SEAAIR 2005 INDONESIA CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

Higher Education Reform Facing Local and Global Changes

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ACTIVITY BASED LEARNING (ABL): INNOVATION TO ENHANCE LEARNING PROCESS IN LEGAL HIGHER EDUCATION



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ABSTRACT

University is a place to create graduates that are able to accommodate the society requirements related to societal needs, industrial needs, and professional needs. To accommodate those requirements graduates have to have intelligence, responsibilities, and be able to work on their tasks in particular fields.

In the framework of forming curriculum based on competency in effort to produce the graduates, innovation is needed in learning process. The conventional learning process using one-way method could not promote students to be more proactive and have creative thinking. Regarding that, a new paradigm is needed in learning process. It consists of various activities strategic where students actively involved, teacher act as a facilitator and motivator, two-ways communication is essential. It also requires various activities that have to be done by students to encourage them explaining their opinion. Therefore a new learning process has to be formed and so called Activity Based Learning where the thinking process comprises learning outcomes, instructional methods and assessment system.

Particularly in legal education, where the law is an instrument that is used to change the society (law as a tool of social engineering), the law could be enforced and implemented by graduates in their life. There is characteristic distinguishing in law faculty learning process, which is more focused on case study. Activity Based Learning is important to improving the quality of law students and the positive aspects of students like communication skill; self-confidence; ability to explore new findings. Law faculty of University of Surabaya has been three years in applying Activity Based Learning as a learning process and it brings progressing and positive impact.

Keywords: Innovation, learning process, activities strategic, legal education

INTRODUCTION

As a higher education institution, universities have responsibility to produce graduates that are able to accommodate challenges emerging in society, such as graduates producing high quality profile and competence. These graduates must have some requirements:

- (i) personality development ability
- (ii) know how and know why ability
- (iii) know how to do
- (iv) ability to be a role model and independent as well as to make decision wisely
- (v) ability to assimilate with socjety and appreciate pluralism values and harmony.

Higher education is an institution that teaches students to be a civilized person and a good professional person. Higher education has a unique position because it has various functions:

- a. house of learning;
- b. house of culture;
- c. guardian of values;
- d. agent of change;
- e. producers of leaders (Zen, 2005)

Higher education is an effective instrument for:

- a. developing all of the potential of people: cognitive, affective, and psychomotoric;
- b. socialization and inheritance of value;
- c. social interaction and acculturation of culture;
- d. vertical mobility and social transformation;
- e. acceleration toward the advance, modern, civilized living society. (Rachman, 2005)

To reach the goals above, the DIKTI addresses 3 (three) societal needs toward higher education institutions, which are societal, industrial and professional needs. Therefore, these institutions must synchronise their vision and mission through curriculum elaboration, providing facilities and other strategic planning.

In legal education, a critic emerges from society where they do not satisfy with the outcome of legal education. It is because most of legal graduates are "ready to train" not "ready to use". Due to this critic, we must endeavour to answer by providing high quality legal graduates.

University of Surabaya Faculty of Law has a vision "to be an innovator in learning, research and services in business law". The essential meaning of it is that the Faculty of Law wants to perform the needs of business and industrial society to achieve social welfare.

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Moreover, the missions of the faculty of Law are:

- 1. to perform innovative legal higher education
- 2. to carry out and to develop research as well as legal services for industrial and business society
- 3. to push the creation of law faculty community which respect the values of life, humanism, democracy in the frame of harmony and equity

University of Surabaya Faculty of Law has strategic goals as follows:

- 1. to perform Tridharma to develop knowledge in business law, to produce relevant graduates as expected by society
- 2. organisation management based on competition which is fitted with the transformation and organisation culture
- 3. to expand networking in learning, research and services

In the globalisation era, each university must have ability to bridge the needs of services. It can be reached by enhancing the innovation and quality of learning process. To increase the quality can be achieved through an effective pedagogy method, such as two ways learning.

According to Bulgesky, a lecturer must remember four (4) things:

- 1. students must have attention and response to the lesson, therefore it must be creative and attractive
- 2. limitation of lesson in one time
- 3. one has internal system to control motivation and determine how far he/she can do
- 4. knowledge is a control tool (Hariyanto, 2004)

Referring to those statements, the learning process in higher education should look at the quality of the materials and learning system. Learning is experiencing through exploration and discovery.

In order to achieve pleasure of learning, students must be given experiences through exploration to discover something. In this situation, the role lecturers are crucial, not only to deliver knowledge but they must be able to encourage students to participate proactively and to use their analytical thinking. Lecturers can have double roles as a leader, an actor, and an evaluator. Therefore, this ideal process needs creative thinking and activity based learning.

II. NEW PARADIGM IN LEARNING

New paradigm in learning process is required where there are some activities strategic which students actively involved inside, teacher acts as facilitator and motivator requires scenario for each activity, communication is essential, avoid long monologue lecturing. It needs to encourage students to explain or defend his/her opinions on specific issues. Hence, the activity based learning is really needed. The ABL covers learning outcomes, instructional methods and assessment system. In basic terms, this means that the types of thinking incorporated in the Learning Outcomes must be effectively taught through the Instructional Methods/Strategies used and accurately measured in the Assessment System. (Sale, 2004). In the learning system, peer group discussions must be often conducted. The goals of the discussions are:

- 1. positive interdependent, each group member has mutual dependence to each other to achieve the goal
- 2. self accountability, all group members maintain their own accountability because the success of the peer group depends on the members' inputs
- 3. interactive activity, peer group increases the ability to interact with others
- 4. improving collaborative skills, in order to build trust amongst students, leadership, making decisions, communicate and conflict management.
- 5. group activity, each member contribute to determine the goal and mutual evaluation among them (Felder, 1994):

Through peer group, students can build their interpersonal skill, as well as to improve analysing skill toward the emerging problems.

In the class, learning process in social science, such law, is different with non social science, where everything is real. However, studying law, something to remember is that the law itself is life. It can be very dynamic. It lives in the society. It becomes alive when a problem emerges. The law is used to solve the problem. The law is influenced by many things living society, such as the culture. As a living law, the law exists to bring justice, legality, and public order.

Legal culture should be interpreted as people's attitudes toward law and the legal system-their beliefs, values, ideas and expectations. Thus, legal culture is whatever or whoever decides to turn the machine (the legal structure) on and off, and determines how it will be used. Legal structure is interpreted as a kind of cross section of the legal system – a kind of still photograph, which freezes the action. (Friedman, 1986). Legal substance (legal structure) has core meaning as a law that regulates every norms, values, and sanctions within various laws. In this case included living law that happened in legal practice that full of discretion. (Muladi, 2002).

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III. THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTIVITY BASED LEARNING AS AN INNOVATION

Law is living and dynamic, it is a tool of social engineering and agent of change. Legal culture assists to build legal function in society. As candidate of legal expert, students should be able to follow the dynamic of law in society. In the learning system of activity based learning, students are thought how to study independently and in group to analyse real issues, and they must have the ability to solve the matters as well as provide solutions. Students should have upgraded their legal knowledge and skill to catch up with the change of law.

ABL is very important to improve the quality of legal students. Through ABL, students can build communication skill, self confidence, accountability, conflict management and exploring new findings.

With that ABL, in the future, someone who will be candidate of Legal Expert should be a professional, that have the responsibility for their duties in legal law. It is necessary for a legal practitioner to responsibilities all of what they've done (Reksodiputro, 1995).

In ABL system, we need to encourage students more in thinking. That's why we need specification types of thinking, that are:

- Generating possibilities, that may generate many possibilities, different types of possibilities, and generate novel possibilities;
- Analysis, that may identify the relationship of the parts to a whole in system/structure/model, identify the function of each part, and identify if and how certain parts have a synergetic effect;
- Comparison and Contrast, that may identify what is similar between things-objects/option/ideas, identify what is different between things, identify a range of situations when the different features are applicable;
- Inference and Interpretation, that may make meaning of information/data available, identify causal relationships, identify key points and emphasis, make predictions concerning future possibilities, separate fact from opinion, identify intentions and assumptions;
- Evaluation, that may decide on what is to be evaluated, identify appropriate criteria from which evaluation can be made, and apply the criteria and make decision
- Metacognition, that may monitoring and evaluating how effective we are thinking, seeking to make more effective use of the different ways of thinking and any supporting learning/thinking strategies/tools, actively thinking about the ways in which we are thinking. (Sale, 2004)

IV. POSITIVE ASPECTS USING ABL IN LEGAL HIGHER EDUCATION

Faculty of law, University of Surabaya as one of education institutions to perform legal education has endeavoured to upgrade and to renew the learning system. It is now almost 3 years Faculty of Law, University of Surabaya carry out learning system based on ABL through a project called PPKSP (Program Peningkatan Kualitas Sistem Pembelajaran) or Improvement the Quality Learning System Program. PPKSP itself has urged the universities to use two ways learning, where a lecturer is not only to teach but also to direct students to solve problems. Student participation is one of assessments in this method.

The Most Outstanding Performance during the 3 years program of ABL, follows the result of questioners given to students as feedbacks, thereof we are able to identify several positive aspects, such as:

- 1. reward points > 85%
- 2. Improvements can be looked at:
 - a. Student more active
 - b. Think critically
 - c. Avoid boredom in class
 - d. Dare to speak up (opinions)
- 3. the influence of peer group to motivate students > 80% on "activity in peer group to have critical thinking and to argument"
- 4. Structured assignment (individual or group) is very helpful in the process of learning 92% comprehend more and more independent.

V. CONCLUSION

To draw alongside with the law which is dynamic and living, legal higher education is expected to stimulate the ability of students to be sensitive toward the transformation and development of law. For that reason, it is crucial to think of the emergence a new paradigm to bring a dynamic learning system, in order to motivate students to explore more and to actualise themselves to handle issues in society. The actual implementation will be not very simple because it will be affected by many factors (external pressures for change, management, ethos, staff motivation and competence, resource availability etc).

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