

Tolerance education through a choral lesson in schools

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ABSTRACT: The aim of the study is to instill tolerance through a choral lesson which focuses on *Nusantara* songs. Indonesia's diversity fosters differences of opinions, habits, and perspectives. Therefore, we need to understand how to respond to these differences which can be accomplished through the process of understanding *Nusantara* songs originated from diverse regions in the form of school choirs. The research is experimental by using pretest post test design. Students are invited to examine and experience *Nusantara* songs from Sumatra, Java, to Papua so that students are able to recognize and understand the diversity of Indonesia as reflected in the *Nusantara* songs.

1 INTRODUCTION

Indonesia has a diversity of ethnicities, languages, religions, and cultures in each region. According to the Centre of Statistics and Data for Education (PDSPK) of the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture, Indonesia has six official religions, 250 ethnicities, and 250 regional languages that make up various cultures spread across 34 provinces and 16,056 islands. These differences make Indonesian people more vulnerable to various problems and conflicts. Some national news and surveys inform that various conflicts between communities are due to differences.

The Indonesian Ministry of Religion survey states that Indonesia has various conflicts that arise because the people involved have used their respective religious and affirmed their religious interests toward others. Therefore, actions to prevent conflict in all aspects such as in formal education are urgently needed. Promotion of character education values such as tolerance values needs to be held. Choirs, which are part of extracurricular activities in schools, can be a medium for teaching and applying tolerance values.

2 CHOIRS

The result of the choir is the combination of many sounds into one colour of sound, namely the colour of the choir (clear and balanced sound) which is a unified whole. A Choir is the uniformity of a group of people who sing together on the same basic note.

In addition, there are various types of voices and groups based on gender in choirs. Soeharto (1992: 15) said that generally a choir presents several parts of voices that consist of Sopran, Mezzosopran, and Alto (for women) and Tenor, Bariton, and Bass (for men). Human voices are divided into female voices, male voices, and children's voices. Differences in voice timbre in men, women, and children will provide more colors to choir groups.

The *Tim Pusat Musik Liturgi* (Liturgi Music Centre Team) (2011: 13) explained the formation and tone colour of choirs in which they stated that the ideal number of members in the choirs is between 40-50. If the number is too small, it will be difficult because the sound produced will be soft. Meanwhile, the large number of members results in the difficulty of maintaining group cohesiveness. Choirs involve many interactions and social

processes in its formation both in terms of singing ability and attitudes in learning choirs in school.

However, *Tim Pusat Musik Liturgi* (Liturgi Music Centre Team) (2011: 14) in its discussion of the standard number of members and the arrangement of songs performed in the choir also said that choirs can have members between 25-30 people with the characteristic of 2 or 3 sounds. That formation will also result in a beautiful performance even without musical accompaniment if they sing softly.

According to various opinions above, it can be concluded that a choir is a group of 25 people or more. However, if the number of choir members ranges from 40 to 50, the volume of sound formation can be maximized. In general, a choir can fulfil the choir requirements if there are 25 people in the group. If it is less than that, then the group can be considered as a vocal group. Integrating voices in choir groups consisting of many people cause various events to occur in the process of social interaction between students and teachers. These interactions provide opportunities to experience the process of understanding each other related to the process of tolerance education.

3 TOLERANCE EDUCATION VALUES

3.1 *Definition of values*

Value is a scale to measure something. Scheler (Wahono & Hum, 2014) argues that value is a quality that does not depend on its bearer; something that has been felt by humans without going through worldly experience first. Value is something that human beings, according to their essence and characteristics, believe as important or useful for humanity. The value in this study is not defined as a measured value in units of numbers but an explanation of events based on a description of the facts in people's interaction in a choral lesson.

3.2 *Education*

Education is very important for the growth and development of human life. Soehardjo (2005: 1), referring to the Indonesian Law No. 2 of 1989 concerning the national education system, said that education is a conscious effort to prepare students through guidance, teaching, and/or training activities for their role in the future. Education has a role that is always related to human benefit. Yaumi (2014: 6) says that only through education, all the potentials possessed by humans are developed to become fully human. Children with their capacities have to be directed towards education to make them able to develop their thoughts, feelings, psychotropic, and, more importantly, their souls as a source of spirit in life. Likewise, Arslan (2013: 4115) said that education is the most effective process in forming, developing, guiding and preparing healthy individuals and communities for their future. Thus, education must continue to be inherent in human life so that humans develop into complete human beings and are useful in all ages.

3.3 *Tolerance*

In the table of values of character and national culture, Yaumi (2014: 83) includes tolerance into groups of descriptions of character education values. Tolerance is an attitude and action that respects differences in religions, ethnicities, opinions, attitudes, and actions toward others which are different from us. Differences encountered by children must be framed using tolerance values so that they respect one another.

Yaumi (2014: 91) says that tolerance is the attitude of accepting differences in others, not imposing beliefs on others, not disliking others because they do not share the same beliefs or understandings, and not judging others based on their background, appearance, or habits. Therefore, tolerance is needed for character building and education in the midst

of Indonesia's cultural diversity. The value of tolerance can be one of the pillars in making Indonesia a unified whole.

Judiani (2010: 284) says that tolerance is an attitude and action that respects differences in religions, tribes, ethnicities, opinions, attitudes, and actions of others. Therefore, tolerance is needed in dealing with various differences in the learning process of students who have various ethnic, cultural, and religious backgrounds.

From the theories above, it can be concluded that tolerance values play an important role in people's education. This value is found in educational interactions related to guidance and training that are useful for optimizing the full nature of human beings. Tolerance is one of the most needed attitudes, especially in multicultural Indonesia. The value of tolerance education is closely related to various activities in people's daily lives. One of them is in the choir whose process of achieving sound integration involves many students with various attitudes and behaviours.

4 TOLERANCE EDUCATION THROUGH *NUSANTARA* SONGS

Indonesian regions are rich in culture and language. Therefore, Indonesia has a variety of regional songs called *Nusantara* songs. *Nusantara* can literally be translated as 'archipelago'. However, this paper emphasizes the meaning of *Nusantara* as the combination of *Nusa* (island) and *Antara* (among). *Nusantara* songs in this paper refer to the songs that are developed among all the islands in Indonesia. Therefore, the authors will persistently use the term *Nusantara* without being translated to 'archipelago'. Moreover, *Nusantara* songs show or accentuate the characteristics of Indonesian-ness, both in terms of language and melody style.

All 34 provinces in Indonesia provide a diversity of regional songs. This diversity is a tool for carrying out tolerance education in choirs. Darrow (2017: 20) says that teaching vocal music is related to lyrics in a unit and instrumental compositions written for the purpose of promoting unity by highlighting social justice in music classrooms. The strength of the meaning of song lyrics can be a tool and material for tolerance lessons. Various styles of melody, distinctive regional tones, and the language and meaning of songs can be a learning tool in the process of tolerating various differences.

For example, Sumatra regional songs have a distinctive style of Malay music which is dominated by Malay *cengkok* (melodic style), *gambus* musical instruments, *rampak rebana*, and *pantun* (a traditional form of repetitive prose) contest. The Java region has a gamelan which is a distinctive tone in the song (pentatonic tone) and are rich in meanings inherited from ancestors. Meanwhile, the Papua region tends to describe the strength of nature in its regional songs. Therefore, students will be taught how to deal with and behave on different cultures reflected in *Nusantara* songs. Students learn how to understand the contents of regional songs that do not originate from the regions where they live and accept difficulties in various regional songs both in terms of song lyrics, tones, melodies, and interpretations. *Nusantara* songs become objects in a choral lesson for students under the teachers' guidance. The teachers can apply the value of tolerance education in the learning process. The habitual process to understand diversity can be done through *Nusantara* songs.

5 TEACHERS' ROLES

The learning process in choral classes which focuses on the value of tolerance education certainly requires a figure of teachers who are professional and organized in regulating classrooms. Kuyumcu (2012: 479) says that suitable teachers in the art education environment are organizers who are able to teach how to use materials, talk about what students are doing, organize art education in such a way that shows and preserves things, follows their application, and provides necessary guidance.

Teachers have a very important role in managing and achieving the success of the class they are teaching. This role needs special attention, especially when applying tolerance education to choral classes. This special case is a challenge for the future of music education, especially choir, amidst various problems in Indonesia.

The application of tolerance education values certainly requires critical thinking skills guided by the teacher. Music lessons also aim at developing social character, problem solving skills, cognitive abilities, critical thinking dispositions, and academic achievement. Tolerance is a social character that requires a critical mindset, so children are able to think actively, especially when applying tolerance.

Observing music education in schools will offer more or less adequate information about what music education is like today that can be used to build music education in the future. Music educators must be able to see the development of music along with the development of students and their development for music education, especially choirs that are able to develop educational values of tolerance.

Current technological developments help teachers to get several examples of cultural diversity in Indonesia. Documentation in the form of photos and videos can be easily accessed by the teacher to be used as references by students in recognizing various cultural diversity of the *Nusantara*. These references can strengthen and explore appreciation when singing *Nusantara* songs through choirs.

For example, the sound of *Gondang Batak* (percussion instrument in the region of North Sumatra) imitated in choir arrangements can be more alive when students see and listen to the sounds of *Gondang Batak* through video. Thus, the role of teachers who are active, innovative and able to adapt to changing times is needed in facilitating tolerance lessons in school choirs. Learning is not only limited to the learning process of singing but also recognizes indirectly the diversity of the *Nusantara* and applies tolerance values through maximizing the use of technology.

6 CONCLUSION

Character education has actually been a part of education so far. However, the educational tools in the process of implementing character education in Indonesia must be developed and maximized according to the potential of a region. Indonesia with various conflicts caused by differences (lack of understanding of the importance of tolerance), requires various media so that tolerance education can be effectively applied in the learning process.

Choir is an alternative topic in applying tolerance education processes. The number of members which generally ranges from 30-40 people offers an opportunity for social interaction (which is important in implementing tolerance education). In addition to musical interactions in choirs, diverse Indonesian songs in Indonesia can be a strategic medium in implementing tolerance education. The learning process is certainly fully held by the teacher. Therefore, teachers must be able to develop materials for choral lessons in schools by looking at the opportunities of Indonesia's cultural diversity. By learning choirs and *Nusantara* songs, students are directed to understand the importance of tolerance since school age.

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