined with e-learning can also increase student engagement in learning, especially in the context of health education (Azrimaidaliza et al., 2021). This collaborative approach allows students to work together to complete tasks, which not only improves their understanding of the material but also their social skills.

The use of technology in dialogic education can also be seen in research by Awedh et al., which highlights the use of Socrative, an online student response system that allows teachers to create quizzes and monitor student progress in real-time (Awedh et al., 2014). By providing immediate feedback, Socrative supports more dynamic interactions between teachers and students, as well as between students themselves. This is in line with the findings of Meguid and Collins, which showed that interactive teaching approaches were more effective in monitoring students' progress and identifying gaps in their understanding (Meguid & Collins, 2017).

Pianta emphasizes the importance of interaction between teachers and students as a key asset to enhance student learning and development (Pianta, 2015). Positive interactions can create a supportive learning environment, where students feel valued and motivated to actively participate. In this context, research by Tuma et al. shows that shifting from traditional teaching to more interactive teaching can improve the quality of education (Tuma et al., 2021). By maximizing student engagement, dialogic education not only improves academic outcomes but also builds critical skills necessary for everyday life.

Dialogic education in elementary education can be achieved through a combination of interactive learning methods, the use of technology, and positive interactions between teachers and students. This approach not only enhances academic understanding but also prepares students to become more collaborative and critical individuals in the future.

C. Humanistic and Inclusive Education in Basic Education

Freire also advocated a humanistic education, in which students are valued as individuals with the potential to develop, regardless of their social and economic background. Education should not be a tool to reinforce injustice, but rather a means to create a more inclusive and just society. In this regard, Freire emphasized the importance of equal access to education for all, especially for those who are marginalized or oppressed. Application in Primary Education: The application of Freire's humanist principles in primary education can be seen in inclusive education programs, where all children, regardless of their social, economic, or ability backgrounds, are given equal opportunities to learn. This also includes an approach that values cultural diversity, language, and the special needs of students. In an inclusive educational environment, teachers are encouraged to be sensitive to the unique needs of each student and to develop teaching methods that are equitable and responsive to various learning styles.

Humanistic and inclusive education in basic education is a very important approach in creating a learning environment that supports the development of all students, including those with special needs. This approach emphasizes the importance of warm interactions between educators and students, as well as the recognition of fundamental human values in the educational process. In this context, humanistic education focuses on the development of individual character and potential, as well as creating a pleasant and inclusive learning atmosphere.

One of the key aspects of humanist education is the role of teachers as learning partners for students. In humanist education, teachers not only function as conveyors of information, but also as facilitators who support students in their learning process. This is in line with the view that education should be student-centered, where learning activities involve real experiences and dialogical approaches that encourage collaboration between students (Apriliano, 2023; Okur-Berberoglu, 2023). Thus, humanist education not only prioritizes the transfer of knowledge, but also builds discipline and character through positive interactions.

Inclusion in education is also an important component in creating a humanistic learning environment. Inclusive education seeks to meet the needs of all students, including those with special needs, by creating spaces that support constructive interactions between all parties involved in the educational process. Research shows that ethical qualities such as teacher patience and perseverance are critical to success in building strong relationships with

students and their parents, which in turn can improve educational outcomes (Shutaleva et al., 2023; Muis et al., 2022). Therefore, it is important for schools to implement policies that support inclusive education, so that all students can develop optimally (Jardinez, 2024).

A humanistic curriculum should also be designed to reflect students' interests and needs. In this context, the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) approach can be applied to create an accessible learning environment and eliminate physical barriers, so that all students, including those with disabilities, can actively participate in the learning process (Jardinez, 2024). Thus, humanistic and inclusive education is not only beneficial for students with special needs, but also for the entire learning community, because it creates an atmosphere of mutual support and respect for differences.

Humanistic and inclusive education requires commitment from all parties, including teachers, principals, and parents. Principals, for example, must apply a humanistic leadership approach to strengthen students' character and create a supportive school environment (Effendi et al., 2020). In addition, it is also important to conduct regular evaluation and monitoring to ensure that this approach is implemented effectively and has a positive impact on student development (Nuryadin, 2024). Thus, humanistic and inclusive education can be a strong foundation for creating a generation that is not only academically intelligent, but also has good character and is able to contribute positively to society.

D. Implications for Basic Education in Indonesia

The application of Freire's thinking in Indonesia, in basic education still has great potential. The Independent Curriculum introduced in recent years gives teachers and students more freedom to explore subject matter more flexibly. This is a step in line with Freire's ideas about liberating and dialogical education. However, many challenges remain to be overcome, including an evaluation system that relies heavily on standardized tests and a lack of training for teachers in adopting short courses.

Paulo Freire's thinking has significant implications for basic education in Indonesia, especially in the context of developing critical consciousness and educational liberation. Freire argued that education should be dialogic and participatory, where students are not only recipients of information, but also play an active role in the learning process. This approach is very relevant to the condition of education in Indonesia which is still heavily influenced by the "banking" model that considers students as passive objects in the teaching and learning process (Asman, 2023). In this

context, Freire emphasized the importance of "conscientization" or critical consciousness, which allows students to understand and criticize the social, political, and economic realities they face (Jemal, 2017).

Freire also emphasized that education should serve as a tool of liberation, not oppression. In the context of primary education in Indonesia, this means that the curriculum should be designed to empower students, helping them to become agents of change in their society. Research shows that pedagogical approaches that adopt Freire's principles can help address social injustice and increase student participation in the educational process (Roter, 2000). Thus, the application of Freire's principles in primary education in Indonesia can encourage students to think critically and contribute to positive social change.

Furthermore, the integration of Freire's educational values with local contexts, such as Islamic education, also shows great potential in creating a more inclusive and relevant education system (Umiarso, 2022). Research shows that collaboration between Freire's liberative education and education based on spiritual values can produce a more holistic approach in educating Indonesia's young generation (Umiarso, 2022). This is in line with the need to develop a curriculum that not only focuses on academic aspects, but also on character building and students' social awareness.

The challenge faced by educators in Indonesia is how to change the educational paradigm from a traditional approach to a more critical and participatory approach. Research shows that ongoing training for teachers is essential to developing teaching practices that reflect Freire's principles (Nascimento et al., 2023). By providing training that focuses on critical reflection and the development of innovative pedagogical practices, teachers can be better prepared to implement educational approaches that empower students (Nascimento et al., 2023).

Paulo Freire's thinking offers a strong framework for basic education reform in Indonesia. By adopting a critical and participatory approach, education can become a tool for liberation and empowerment, helping students to not only understand their world, but also to contribute to creating positive change..

Conclusion

Paulo Freire's thinking has had a significant influence on educational reform, especially by emphasizing participatory, dialogical, and critical education. Freire criticized the traditional education system that positions students as passive recipients, and offered a collaborative approach that encourages interaction between teachers and students to jointly

understand and change social reality. The concept of critical consciousness that he developed helps students to think critically about the world around them, especially in dealing with social problems and injustice. This liberating education is inclusive, providing opportunities for all students to develop optimally, regardless of background. Although the implementation of Freire's thinking faces challenges in the formal education system, more flexible policies, such as the Merdeka Curriculum in Indonesia, provide space for the adoption of a more liberating education. Overall, Freire's thinking provides a strong foundation for basic education that is oriented towards empowering students as agents of change in society.

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