

## IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONTEXTUAL TEACHING AND LEARNING (CTL) METHOD TO IMPROVE LEARNING QUALITY IN CLASS V ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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### Abstract

This study stems from the low learning motivation observed among fifth-grade students, particularly in the Natural and Social Sciences (IPAS) subject, which is often perceived as complex. Contributing factors include limited variation in teaching methods, monotonous instructional media, and abstract material delivery. These issues manifest in low student engagement and learning outcomes falling below the Minimum Completion Criteria (KKM). The research aims to enhance student motivation and learning outcomes through the application of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach in IPAS lessons at SDN Munjul (Cilaku District) and SDN Sukmajaya (Cugenang District), Cianjur Regency. Employing a descriptive qualitative method with a case study design, the research follows the PDCA (Plan, Do, Check, Action) cycle. Data were collected via observation, in-depth interviews, documentation, and learning outcome tests, involving principals, teachers, and students. Analysis used the Miles and Huberman interactive model: data reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing. The study focused on fifth-grade students from both schools. Findings reveal that CTL significantly boosts student motivation and participation, as well as improves learning outcomes—most students achieved or exceeded the KKM. In conclusion, the CTL method proves to be an effective, meaningful, and contextually relevant pedagogical approach for enhancing IPAS learning quality at the elementary level.

**Keywords:** CTL, learning, yang method, motivation, quality

### Abstrak

Penelitian ini berangkat dari rendahnya motivasi belajar yang diamati pada siswa kelas lima, khususnya pada mata pelajaran Ilmu Pengetahuan Alam dan Sosial (IPAS), yang sering dianggap kompleks. Faktor-faktor yang berkontribusi meliputi variasi metode pengajaran yang terbatas, media pembelajaran yang monoton, dan penyampaian materi yang abstrak. Masalah-masalah ini tercermin dalam rendahnya keterlibatan siswa dan hasil belajar yang berada di bawah Kriteria Kelulusan Minimum (KKM). Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan motivasi belajar dan hasil belajar siswa melalui penerapan pendekatan Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) dalam pelajaran IPAS di SDN Munjul (Kecamatan Cilaku) dan SDN Sukmajaya (Kecamatan Cugenang), Kabupaten Cianjur. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif dengan desain studi kasus, mengikuti siklus PDCA (Plan, Do, Check, Action). Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara mendalam, dokumentasi, dan tes hasil belajar, melibatkan kepala sekolah, guru, dan siswa. Analisis menggunakan model interaktif Miles dan Huberman: reduksi data, presentasi, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Studi ini berfokus pada

*siswa kelas lima dari kedua sekolah. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa CTL secara signifikan meningkatkan motivasi dan partisipasi siswa, serta memperbaiki hasil belajar kebanyakan siswa mencapai atau melebihi KKM. Kesimpulannya, metode CTL terbukti sebagai pendekatan pedagogis yang efektif, bermakna, dan relevan secara kontekstual untuk meningkatkan kualitas pembelajaran IPAS di tingkat sekolah dasar.*

**Kata kunci:** CTL, pembelajaran, metode, motivasi, kualitas

## INTRODUCTION

The quality of learning in primary schools is key to shaping students' character and basic knowledge. The success of education at this level is measured not only by the final output, but also by the learning process itself. However, the reality on the ground reveals that the quality of learning, especially in science and social studies subjects, is still far from expectations. This can be seen from the low motivation of students, which results in their lack of active involvement during lessons, minimal understanding of concepts, and the dominance of a conventional, teacher-centred approach to learning. These conditions result in a learning experience that is uninteresting and does not encourage in-depth exploration (Depdiknas, 2008). Similar conditions were found at SDN Munjul and SDN Sukmajaya in Cianjur Regency. Based on initial observations and interviews with Year 5 teachers, it was found that students tended to be passive and lacked enthusiasm during IPAS lessons, resulting in the majority of students' learning outcomes still falling below the Minimum Passing Criteria (KKM). This implies that the learning approach used has not been able to provide meaningful and contextual learning for students (Observation, January 2025).

To address the challenges in the learning process, innovation is needed in strategies that not only transfer material but also connect it to the context of students' daily lives. One appropriate approach for this is Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL). CTL is an approach that emphasises the importance of relevance between subject matter and students' real experiences. Thus, learning becomes more meaningful, easier to understand, and can be directly applied in their daily lives (Johnson, 2002). The urgency of this research lies in the need for empirical evidence that the CTL method can be a solution for fostering science learning, especially at the primary school level. In addition, this approach is also in line with the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, which encourages learner-centred learning. Several previous studies have revealed that the CTL method is very effective in fostering learning outcomes and student engagement in learning. For example, Suryani (2018) found that the use of CTL in science lessons in primary schools significantly increased learning activities and student evaluation outcomes (Suryani, 2018).

Similarly, research conducted by Nugroho (2020) revealed that CTL helps students build conceptual understanding independently through exploration and direct experience. However, most of this research only focuses on learning outcomes, without explicitly addressing the improvement of overall learning quality in terms of planning, implementation, evaluation, and follow-up. The integration of the CTL method with the

PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) cycle-based learning quality management approach has not been widely used in the context of primary school learning, especially in IPAS subjects. This study not only assesses student learning outcomes but also comprehensively explains how learning planning, implementation, evaluation, and follow-up can be improved through the implementation of CTL. Based on this background, the problems in this research are formulated as follows: ‘How does the implementation of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) method improve the quality of IPAS learning in Grade V at SDN Munjul and SDN Sukmajaya?’ The objectives of this research are: To describe CTL-based learning planning in Grade V IPAS lessons. 1) To analyse the implementation of learning with the CTL approach, 2). To evaluate the learning output and the learning process that has been attempted, 3. To explain the follow-up to learning as a continuous improvement effort to foster collaborative learning, 4. To explain the obstacles to the implementation of the CTL method in learning, 5). To explain the solutions to the obstacles to the implementation of the CTL method in learning.

## **METHODS**

This study adopted a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design based on the PDCA (Plan, Do, Check, Action) cycle. Data collection was carried out using various techniques, namely observation, in-depth interviews, documentation, and learning output tests, involving the school principals, teachers, and students. Data analysis utilised the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, which included the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The research subjects were Year 5 students at the two primary schools that were the focus of the research, which enabled an in-depth description of the learning processes and outcomes that occurred. This research aims to explore the phenomenon of learning holistically, obtain contextual and in-depth information related to the implementation of the CTL method, and assess various aspects of learning activities from multiple perspectives, including the process, student responses, and learning outcomes. The case study approach was chosen because the focus of this research is to analyse the process in depth in the field, rather than to generalise the outcomes to a wider population. The targets of this research are Year 5 teachers and Year 5 students at SDN Munjul and SDN Sukmajaya. The research subjects were selected using purposive sampling, namely Year 5 teachers and Year 5 students at SDN Munjul, Cilaku Subdistrict, and SDN Sukmajaya, Cugenang Subdistrict. The criteria for selecting subjects were teachers and students who were active in the IPAS learning process. The schools were willing to apply the CTL method during the research process.

Various data collection techniques were used, including: 1) Observation was used to observe the implementation of the CTL method in the IPAS learning process and student activities during the learning process, as well as teachers in the classroom. Interviews were conducted with teachers and students to explore their understanding, experiences, and perceptions of learning using the CTL method. Questionnaires were given to students to find out their responses to IPAS learning using the CTL method, including aspects of involvement and understanding. Documentation was used to obtain additional data,

including lesson plans, student learning outputs, photos of learning, and class activity notes.

The research procedure was carried out in several stages in accordance with the PDCA (*Plan, Do, Check, Action*) approach:

- 1 Planning Stage (*Plan*): Develop CTL learning tools, prepare
- 2 data collection instruments, and schedule learning activities. Implementation Stage (*Do*): Implement IPAS learning using the
- 3 CTL method in Grade V in accordance with the prepared lesson plans.
- 4 Evaluation Stage (*Check*) Collecting and analysing data from observations, questionnaires, interviews, and documentation to assess the effectiveness of CTL implementation.

Data Analysis: data is analysed qualitatively with the following stages:

- 1 Reduction: Sorting, selecting, and directing data from the field to focus on data relevant to CTL implementation.
- 2 Presentation of data in the form of narratives, tables, or diagrams to facilitate meaning and interpretation.
- 3 Describing Conclusions: Compiling research findings based on patterns that emerged during the data collection and analysis process.

The analysis is also based on the principles of PDCA-based learning quality evaluation, which allows researchers to systematically assess improvements in learning quality. This analysis technique refers to Miles and Huberman (1994), who emphasise that the analysis process is an ongoing activity during and after data collection.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to examine and describe the implementation of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) method in improving the quality of IPAS learning in Grade 5 of elementary school. Using the PDCA (Plan–Do–Check–Act) cycle approach, this research prioritises systematic steps to overcome problems, including planning, implementation, evaluation, and follow-up of CTL implementation. The main focus of this research is to explore how the CTL method can improve the quality of Science and Social Studies learning and analyse its impact on student learning outcomes.

In the *Plan* stage, this research analyses CTL-based learning planning undertaken by teachers, including the formulation of objectives, selection of strategies, media, and planning of contextual learning activities. The *Do* stage covers the implementation of CTL learning in the classroom, which involves students in an active, collaborative, and meaningful process. The *Check* stage reviews the implementation output through the evaluation of student engagement, concept understanding, and improvement in learning output. Finally, in the *Act* stage, the follow-up improvements made by teachers to foster the effectiveness of CTL implementation in a sustainable manner are analysed.

Using a qualitative descriptive approach, this research utilises data collection techniques such as interviews, observation, and documentation. It is hoped that through the

implementation of structured contextual learning methods within the PDCA cycle framework, the output of this research can make an important contribution to the continuous improvement of learning quality.

## DISCUSSIONS

According to Kadir (2013), the objectives of implementing Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) are: 1) To motivate learners to connect the subject matter with their real-life experiences so that they can reflect on and apply their knowledge or skills in dealing with broader issues; 2) To help students understand that learning is not just about memorising material, but requires deep understanding; 3) To foster interest in learning and enrich students' learning experiences; 4) To train students to think critically and apply their knowledge to come up with useful solutions for themselves and society; 5) To make learning more meaningful and produce productive skills.

Quality can be defined as a measure or standard used to assess the quality of a product or service, which includes whether something is good or bad, as well as the level or degree of something. According to Permendiknas No. 63 of 2009, the quality of education is the level of intelligence of a nation that can be achieved through the implementation of the National Education System. Quality education is education that can facilitate the development of students by freeing them from ignorance, incompetence, helplessness, untruthfulness, dishonesty, and overcoming moral and faith problems. Quality plays an important role in various aspects of life, including in the world of education. A good understanding and implementation of quality can help organisations and individuals achieve excellence and success.

Quality can be measured in various dimensions such as needs, safety, comfort, convenience, durability, consistency, accuracy, operational smoothness, and improvement. Educational quality is the measure of how good or bad the educational process and output are. Educational quality is one of the factors that determine a nation's competitiveness. Some educational quality standards include: content standards, management standards, financing standards, process standards, assessment standards, facilities and infrastructure standards, and educator and educational personnel standards. The characteristics of educational quality include relevance, efficiency, credibility, flexibility, effective output, and competence.

*First*, the motivation to learn among Year 5 students often declines, especially in subjects that are considered difficult, such as IPAS. This could be due to various factors, such as monotonous learning methods, lack of variety in learning media, abstract material, or a lack of interest in science, as seen from the lack of enthusiasm among students during lessons, with many students dozing off, chatting with their friends, or going in and out of the classroom on the pretext of going to the toilet while the teacher is delivering the lesson. Second, fifth-grade students are at a unique stage of cognitive development. They are beginning to be interested in concrete things and want to know how things work. The CTL method can accommodate the characteristics of students at this age.

After the teacher conducted a final evaluation of the IPAS lesson, most of the fifth-grade students' scores were below the minimum passing grade. If the learning process can be made enjoyable and meaningful for students, it will automatically lead to better scores, enabling students to achieve the minimum passing grade. The implementation of the CTL method is carried out through several stages, namely planning contextual learning (Plan), implementing CTL-based learning (Do), disseminating learning outputs (Check), and making continuous improvements (Action). The results of the research reveal:

- 1 Increased student engagement in learning the material: in learning activities, students were more active in discussions, experiments, and reflection on the material.
- 2 Improved conceptual understanding: There was a significant increase in students' ability to understand IPAS material.
- 3 Increased learning output: Students' average scores increased after the implementation of CTL.

These results are in line with Johnson's (2007) opinion, which states that CTL can facilitate active and meaningful learning for students.

## **CONCLUSION**

Before the CTL method was implemented in learning activities at SDN Munjul, only 10 students (28.6%) out of 35 fifth-grade students were able to achieve the Minimum Passing Grade (KKM). Meanwhile, at SDN Sukmajaya, out of 30 students, only 7 students (23.3%) managed to achieve the KKM. These results reveal that most students have not met the expected competency standards. Several contributing factors include students' lack of understanding of the subject matter and their low level of active participation in learning. After efforts were made to improve and strengthen learning strategies through the implementation of the CTL method with more emphasis on a contextual approach that actively involves students, the use of more interesting learning media, the utilisation of the surrounding environment, and more effective classroom management, the results showed a significant improvement. At SDN Munjul, the number of students who achieved the minimum competency standard increased to 32 students (91.4%). Meanwhile, at SDN Sukmajaya, the number of students who achieved the minimum competency standard increased to 28 students (93.3%).

This increase in learning output reflects the successful implementation of the CTL method in improving the quality of learning for Grade 5 students in IPAS subjects. Thus, it can be concluded that the CTL method is effective in creating a meaningful, active, and contextual learning process, which ultimately has a positive impact on learning output and overall learning quality.

Based on the research output regarding the Implementation of the CTL Method to improve the Quality of Grade 5 Learning in IPAS at SDN Munjul and SDN Sukmajaya, it can be concluded that:

1. Learning planning (Plan) has been carried out well through the development of contextual CTL learning tools, in accordance with the characteristics of IPAS material and student needs.
2. The implementation of learning (Do) revealed that the CTL method was able to encourage active student involvement in the learning process through contextual, collaborative, and meaningful group discussion activities.
3. The evaluation of learning (Check) showed a significant increase in IPAS concept understanding and student participation, with formative assessment and teacher reflection on the learning process.
4. Follow-up (Act) is pursued through improvements in learning strategies, the use of contextual media, and more effective classroom management, as part of continuous quality improvement efforts.

The implementation of the CTL method within the PDCA framework has proven to be effective in improving the quality of IPAS learning, both in terms of the learning process and student learning outcomes.

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