

Implementation of Music Education at Indonesian School of Bangkok

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ABSTRACT

The implementation of music education at the Indonesian School of Bangkok (Sekolah Indonesia Bangkok/ SIB) plays a significant role in fostering students' cognitive and artistic development, while also contributing to the preservation and promotion of Indonesian culture abroad. This qualitative study, employing an autoethnographic approach, aims to describe the music education practices at SIB, focusing on the materials taught, the teaching methods used, and the impact of these practices on cultural diplomacy. Through various traditional Indonesian musical instruments such as angklung, kolintang, cethik, and gamelan, students are not only taught technical music skills but also the cultural values embedded in each instrument and its repertoire. Methods such as demonstration, drill, Kodály, experiential learning, and discussion are applied to ensure students develop a comprehensive understanding of music. Additionally, through cultural performances, students can introduce Indonesian music to the Thai public and international audiences, enhancing Indonesia's cultural diplomacy. The study highlights how music education at SIB serves as both an educational tool and a medium for cultural exchange, promoting Indonesian arts and strengthening cultural ties between Indonesia and the global community.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Learning music has an important role in teaching and learning activities in schools. Music education can improve students' cognitive abilities and concentration, as well as foster social, emotional, and critical thinking abilities (Malhotra et al., 2024). Through learning music, students can learn to appreciate and express ideas. Apart from that, music education can also improve memory, language, and mathematics skills (Turyamureeba, 2024). Based on this, it is necessary to implement music learning because it contributes to improving students' positive character and supports overall cognitive development.

Indonesian School of Bangkok or Sekolah Indonesia Bangkok (SIB) is an educational institution that provides educational services for Indonesian citizens abroad, especially in Thailand. SIB provides

education from early childhood education, elementary school, middle school, and high school levels (Deviana & Sulistyani, 2019). The curriculum used at SIB is the Independent Curriculum, so that at SIB there are Cultural Arts or Musical Arts subjects as part of the implementation of the national curriculum. Learning the art of music at SIB not only functions as a means of education, but also as a medium for preserving Indonesian culture. Apart from that, learning musical arts at SIB is also part of cultural diplomacy because SIB students often can perform in Thai public (Zuhri & Sholeh, 2024). Therefore, the implementation of music learning at SIB plays an important role in providing students with the arts, as well as in preserving and promoting Indonesian culture in the global community.

Most students who study at SIB are Indonesian students who moved because their parents were working or studying in Thailand (Deviana & Sulistyani, 2019). This makes the SIB environment have a diverse cultural background, because students come from various provinces in Indonesia. Apart from that, SIB students also have different musical abilities. This is because some students at previous schools did not learn music, but only fine arts or dance. This diversity creates opportunities as well as challenges in learning the art of music at SIB. Teachers need to adapt teaching materials that are relevant to the diversity of students' conditions, including learning Western musical instruments or traditional Indonesian musical instruments which may be less familiar to some students. Apart from that, choosing a method for teaching music at SIB also requires structured planning so that the learning outcomes can be performed if you want to take part in a performance, both at the Indonesian Embassy and outside the Indonesian Embassy. This condition encourages teachers to be more creative in designing learning strategies that can accommodate this.

The lack of studies regarding learning strategies at Indonesian Embassy Schools/ Sekolah Indonesia Luar Negeri (SILN) such as the Indonesian School of Bangkok (SIB) means that references on this topic are limited. Many aspects have not been systematically documented, so research is needed regarding the implementation of music learning at SILN, especially at SIB. This includes the material presented, the teaching methods used, and how learning contributes in terms of cultural diplomacy, considering SILN's position in the international environment. Documenting good practices in the implementation of musical arts learning is important so that it can become a reference for the development of arts education, especially in SILN. At the Indonesian School of Bangkok, appropriate good practices can become a reference for other schools that face similar conditions, such as the diversity of student backgrounds or the challenges of implementing learning abroad. Based on this, research regarding the implementation of music arts learning at Indonesian School of Bangkoks can contribute to studies regarding the implementation of learning at Indonesian Embassy Schools.

2. METHOD

This research aims to describe the implementation of music arts learning at the Indonesian School of Bangkok. This research is qualitative research. Descriptive qualitative research is research that aims to obtain detailed and in-depth information about a phenomenon (Creswell, 2014). This research is qualitative research using autoethnography methods. Autoethnographic research uses the researcher's life experiences as research data which is then analyzed to understand certain social phenomena (Chang, 2008). The data collection technique in this article is through self-reflection. Self-reflection is carried out in qualitative research to gain a deeper understanding of the researcher's experiences and thoughts regarding the phenomenon being studied (Moon, 2004). In this research, the self-reflection carried out was by writing down the researcher's experiences or field notes as an arts and culture teacher, especially music, at the Indonesian School of Bangkok who was actively involved during the music arts learning process at the Indonesian School of Bangkok.

The data analysis technique in this article uses thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a method in qualitative research that is used to identify patterns or themes that appear repeatedly in data collected from interviews, field notes, or documents (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This theme can be a concept or category that reflects experiences or views that are relevant to the research topic. Testing the validity of

the data in research it uses triangulation of data sources. Triangulation of data sources can be done by confirming findings, such as comparing results or findings in research.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Indonesian School of Bangkok

The Indonesian School of Bangkok (SIB) is located within the Indonesian Embassy in Bangkok. SIB is a one-roof school consisting of PAUD, Elementary, Middle School and High School levels, with a total of 128 students. The majority of students registered at SIB are Indonesian students who are following the assignments of their parents who are continuing their education, serving or working in Thailand (Deviana & Sulistyani, 2019).

The curriculum used at SIB is the Indonesian national curriculum, namely the Merdeka Curriculum. In the Indonesian national curriculum, arts and culture are important content in teaching inside and outside the classroom (Zuhri & Sholeh, 2024). This is in line with the efforts made by the Indonesian School of Bangkok, namely actively implementing arts and culture learning in intracurricular and extracurricular activities.

Indonesian School of Bangkok (SIB) as one of the Indonesian Overseas Schools not only functions as an educational institution, but also has a role as an ambassador for Indonesian culture abroad, especially in Thailand. Located in the midst of the international community, SIB plays a role in introducing and preserving Indonesian culture to the global community. Through various activities such as participation in cultural performances, arts festivals and other international events, SIB actively introduces the diversity of Indonesian culture, including traditional music such as angklung, kolintang, cethik, gamelan and other arts, to the people of Thailand and other countries. Cultural appearance by SIB was well received by the Thai people (Zuhri & Sholeh, 2024).

The Indonesian School of Bangkok (SIB) which is located abroad has a strategic role in introducing and preserving Indonesian culture, one of which is through the art of music. As a cultural ambassador, SIB is not only tasked with providing academic education, but also teaching artistic skills from various Indonesian cultures to its students. With the opportunity to perform in various cultural performances, both at local and international levels, SIB has the opportunity to learn more about Indonesian culture, as well as demonstrate this cultural identity to the international community.

B. Music Lesson at SIB

Arts and culture learning, in this case the art of music, plays an active role in facilitating the arts learning process for students, especially regarding musical knowledge and skills. Apart from teaching music theories, researchers as teachers also guide students to practice musical skills that can be used on various cultural performance occasions. In this context, researchers are tasked with preparing students to be able to perform Indonesian musical arts in the cultural performances they participate in. This process involves various learning activities regarding aspects of the art of music, such as the material to be studied, the methods used, the techniques for playing the musical instruments being studied, the repertoire or songs that will be played, as well as the cultural context contained in each musical work that will be performed.

Preparation for cultural performances requires individual practice and group practice, so that music playing becomes unified and harmonious. The researchers carried out this exercise in intracurricular and extracurricular teaching and learning activities. Another thing that needs to be prepared is the selection of traditional musical instruments that suit the needs of the performance. The instruments chosen must reflect the diversity and richness of Indonesian culture, for example by using angklung, kolintang, cethik, gamelan, or other traditional Indonesian musical instruments. Apart from that, selecting a representative musical repertoire is something that needs attention, in order to introduce diverse and meaningful Indonesian musical works, so that the cultural messages contained in these musical works can be conveyed. Choosing the right repertoire will give the audience a deep nuance about the richness and diversity of Indonesian culture.

An intense and structured technical training process is necessary to ensure that every piece of music performed can be delivered well. Through a systematic approach, researchers seek to equip students with technical skills, including mastery of playing repertoire or songs, techniques for playing musical instruments, adjustments to the tempo and rhythm of songs, harmonization, and the ability to collaborate in musical groups. With this preparatory exercise, researchers hope that students will not only have musical skills, but also a sense of pride in Indonesian culture. Thus, through cultural performances, students can introduce and celebrate the richness of Indonesian culture in a way that is interesting, impressive and profound for the audience, while strengthening Indonesia's cultural identity in the eyes of the international world.

C. Topics of Music Lesson at SIB

Music learning topics at SIB are adjusted to the learning outcomes and objectives set by the curriculum. Topics obtained from the Teacher's Book published by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Supplemental learning materials are also obtained from other learning sources such as journals, learning videos from other schools or universities, and other trusted references. Musical arts learning materials at the Indonesian School of Bangkok include learning about choirs, traditional musical instruments, modern musical instruments, and creating simple compositions or songs. In this discussion, what will be explained is the learning material for traditional Indonesian musical instruments. The following is an explanation of each learning material.

1). Angklung

The next material is learning angklung. The researcher explained the basic techniques for playing angklung, techniques for reading notation in angklung ensemble arrangements, and techniques for playing harmony in angklung ensembles. Angklung performances are performances that are often performed at the Indonesian Embassy and outside the Indonesian Embassy, because of the uniqueness of the angklung instrument and the ease of carrying it, due to its small size. This is different from kolintang or gamelan which is large in size so the process of carrying it to the performance location requires a lot of energy.

2). Kolintang

Kolintang, a traditional musical instrument from North Sulawesi made of wood, is also an important part of teaching the art of music studied by students at SIB. Researchers teach students to understand the function of each kolintang, the correct beating technique, as well as the expression and dynamics in playing it. Then the researcher as a teacher explained how to read the notation in the kolintang arrangement which includes chords, melody and bass. Apart from that, researchers also invite students to study repertoire or songs and appropriate arrangements so that they can be played on kolintang harmoniously and beautifully. Kolintang performances appear at the Indonesian Cultural Night event, collaborating with angklung, violin and other colossal performances. Apart from that, several times campuses in Thailand visited SIB to learn about kolintang. This makes researchers often involve students (elementary school, middle school, high school) to accompany researchers to become instructors for the Kolintang workshops.

3). Cethik

Cethik, a traditional musical instrument from Lampung made from bamboo, is a quite unique instrument and is rarely found in musical art lessons. Researchers teach students how to play cethik as part of the introduction and preservation of traditional Lampung music. Cethik is used in various traditional ceremonies, including weddings and other rituals, which provides contextual knowledge for students regarding the importance of musical arts in social and cultural life. Apart from that, researchers also guide students in recognizing various types of traditional Lampung music repertoire which are often played in arts performances, so that they can feel the direct connection between musical instruments, culture and local values contained in them.

4). Gamelan

Gamelan has been registered with UNESCO as Indonesia's cultural heritage. Researchers teach students about gamelan, with a focus on introducing the instrument (*ricikan*), introducing the piece, and playing techniques. The gamelan used is the gamelan of the Indonesian Embassy in Bangkok. Students learn gamelan during intracurricular and extracurricular learning activities.

D. Music Education Method at SIB

1). Demonstration Method

The demonstration method is used at the Indonesian School of Bangkok (SIB) in learning of music, namely providing direct examples of how a technique or musical repertoire should be played. In this method, the researcher as a teacher shows how to play musical instruments, vocal techniques, or other musical arrangements. Through demonstrations, students can see firsthand how a composition or exercise should be performed, allowing them to imitate and apply the technique in their own practice. It is very effective in teaching students basic technique and helping them understand visually and auditorily how a piece of music is done.

2). Drill Method

The drill method at the Indonesian School of Bangkok is used to train students to master certain musical skills through repeated practice. This technique is very useful for strengthening students' understanding of basic musical concepts, such as rhythm, tempo, intonation, melodic sequence, or harmony. In the context of musical arts, drill allows students to practice intensively with certain instruments or parts of a song, so that their skills can be honed optimally. This repetition helps speed up the learning process and ensures that students can master techniques well and without errors, especially for complex material or techniques that require high precision.

3). Kodály Method

This method is used in learning *angklung*. The Kodály method, which focuses more on developing solfeggio abilities and listening skills, is applied at the Indonesian School of Bangkok to teach students the importance of recognizing pitch, tempo, rhythm and harmony in music. In this method, students begin learning through simple traditional songs, before progressing to a more complex repertoire. The use of an easy notation system and intensive *angklung* practice makes it easier for students to understand musical elements in depth.

4). Experiential Learning Method

The Experiential Learning method at the Indonesian School of Bangkok prioritizes learning based on direct experience, where students learn the art of music in a more practical and interactive way. Students are given the opportunity to be directly involved in various musical activities, such as cultural performances or music projects, so that they can experience real experiences in playing, exploring and creating musical works. This method encourages students to learn through reflection on their experiences, whether in playing musical instruments, singing, or collaborating in musical groups, which ultimately enriches their understanding and skills in the art of music as a whole.

5). Discussion Method

The discussion method at the Indonesian School of Bangkok is used to develop a deeper understanding of musical concepts and to encourage students to think critically about the art of music and its various elements. In this lesson, students are invited to discuss various topics related to music, such as the role of traditional musical instruments, certain repertoire or songs, as well as techniques for playing various musical instruments. This discussion not only enriches students' insight into music culture and theory, but also teaches them to listen to other people's opinions, exchange ideas, and develop their communication and argumentation skills. With this method, students are expected to be able to better appreciate the diversity of views and approaches in the world of musical arts.

E. Contribution of Music Education in Cultural Diplomacy in Thailand

Learning the art of music at the Indonesian School of Bangkok (SIB) has a significant contribution to Indonesian cultural diplomacy in Thailand. Through teaching the art of music, SIB not only equips students with technical skills, but also introduces cultural riches Indonesia to the Thai and international community. Cultural performances involving traditional Indonesian music, such as angklung, kolintang, cethik, gamelan, or choir, are a means of building a deeper understanding of Indonesia's cultural diversity. Through this performance, SIB acts as a cultural ambassador who connects the two countries through art, strengthens bilateral relations, and introduces Indonesia as a country rich in valuable artistic traditions. Thus, learning the art of music at SIB not only teaches artistic skills, but also becomes an effective cultural diplomacy tool in introducing and preserving Indonesia's cultural heritage abroad.

4. CONCLUSION

The implementation of musical arts learning at the Indonesian School of Bangkok (SIB) has an important role not only in the cognitive and skill development of students, but also in the preservation and diplomacy of Indonesian culture abroad, especially Thailand. Through various learning materials, such as angklung, kolintang, cethik, and gamelan, students are taught not only musical skills, but also the cultural values contained in each musical instrument and its repertoire. The learning carried out at SIB combines various methods, such as demonstration, drill, Kodály, experiential learning, and discussion, to ensure students can master techniques and understand musical concepts as a whole. In addition, through involvement in cultural performances both within the Indonesian Embassy and outside the Indonesian Embassy, SIB students not only enrich their understanding of traditional Indonesian music, but also play an active role as cultural ambassadors who introduce the richness of Indonesian art to the Thai and international community. Thus, the implementation of music arts learning at SIB contributes to the development of student character and strengthens Indonesia's position in global cultural diplomacy, as well as showing how important arts education is in introducing and preserving national culture abroad.

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