

Development of Students' Knowledge of History: Acceptance and Rejection of the Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation Narratives

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to investigate the development of students' knowledge in the process of learning history. The research questions are as follows: (1) How do students construct their knowledge of history? (2) What main factors affect whether students accept or reject historical information? This research is a qualitative project adopting Charmaz's (2006) grounded theory framework to focus on the position of language use in the development of students' knowledge of history. In total, 30 postgraduate students of the History Education Department, Sebelas Maret University, enrolled in a course on the Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation, participated in this research. To analyze students' language use, I used critical discourse analysis focusing on their speech acts and discursive practice. The findings of the research show that students have autonomy to construct their knowledge of history. Students could accept or reject the historical information that arose throughout the learning process. Two factors affected whether students accepted or rejected the historical information: their prior knowledge and discursive practice. Students construct their knowledge of history through a dialectical process in the form of such discursive practice between their ideology, prior knowledge, and historical information. The findings of the research indicate that language use, especially in the form of discursive practice, determines the transmission and development of knowledge of history in the learning process.

Key words: *learning history, knowledge development, knowledge of history*

Introduction

Learning history is the process of making meaning while reconstructing past events (Florovsky, 1969). In general, scholars believe that learning history can develop students' cognitive and affective dimensions such as knowledge, historical consciousness (Counsell, 2002; Gunning, 1978), and morality (Peterson, 2011). Conventionally, these learning outcomes are understood as the result of students' engagement, understanding, and valuing of past events. In this understanding, learning outcomes are simply derived as an individual process in which the student reconstructs past events without intervention from social factors such as the presence of classmates or the teacher. This understanding stems from Booth's (1994) observation of British schools from

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the 1870s to 1960s. Booth exposes the tendency to emphasize rote learning of history because of political interests. In this situation, Booth explains that students were placed as passive objects learning history by memorizing information from textbooks.

Furthermore, in the 1970s, Gunning (1978) noted paradigmatic shifts in the framework of history learning. Here, three educational frameworks influenced understanding of learning history, namely those of Piaget, Bruner, and Bloom. Piaget contributes to the debate of abstraction by problematizing learning history in elementary schools. Bruner conceptualized history as a body of information transmitted from teachers to students. Meanwhile, Bloom developed a hierarchy of students' development for teachers to set the target of learning history. However, these educational frameworks still perceive students as passive objects and receivers of knowledge or information in the learning process. They posit that historical knowledge is taken for granted without any room for interpretation by students.

The problem of students' knowledge development of history is continuously debated. Gunning (1978) and Hallden (1986) highlighted another framework from language studies that provided an alternative approach to understanding the process of creative thinking and students' knowledge development in learning history. This framework was derived from Vygotsky's (1986) concept of socio-cultural constructivism in education. Using the concept of socio-constructivism, Vygotsky emphasizes language use as a mediator between students and their social environment. By emphasizing language use, Vygotsky initiated space for a humanistic approach that considers students an active entity in the learning process (Hardcastle, 2009).

Considering the above discussion, the development of historical understanding should be seen from the perspective of constructionism in which students' historical knowledge is constructed through the language used as the representation of the dialectical interaction between students and their socio-cultural context and environment. The study of students' knowledge development of history should be based on an analysis of language use. Some scholars already focused their analysis on the dialectical interaction process in history learning. Beck and McKeown (1994) investigated students' engagement and active interchange with texts to examine the dialectical process between the students and texts, but did not discuss language use in history learning. Moreover, recent studies have provided an advance perspective by which to understand the process

of learning history through analyzing students' narratives (Rigney, 2013). However, the problem of language use and students' knowledge development are rarely discussed.

Therefore, language use and students' autonomy should be investigated to understand the development of students' knowledge of history. My focus in this research is on revealing problems with students' knowledge development in learning history. The research questions addressed in this study are as follows: (1) How do students construct their knowledge about history? (2) What main factors affect whether students accept or reject historical information?

Theoretical Review

As mentioned, the development of students' knowledge can be perceived as the result of the dialectical interaction between students and their socio-cultural context and environment. Following the frameworks of Blumer (1969) and Vygotsky (1986), it is assumed that students' knowledge of history is constructed from social interaction, which involves language use as a medium of knowledge transmission. Some scholars identified the role of language use as a decisive aspect in the representation of past events and historical information. Postmodernist historians such as White (1987) mentioned narrative and discourse as two forms of language use that affected the others through spoken or written texts. White (2008) added that the narration and historical discourse presented during the learning process contains information, beliefs, traces of the social relationship, and identities that could influence students' prior knowledge of history. Furthermore, in the case of language use in history education, more attention should be paid to Vygotsky's (1986) notion of language use in education, because the practice of history education is not solely related to history and narrative, but also to social interaction. Specifically, Vygotsky (1986) believes that the practice of language use contributes to developing students' knowledge. Vygotsky's idea about language use can be explained based on two concepts related to the development of students' knowledge and language use: zone of proximal development and scaffolding. The zone of proximal development is the maximum zone of cognitive development students can attain through the process of scaffolding (Langford, 2005; Vygotsky, 1986). Scaffolding is a social process between students and other subjects of learning that contributes to their knowledge development, which they achieve through interaction, communication, and

language use (Beveridge, 1997; Daniel, 2007). Implicitly, Vygotsky believed that students could reach their zone of proximal development through language use.

In the context of language use, students should be regarded as active subjects who accept or reject the historical information presented during the learning process. Piaget (2003) discussed this problem, noting the concept of schemata that represents students' early knowledge and assimilation in the internalization process of learning. Piaget believed that these concepts represent the mechanism of students to accept or reject knowledge during the learning process. Similarly, van Dijk (2011) used the term ideology and mental models, which are similar to the concepts of schemata and assimilation, as two aspects that affect students' acceptance or rejection. On the other hand, students' prior knowledge also exists. Following Piaget (2003) and Schunk (1989), students' prior knowledge is similar to their schemata and includes their assumptions, perceptions, ideas, ideologies, and discourses. Prior knowledge dialectically intermingles with information emerging during class activities through any form of discursive practice.

Considering the mechanism of language use, the development of students' knowledge of history has become more complex. This means that possibly, students have autonomy to accept or reject information in terms of how they organize, articulate, and transmit their prior knowledge to others. The implication is that students cannot entirely accept all historical information that arises during the learning process. In addition, it is possible for students to construct their knowledge through the dialectical process mediated by the language used in the learning process.

Method

This research was a classroom-based project focusing on the development of students' knowledge in history learning. This study did not intend to construct a theory of language use, but to understand the concept of students' knowledge development in learning history. To achieve the research objectives, I used Charmaz's (2006) grounded theory framework, which comprises four phases: (1) Gathering rich data by interviewing and observing students' language use; (2) coding the data; (3) theoretical sampling, saturation, and sorting; and (4) reconstructing the concept of students' knowledge development in history learning. Moreover, I followed the recommendation of Glaser and Strauss (2017) to implement a series of carefully planned steps in the grounded research in the form of a set of designed learning activities, namely through the activities of a

documentary film study and classroom discussion. Based on the designed learning activities, I collected data related to the development of students' knowledge of history and language use. Furthermore, according to my theoretical perspective, I analyzed students' interaction through a language use analysis of their speech acts (Searle, 1969). To examine language use and speech acts, I performed a critical discourse analysis (CDA) based on van Dijk (2015). Here, explicit and implicit information was transmitted as part of the development of students' knowledge.

Research participants

In total, 30 postgraduate students of the History Education Department, Sebelas Maret University, Indonesia participated in this study. The students were selected because they had majored in history education for seven years since receiving their undergraduate degrees. Therefore, they had essential prior knowledge of the Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation.

Research scenario

To analyze students' development of knowledge of history, I followed Vygotsky, providing students with a complex learning topic and space for dialectical interaction to assist their learning activities (Langford, 2005). I used the learning topic of the Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation from 1963 to 1965, which refers to the political conflict between Indonesia and Malaysia (Poulgrain, 2014). The learning topic was presented in two activities. The first was a documentary film study and the second a classroom discussion. These two activities employed a student-centered approach and discovery model to discuss the Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation. The documentary film study included films from both the Malaysian and Indonesian perspectives. The Malaysian-perspective film produced a discourse in which the students argued that the establishment of the Malaysia Federation was an internal affair problem related to a nation-building process. On the other hand, the Indonesia perspective produced a neo-colonialism discourse, which the students represented as a confrontation against the establishment of the Malaysia Federation. Table 1 provides the lesson plan for the documentary film study.

Table 1*Lesson Plan for Documentary Film Study*

Learning Section	Time (minutes)	Activities
1	5	Lecturer proposes an apperception of the recent international issues between Indonesia and Malaysia
2	20	Lecturer shows two versions of the documentary film: Indonesia and Malaysia perspectives
3	30	Students observe and analyze the content of the documentary films
4	20	Students complete their written analysis via task sheets
5	10	Conclusion
6	5	Evaluation

After the documentary film study, students participated in the classroom discussion. I designed the classroom discussion by considering a student-centered learning approach and encouraged the students to construct their knowledge. Table 2 provides the lesson plan for the classroom discussion.

Table 2*Lesson Plan for Classroom Discussion*

Learning Section	Time (minutes)	Activities
1	5	Lecturer proposes an apperception of the different perceptions of Indonesian and Malaysian societies of the Confrontation
2	20	Students read selected learning material and books about the Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation
3	30	Students analyze and discuss the Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation
4	20	Students discuss their analysis and critique other opinions of the Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation
5	15	Students report their findings and provide comments in an open questionnaire
6	5	Conclusion
7	5	Evaluation

The selected learning materials and books used by the students in the classroom discussion were (1) Legge (2003) *Sukarno: A Political Biography*; (2) Milne and Ratnam (1974) *Malaysia: New States in a New Nation: Political Development of Sarawak and Sabah in Malaysia*; (3) Dahm (1987) *Soekarno and the Struggle for Indonesian Independence*; (4) Poulgrain (2014) *The Genesis of Kontrontasi Malaysia, Brunei, and Indonesia, 1945–1965*; (5) Sjamsuddin (1988) *Soekarno: Pemikiran Politik dan Kenyataan Praktek [Soekarno: Political Thoughts and Reality Practice]*; and (6) Adams (1966) *Bung Karno Penyambung Lidah Rakyat Indonesia [Soekarno My Friend]*.

Data Collection

I collected data via open questionnaires, in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and students' task analysis. The open questionnaires and interviews were employed to determine students' prior knowledge of history, including fore-having, fore-sight, and fore-conception (Heidegger, 1996: 214). The classroom observation and task analysis were used to examine students' discursive practices and their production and reproduction of their knowledge of history. Furthermore, the task analysis was an empirical source used to identify students' knowledge development by emphasizing their production and/or reproduction of the historical narrative.

The research objects were the communications during the learning process, particularly speech acts as a representation of students' language use. Based on Searle's (1969) framework, I examined perlocutionary speech acts in terms of how students' discussions affected other students. I transcribed the speech acts from the open questionnaires and classroom observation of the pre-learning, learning, and post-learning phases. Furthermore, I selected students' speech acts based on three discursive criteria: (1) representing social practice (Fairclough, 1992), (2) expressing ideologies or beliefs (Dijk, 1981), and (3) contextualizing units of language use (Schiffin, 1994). The results were seven transcriptions of speech acts, which I coded according to Student Number as follows: Student Number 1 = SN1, Student Number 4 = SN4, etc. The remaining codes were as follows: SN7, SN10, SN11, SN22, and SN27.

Data Analysis

A CDA of the data was conducted following the socio-cognitive approach of van Dijk (2015), which comprises three layers of analysis: discourse, cognition, and sociality. CDA provides a methodological and practical tool to examine students' language use and discursive practices to reveal their cognitive structure and production and/or reproduction of knowledge. Based on the CDA, I analyzed the cognitive aspects of students' prior historical knowledge, discursive practice, and development of knowledge. The analysis began with a linguistic analysis of students' texts and speech acts, especially at the pragmatic level of language. The purpose was to analyze knowledge interchange and discursive practices among students through language use. The findings of the linguistic analysis were then triangulated with the educational and historical

analysis to expose the mechanism of students' development of knowledge. These three layers of analysis explained the development of students' knowledge of history.

Findings

The findings below indicate two important points regarding the development of students' knowledge of history. The first pertains to students' prior knowledge of the history of the Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation as an early depiction of their knowledge. The second is about the empirical findings of students' language, speech acts, and development of historical knowledge.

Students' prior knowledge

I analyzed students' prior knowledge of history before they registered for the course on the Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation. The analysis of students' prior knowledge was important in understanding the development of their knowledge of history. The interviews revealed that most students had prior knowledge of the history of the Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation, as confirmed by their ability to articulate the primary and secondary events thereof. The students mentioned the following primary historical events: (1) The Malaysia Federation consisted of Sarawak, Sabah, Brunei, Singapore, and the Malay Peninsula in 1957; (2) the Maphilindo Conference: June 10, 1963; (3) U Thant announced the voting results: September 14, 1963; (4) Indonesia-Philippine resistance toward the Malaysia Federation declaration: September 16, 1963; (5) Indonesia severs diplomatic ties with Malaysia: September 17, 1963; (6) the attack on the Indonesian Embassy in Kuala Lumpur: September 19, 1963; (7) Soekarno's statement "*Ganyang Malaysia*" [destroy Malaysia]: September 23, 1963; (8) Indonesia established Dwikora to strengthen its national defense and help the citizens of Sabah, Sarawak, and Brunei in annulling the establishment of the Malaysia Federation: May 3, 1964; and (9) Indonesia exits the United Nations: January 7, 1965. Furthermore, the students also mentioned secondary historical events such as the following: (1) Soekarno visited the White House, but did not receive enough respect from Eisenhower: October 6, 1960; (2) Soekarno met with John F. Kennedy: April 24, 1961; (3) John F. Kennedy's assassination: November 22, 1963.

The students then connected these events in a multi-cause explanation using transition words. For instance, SN10 used transition words in this sentence: "On September 16, 1963, the Malaysia

Federation was declared. *As a result*, Soekarno proclaimed ‘*Ganyang Malaysia*’.” The transition phrase “as a result” shows that the student understood the connection between historical events. However, the multi-cause explanation was not multidimensional, as the student only focused on the political dimension. For example, students’ understanding of the history of the Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation is as a political affair connected with imperialism and colonialism. SN7 said, “Malaysia claimed that the establishment of the Federation is an internal affair problem. Yet, Soekarno says that Malaysia is controlled by English colonialism and imperialism.” Likewise, SN4 then stated, “The Federation of Malaysia aimed to show supremacy through inequality, because Malaysia positioned itself as the first leader.” The statements of SN7 and SN4 reveal their prior historical knowledge and logic, as they located Malaysia in the shadow of Britain’s colonialism and imperialism.

Students’ language use, speech acts, and knowledge formation

After analyzing students’ prior knowledge, I examined their language use and knowledge formation. I noted perlocutionary speech acts, mostly in the form of representative and declarative acts in students’ arguments, which affects the transmission and construction of their historical knowledge.

Based on their prior knowledge, the students tended to reject the Malaysia perspective presented in the documentary film. This is demonstrated in SN27’s statement: “This documentary film gave a new perspective for understanding the Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation, but the film also has its own political interest.” Similarly, SN11 also rejected the information: “This film opened my view that there are two versions when looking at the Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation. However, we have to understand it chronologically. Malaysia broke the Maphilindo treaty.” These rejections relate the students’ comprehension of historical information contained in the learning material. In the documentary film study, students’ comprehension was determined according to semantic information in the form of narration in the documentary film scene. Therefore, it can be concluded that they only retained the semantic information in their short-term memory.

I found a different pattern for students’ knowledge development in the observation of their activities in the classroom discussion. There were more in-depth dialectical interactions and discursive practices among the students and lecturer. The discursive practice enabled students’ to

construct knowledge of history. The process is part of the knowledge they exchanged and shared during the classroom discussion. SN4's statement represents this exchanging and sharing process: "I agree with [SN11] that Malaysia broke the Malindo Conference agreement. As [SN11] said, Indonesia is not the one at fault." The above quote shows that SN4 agrees with SN11. This represents sharing knowledge processes between SN4 and SN11, in which SN4 intentionally took historical information from SN11, who had greater rhetoric skills and a better knowledge of history. As a result, SN11 tended to share his knowledge of history and opinion with other students. At the same time, SN4 was in the position of receiving knowledge of history from SN11.

Another pattern of discursive practices was evident when two students with equal rhetorical skills and knowledge of history became involved in a discussion. Here, the students were likely to exchange knowledge of history. SN1's statement represents this exchange process:

"I know there is new information after understanding SN11's statement, but the conflict did not occur because there was a party at fault or not between Soekarno and Tunku Abdurachman. Here, we agree there was another factor such as Soekarno's internationalism ideology."

SN1's statement shows an exchange process directed to discovering new knowledge of the history of the concept of internationalism. Therefore, this exchange forced the students to continue exploring and finding new knowledge.

The lesson observation showed that students tended to receive or discover new knowledge of history through discursive practices. These processes indicated that they were forming knowledge of history. Knowledge formation refers to students' awareness of a historical subject or object. Here, students' awareness of the internationalism that became a decisive factor in the Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation represents their knowledge formation.

The discussion between SN1, SN4, SN7, and SN27 represents the mechanism of knowledge formation. I noted that in the pre-learning phases, SN4 had not yet acknowledged the existence of the internationalism concept. After going through the learning processes, SN4 realized that internationalism was a determining factor in the history of the Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation.

SN4 argued that the concept of internationalism was derived from Pancasila (the five principles constituting the Indonesian state foundational philosophy):

“The internationalism paradigm became an important element in the Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation. The international paradigm is a nationality view based on humanity and goodwill. Soekarno viewed all states in Southeast Asia as siblings. That is why when Malaysia established a Federation, it was seen as a repression of Indonesia. Indonesia wanted to help Malaysian citizenship to be based on humanity or internationalism.”

From SN4’s perspective, the internationalism concept pushed Indonesia to help the struggle of the citizens of Malaysia.

SN7 then responded to SN4, stating that internationalism is identical to Karl Marx’s idea thereof. Internationalism can be defined as global solidarity between laborers to fight capitalism. According to SN7, “the concept of internationalism reminded us of the concept of global labor solidarity proposed by Karl Marx.” In response to SN7, SN27 stated that there is a similarity between the views of Soekarno and Karl Marx. SN27 stated:

“The similarity between Soekarno’s internationalism and Karl Marx’s idea is the global idea of fighting capitalism. However, Soekarno does not only use Marx’s concept. Soekarno made adjustments to the spirit of Indonesia, positioning it as global solidarity: Not a laborer’s network, but a humanity network.”

“In the next development, Soekarno used nationalism, religion, and communism as a foundation for global solidarity. However, there is a difference between Soekarno’s concept of internationalism and that of Karl Marx. Soekarno’s concept of internationalism did not refer to Karl Marx’s concept of cosmopolitanism, which annulled the role of the state. Soekarno was structuring the concept of internationalism by accepting the existence of a nation.”

SN7 then responded, “Yes, I agree with your opinion. Karl Marx’s idea regarding global solidarity demanded collective actions to fight the foreign power that enslaved humanity.” Furthermore, SN4 responded to the statements of SN7 and SN27, stating that Soekarno thought identically to Karl Marx. SN4 said:

“In Soekarno’s perspective, solidarity was based on religious power. This is proven when Soekarno quotes the verses of the Islamic holy book to emphasize his want of unity and refusal of discrimination, intolerance, and domination. This idea was presented in Soekarno’s speech during the 1960 United Nations conference entitled “To Build the World Anew.”

SN1 then responded to SN4 and SN27, saying that Soekarno’s thoughts were based on the principles of the Non-Alignment Movement establishment in 1961:

“The concept of Soekarno’s internationalism was constructed by the ten basic principles of the Non-Alignment Movement establishment, which include sovereign equality, respect of human rights, anti-neo-colonialism, and advancement of international cooperation based on equality. This explains why Soekarno considered Malaysia a threat to Indonesia.”

Following these discussions, the students concluded that the Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation was not only caused by political reasons. The students’ produced new knowledge that Soekarno’s internationalism idea was also an important factor that affected the dynamics of the Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation.

Based on these findings, the students either accepted or rejected the historical information presented during the documentary film study and classroom discussion. The factors that most strongly affected students’ acceptance of the historical information were their prior knowledge and discursive practices. This highlights the importance of language use in the development of students’ knowledge of the history of the Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation.

Discussion

This research supports Gunning (1978), Beck and McKeown (1994), and Rigney’s (2013) arguments regarding language studies as an advanced approach in analyzing the development of students’ knowledge of history. It corroborates studies by Vygotsky (1986), Glasersfeld (1995), and Piaget (1959), which highlight the importance of linguistic and language use in the development of students’ knowledge. The development of students’ historical knowledge should be viewed as a dialectical process between students and their socio-cultural environment through language use. Students should be considered active subjects who accept or reject the historical information presented during the learning process. This is aligned with the frameworks of Piaget (2003) and van Dijk (2011), which posit that students have autonomy to accept or reject historical information based on their prior knowledge and discursive practices. Specifically, this study extended these previous works by emphasizing the importance of discursive practice in the development of students’ knowledge of history.

This research showed the role of language use in the development of students’ knowledge of history. Students have autonomy to accept or reject the information based on their discursive practice. Students tended to take and share knowledge through language use, in which the discursive practices became important. The discursive practice involved speech act skills and

mastering knowledge of history. This rhetoric and mastering of history affected students' comprehension and development of new understanding during the class activities, supporting knowledge transmission (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975). Discursive practices connect students' schemata and knowledge beyond the student (Cunnah, 2000; Glasersfeld, 1995; Wodak, 1996).

In this study, discursive practices linked the transmission of knowledge regarding Soekarno's idea of internationalism. That is, according to Kukla (2000), the schemata and discursive practice dialectically construct students' formation of knowledge. From a theoretical perspective, this discursive practice is part of the scaffolding that forces students to achieve a zone of proximal development through a discourse transfer process (Vygotsky, 1986). Discursive practice and discourse can be considered exponents of the development of knowledge of history, in this case of the Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation. Discourse is a knowledge abstraction that takes place inside narrations, texts, and discursive practices (Dijk, 1981) that contain the knowledge, beliefs, identity, social structures, economics, politics, and culture from the subject producing the discourse (Dijk, 2015; Gumperz, 1977; Purwanta, 2017; Wodak, 1996). Furthermore, the rejection of historical knowledge relates to students' comprehension of information contained in the learning material. In the documentary film study, I determined students' comprehension based on semantic information in the form of the narration and scene. The students were only able to receive and retain this semantic information in their short-term memory (Dijk, 2012). This supports Dijk (2006), who emphasized the relationship between cognitive aspects and mental models. The cognitive aspect develops students' mental attitude during their process of learning history. This research showed that the mental model could affect students' discursive practice in the process, forcing them to be more selective of or reject historical information from the Malaysian-perspective documentary film. As a result, students did not add to their knowledge of history by watching the documentary film with the Malaysian perspective. That is, students' schemata did not significantly change after the learning process based on the documentary film.

The discussion above shows the mechanism of discursive practice in historical learning that contributes to the development of students' knowledge of history. According to the findings of the research, the dialectical interactions among students resulted in the formation of knowledge about internationalism. In the dialectical process, the discussion helped them understand internationalism as an important factor in the history of the Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation. In other words, the

students produced new ideas from the learning activity, which differed from the common conversations of the Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation. Based on this, discursive practice becomes essential in the development of students' knowledge of history. Discursive practice can be seen as a space for the adaptation of new knowledge to students' prior knowledge. In this research, students' perspectives when explaining their views regarding the 1963 Indonesian-Malaysian Confrontation narrative represent their adaptation. From this viewpoint, students' perspectives are new pieces of knowledge found and formulated through a dialectical process among them and their social environment. The formulation of new knowledge will be strong, weak, or replaced when it is narrated or critically discussed. The new knowledge strengthens when other students approve and accept it, and weakens if other students disagree with or reject it. On the other hand, the acceptance of knowledge occurs when the critical discussion process brings about new knowledge the student considers more comprehensive and that conforms to a student's ideology. This mechanism explains how students develop their knowledge of history.

Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion, it is concluded that students have autonomy to construct their knowledge of history. The students could accept or reject the historical information based on their prior knowledge and the discursive practice during the learning process. Discursive practices are the main factor affecting whether students accept or reject historical information, because these practices connect their prior knowledge and historical information presented during the learning process. As such, students construct their knowledge of history through the dialectical process between their ideology, prior knowledge, and historical information through discursive practices. Overall, I want to highlight that the findings of this study show the importance of language use, especially in the form of discursive practice, which determines the transmission and development of the knowledge of history in the learning process.

This study is significant because it analyzed knowledge development through students' language use. It proposed a new approach to analyzing the learning process by emphasizing language use and discursive practices, demonstrating students' autonomy in rejecting or accepting the knowledge provided during the learning process. Therefore, further research should pay attention to language use, discursive practice, and students' autonomy. Practically, higher education teachers and administrators should promote discursive practice based on its benefits in developing

students' knowledge of history. However, they should note that obstacles might arise. The most important factor supporting the success of discursive practice is students' rhetorical ability, especially when delivering statements, constructing arguments, and criticizing their peers' opinions. Students with better rhetorical ability can express their opinions logically, and in so doing, gain approval more easily. On the other hand, peers tend to reject statements from students with lower rhetoric abilities. As a result, students with high rhetoric ability dominate the critical discussion, which teachers should be aware of to avoid such situations

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