

Can Primary Source Evidence Skills be Improved by using Virtual Field Trip Learning Resources?

Ofianto¹, Erniwati², Azmi Fitriisia³

¹ Universitas Negeri Padang, Padang, Indonesia; ofianto@fis.unp.ac.id

² Universitas Negeri Padang, Padang, Indonesia; erniwati_ymail.com

³ Universitas Negeri Padang, Padang, Indonesia; azmifitrisia@unp.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

The development of historical thinking skills, one must analyze historical event evidence. A thorough, reliable, and trustworthy grasp of history will be created through a variety of historical sources. In order to construct historical narratives, one has to be able to find, recognize, evaluate, interpret, and generalize information from primary source material. In order to fully fulfill this potential, educators must create effective ways. Due to this, the purpose of this study is to (1) explain the value of using original sources to support historical understanding and (2) find ways to use Virtual Field Trip media to help students use primary sources to support their historical learning. A literature review is employed to obtain the answers to the stated research questions. Literature reviews that were pertinent to the issue under study were used to gather research data. The interactive model developed by Miles and Huberman for data analysis included data gathering, data reduction, data display, and conclusion-making. The study's major results point out that (1) using primary source evidence effectively is crucial for developing historical understanding and (2) using virtual field trip media effectively helps students develop higher-order thinking skills, including the ability to use primary sources effectively. According to the conclusions, this article advises teachers to employ learning resources that provide students with hands-on experience.

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Corresponding Author:

Ofianto

Universitas Negeri Padang, Padang, Indonesia; ofianto@fis.unp.ac.id

1. INTRODUCTION

Historical thinking skills include the capability to use primary sources of evidence (Gestsdóttir et al., 2021; Seixas, 2017; Seixas & Morton, 2013). The objective of studying history in high school is to develop the higher-order cognitive skills of historical thinking (Ofianto & Suhartono, 2016). When reconstructing historical events, procedural expertise is required. Students are encouraged to learn "how" to access previous knowledge rather than "what" past information by employing procedural skills in the classroom (Seixas & Morton, 2013). The use of numerous historical sources will be required of students in order to completely comprehend the past. Every historical source occasionally confirms and occasionally disputes the information provided by other sources (Britt & Aglinskias, 2002; List et

al., 2021). To form a conclusion in the form of a valid and trustworthy historical work (historiography), students in this situation must gather a large number of historical sources about past events (heuristics) for later criticism and source selection (verification), analysis, and source synthesis (interpretation). Numerous sources provide a plethora of historical information that helps pupils comprehend the past.

However, there are some issues with how history is taught in classrooms. Teachers and students still rely only on "textbooks" as a source of knowledge, which means that pupils only receive one point of view of historical events. Naturally, this will have an effect on how little knowledge students have. Whereas under the present Curriculum Merdeka, educators must employ a variety of resources, strategies, models, and teaching techniques to meet students' learning objectives (Budi Harijanto et al., 2021; Sihombing et al., 2021). Another problem is that conventional learning still dominates high school history teaching, which simply transfers information about dates, locations, people involved, and historical events (Lesh, 2011). Furthermore, in the educational process, teachers continue to be the main source of information (Abbas et al., 2022; Voet & De Wever, 2016). Naturally, this is in opposition to the present educational framework in Indonesia, which demonstrates that students are the principal actors in the "student center" learning process. And since the high school history curriculum aims to foster higher-order thinking skills (HOTS), one of them being the utilization of primary source evidence skills, it is obvious that if teacher learning approaches are kept as the only sources of information, only lower-order thinking skills may be developed (LOTS).

Teachers can teach history to students using a variety of techniques, models, methods, and media by considering the goals to be attained. For instance, teachers might implement the Problem-Based Learning methodology to help students learn to solve problems (Aslan, 2021; Simanjuntak et al., 2021). Teachers might employ a scientific strategy with the project learning model or the inquiry learning model to hone their students' historical research skills (Gunawan et al., 2019; Lestari et al., 2018; Nurulwati et al., 2021). Teachers can employ techniques like discussion, question-and-answer sessions, and other activities to help students reach their full potential and support the development of historical reasoning skills (Abbas et al., 2022). Teachers can organize for students to go on field visits to historical source sites in order to learn how to use primary source evidence to obtain facts or information about the past. The authors contend that it is reasonable for teachers to prepare their students to visit historical locations as part of class field excursions since the skill to utilize primary source evidence is connected to the skill to use historical sources. During field trips, students can actively increase their knowledge by interacting with historical sites, historical individuals, and artifacts (Noel, 2007). However, the COVID-19 epidemic has an effect on limiting social mobility, making it challenging to carry out historical tourist activities. Therefore, an effort is needed to bring historical sites or sources in visual form that can be witnessed by students. With the use of digital technology, students may view, hear, and interact with a variety of historical locations through a virtual field trip (VFT), which is a teaching media for history. VFT has the potential to support the development of students' use of primary source evidence skills because they are involved in searching, locating, and analyzing historical sites or sources through virtual displays. With the aforementioned backdrop in mind, this article will discuss (i) the importance of primary source evidence use skills in creating historical understanding and (ii) potential learning resources through VFT virtual field trips for improving students' primary source evidence use skills.

2. METHODS

To gather the information required to respond to research questions, this research approach involves a literature review (Zed, 2004). To gather information on the investigated themes, namely Virtual Field Trips and Skills to Use Primary Source Evidence, the author explores a variety of literature, including books, journal articles, conferences, and other relevant sources. In an effort to arrive at valid and trustworthy conclusions, different types of information are gathered from a variety of sources; relevant information is chosen and sorted; data is then analysed; and generalizations are made. Data

collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion-making were all done as part of the data analysis process, utilizing Miles and Huberman's interactive model triangulation approach.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 The importance of using primary sources' evidence skills in building historical understanding

History is a past event that can only be comprehended by the documentation that has been left behind. Historical documents, historical witnesses, archaeological finds, historic places, and other types of documentation can all serve as historical proof. For historians to recreate and comprehend historical events, they rely on historical evidence (Williams & Riley, 2020). In order to get all the information possible from historical data, higher-order thinking skills are required for analyzing, recognizing, and generalizing a component of the evidence. The primary components for collecting information from numerous historical sources include skills for choosing, categorizing, evaluating, criticizing, confirming sources, interpreting, and generalizing (Seixas, 2017; Seixas & Morton, 2013).

For instance, students will automatically engage in data collection (heuristics), data verification, data interpretation, and writing historical narratives when requested to create a narrative on the history of the Padri War. The four tasks listed above are part of the skills to use primary source evidence according to the education curriculum that is now in use. This project will start with data collection by looking for and locating sources that are pertinent to the subjects being addressed (Coiro, 2021; Houssein et al., 2021). Some of the historical sources that students must study to develop a comprehension of the Padri War are: written texts on the Padri War in print and online, witnesses to the history of the Padri War, and heritage sites from the Padri War like the Tuanku Imam Bonjol museum and monument. Students are expected to think critically and closely during this data-gathering assignment. This data gathering exercise requires the process of choosing sources, categorizing sources, and deciding which historical materials will be utilized to develop an understanding of the Padri War. Critical thinking is needed during the data gathering process to ensure that the sources chosen can really assist historical understanding of the subject being researched. As a result, this procedure cannot be completed using only lower order thinking skills (LOTS).

Students will next be requested to conduct an investigation into the selected topic by identifying, analyzing, confirming facts, and drawing historical inferences from the data supplied by a number of chosen sources once they have gathered and determined numerous sources that are thought to be relevant. Since this exercise follows a scientific process, it obviously requires investigative abilities. To get the knowledge they need, students must read a variety of sources. Normally, when working with numerous sources, you may discover material that either supports or contradicts one another. Students must compare, evaluate, verify, and criticize information in this case in order to draw a credible and trustworthy conclusion. The presentation above leads to the conclusion that students will use a variety of historical sources and evidence to acquire comprehensive, accurate, and trustworthy information as they develop a historical understanding of historical events. In this situation, the ability to perform scientific examinations of the available sources is required in order to develop a thorough, legitimate, and trustworthy historical understanding.

3.2 Strategies to improve skills in using primary source evidence

It is necessary to continue making efforts to hone primary source evidence-using skills by utilizing a range of strategies and effective techniques. In the study of history, a variety of techniques, models, methodologies, and teaching tools must be used, especially those that help students develop their historical thinking skills, such as using primary source evidence. The right approaches, models, techniques, and teaching aids will help students reach their full potential. On the other hand, if the teacher chooses the strategy, model, approach, and teaching media incorrectly, students may not reach their full potential, particularly in terms of higher-order thinking and the ability to use primary source

evidence (Kokotsaki et al., 2014; Williamson et al., 2020). Teachers are presently instructed under the Merdeka curriculum to include a variety of learning tools into the classroom learning process in order to enhance student learning results. Teachers may use a variety of techniques and learning resources in the classroom to make learning engaging and enjoyable, which will enhance students' motivation and interest.

It is clear that the development of these skills cannot be accomplished solely through the use of an expository learning approach where the teacher provides as the center of information, in accordance with the idea of using primary source evidence as a high-level thinking skill that involves historical research skills through scientific stages. Students will become passive and justifiable of all knowledge when teachers provide lectures in a one-way fashion. Students' understanding of a historical event is therefore limited since they only have one point of view about it (Abdulbaki et al., 2018; Lohmann, 2020). Additionally, conventional teaching methods like images of heroes, maps, or powerpoints with voluminous text must be replaced with interactive learning tools by including a variety of learning elements. The teacher's photos of heroes will only impart data from people in historical events (Anderson, 2019). Additionally, using general maps as a teaching tool for history does not help pupils develop their critical thinking abilities. This is because pupils can only understand the place's name in this situation since the teacher only uses a map to illustrate the location of a historical event. On the other hand, some teachers have employed PowerPoint as a teaching tool for historical lessons in the classroom. It appears like the teacher is just transferring material from books into a type of visual display, though, because the PPT that is being shown still has a lot of dense and lengthy text. Additionally, it will be difficult for children to develop a comprehension of historical events.

It is advised that educators employ the appropriate technique in line with the development potential and the learning objectives that will be achieved in order to enhance historical thinking skills, one of which is the utilization of primary source information. Teachers may use interactive multimedia learning resources, for example, to increase students' interest and desire to participate in the learning process. Teachers can occasionally conduct historical tours by going to historical locations to get first-hand knowledge of historical data. Compared to pupils who just imagine from a textbook, this practice will unquestionably improve students' grasp of a historical event. Students will have the opportunity to actively improve their knowledge through direct observation of historical sources thanks to field visits (Noel, 2007). Due to the fact that students interact directly with historical artifacts, field tours are regarded as the primary method of teaching history. The aforementioned description leads to the conclusion that teachers, as educators, must be innovative and creative in coming up with the best plan of action to maximize students' potential.

3.3 Can a Virtual Field Trip Improve students' Primary Source Evidence skills in learning history?

A virtual field trip is a form of multimedia learning that integrates many forms of media. VFT creates a virtual environment from the current world, giving consumers the sense that they are experiencing the real world (Co, 2020; Tuthill, 2002). VFT is field trip learning that has been digitally packaged. Due to social mobility limitations, VFT is ideally suited to be employed as a learning tool during the COVID-19 epidemic. Through virtual displays, VFT enables students to see, hear, and interact with a variety of real-life surroundings (Co, 2020). When students go on field trips to historical locations to gather historical facts, VFT is a huge help. VFT is thought to facilitate the reconstruction of historical events more effectively and efficiently than real-life field excursions. Students may quickly and easily discover the historical knowledge they need by using VFT. The use of VFT in history education has many advantages, unquestionably. Additionally, students may access more historical locations with VFT without being constrained by space or time. Students can tour several historical places just by seeing the virtual display provided by VFT. However, on a real field trip, they can only visit two to three nearby historical sites in a single day. Reaching historical sources or locations that are far from the students' environment is another wonderful usage of VFT. Students in West Sumatra, for instance, can readily explore historical monuments or evidence of the kingdoms on the island of Java

with VFT without having to go to the island of Java. When seeking information or visiting historical places in Sumatra, students who are on the island of Java can access them using Virtual Field Trip media.

Students who utilize VFT media to reconstruct historical events will be required to search for and locate pertinent sources, trace the information offered, assess if the material is genuine and credible, compare VFT data with data from other sources, and draw conclusions about historical events. The use of primary sources as evidence may be honed through this practice. According to several studies, VFT media provides students with an intriguing experience in which they are actively involved, observed personally, and appear to be in a realistic situation.

Students can visit and find different information on their own without leaving their homes or places of study thanks to virtual field trips (VFT), which have many benefits for learning, including (a) increasing student centeredness so that they are more engaged in the learning process; and (b) learning independence for students (Kenna & Potter, 2018); (c) giving students the chance to make their own observations in order to encourage engagement, inquiry, analysis, and the growth of higher-order thinking abilities in scientific studies while they are learning; (d) giving students the chance to engage with historical sources through VFT. Although VFT has many benefits, it also has some drawbacks, such as (i) students exploring sites or resources on their own through their individual monitor screens, which results in less interaction between students and teachers and students with each other; (ii) the environment surrounding historical sites cannot all be displayed due to the monitor screen's limited virtual display; and (iii) different emotional impressions (Bekele & Champion, 2019; Schaper et al., 2018). However, especially for remote learning, VFT may be the ideal option for students to examine historical sites or materials.

The discussion above leads to the conclusion that the Virtual Field Trip medium is beneficial in enhancing students' capacity for historical analysis, critical thinking, and the use of primary sources as evidence. As a result, the researcher advises educators, in particular history teachers, to employ VFT as a learning medium for teaching to help pupils reach their potential for higher-order thinking.

4. CONCLUSION

The study's main conclusions point out that (i) using primary source evidence effectively is crucial for developing historical understanding and (ii) using Virtual Field Trip media effectively helps students develop higher-order thinking skills, including the ability to use primary sources effectively. In light of the research's conclusions, this article advises teachers to employ learning resources that provide students with hands-on experience. The study's conclusions have repercussions for educators, students, and other interested parties. This discovery gives teachers a new tool for teaching history in order to develop higher-order thinking skills, particularly those related to the use of primary source material. The goal of VFT is to boost students' motivation and enthusiasm for studying history. These results can serve as the foundation for other stakeholders' decisions about educational policy, particularly with regard to future history education. However, this study is exclusively confined to the literature, and only still-applicable previous studies are used to answer research problems.

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