

***Cura Personalis* in Creative Pedagogy Mining the Meaning of History Learning in the Digital Era**

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ABSTRACT

Learning in the digital era, teachers have a humanistic role in the educational process that cannot be replaced by technology. This is because education is not merely a transfer of knowledge but also a transfer of values. Included in history education, which is tasked with developing the national character of the younger generation. To arrive at this noble purpose, history learning requires a breakthrough. Opportunities for the realization of meaningful history learning can be achieved through creative pedagogy. Creative history learning can lead students to historical imagination to understand the past so that it can be used as inspiration in facing current and future challenges. In addition to facilitating cognitive processes, imaginative historical stories also stimulate the affective side of students. Expression of the students' imagination is accommodated through a psychomotor process by producing creative work. The potential of these students needs to be optimized through personal mentoring. *Cura personalis* in creative history learning does not only free the imagination. *Cura personalis* helps students interpret and utilize their learning experience for themselves and others in a human dignity that no matter how sophisticated technology can not make up for it.

Keywords: *creative pedagogy, cura personalis, history learning, digital era.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Who has never heard of the Ruangguru, Quipper, Zenius, Brainly, Kelas Kita, Kelas Pintar, and the like applications nowadays? The advertisements are so intense on television and various other media. Especially recently, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, online schools have become the best alternative so that the education process can continue. Online learning applications are a means that are considered to help students get optimal learning achievement. So what about teachers at school? Has his role been unreliable? Is there another side that the application cannot offer but that can be obtained through teachers in schools?

If education is only the ability to do questions and get good grades, the existence of an online learning application is more than enough. Provided that students have adequate facilities to access them. However, the essence of education is a holistic process of assisting the development of a child in various aspects. Education is not limited to gathering knowledge but human development physically and spiritually in a society in

various aspects of life [1, p. 12] The existence of schools does not merely serve the needs of achievement, but to educate them to become whole humans [2, p. 8].

Teachers are relied on to carry out this noble educational task. Teachers play a key role in designing creative and innovative learning so that students find meaning from their learning experiences. Learning is not a transaction between students and teachers. This side is what online learning applications do not have with their limitations. Meanwhile, the interaction between teachers and students in schools provides a broad and deep humanistic space for the realization of meaningful learning.

Learning is not only a transfer of knowledge but also a transfer of values. Including history education which has the task of developing national character. National identity is formed from the character of the nation, while the character of the nation is formed from the virtues developed by the nation over a long period of time. History education is a powerful means of bringing students to the imagination to understand the past so that

it can be used as inspiration in facing present and future challenges [3, pp. 32–33].

Historical knowledge should serve as an example, in the context of *Historia Magistra Vitae*, to reflect on contemporary problems [4, p. 16]. Historical subject matter does not merely provide knowledge, facts, and chronology but forms historical insights or historical perspectives. History learning also has the function of arousing historical awareness towards national awareness. Inspirational history learning will be able to transform students to do something positive, willingness to sacrifice, and sincerity to serve the nation and state because of national pride [5, p. 31].

History teachers who deliver historical material just like that will be easily kicked out of their role by an online learning application which is much more interesting. Meaningful and inspirational history learning requires the presence of a teacher who optimally facilitates students to enter their deepest historical imaginations. Creative pedagogy provides space for dialogue between teachers and students to create historical lessons that help students develop their interests, talents, and potential. Creativity cannot be replaced by machines or patterned with artificial intelligence (AI) to be a robotic way of working so that online learning applications cannot be replaced [6, p. 21], [7, p. 3].

This article emphasizes that creative history learning can accommodate all domains from cognitive, affective, to psychomotor. The growth and development of these dimensions of student abilities needs to be optimized through mentoring with a personal approach. One way is through *cura personalis*. In creative history learning, *cura personalis* does not only provide space for students to imagine and be creative. *Cura Personalis* also helps students interpret and at the same time take advantage of their learning experiences for themselves and others in humanistic relationships and cannot be represented by technological sophistication.

2. CREATIVE HISTORY LEARNING

Motivation, talents, and skills to think and work creatively are what is needed in facing the 21st century [8, p. 1]. The online learning application discussed at the beginning of this paper must also be recognized as having a creative and innovative side. They are so adaptive to advances in information and communication technology that they are able to present an attractive and interactive online learning model. History learning which is full of material can be transformed into fun learning in the hands of online learning application managers. However, the role of humans with the ability to think and feel they cannot be replaced by artificial intelligence technology. So what kinds of creative learning can history teachers strive for?

Current views on creative learning are often associated with technological sophistication that teachers must master. The creative teacher is skilled at operating various computer applications, planning and making digital-based learning media, presenting hi-tech learning, and so on. Of course, this view is not wrong, especially as technology advances rapidly in the digital era, making these skills very much needed. It is undeniable that history learning with various digital media and technology treats that are so attractive will fascinate students. But who guarantees that this charm can lead students to a meaningful depth of learning?

One of the things that strikes from creative pedagogy is the belief that the lecture method in history learning is still very relevant [7, p. 83]. On the other hand, especially lately, many circles are anti-lecturing and think the lecture method is conventional, boring, teacher-centered, and makes students passive in learning. This is a view that is not completely wrong because it really depends on how the lecture is presented. Lectures in a fun, creative, and challenging style will be able to seduce students to arrive at a meaningful historical imagination. Lecturing is a simple method that can be applied to students anywhere, including those experiencing technological gaps in remote areas.

Lectures that should be avoided in creative learning are monotonous lectures because they cause imbalances in stimulating the brain. The series of words only accepted by the left hemisphere will make students bored and tired. Lectures in creative learning also need to stimulate the right brain in a fun, dialogic, and imaginative style, for example by storytelling. A teacher who tells a historical event in an interesting style will build historical imagination [7, pp. 83–84]. Imagination in history not only fills the gaps in facts that are not conveyed, but also imagines past events while animating the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of the actors involved [9, p. 641].

The entrance to imagination through creative lectures will be more open when students are invited to free their minds and look for relationships between the material being studied and the context they are facing. This is what is called making connections in history [7, p. 97], [9, p. 643], [10, p. 57]. Students are led to find a relationship between learning and the real world, both the natural and social environment that is closest to them [7, p. 91]. Contextual learning like this will provide students with a memorable and meaningful learning experience because the gap between what is learned and reality is destroyed.

Creative lectures that build imagination can be done by combining verbal and nonverbal language. For that it requires diligent practice for the teacher to be more flexible in presenting it. Various available and accessible media can be used to strengthen this method.

In an online learning mode such as during the current Covid-19 pandemic, the use of digital media will certainly help creative lecture efforts. Of course once again it takes the creativity of the teacher in packaging it so that it is able to be meaningful and awaken the imaginary power of students.

Questions and answers can also be used as a variation. Not easy questions and about memory, but “asking difficult questions” that invite critical answers [11, p. 114]. The 5W + 1H questioning technique (what, who, when, where, why, and how) can explore the potential of students' brains in critical thinking. In history learning, there is also an if history question that invites students to imagine themselves as history actors. It is also possible to suppose that if history events did not occur or had different events, the impact would be different. By possessing a historical event and understanding its causal relationship, students are expected to absorb the values from the past. Another questioning technique is the emancipatory question, which departs from Habermas' critical philosophy. Students are facilitated to imagine being agents of change by playing historical roles in their present era. Questions like this will raise divergent thinking skills that produce a variety of creative answers from students [7, pp. 86–88].

Historical stories conveyed by the teacher with intonation, rhythm, symbolic and figurative language will leave interesting impressions and messages. Teachers as speakers become intimate with students as listeners. The imagination that appears when listening to creative teacher lectures is the fruit of listening literacy skills. From there, other literacy skills (multiliteration) will be stimulated to grow [12]. Through stories, all brain nodes work and cognitive processes in digesting information become easier. Emotional stimulation and psychological attachments that surround storytelling will bring out the imagination and make it last a long time in memory [13, p. 21]. The imagination that overflows with the magic of historical narratives will stimulate curiosity.

Cognitively, learning history is expected to broaden intellectual horizons about the past as well as instill an orientation to the future [14, pp. 33–35]. For this reason, studying history is not memorizing a series of facts, names, times, and places but exploring these events and picking up their values so that they become meaningful lessons for life. Creative history learning also encourages the moral transformation (values) of historical events or role models into students who imagine them. Students have the opportunity to determine useful things that can develop character and give it meaning when struggling to actualize it in their daily lives [15, p. 27]. Students not only gain historical knowledge but also build attitudes. Historical awareness, national pride, and other values that can be

tasted from history will be embedded in students stronger and more durable.

Creative history learning not only encourages the development of cognitive and affective domains but also psychomotor. The expression of students' historical imagination can be realized through psychomotor processes and products. Productivity produces output in the form of ideas or works in creative history learning in line with the pedagogical principles of the 21st century. Creative learning embodies contextual, participatory, and authentic learning. Creative pedagogy that is flexible in nature can be integrated into various learning models that are commonly used by teachers, such as discovery learning, problem based learning, and project based learning [7, p. 40].

Even in current developments, there is a STEAM learning model which is believed to be suitable to be applied in the middle of this 4.0 Industrial Revolution era. STEAM learning is an applied model that uses the Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics approach [16, p. 20]. STEAM learning is directed to create a pleasant learning atmosphere and encourage active and productive students. Although the components seem far from the scope of history, this does not mean that STEAM learning is difficult to apply in history learning. Through creative history learning, each work produced by students can be described in a process by referring to the STEAM components.

Creative pedagogy is also in line with reflective pedagogy which helps students to become whole individuals who develop knowledge, conscience, and sensitivity to the environment. Reflective pedagogy has dynamics starting from exploring context, experience, reflecting, formulating action, and evaluating [17, p. 21]. This dynamic is very relevant to creative pedagogy which invites students to connect learning experiences with the context they are facing. Creative pedagogy also provides opportunities for students to reflect and then formulate change actions to answer problems around students. Furthermore, students can plan a service learning program for the surrounding community that departs from their experience of learning history. Thus students have the opportunity to apply what they have learned for humanity [18, p. 274].

3. CURA PERSONALIS IN LEARNING

In the students' imaginations that are built through historical narratives, there are cognitive content in the form of new knowledge and emotional impulses that need to be expressed. "Literature also provides a highly effective way to help students make personal connections to history" [10, p. 46]. The imagination that emerges from historical narratives will construct students' personal relationships with history. This needs to be expressed in a variety of unique ways in the form

of works such as writing, paintings, posters, infographics, songs, dances, videos, miniatures, mockups, and various other creative ideas. Motivation to be creative needs to be given the widest possible space according to the passion of the students [8, p. 7]. Through writing, students are invited to cultivate the soul of "the writer" in themselves. Through paintings, songs, dances, and other artistic expressions, students cultivate an "artist" spirit. Through creative works that adopt the sophistication of information and communication technology, students cultivate their digital literacy.

The expression of imagination can also be accommodated when students express their reflective thoughts by presenting past memories that are linked to current and future situations. Memories of suffering and hegemony in coffee gardens as depicted in the novel *Max Havelaar* by Multatuli can be present in a cup of coffee enjoyed by students in cafes [19, p. 318]. By connecting and at the same time reflecting on that experience, ideas of entrepreneurship, environmental awareness or ecopedagogy, social awareness, and others will show how valuable historical awareness is. It can even further train students' critical thinking skills that cannot be separated from critical pedagogy [20, p. 84]. Creative pedagogy which on several sides also intersects with critical pedagogy can be a pedagogy of hope which is liberating in a certain sense [21], [22, p. 225].

Imaginative creativity has magical powers. The creative tradition is a magical tradition that has magical powers. Magic in this context is not something supernatural or transcendental. Creativity produces immanent magical power. Creativity has the charm and power that can move a person to produce extraordinary work as the fruits of cognition and affection combined in an unusual way [23, p. viii]. Therefore, creative learning must also be supported by a magical spirit. The spirit to really, excel, strive for the best learning for students to be able to produce fruit that is useful [24, p. 4].

Student contribution in creative learning can be pursued through a personal approach. One form of personal approach that can be adopted in creative learning is *cura personalis*. "They [teachers] are to love these students, knowing them personally (*cura personalis*), living a respectful familiarity with them" [25, p. 7]. By providing egalitarian assistance and providing room for students to develop according to their talents, creative learning will be more optimal. This is characterized by the development of individual student creativity and performance, the achievement of metalearning, encouraging the development of inductive and creative reasoning and problem solving, the creation of content that is produced independently and collaboratively by students, the creation of horizontal learning (peer to peer), and peer-to-peer assessment [7, pp. 42–43].

The role of the teacher as a traveling companion for students in learning will encourage the growth and development of optimal imagination expression. The teacher is tasked with directing and guiding students to express their personal relationship with history through work and action. When students are able to find things they can do after studying history, students will realize how history is not only about the past but also useful for the present and future. Students can also find themselves useful to others. Through *cura personalis*, students are aware of the existence of men or women for others [26, p. 9]. Of course, personal mentoring takes time and patience.

Often history teachers fall into superficiality when designing creative, innovative, and meaningfully historical lessons. The history teacher is caught in a pit of difficulty that she has dug herself. Creative history learning is often imagined to be full of sophisticated digital materials, media and devices so that it can provide attractive learning. Even though the essence of creative pedagogy as explained by Dezvani and Jetnioff is based on the development of student creativity (Supriatna & Maulidah, 2020, p. 8). Through *cura personalis*, teachers can learn from colleagues as well as the learning experiences of the students they supervise. This is where the adage "all teachers, all students" applies. In principle, creative pedagogy can be presented in a simple and flexible manner, but the results are meaningful and able to move students. How do history teachers get started?

Experience or best practice is important to strengthen teacher confidence in trying new things. The courage to try by itself will change the paradigm of the teacher. Theories and concepts will not work without the courage of the teacher to try in the classroom. So what must be done for teachers and prospective teachers is to encourage them to dare to try. In addition, teachers should also not hesitate to learn, forge themselves, and follow world developments. From the experience of repeated attempts and enthusiasm for learning, teachers and prospective teachers will find a creative history learning model that is effective for their students.

4. CONCLUSION

Creative history learning can help students arrive at historical imaginations and find meaning from their learning experiences. Creative history learning is not something difficult. Historical stories that are told in an interesting manner will make all the brain nodes work and the cognitive processes in digesting information become easier. Meanwhile emotional stimulation and psychological attachment will grow the affective side and make memory last longer. Expression of students' imagination through psychomotor activities is manifested in creative work.

Paulo Freire emphasizes the importance of wishful thinking (imagination) in education. Through imagination, students develop broader and divergent thinking that is not limited by barriers. Teachers with *cura personalis* are tasked with helping and challenging students to develop their imaginations as high as possible through creative learning. This humanist role cannot be replaced by any online learning application. Historical creative learning with *cura personalis* is able to inspire students as well as for the sake of human dignity in the present and in the future.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors collected data. Hendra Kurniawan conceived and designed the analysis, performed the analysis, and wrote the manuscript. Nana Supriatna performed the analysis and reviewed the manuscript. Candra Permana performed the analysis. All authors discussed the results and contributed to the final manuscript.

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