Improving History Literacy among Adolescences: Towards Hoax Prevention through KCBS (Kumpulan Cerita Buku Sejarah)

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Abstract. Teenagers tend to find difficulties in filtering hoax due to a lack of literacy skills. They view that learning history through a book is boring. Instead, teenagers prefer to read information online. This study aims to improve history literacy among adolescents in order to prevent the spread out of hoax through KCBS (Kumpulan Buku Cerita Sejarah/the collection of historical narratives). The method used is qualitative with a descriptive approach. The result of this study is improved history literacy of the adolescences which enabling them to filter information gathered from blogs and websites as well as the use of Facebook as a source of information and the development of positive characters. One of many ways to improve history literacy is through literacy movement in which students are imperatively encouraged to read history books that are followed by summarizing a certain topic into the KCBS (Kumpulan Cerita Buku Sejarah). Rewriting historical narratives is hoped to improve the students’ literacy skills so that in the near future they will understand the danger of spreading out a hoax and will better respond to prevent the widespread.

Keywords: History Literacy, Hoax Prevention, Kumpulan Cerita Buku Sejarah

1. Introduction

The ubiquitous use of the internet in Indonesia has reached around 82 million users with 80% of them are teenagers at the ages of 15 to 19 [1]. Meanwhile, Facebook is the most used online platform among the adolescences of the country. Social media can easily affect and influence people’s opinions in the name of freedom of speech [2]. With the increasing numbers of internet users, the widespread of hoaxes is inevitable, especially among youths. The youths tend to accept all of the information without prior analyzing the validity [3]. The hoaxes are highly evident in historical knowledge as nowadays validation of history becomes increasingly difficult as the teenagers are unaware of the validity especially the historical narratives which already appear on the internet [4]. To tackle this issue, the teenagers had better be given information regarding hoaxes, regardless of the difficulties in transferring such knowledge. Generally, teenagers have high curiosity so that they will be easily influenced by information on social media [5]. Such a typical character of teenagers leads them to be unaware of selecting valid information.

This problem is due to the fact that adolescences have a lack of historical literacy. This is negatively affecting them, especially when exposing to social media [6]. The literacy skills, in this case, are those stimulating them to read and write valid information so that they will be more aware of selecting information online. Reading and writing cultures among teenagers in
Indonesia have been dramatically decreasing. This is directly weakened to the youths’ nationalism. They assume that learning history through a book is too boring [7]. The internet and social media are one of the platforms through which hoaxes are effectively spread [8]. The widely spread hoaxes in those platforms made it almost impossible to differentiate between valid information and hoaxes. One of the actions to prevent invalid information is by improving reading culture among adolescences. The reading culture includes the ability of the teenagers in selecting information received especially information about history [9]. Building on this case, the government through the literacy program called GLS (Gerakan Literasi Sekolah) has been trying to prevent the spread-out of hoaxes. Unfortunately, the program outcomes are unsatisfactory [10]. Therefore, another preventive action is done through the digital literacy program. The program is hoped to anticipate the widespread of hoaxes through social media such as Facebook and Twitter. The program aims to stimulate teenager active participation in finding which information is valid and which is not. The majority of students in MAN 1 Kudus are facebook active users. It is supported by easy and affordable internet access through the smartphone. Thus, it is also accessible for them to access abundant invalid news on social media. In addition to that, the students also lack the ability to differentiate between factual and hoaxes caused by their preference in reading online news rather than paper-based one: a reading book about history, in particular. The students perceived the history book as something boring and hard to comprehend. Based on those reasons, it is important to conduct research on finding a way to improve history literacy among adolescences.

2. Methods

The research used a descriptive qualitative approach. The research focuses on how to improve history literacy among adolescences to prevent hoaxes through KCBS. The result is a literacy product; Kumpulan Buku Cerita Sejarah (KCBS) in MAN 1 Kudus. The data is from closed interviews of 38 Science students. While the literacy programs were given to the two social science classes. The literacy and history books used are those from Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan. The research subject is MAN 1 Kudus students. Data gathering instruments are observation and interview. Observation is done to discover the students’ preference towards history literacy and their view on the hoax. Meanwhile, an interview is conducted on science students. Data validity is through the triangulated method and triangulated source. The data obtained from direct observation and closed the interview. Data on students’ perception towards history literacy gathered from direct observation while the closed interview was conducted towards science students. The data of historical literacy implementation was gathered from the students of XI IPS and XII IPS.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Improving History Literacy Through KCBS (Kumpulan Cerita Buku Sejarah)

Teenagers in MAN 1 Kudus have various reasons for their preference in history. They argued that they like history because they wanted to know the foundation of the nation. They also wanted to predict future events in their country. Meanwhile, some others also argued that they dislike history because it relates to memorization. Solving the problem, teachers had better deliver a contextual lesson through direct observation, the use of interesting media for history and stimulation on students’ curiosity in learning history.

The strategy used in increasing history literacy in the form of writing and reading, one of which is through the KCBS task. The task is given to the students of MAN 1 Kudus, specifically grades XI and XII of Social Sciences. The aim of using KCBS is to improve the history literacy level of the students so that the negative effects of hoaxes can be minimized. The assignment given will automatically lead to the students to read and rewrite the given historical narratives. In order to write in the KCBS the students are working in groups then hand-writing them. Each
class is divided into six groups with every group consists of 6 to 7 students. The groups are given different history books which required them to summarize them into their KCBS for a given two-week period. Every member of the group is emphasized to actively involve in finishing the task. There are 60 different history books selected in the study. The tasks are as follow:

Figure 1. KCBK (Kumpulan Cerita Buku Sejarah)

Figure 1 above is the students’ works on KCBS (Kumpulan Cerita Buku Sejarah). In addition to hand-writing the historical narratives, the books are decorated based on each group’s preferences. Upon completing writing the narratives, once in two weeks before the beginning of each lesson, the representatives of the groups will read the summaries that have been written in the group’s KCBS. The government has initially implemented a related program to increase students’ literacy skills, specifically, the program named Gerakan Literasi Sekolah (GLS) consisting of the following steps: (1) adaptation phase through silent reading, (2) the allocation of 15 minutes to maximize the use of library, (3) reading activities at the beginning of every lesson. This form of literacy-related activities can also lead to the students’ increased responsibility as well as their awareness of their environment [12]. Not only do the activities useful to the students at an individual level, but they are also useful for societies. Through the activities, the students are encouraged to read, write and deeply think through the lenses of a historian [9]; identifying the sources of information, criticizing the information, and proving that the information is valid. In doing so, the collaboration between students and teachers is highly required. The teachers are not only to deliver the contents of each lesson but also to involve their students in examining and applying the contents so that the lesson can be meaningful [7]. Through the literacy-related activities, the students are trained to comprehend a book’s contents through summarization. By applying the KCBS, the students become active readers as opposed to the passive ones [13].

3.2 History Literacy in Teenagers to Prevent Hoaxes through KCBS

On average, the students of MAN 1 Kudus weekly read a history book once to three times. Several of them are into novels, folklores, and short stories. Historical sources can be found through many avenues, one of which is through online resources. The majority of teenagers, especially the students of MAN 1 Kudus, are familiar with the online resources as they access their social media daily. The social media platforms the students generally have are Facebook, Twitter, Line, BBM WhatsApp, and Instagram. However, the use of those social media platforms is for leisure purposes at the expense of school-related purposes. Hoaxes can be prevented through literacy-based activities such as the one called historical literacy movement so that life-long learning can be sustained. Therefore, in the future, the students will access the internet for meaningful purposes such as searching their school tasks, updating the latest information as well as connecting with friends. With easy access to the internet, it is highly likely that the students are exposed to invalid information. Therefore, authentic and contextual activities in learning history are highly needed.
There are many ways to improve students’ literacy skills such as by promoting literacy movements where the students are required to read a certain history book which then followed by summarization of the book contents into the KCBS. The KCBS method can lead to positive habituation to analyze information followed by examining whether or not the information is a hoax. The students’ summarization can also be shared on their social media pages such as Facebook. This joy of learning helps the students to improve their historical knowledge. An updated Facebook status of a student is as follows:

![Facebook Status](image)

Figure 2. Historical Literacy Shared in Social Media

Using social media platforms properly can reduce the negative effects of wide spreading hoax and help teenagers to master critical thinking [14]. This improved mindset is indeed critical to prevent youths from being negatively affected and provoked by hoaxes. As active users of Facebook, especially, teenagers can gather valid information [11]. Creative use of social media in educating the youths will effectively minimize the spread out of hoaxes among this at-risk population. Through digital literacy movements, it is hoped that societies, in general, can access trustworthy information with as few issues as possible [2]. Towards historical literacy, for example, it can help teenagers become critical readers who can carefully spot hoaxes especially those already shared in social media. There are four advantages of delivering information through social media namely easy access, quick process, freedom of expression, and easy information exchange [15]. The positive exchange of information can minimize hoaxes.

4. Conclusion

Based on the result, it can be concluded that: (1) literacy is one of the ways through which students could comprehend information received from reading and writing. (2) Adolescences are prone to inappropriate behavior due to their lack of ability on managing emotional state (3) Internet access could be one of the preventive methods in tackling the issue; (4) Hoax could be prevented by the literacy habituation to adolescences through electronic media such as blog and website and also through Facebook as a source of information and critical thinking; (5) one of the ways of literacy habituation is to make history reading compulsory then assign the students to write the summary to KCBS (Kumpulan Cerita Buku Sejarah).

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