WELCOMING SPEECH FROM THE RECTOR OF UMP

Assalamualaikum wr.wb

Ladies and gentlemen, good morning

First of all, let's thank Allah suhanallahu wa ta'ala, God the almighty, who has blessed us with sound health and good will so that we can assemble here in the Asia Pacific Educational Conference. May salam and shalawat be upon the holy prophet and the messenger of God, Muhammad.

Ladies and gentlemen, in this opportunity I would like to say welcome to our university which is located in a small town in the southwest of central Java and also to express my thankfulness to everyone in this hall who has responded to our invitation either as speakers, presenters and participants, especially to the keynote speakers Prof. Robyn Gillies, Dr. Ian Hardy both from the University of Queensland, Australia, Dr Alexius Chia from the NIE, Singapore and Dr. Rita Johan from Gunadarma University, Indonesia, who have covered very long distance to come to this small town of Purwokerto and share their valuable ideas and experience as educators.

Ladies and gentlemen, it has already been our tendency as human being to always improve the quality of our life, give a better future to the next generation, and make this world a better place for all its inhabitants. We, however, know that there are problems which confront us. Some are small problems which only need effort on national level like how to give equal opportunity for prosperity and justice and some are big problems which require international cooperation such as limiting the impact of the climate change, eliminating prejudice as a result of difference in political system, culture, faith and so on. Nevertheless, I have the conviction that education has a role to play in providing solution to those problems both in national and global level.

Therefore, I am optimistic that this conference will contribute something to the effort of improving our life in general and education in particular.

In this opportunity I also want to give my deep appreciation to the committee who has worked hard to organize this event and hope that the experience of organizing this conference will be of valuable asset of your life.

To keynote speakers and all participants of this conference, I would like to express my apology should there be any inconvenience during this seminar, and on behalf of the Muhammadiyah University of Purwokerto I wish you an inspiring and meaningful conference.

Wassalamualaikum wr.wb.

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Successful achievement of a curriculum is the fruit of a lengthy process, beginning from the formalization of multiple ideal notions and concepts on education, formulation of curriculum design, preparation of teachers and educators, means and infrastructures, governance, curriculum implementation, including learning process, and learning and curriculum assessment.

Curriculum structure in terms of curriculum design formulation, becomes of prime importance. Supposed the prepared structure does not lead to nor support the goals of the curriculum, certainly its implementation will also be unsuitable.

Based on such notions, the discourse of 2013’s curriculum alteration being proclaimed by the government has invited a lot of inquiries. For instance, what kind of preparations has been performed by Ministry of Education and Culture for 2013’s curriculum? Is it really extremely urgent, that the new curriculum has to be implemented in the school year of 2013?

The Governmental destination to prepare such alteration is to meet the competence standard of the graduates, the process standard, and the content standard. Three of the eight national standards of education. Such curriculum alteration constitutes the serious effort of the Government to promote the quality of national.

However, socialization of curriculum alteration notion has not been accomplished smoothly within the school and educator communities.
Figure 1. Curriculum Development in Indonesia

We know that the Government would replace 2006’s Curriculum at Educational Unit Level (KTSP) with 2013’s Integrative Thematic Curriculum. It is called 2013’s Curriculum as it will be implemented in the 2014 school year. It is also called Integrative Thematic Curriculum, as one of its characteristics, especially for Basic School, is integrative thematic in nature. In this approach, Natural Science and Social Science issues become the discussion matters in all subjects.

The impacts of curriculum alteration lay in two basic matters: First, trimming in the number of subjects to be taught, from 10 to 6 subjects in the Basic School. The students will get only six subjects, Mathematics, Indonesian Language, Religion, Physical Education, Pancasila (The Five Principles) and Civic Education, and Art. Natural and Social Sciences become the themes in other subjects. For the High School, the former 12 subjects are trimmed into 10 ones, i.e. Religion, Pancasila and Civic Education, Indonesian Language, Mathematics, Natural Science, Social Science, English Language, Art and a nature of Local Content, Physical and Health Education, and Handy Craft. In Senior High School (vocational as well as Vocational one*), all of the previous subjects are retained.

Second, beside the trimming in the number of subjects, there is an increased total number of hours. For the Basic School, in Grade 1 26 lesson hours become 30 sessions, in Grade 2 27 lesson hours become 31 sessions, in Grade 3 28 lesson hours become 34 sessions, whereas in Grade 4, 5, and 6 32 lesson hours become 36 sessions, all of them in one week. In practice however, one session (one lesson hour) is set at 35 minutes only, not 60 minutes.

There are two viewpoints to deal with such curriculum alteration, namely from academic and political one. These two approaches are important for us to comprehend the alteration both broadly and comprehensively.

From an academic perspective, we try to observe, comprehend, appreciate, realize, and criticize:

- Why does the 2006’s Curriculum (KTSP) be replaced with 2013’s Integrative Thematic Curriculum without any prior research and evaluation on the implementation of 2006’s KTSP Curriculum?
- According to the Vice-President Boediono, the main reason for curriculum alteration is the community dissatisfaction against the results of 2006’s KTSP Curriculum, which is especially in the softskill interest and character formation among the students. There are lots of types...
of softskill, including communicative ability, tolerance, and ability to work in a team. Are such reason and background clear and sufficient for us, to explain why the KTSP Curriculum has to be changed?

3. In the 2013’s Curriculum, the number of subjects is trimmed, yet the total number of lesson hours is increased, what is the impact then? The arised question: In the trimming process of Natural and Social Science subjects, what will become to ongoing teachers of Natural and Social Science subjects? Increasing number of lesson hours means that the students have to stay longer at school, so what will be the impact?

4. One of the characteristics of 2013’s Curriculum, especially for Basic School is that the curriculum be integrative thematic in nature. In such approach, Natural and Social Science issues become the discussion matters in every educational subjects. Natural and Social Sciences are used as the prime mover and penetrate into the discussion matters in all educational subject. Natural Science issues become discussion matters in Indonesian Language, Mathematics, etc., whereas Social Science issues serve as the discussion matters in Pancasila and Civic Education, Indonesian Language, etc. Arised question, Natural and Social Science sofar has been established as separate subjects with the purpose to get early detection on the children’s interest and talent. Coalescence of Natural and Social Sciences into other subject will soon bring clear consequences. The teachers, of various educational quality and backgrounds are expected to implement integrative Natural Science into Indonesian Language and Mathematics, notwithstanding with the fact that every educational subject has its own characters.

5. 2013’s Curriculum will be implemented in 2013/2014 school year, yet do the teachers as the key persons being responsible for the successful achievement of the curriculum, are ready to implement it, bearing in mind that teacher preparations through training are very short in duration? Albeit 2,900,000 teachers have been trained by 40,000 Master Trainers of the Government, do private schools have been included in the training projects, how is the quality of the trainings, or are those projects just for legitimation?

6. English Language, which is previously a separate subject, will be included among the Local Content subjects. What will be your opinion about this, and what are your reasons? Is this a form of counter attitude to Westernization?

7. Pramuka (scouting) training becomes compulsory extra-curricular activities. What is the impact of the word “compulsory” here? Does the Government have prepared the Pramuka Training Personnels, and do we have to pay for them?

B. From political perspective, we try to comprehend every basic pattern of the policy alteration paradigms.

In 2013’s Curriculum, graduate competence must completely include the aspects of noble character, relevant skills, and adequate knowledge. 2013’s Curriculum emphasizes cognitive, affective, and psychomotoric aspects proportionally through the complementary test-based and portfolio assessments.

Quantitatively, in 2007/2008 data there were 144,567 Basic Schools in Indonesia, 132,513 among them were public schools and the other 12,564 (8.65%) were private ones. The number of private Basic Schools had been increased from the previous years. In 2005/2006, among total number of 148,262 Basic Schools, 137,683 were public schools and the other 10,569 (7.12%) were private ones. In 2006/2007, the total number of 146,000 Basic Schools, 135,009 were public schools and the other 10,000 (7.48%) were private ones.

As for the school books, in comparison with other countries, e.g. India, although it has hundreds million of students, its schoolbook quality is however better than that of Electronic School Books.
published by the Book Centre of Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture based upon 2006's STSP. Is the quality of school books to be published based upon 2013's Curriculum able to match that of Indian school textbooks? As an illustration, see the materials to be provided in Grade 1 to Grade 12 in India, which can be downloaded from http://www.notemonk.com/ncert/. An alarming condition is the fact that Basic School books will not be published per subject, yet as one book per theme. Supposed there are 8 themes in the Grade 1 of Basic School, there will be 8 thematic books to be published. Implementation of thematic teaching in Grade 1-3 of Basic Schools so far as well as the comparisons with thematic teaching practices in other countries show that aside from being taught thematically, a scientific discipline also always exists a separate subject in the curriculum. Supposed all materials of a discipline are taught thematically, the student competencies especially those of Indonesian Language and Mathematics will be inadequate. In such case, writing a book just thematically is not recommended. The school books to be published should be per subject and per themes selected by the teachers according to syllabus and thematic lesson plans developed by the teachers. However, this point of view is rejected by the Government, with the arguments that the reasons to be put forward were just superficial and those who opposed the curriculum had no experiences to teach in Basic Schools. Indonesian Language school books are written by Language Centre, with the notion the language in Electronic School Books is disreputable. However, the dependable Language Centre has no experience to write school books as were expected.

Mathematics school books are written by Developmental Agency of Educators and Educational Manpower Resources (BPSDTPK), a new agency in the Ministry of Education and Culture. This new agency has no adequate experience to write school books, while within a short period it is expected to produce qualified books.