
Flexible Action Learning Management Process to Promote Cross-cultural Literacy of Junior High School Students

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Abstract

The objectives of this research are (1) to study the process of flexible action learning management to promote cross-cultural literacy of junior high school students. (2) To propose guidelines for flexible action learning management to promote cross-cultural literacy of junior high school students. It is action research. The sample consisted of 15 social studies lecturers and teachers, and 7 educational experts, totaling 22 participants selected through purposive sampling. The research tools included a document analysis form for cross-cultural literacy, an unstructured interview form, and an evaluation form for assessing the quality of the flexible action learning management process. The results of the research found that: 1) Study the process of flexible action learning management to promote cross-cultural literacy of junior high school students, it was found that teaching and learning for students to have cross-cultural literacy is necessary to enable students to know the history of and the differences of each culture Focuses on providing students with a good level of knowledge about culture. Including having creative ideas They can also become more aware of cross-cultural literacy. and be able to adapt to the current world situation that is both culturally diverse Including adapting to be able to live with the world that “Globalization” has had a great influence on society. 2) Propose guidelines for flexible action learning management to promote cross-cultural literacy of junior high school students, it was found that the researcher had synthesized a flexible action learning management process to promote cross-cultural literacy

called The PLPP Model of flexible action learning management process consists of (1) Plan, (2) Learn, (3) Practice and (4) Progress and there are results for evaluating suitability included at a high level.

Keywords: Cross-Cultural Literacy, Action Learning, Sustainable Citizens, Social Studies, Introduction

1. Introduction

Society in the current world is rapidly changing from the past to the present, especially in the past few decades where cultural significance has widely spread due to the inception of the ASEAN Community. Contemporary Thai society not only embodies Thai culture but has also integrated what is referred to as culture, making it imperative for individuals to learn about cultures other than their own. Moreover, the necessity for individuals in the 21st century to emphasize critical thinking skills and knowledge enhancement, along with the ability to work and live with flexibility and adaptability, is highlighted. Additionally, it's crucial to preserve and continue practicing the culture within the country while also nurturing a mindset that is receptive to learning from other cultures. Cross-cultural learning necessitates social skills and cross-cultural skills. All of these originate primarily from the family institution and then extend to the broader society, specifically schools, which expose children to a larger world where they encounter diverse individuals with different backgrounds. Without mutual learning, there is a high likelihood of segregation (Talaera Talks, 2022). Education management must therefore aim to bridge the cultural divides present in today's classrooms, stemming from the diverse cultural backgrounds of the students. The educational management should align with the educational philosophy for the public good, enabling students to understand their rights, responsibilities, and citizenship within a multicultural society.

The concept of "Education for All (EFA)" thus becomes a necessary educational management approach that requires curriculum development to cater to the learning needs and basic rights of the entire populace in line with international agreements. Through "Education for All," which asserts that "everyone has the right to education," every country must provide opportunities for its citizens to access education universally and equitably, create a conducive environment, and gather collaboration from all sectors to enhance learning. This extends the scope and directions of lifelong education management through diverse processes, managing resources efficiently while considering the development of individuals and societal quality (Royal Institute, 2008). "Education for All" aims to meet the learning needs and basic rights of all citizens, including decentralizing power by involving the community in curriculum development to align education with local conditions and needs. This encompasses formal, non-formal, and informal education, ensuring every target group has equal and equitable educational opportunities (Mangkhang, 2022; Mangkhang, et al, 2022). Furthermore, "Education for All" must consider the universal "humanity" of every student in the classroom, aspiring to foster a prosperous societal future through the power of "Civic Empathy." This promotes students' empathy towards others, not only in their local community but also towards individuals in other countries, serving as a guideline to nurture global citizenship that is not indifferent to humanity and becomes part of societal change (Hylton, 2018; Michigan Voices, 2021).

The educational situation of students in the educational innovation areas of Chiang Mai province revealed that educational institutions have both students from stateless ethnic groups and regular student groups. In this case, it's observed that ethnic groups also desire to send their offspring to schools to gain knowledge and practice in speaking, reading, and writing in Thai (Hilltribe Research Institute, 1998). This presents a challenge for the educational management of these institutions, which need to design teaching and learning management that aligns with cultural, ethnic, and linguistic diversity. Teachers play a crucial role in adapting or integrating these differing cultures so that students can understand and adjust to living together. Learning has gradually been developing to meet the needs of students, such as introducing electronic media to aid in teaching and learning to provide students with opportunities to improve their skills beyond traditional classroom constraints (Theeranut, 2009). The knowledge content used for teaching should relate to everyday life experiences directly associated with the student's context. Classroom teaching should create flexibility that gives autonomy to students in seeking knowledge from various sources according to their aptitude, and teachers may introduce activities embedded with knowledge to reinforce. This form of learning management emphasizes student-centered learning, promoting students to learn to the fullest extent of their abilities and aptitudes. The flexible learning management characteristic adapts to suit both teachers and students in terms of learning management styles and media or learning resources (Spratt, Pulverness & Williams, 2005).

The concept of Flexible Action Learning presents an alternative in the educational environment, as well as an adaptation of the curriculum to meet the needs of individual students. Therefore, providing opportunities for students to choose their learning paths is crucial. These learning options encompass class schedules, curriculum content, teaching methods, resources and learning locations, technology utilization, terms for entry/completion of education, and learning media (Edmonstone, & Flanagan, 2007; Kokoc, 2019; Huang, et al., 2020). However, the researcher opines that if the teaching and learning process is developed towards Flexible Action Learning, it can enable students to feel relaxed and acquire knowledge simultaneously. If students can achieve cross-cultural literacy, it will greatly facilitate the ease of attaining cross-cultural literacy. The content used for teaching should indicate the basics of each culture that students can encounter in their daily lives, and educate children to accept diversity and differences among each other. Such actions would foster unity and reduce the conflicts arising in society.

Cross-cultural Literacy refers to an individual's ability to adapt to diverse cultures, exhibiting appropriate and correct behavior when interacting with individuals from other cultures. Individuals with cross-cultural literacy adjust their methods and

behaviors suitably when faced with unfamiliar cultural situations. They understand the differences among individuals, treat others with respect, honor, and compassion, and possess adaptable leadership qualities in culturally diverse situations. Furthermore, they can interact and work with others from various cultural backgrounds by communicating effectively, and solving problems appropriately, which requires knowledge about the particular culture in aspects like ethics, religion, gender, finances, and age differences (Livermore, 2011; Polyota, 2017; Sergeeva, et al., 2019; Saengow, 2022). Hence, learning management aiming to enhance cross-cultural literacy is a significant approach to reducing disparities in the educational system. It helps promote students to gain knowledge, life skills, and a positive attitude toward learning, contributing to creating resilient citizens for society in the future.

Therefore, the researcher is interested in studying the flexible action learning process to enhance the cross-cultural literacy of lower secondary students. This serves as a guideline for managing learning in a way that leaves no child behind in multicultural classrooms and helps promote global citizenship among students for the future.

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Design

This research will employ action research methodology utilizing both quantitative and qualitative data for analysis and description of research outcomes.

2.2. Research Instruments

The instruments utilized for data collection in this study include:

- 1) Document Analysis
- 2) Unstructured Interviews
- 3) Learning Management Process Quality Assessment

2.3. Sample and Data Collection

2.3.1. Population and Sample

The population includes 1) faculty and social studies teachers, and 2) education experts. The sample for this research comprises 15 faculty and social studies teachers along with 7 education experts, totaling 22 individuals. Purposive sampling method will be used to select the participants.

2.3.2. Data Collection

1) **Documentary Study:** In this step, data will be collected from various documents, books, and instructional plans that encompass theories, concepts, and related research. The aim is to compile a substantial amount of information that will aid in analyzing the educational issues at hand.

2) **Field Study:** A field study will be conducted by interviewing faculty and social studies teachers to collect data regarding the approaches of flexible action learning to promote cross-cultural literacy. Unstructured interviews will be employed as the tool for this step.

3) **Design and Development:** This step involves a quantitative approach where the design and development of flexible action learning approaches to enhance the cross-cultural literacy of junior high school students are carried out. Following the development of these approaches, an assessment of the quality will be conducted by education experts using the Learning Management Process Quality Assessment tool.

2.4 Analyzing of Data

1) **Qualitative Data Analysis:** The researcher will analyze the qualitative data by the objectives of the study using interpretation methods. This analysis will be carried out through the examination of documents and interviews to summarize key points based on data clusters and to analyze the relationships between the data.

2) **Quantitative Data Analysis:** The researcher will utilize the data obtained from the evaluations and analyze it using statistical software that allows for appropriate data analysis. The method of analysis will be Descriptive Statistics, which helps to summarize the main features of a collection of data quantitatively. The statistical analysis will include computing the mean and standard deviation.

3. Results

The study on the process of flexible action learning to promote cross-cultural literacy of junior high school students revealed that the flexible action learning process should be characterized by a learner-centered approach in both theoretical and practical aspects. This flexible learning approach should allow students the time to explore knowledge based on their aptitudes. Hence, teachers act as facilitators of learning, providing support and guidance on various methods to maximize students' literacy. In the process of flexible action learning, the focus should be on developing essential attributes of sustainable citizens in cross-cultural learning:

Table 1. Attributes of Sustainable Citizen for Cross-cultural Learning for Students in Innovative Areas

The Concept of Sustainable Citizens in the Context of Cross-cultural Learning	Levels of Learning
Feature 1: Cognitive Domain	1) Understanding and recognizing the existence of various cultures. 2) Understanding the differences of each culture in society. 3) Recognizing and understanding the co-existence of cultures.
Feature 2: Affective Domain	1) Acceptance of cultural diversity in society 2) Respect for decisions or respect for various aspects of individuals from different cultures 3) Promoting cross-cultural learning concepts
Feature 3: Psycho-motor Domain	1) Ability to adapt in a society with cultural diversity 2) Practice to be ready to handle changes in society 3) Act as a role model in living in a culturally diverse society
Feature 4: Value Domain	1) Narrating stories and practices for living together in a multicultural society 2) Serving as a mediator in campaigning for people to accept cross-cultural learning for unity in society 3) Having a sense of co-existence in a society with diverse cultures

The presentation of the flexible action learning process to promote cross-cultural literacy of junior high school students reveals that the researcher has synthesized a method of flexible action learning to foster cross-cultural literacy, termed as the PLPP model. This model comprises (1) Plan, (2) Learn, (3) Practice and (4) Progress. The details are as follows:



Figure 1. The PLPP Model Flexible Action Learning Management Process

P= Plan Teacher's Role: The teacher is responsible for planning both the semester and individual lessons to maximize benefits for students. **Student's Role:** Students should be ready to learn and prepared to engage in the activities assigned by the teacher.

L= Learn Teacher's Role: Teachers should ensure effective content delivery, possibly adapting the format to be easily understandable, and assess students' knowledge level through questioning. **Student's Role:** Students are expected to develop problem-solving skills, provide creative perspectives, and respond to questions.

P= Practice Teacher's Role: Teachers should present diverse perspectives to enable students to think in a comprehensive and varied manner. **Student's Role:** Students should ask creative questions regarding the content and practice the thinking processes acquired from the learning in their way.

P= Progress Teacher's Role: Teachers should find media or activities beyond traditional learning to engage with students, embedding knowledge from the lessons to stimulate students' continuous curiosity and introduce new memorization techniques. **Student's Role:** Students should strive to absorb the learning content through various methods provided by the teacher during the activities.

From all the processes mentioned, it can be seen that it's a process where both teachers and students use their thoughts in teaching and learning together. All the processes mentioned can be considered as a learning management process where both teachers and students participate in teaching and learning together in terms of opinions or content that can help enhance each other effectively.

Later, the researcher has taken the developed flexible action learning to promote cross-cultural literacy to evaluate the quality and appropriateness by experts in educational management. The evaluation results are as follows:

Table 2. Results of the evaluation of the appropriateness of the flexible action learning to promote cross-cultural literacy (n=7)

Item	Evaluation Items	Appropriateness Level		
		\bar{x}	SD	Interpretation
1	Process of learning promotes cross-cultural Literacy of students.	4.86	0.38	Highest
2	Process of learning presents steps and methods suitable for promoting sustainable citizens in cross-cultural literacy of students.	4.57	0.53	Highest
3	Process of learning has a learning process that enhances learning for the next century.	4.14	0.90	High
4	Process of learning has a learning process through hands-on practice.	4.14	0.69	High
5	Process of learning has a learning process that aligns with the geographical context of the educational institution in the innovation area.	4.43	0.79	High
6	Process of learning has a process of preparing students for the changes in the future society.	4.71	0.49	Highest
7	Process of learning promotes creative thinking in cross-cultural learning.	4.43	0.79	High
Overview		4.47	0.65	High

From Table 2, it is found that the suitability of the process of flexible action learning to promote cross-cultural literacy is at a high level ($\bar{x} = 4.47$, $SD = 0.65$). When considering each item, it is found that the process of flexible action learning to promote cross-cultural literacy that is most suitable has 3 items, namely 1) Process of learning promotes cross-cultural literacy of students ($\bar{x} = 4.86$, $SD = 0.38$) 2) Process of learning has a process of preparing students for the changes in the future society ($\bar{x} = 4.71$, $SD = 0.49$) and 3) Process of learning presents steps and methods suitable for promoting sustainable citizens in cross-cultural literacy of students ($\bar{x} = 4.57$, $SD = 0.53$) respectively. This shows that the process of flexible action learning to promote cross-cultural literacy is effective to be used in managing teaching and learning in educational institutions.

4. Discussion

The study of the process of flexible action learning to promote cross-cultural literacy of junior high school students found that teaching management to enable students to have cross-cultural literacy necessarily requires students to understand the origins and differences of each culture, focusing on learners gaining a good level of cultural knowledge, including creative thinking. Furthermore, it can realize cross-cultural literacy more and can adapt to the current global situation with cultural diversity, as well as adapt to live along with the world where "globalization" has a significant influence on society. This corresponds with Kasetsuwan (2012) mentioning that societal changes show the growth of economic, political, technological, and cultural relationships connecting individuals, communities, and business organizations, making the country similar to a global village. This is because the world's population is merged into a single society, arising from the joint influence of economics, technology, sociocultural, and politics. This is also in line with the idea of Phanpairaj, Phiromsombat, and Ruangtrakul (2016) stating that individuals should also have cultural literacy, to adapt cultural experiences into daily life, build relationships between individuals, and work in culturally diverse societies. Those who have cultural experiences can better adapt cross-culturally, possibly due to the influence arising from cultural literacy. Additionally, this aligns with Polyota's (2017) notion that developing cultural literacy requires an interested knowledge to understand cultural diversity, an effort to develop language skills and seek experiences in interacting with different cultures, leading to a broader world learning, having new friends from different countries, languages, and cultures. This results in a continuous interest in learning cultures, and self-confidence in adapting to different cultures, not being afraid to interact or work with foreigners. Chamnan (2015) also mentioned that cultural literacy in motivation is a significant factor as it is the main factor for individuals to create drive or have the power to perform in new and confident situations that they can perform effectively in such situations. Furthermore, Arvizu & Saravia-Shore (1990) proposed that cross-cultural literacy is an essential skill of humanity that needs to learn cultural diversity, respect differences without any prejudice, not ignore unjust practices towards the diverse, and support the sense of citizenship together as citizens of the world. In addition, Mangkhang & Buttong (2024) propose that learning center innovation is considered a tool to promote the development of networks for civil society education that will affect educational reform to create opportunities

for seamless access to quality education. Continuing, which is a flexible educational strategy to end children dropping out of the school system.

The process of flexible action learning to promote cross-cultural literacy of junior high school students found that the researcher has synthesized the process of flexible practical learning management to promote cross-cultural literacy, referred to as the PLPP MODEL, which consists of (1) Plan, (2) Learn, (3) Practice, and (4) Progress. The overall appropriateness evaluation results are at a high level, which is in line with the process of Sergeeva, et al. (2019) proposing that teachers should have key characteristics in teaching to promote cross-cultural literacy, including four qualities: 1) Personal and psychological qualities, 2) Cognitive qualities, 3) Ethno-social qualities, and 4) Creative and pedagogical qualities. This also corresponds with Inchaiya (2022) stating that the concept of flexible learning is a way of learning management that emphasizes learners' freedom to learn according to their potential, interest, and aptitude, focusing on learning from various sources which help students to develop the ability to select and analyze information, know how to plan the use of information for the most benefit and in line with the requirements, where the important characteristics in designing flexible learning activities must create various activity management formats, allowing students to have choices in learning, emphasizing the importance of learners, where content and activities must respond to the interests of learners, focusing on developing learners' learning experiences, supporting various and quality learning resources. This is also in line with the idea of Sosutha, Wijakkanalan & Nuangchalerm (2021) saying that in the format of learning management focusing on flexible learning, learners can learn from various sources anytime, anywhere, and apply it practically, using technology assist in knowledge seeking, which allows learners to have the opportunity to develop their ability in selecting, analyzing information, and planning to use information diversely according to their own needs to cope with various rapid changes in today's world. Additionally, Jongmuanwai, Simmatun & Teemauangsai (2022) also proposed that flexible blended learning is learning management that can adapt to changing situations, by blending synchronous and asynchronous learning connected by telecommunications networks, capable of learning in classrooms and online, where key components include learning environment, class community, engagement and interactivity, and assessment and feedback, resulting in higher learning performance. Flexible blended learning has opened opportunities for students to have time for activities and self-learning, thus enabling better problem identification.

5. Conclusion

The process of flexible action learning to promote cross-cultural literacy of junior high school students proposes a pathway for learning management amidst turbulent societal changes. It aims to foster "Civic Empathy" among students as global citizens, making them aware of their roles, duties, cross-cultural literacy, and respect for cultural diversities among individuals in various regions. This aligns with the concept of Education for All (EFA) which strives for equity and equality for humans in the post-digital society that humanity is currently facing.

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