



## PROGRESSIVISM IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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### ABSTRACT

Progressivism is one of the schools of modern educational philosophy which is based on changes in the implementation of education for the better. Progressivism requires the basics of education that are meaningful for every student. The of progressivism refers to the implementation of education that is carried out by involving an active and centered role for students. The of progressivism that sided with students became one of the philosophical foundations in the development of the education curriculum in Indonesia, including education at the elementary school level. Curriculum changes took place in 2013 following the direction and policies of the government. This curriculum was introduced with the term "curriculum 2013 or K-13". The 2013 curriculum and progressivism conform to concepts and goals for the progress of education in Indonesia. The 2013 curriculum and the of progressivism serve as guidelines in implementing education that is oriented towards the potential and experience of students, especially students in elementary schools. Elementary school education is the main education in shaping the personality development of students to become quality students and born as a generation who will answer every challenge of the new civilization era to have a prosperous life in realizing the goals of Indonesia's national education.

**Keywords:** Progressivism, Curriculum, Elementary School

### Introduction

Education is one of the efforts to shape humans into individuals following the values of Pancasila. Education produces human beings who can develop attitudes, knowledge, and skills comprehensively. This is stated in Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System which states that every student in each education unit is entitled to educational services according to their talents, interests, and abilities (Chapter V Article 1b). Education is carried out fairly by the stages of development, abilities, interests, and talents of students. Education is tailored to the needs and conditions of students so that it can facilitate meaningful learning experiences for students. Of course, these learning experiences change over time. The process of change also occurs, including in the field of education. Progressivism exists as an answer and a foundation for curriculum changes that are occurring in Indonesia. Pohan, (2019: 110) argues that the progressivism curriculum focuses on learning activities and opportunities for students to gain learning experiences. The principle of progressivism refers to the reality that students are not small humans, but whole people who have the potential to develop actively, creatively, dynamically, and have the motivation to fulfill their needs. A curriculum that is guided by progressivism prioritizes processes rather than products that make learning a tool rather than just being a curriculum target. Progressivism recognizes that changes and developments need to be done in education to face the challenges of the times. In progressivism, the educational process using a curriculum that is integrated (integrated curriculum) with a system of learning by doing methods and problem solving, it is hoped that students will progress to have practical skills and be able to solve social problems well (Jalaluddin and Idi, 2011: 93). The purpose of this paper is to identify progressivism in the curriculum in elementary schools in Indonesia. The identification carried out includes the contribution and relevance of progressivism views in the 2013 curriculum, especially the impact on learning.

### Research Methodology

This research method used a systematic literature review. The systematic literature review is a literature review method that identifies, assesses, and interprets all findings on a research topic, to answer pre-defined research questions

(Kitchenham & Charters, 2007). The SLR method is carried out systematically by following the steps and protocols that allow the literature review process to avoid subjective understanding of the researchers. The SLR method is used to identify, study, observe, and interpret all research related to progressivism and curriculum 2013 in elementary school with certain relevant research questions. Some references that become references in the discussion of the 2013 curriculum in elementary schools include: (1) Robin Fogarty's "How to Integrated The Curricula"; (2) "Curriculum Innovation In School" by Argyle Elementary, et al; (3) "Curriculum Development in the Era of Regional Autonomy (from Curriculum 2004, 2006, to Curriculum 2013)" by Dr. Herry Widyastono; and (4) "Implementation of Thematic Learning in Elementary Schools" by Sa'dun Akbar, et al.

## Results and Discussion

Progressivism is an educational stream that puts forward the thinking process of students as a result of learning. Progressivism which comes from the word progressive has a positive meaning. According to KBBI, progressive itself can be interpreted as the direction of progress or improvement of the situation in a better direction. Simply put, the word progressive refers to the meaning of a process that leads to situations and conditions that are more advanced and better than previous conditions. Progressivism is one of the schools of educational philosophy that requires a change in education towards a more advanced and better direction. The view of progressivism argues that correct knowledge in the present can turn into untrue knowledge in the future. This confirms that the view of progressivism in education is dynamic, meaning that it always changes from time to time to obtain quality knowledge and provide real benefits to students. One of the figures who introduced progressivism was John Dewey (1859-1952M). Rukiyati (2018: 59) argues that John Dewey as the father of progressivism views education as a process and socialization. Dewey's process is a process of growth and a process of learning from the events around him. So, according to Dewey, the wall that can be a separation between school and society needs to be removed, because good learning is not enough at school. A good school is a school whose education system is integrated with the surrounding environment. Thus, schools can produce capable students who can be of use to society. Progressivism argues that every student has an active mind and intelligence and always wants to find out the truth so that he does not easily accept one view or opinion before he proves the truth empirically. Every student has the potential to develop, both talents and interests. Thus, students must be able to construct their own existing reality through their experiences. Gutek (1974: 138) states that progressivism refers to how individuals have the ability and intelligence to develop themselves through the environment by using scientific methods to solve problems that arise both in human personal life and in social life. Progressivism views that knowledge and values develop continuously because of new experiences between individuals and the knowledge and values that have been stored in the culture. Progressivism is always associated with the liberal way of life (The liberal road to culture), which is a liberal view of life that has a flexible nature (flexible and not rigid, does not reject change, and is not bound by a particular doctrine), curious (curiosity and desire). investigate), tolerant, and open-minded (having an open heart and mind) in appreciating the differences in one's abilities in problem-solving efforts through the experiences possessed by each individual. Therefore, the view of progressivism states that students must actively discover their knowledge (student-centered) so that students can get used to facing challenges in life.

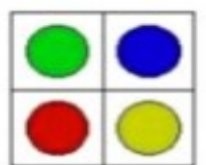
The of progressivism also argues that as beings who think in search of truth and knowledge, students are empowered as educational subjects for themselves rather than being objects of teaching from their teachers (Pohan, 2019: 110). It is not uncommon for students to be led to experience active and independent learning such as learning by doing methods and problem-solving methods. Therefore, progressivism in its implications in the field of education is closely seen in the learning approaches and methods. This is of course with the consideration that the of progressivism emphasizes learning which enables students to be able to have their creativity and way of solving various problems. In the context of learning and education, the of progressivism is an educational stream that focuses on the learning process that occurs in students, not merely focusing on instant results to be shown. According to Barnadib, as quoted in Fadillah (2017: 21) Progressivism requires education that has progress. In this case, the goal of education should be interpreted as a continuous reconstruction of experience. Education is not only imparting knowledge to students but most importantly training the ability to think scientifically. Students play an active role and take a big share in learning something so that what happens is child-oriented or student-oriented learning. For that, the output is expected that the learning process that adheres to this is more adaptive to change so that students can become problem-solvers to the problems at hand. Progressivism has contributed to the education curriculum in Indonesia, especially the curriculum in elementary schools. The curriculum is both the heart and the estuary of implementing educational programs in educational institutions including elementary schools. The curriculum becomes a guide in implementing learning. The most important part is that designing a curriculum cannot be rigid, but the curriculum is designed to be flexible, open, and following the needs and demands of the students. About the progressivism, the 2013 curriculum in elementary schools is integrated into a single theme of several subject content and is not separate from one another. This integrated curriculum is further known as thematic learning. Subject content that is integrated into the curriculum includes three important aspects, namely affective, cognitive, and psychomotor so that students can develop completely. In this case, the recommended learning is following the principle of learning by doing. Pohan

(2019: 112) argues that progressivism is one of the schools of educational philosophy that develops the child center curriculum. This means that education is oriented towards the development of individual learners with the freedom to create, play, and develop according to their experiences. William H. Kilpatrick in Pohan (2019: 112) suggests three principles of a good curriculum, namely: (1) improving the quality of children according to their level of development; (2) turning actual life into the direction of development in a whole life; (3) developing the creative aspects of life which are the main benchmarks for school success so that students develop their ability to actively think about new things to practice. The curriculum is designed to adapt to situations and conditions, be flexible in dealing with changes, and be familiar with the present. Progressivism views the past as a mirror to understand the present and the present as the foundation for the future. Fadillah (2017: 21) argues that in the view of progressivism, the curriculum shows programs that can influence children to learn educationally, both in the school environment and outside. Faris (2015: 321) states that progressivism has the view that a good curriculum is placed by students as students. Moreover, it is claimed that the color of progressivism in the 2013 curriculum is especially thick and appears in the reasons for the development of the 2013 curriculum who are active and able to independently create. The teacher's role in the 2013 Curriculum also has a similar explanation to progressivism thinking. Learning in the 2013 Curriculum is centered on student activities and does not know and is not dominated by teacher interactions. Hasan in his study (2013) states that the 2013 curriculum is based on various philosophies including perennials, essentialism, humanism, progressivism, and social reconstruction.

Megawati & Zuchdi (2020, 174) suggest that the philosophy of progressivism can be found in Grammar, Listening, and Checking Task progress. Students are given situations commonly found in everyday life and the student's task is to find solutions for these situations. Students who agree to decide about the problem related to the statement that has been given. Looking from the point of view of the philosophy used in the preparation of the curriculum, the textbooks used by the teacher must also have a match between philosophy and applied philosophy. Based on the results of the analysis, there is a conformity of the philosophical foundation between the English Book in Student's Mind and the 2013 curriculum. Mustagfiroh (2020: 144-145) argues that the principles of progressivism education can be formulated, including (1) students must be free and develop naturally; (2) direct experience is the best stimulus for learning; (3) teachers must be able to guide and be good facilitators; (4) educational institutions must become educational laboratories for changing learners; and (5) activities in educational institutions and at home must be operable. This research is similar to the principles of progressivism learning put forward by Rukiyati (2018: 58) including (1) students have intelligence as the natural potential that distinguishes them from other creatures; (2) students have creative and dynamic potential, as provisions to face and solve problems in their life and environment; (3) the important thing for students is experience. Students learn from the environment and act with all the consequences; (4) education is an effective vehicle with an orientation to the nature and essence of students as developing human beings; (5) the teacher is a learner and only he is more experienced so that it can be seen as a guide or guide by students; (6) efforts that must be made by the teacher are to create educational conditions, provide motivations, provide a stimulus so that the reason and competence of students can develop properly; (7) school is part of life, not just preparation for life.

Progressivism is very thick and clear in supporting the achievement of the learning process. This is a big consideration for the Government of Indonesia in designing the education curriculum in a better direction. Fogarty, R (1991) suggests that there are ten models of curriculum integration, namely fragmented, (2) connected, (3) nested, (4) sequenced, (5) shared, (6) webbed, (7) threaded, (8) integrated, (9) immersed, and (10) networked. In brief, the ten methods or models can be described as follows.

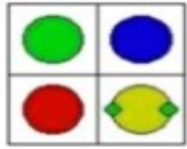
1. **Fragmented Model.** The fragmented model is characterized by the integration feature which is limited to one subject only. For example, in the Indonesian language subject, learning materials about listening, speaking, reading, and writing can be integrated into language skills learning materials. In the learning process, the material items are carried out separately at different hours. To help you understand this model, consider the image or illustration above.



*Fragmented*

2. **Connected model.** The connected model is based on the assumption that learning items can be carried out in the parent of certain subjects. The points of learning vocabulary, structure, reading, and writing, for example, can be reflected in Indonesian Language and Literature subjects. Mastery of these learning points is integral in shaping language and literary skills. It's just that the formation of understanding, skills, and experience as a whole does

not take place automatically. Therefore, the teacher must arrange the learning points and the learning process in an integrated manner. To help you understand this model, consider the image or illustration above.



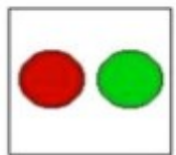
*Connected*

3. **Nested Model.** The nested model is a combination of various forms of mastery of the concept of skills through a learning activity. For example, in a certain hour, a teacher focuses learning activities on understanding word forms, meanings of words, and expressions with suggestions for concocting skills in developing imagination, logical thinking, determining the characteristics of the form and meaning of words in poetry, making expressions and writing poetry. Learning various forms of mastery of concepts and skills as a whole does not have to be formulated in the learning objectives. Skills in developing imagination and logical thinking in this case are treated as a form of skill that is cultivated when students use words, make expressions, and compose poetry. The sign of mastery of these skills is shown by their ability to make expressions and compose poetry. To help you understand this model, consider the image or illustration above.



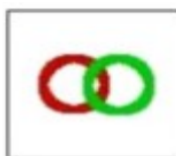
*Nested*

4. **Sequenced Model.** The sequenced model is a model for combining topics between different subjects in parallel. The contents of stories in historical romances, for example, the topics of discussion in parallel or in the same hour can be combined with the history of the nation's struggle, the characteristics of social life in a particular period, or topics related to changes in the meaning of words. The learning topics can be combined in the same allocation of hours. To help you understand this model, take a look at the picture or illustration above.



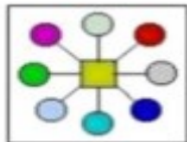
*Sequenced*

5. **Shared Model.** The shared model is a form of integrating learning due to the “overlapping” of concepts or ideas in two or more subjects. Learning points about citizenship in PPKN, for example, can overlap with learning items in State Administration, PSPB, and so on.



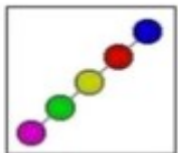
*Shared*

6. **Webbed model.** Furthermore, the most popular model is the webbed model. This model departs from a thematic approach as integration of learning materials and activities. In this connection, the theme can tie learning activities both in certain subjects and across subjects. To help you understand this model, consider the image or illustration above.



*Webbed*

7. Threaded Model. The threaded model is a model of combining skill forms, for example, making predictions and estimates in mathematics, predicting events, anticipating stories in novels, and so on. This threaded form focuses on what the meta-curriculum is about. To help you understand this model, consider the image or illustration above.



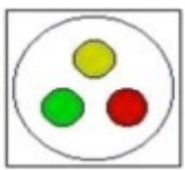
*Threaded*

8. Integrated Model. The integrated model is a combination of a number of topics from different subjects, but the essence is the same in a particular topic. The topic of evidence originally contained in the subjects of Mathematics, Indonesian Language, Natural Science, and Social Knowledge, so as not to overload the curriculum content, it is sufficient to be placed in certain subjects, such as Natural Science. Another example, in the reading text which is part of the Indonesian subject, learning items can be included that can be related to Mathematics, Natural Knowledge, and so on. In this case, it is necessary to arrange a complete reading content area so that it can be used to convey various learning points from these different subjects. Judging from its application, this model is very well developed in elementary schools. To help you understand this model, consider the image or illustration above.



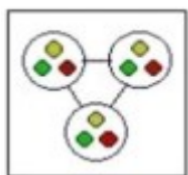
*Integrated*

9. Immersed Model The immersed model is designed to assist students in filtering and combining various experiences and knowledge related to the field of use. In this case, the exchange of experiences and the use of experiences are very necessary for learning activities. To help you understand this model, consider the image or illustration above.



*Immersed*

10. Finally, the networked model is a learning integration model that presupposes the possibility of changing conceptions, the form of problem-solving, and demands for new forms of skills after students have conducted field studies in different situations, conditions, and contexts. Learning is viewed as an ongoing process because of the reciprocal relationship between understanding and the reality faced by students. To help you understand this model, consider the image or illustration above.



*Networked*

Of course, not all of the integrated learning models have been suggested by Robin Fogarty and Jacobs above in elementary schools in Indonesia. According to the results of the “Elementary Teacher Education Program” Development Team (1997) study, three integrated learning models seem to be the most suitable or appropriate to be applied in our elementary schools, namely the webbing model, the connected model, and the integrated model. The current curriculum in Indonesia is the 2013 curriculum. Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 57 of 2014 concerning the 2013 Curriculum for Elementary Schools / Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Article 1 paragraph (1) states that the curriculum in Elementary Schools / Madrasah Ibtidaiyah has been implemented since the 2013 academic year / 2014 is called the 2013 Elementary School / Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Curriculum. Furthermore, paragraph (2), the 2013 Elementary School / Madrasah Ibtidaiyah curriculum as referred to in paragraph (1) consists of: (a) the basic framework of the curriculum; (b) curriculum structure; (c) syllabus; and (d) integrated thematic learning and subject guidelines. Widyastono, H (2014: 135) states that the 2013 Curriculum embraces direct learning experiences for students (learned-curriculum) according to the background, characteristics, and initial abilities of students. The individual direct learning experience of students becomes the result of learning for themselves, while the learning outcomes of all students become the result of the curriculum. Since the implementation of the 2013 curriculum, the learning process at the elementary school level has changed. Based on the direction of the 2013 curriculum, the learning process at the elementary school level is carried out thematically and thoroughly from grade 1 to grade 6. Elementary, et al (2008) explains that the thematic approach focuses on main themes, such as the impact of rivers on the environment and social development and economics, which allows students to explore it from multiple perspectives, making use of the skills, knowledge, and understanding of a variety of subjects. Furthermore, Elementary et al (2008) explained that the thematic approach is the most commonly used in elementary schools. This learning often involves simulation and role-playing. All schools that use a thematic approach also teach subjects separately. In particular, it applies to English and mathematics. However, teachers plan thematic learning to enable students to integrate and apply their literacy and numeracy skills and to understand their wider relevance and usefulness.

Akbar, S a'dun (2016: 17) explains that there are three thematic learning foundations in the 2013 curriculum at the elementary school level based on the 2013 curriculum socialization material carried out by the Ministry of Education and Culture, which are as follows.

1. Progressivism, which is a learning process that focuses on the active involvement of students to form creativity by providing several activities, a natural atmosphere, and paying attention to student learning experiences.
2. Constructivism, namely the process of students constructing or constructing their knowledge through interaction with various objects, phenomena, experiences, and the environment.
3. Humanism, which sees students in terms of uniqueness, potential, and motivation of each student as a form of awareness that each student has different competencies.

Sa'dun (2016: 19) also suggests that as an approach to learning, thematic learning has the following characteristics:

1. Student-centered  
In the learning process, students play as the main learning subject. The teacher plays a greater role as a facilitator and motivator. The teacher as a facilitator is a person who facilitates the learning process by serving and handling needs and directing the learning process.
2. Provide direct experience  
In the learning process students are faced with real (concrete) things and problems that exist and occur around students as a basis for understanding more abstract things.
3. The segregation of subjects is not very clear  
In thematic learning, the separation between subjects is not very clear. the focus of learning is directed to discussing themes related to student life in the things around students.
4. Presenting the concept of various contents  
Thematic learning presents concepts from various subjects in an integrated learning process. The materials that are combined are by the existing theme. The goal is to form a holistic student knowledge about the concepts being studied.
5. Flexible  
Thematic learning is flexible, which is linking one subject to another based on the suitability of the content, and relating it to the life and environment where students live.
6. Using the principles of learning while playing  
Thematic learning should be carried out with methods that activate students in learning activities with a fun process. Games can also be integrated as a learning method because elementary-age students are still classified as playing age, so learning is more effective.

One example of mapping learning themes in thematic learning in grade 4 elementary schools, namely Theme: The Beauty of Togetherness, Sub-Themes: the cultural diversity of my people, learning 1 is shown in the picture below.





According to Permendikbud No. 81 A of 2013 concerning Implementation of Appendix IV Curriculum, the learning process consists of five experiences known as the scientific approach. The 2013 curriculum mandates the essence of a scientific approach in thematic learning. The scientific approach is believed to be a forum for the development and development of attitudes, knowledge, and skills of students. The scientific learning process to improve creative abilities is obtained through main learning activities, namely: observing, asking questions, collect information/experiments, associating / processing information, and communicating.

1. Observing

Observing is a method that prioritizes the meaningful learning process. Learning activities carried out in the process of observing are reading, listening, listening, seeing (without or with tools). The developed competencies are training sincerity, thoroughness, seeking information. Observing is a learning process in a scientific approach that puts forward direct observation of the object of research systematically. The purpose of this observation is to obtain facts in the form of objective data which are then analyzed according to the level of development of students. Besides, by observing activities, it is hoped that the learning process can be more meaningful for students.

2. Questioning

Asking is an activity to ask questions about the information that is not understood from what is being observed or to add information about the object of observation (from factual to hypothetical questions). The questioning activity is expected to develop competency in creativity, curiosity, and the ability to formulate questions to form critical thinking skills for intelligent life and lifelong learning.

3. Experimenting

Experimentation/collecting information is a learning activity in the form of experiments, reading other sources besides textbooks, observing objects/events/activities, and interviewing sources. Information can be obtained through various sources, observations, or conducting experiments. Competencies that are expected to develop through this activity are conscientious, honest, polite attitudes, respect for other people's opinions, communication skills, ability to gather information in various ways, develop learning habits.

4. Associating [associating / reasoning / processing information]

Associating activities are activities to collect information, facts, and ideas that have been obtained from observing, asking, or trying to be processed further. Associating / processing information is a learning activity in the form of processing information that has been collected, either limited to the results of collecting / experimental activities or the results of observing and gathering information. Competencies developed in the process of associating / processing information include developing honesty, thoroughness, discipline, obeying rules, hard work, the ability to apply procedures, and the ability to think inductively and deductively in concluding. Information processing is an activity to expand and deepen the information obtained to find solutions from various sources. In reasoning activities, students connect what is being learned with what is in everyday life. Competencies that can be developed through this activity are honesty, thoroughness, discipline, obeying rules, hard work, the ability to apply procedures, and the ability to think inductively and deductively in concluding.

5. Communication

Communicating is a learning activity in the form of conveying observations, conclusions based on the results of analysis orally, in writing, or other media. Competitions developed in the communicating stage are developing

honesty, thoroughness, tolerance, the ability to think systematically, expressing opinions briefly and clearly, and developing good and correct language skills.

According to Permendikbud No. 81 A of 2013 concerning Implementation of Appendix IV Curriculum, it is stated that the recommended method to be applied is a scientific approach enriched with a problem-based approach and a project-based approach. Based on the previous explanation, several studies were found related to the implementation of the 2013 curriculum in thematic learning with a scientific approach in elementary schools that is in line with progressivism, namely: Budiyanto, M., Waluyo, K., & Mokhtar, A (2016). the scientific approach is more effective than traditional learning. The results showed that in traditional learning, the retention of information from the teacher was 10 percent after fifteen minutes and the acquisition of contextual understanding was 25 percent. In scientific-based learning, information retention from teachers is more than 90 percent after two days and the acquisition of contextual understanding is 50-70 percent (Kemendikbud, 2013, Atsnan and Gazali, 2013). Another study, Prakoso, B. A. (2020) shows that based on the analysis of various data collected regarding the implementation of thematic learning, teachers at MI Salafiyah Gombong began to lead to an independent learning system. Students are given the freedom to seek information that enriches their knowledge of a material, but this is not borne by grades I and 2. In each learning activity, the teacher has also begun to apply various learning methods by directing students according to their abilities. In this study, it is also explained that progressivism emphasizes the intelligence function of students, which means that it has the same direction as the essence and characteristics of thematic learning.

## Conclusion

Progressivism is one of the streams that become a philosophical foundation in curriculum development in schools, including the curriculum in elementary schools. The of progressivism greatly influences education and learning in elementary schools. This is based on the fact that the 2013 curriculum which is implemented in elementary schools is integrated thematic learning. Integrated thematic learning is a curriculum development that pays great attention to the acquisition of the abilities of students as a whole and comprehensively. Several theoretical studies and research results show that progressivism makes a dominant contribution, not only to learning but also to the development of the 2013 curriculum in Indonesia. Progressivism has goal compatibility with the 2013 curriculum which is now implemented in education in Indonesia, including education at the elementary school level that uses thematic learning and a scientific approach in the learning process. Whereas, the ideal education is education that prioritizes the needs and potential of students to have the opportunity and freedom to become active and creative learners so that capable, independent, and responsive individuals are created in facing all changes.

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