

Analysis of Environmental Education in Novel *Totto chan: The Little Girl at the Window* by Tetsuko Kuroyanagi

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Abstract. This article aims to describe environmental education in Tomoe Gakuen in the novel *Totto Chan: The Little Girl in the Window* by Tetsuko Kuroyanagi. The method used in compiling this article is a descriptive method. Environmental education contained in the novel *Totto chan: Little Girl at the Window* creates an individual personality from an early age, such as (1) being aware of and caring for the environment and the surrounding community, (2) having knowledge, skills, attitudes and behavior, motivation and commitment to work together, both individually and collectively, (3) being able to solve various environmental problems, and prevent new problems from arising. These three things can be seen through the learning activities at Tomoe Gakuen both inside and outside the classroom, the class rules, the role of educators, and some actions that *Totto chan* does in various situations.

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1 Introduction

According to Mestika[1] (2013), Environmental Education is an effort to change the behavior and attitudes of the community which aims to increase knowledge, skills and awareness about environmental values and issues of environmental problems that can move the community to play an active role in conservation and safety efforts for the present and future generations.

This is in line with the meaning of Environmental Education according to UNESCO [2] in the 1977 Tbilisi Declaration which states that environmental education is a process for building a human population in the world who is aware and cares about the social environment and all problems related to it and a society that has knowledge of attitude skills, and motivational behavior and commitment to work together both individually and collectively to be able to solve various current environmental problems and prevent new problems from arising.

Environmental Education can be categorized into Formal Environmental Education and Non-Formal Environmental Education. Formal Environmental Education is educational activities in the environmental sector which are carried out through formal education consisting of elementary, secondary and higher education which are carried out in a structured manner using integrated curriculum approaches or monolithic or separate curricula. Meanwhile, Non-Formal Environmental Education is an educational activity in the environmental field that is carried out outside of school, such as the family environment, community organizations, and others.

This article will analyze in depth using descriptive methods about how the Formal Environmental Education takes place inside and outside Tomoe Gakuen's classroom. Learning activities both inside and outside the classroom, class rules, the role of educators, and the actions taken by Totto chan in dealing with various situations are the main focus in this article.

Totto Chan: The Little Girl At The Window is an autobiographical novel by Tetsuko Kuroyanagi. This novel was first published in 1981 in Japan. Then in 2008 PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama published this novel in Indonesia. Totto Chan: The Little Girl At The Window tells about the life of a little girl who is the author herself, Tetsuko Kuroyanagi, who is embodied in a character named Totto-Chan. Totto-Chan is a little girl who has a great curiosity about anything. However, this sometimes caused a

commotion in the class which made Totto-Chan considered a naughty child by her class teacher until she was finally expelled on the first day of school. Her mother also enrolled Totto-Chan at a school called Tomoe Gakuen which was led by a principal named Sosaku Kobayashi.[3] The education system established by Sosaku Kobayashi at Tomoe Gakuen is very unique and different from other schools in general. One of the educational systems that stands out at Tomoe Gakuen is Education about the Environment which is taught in a simple and practical way both inside and outside the classroom, through class rules, and the role of the educator.

2 Result and Discussion

2.1 The Learning Activities at Tomoe Gakuen Inside the Classroom

In general, schools allow their students to bring any meals, so the lunch menu that each student brings is different and some don't even bring meals. Unlike most of schools, Sosaku Kobayashi asks his students to bring "something from the sea and something from the mountains" with them.

"Sesuatu dari laut" artinya makanan dari laut, seperti ikan dan tsukuda-ni (udang kecil atau sejenisnya yang direbus dengan kecap dan sake manis).Sementara "sesuatu dari pegunungan" berarti makanan dari daratan seperti sayuran, daging sapi, daging babi, dan daging ayam.[4]

Totto Chan's mother in this novel was impressed by how Sosaku Kobayashi makes it easy for parents to prepare their children's meal by only giving instructions "something from the sea and something from the mountains".

In addition, this method will also foster students' curiosity about food ingredients in their surrounding environments, both at the sea and on the land. Sosaku Kobayashi as a teacher can explain well to the students, so that the students have indirectly learned to recognize their environment even during lunch time. This is clearly stated in the following quote.

Kemudian Kepala Sekolah bicara kepada semua murid, "Dari mana asalnya denbu, dari laut atau dari pegunungan?"Suasana hening.Anak-anak berpikir keras.Tiba-tiba seorang anak berseru, "Pegunungan," yang lain berseru, "Laut."Tapi kelihatannya tak seorang pun tahu pasti."Baiklah.Akan kujelaskan," kata Kepala

Sekolah. "Denbu berasal dari laut." "Kenapa?" tanya seorang anak laki-laki gendut Berdiri di tengah lingkaran meja-meja, Kepala Sekolah menjelaskan, "Denbu dibuat dari daging ikan rebus yang dibuang tulangnya, dibakar sebentar, ditumbuk halus, lalu dibumbui dan dikeringkan." [5].

Sosaku Kobayashi was adding the insights for the students with an explanation of where Denbu comes from. It turns out that the explanation from Sosaku Kobayashi can trigger interaction and closeness between students. Like the quote below, where the students are interested to see Denbu brought by Totto chan and start to approach her.

Kemudian seorang anak bertanya, apakah mereka boleh melihat denbu Totto-chan. "Tentu saja," kata Kepala Sekolah. Anak-anak berkerumun untuk melihat denbu Totto-chan. Pasti ada anak yang sudah tahu apa itu denbu tapi minat mereka terangsang, dan juga ada yang ingin melihat apakah denbu Totto-chan lain dari yang biasa mereka makan di rumah. Banyak anak yang mengendus-endus denbu Totto-chan hingga gadis cilik itu khawatir denbu-nya akan terbang. [6]

2.2 The Learning Activities at Tomoe Gakuen Outside the Classroom

Tomoe Gakuen is a school that does not only focus on learning activities in the classroom, but also introduces the environment outside the classroom to its students. It were shown when a teacher asked the reason why flowers could bloom.

Setelah berjalan kira-kira sepuluh menit, Guru berhenti. Dia menunjuk beberapa kuntum bunga berwarna kuning dan berkata, "Lihat bunga sesawi itu. Kalian tahu mengapa bunga-bunga mekar?" [7]

This triggered the curiosity of the students to observe and find out more, because the object that the teacher was asking about was clearly visible in front of them. Not only that, the teacher also explained the reason why flowers bloom to Tomoe Gakuen's students afterwards.

Dia menjelaskan tentang putik dan benang sari sementara anak-anak berjongkok di pinggir jalan dan mengamati bunga-bunga itu. Guru menjelaskan bagaimana kupu-kupu membantu bunga-bunga menyerbukkan benang sari ke putik. Memang, semua kupu-kupu itu tampak sibuk membantu bunga-bunga. [8]

2.3 The Action Taken by Totto Chan

Learning activities at Tomoe Gakuen was shaped the personalities of the students to have a high curiosity, and Totto chan is no exception. Totto chan had a strange habit where every time she went to the toilet, she always peeked into the toilet hole after she finished defecating. This causes the things she carries or wears to fall into the toilet bowl, including her favorite purse.

Sebelum menyadari apa yang sedang dilakukannya, tahu-tahu ia sudah mengintip ke dalam lubang. Mungkin karena genggamannya yang mengendor, dompet kesayangan Totto-chan terlepas dari tangannya dan tercebur ke dalam lubang. [9]

However, instead of crying or giving up, Totto-chan looked for a way to retrieve her favorite purse by emptying the cesspool with a long-stemmed wooden ladle.

Tapi Totto-chan bertekad takkan menangis atau merelakan dompetnya hilang. Ia pergi ke gudang per-alatan tukang kebun lalu mengeluarkan gayung kayu bertangkai panjang yang biasa digunakan untuk menyiram tanaman. Panjang tangkai gayung itu hampir dua kali tinggi badannya, tapi itu sama sekali tidak menyurutkan tekad Totto-chan. Ia berjalan ke belakang sekolah sambil menyeret gayung itu dan mencoba menemukan lubang untuk mengosongkan bak penampung kotoran. [10]

2.4 The Role of Educator

Sosaku Kobayashi as an educator at Tomoe Gakuen has a very important role for the self-development of his students, including Totto chan. Continuing from point three, when Totto chan kept trying to scoop up dirt to find her purse, Sosaku Kobayashi happened to pass by and asked Totto chan calmly.

Tumpukan kotoran di tanah sudah cukup tinggi ketika Kepala Sekolah kebetulan lewat. "Kau sedang apa?" tanyanya kepada Totto-chan. "Dompetku jatuh," jawab Totto-chan, sambil terus mencedok. Ia tak ingin membuang waktu. "Oh, begitu," kata Kepala Sekolah, lalu berjalan pergi, kedua tangannya bertaut di belakang punggung, seperti kebiasaannya ketika berjalan-jalan. [11]

Sosaku Kobayashi's reaction was very different from other educators in general, which when they saw their students making a mess, they would warn or even scold them. However, Sosaku Kobayashi just kept letting Totto chan continue looking for his purse even though he knew Totto chan had made dirt pile up.

Sosaku Kobayashi is also wise, gentle, and patient in dealing with Totto chan. It is clearly visible that He really understands the personality of children. It is shown in the following quote.

Kepala Sekolah mendekat dan berkata ramah, "Kau akan mengembalikan semuanya kalau sudah selesai, kan?" Kemudian pria itu pergi lagi, seperti sebelumnya. "Ya," jawab Totto-chan riang, sambil terus bekerja. [12]

2.5 The Class Rules

The school rules in Tomoe Gakuen are very diverse and unique, one of them is asking the students to wear the most worn out clothes to school. This rule was made by Sosaku Kobayashi so students don't have to worry about their clothes getting dirty or torn. According to him, it's a shame if children should be afraid of being scolded for dirtying their clothes, or hesitate to join in a game because they are worried that their clothes will be torn or dirty. This will certainly make students have the confidence to explore the surrounding environment.

The following quote below is a comparing the clothes worn by Tomoe Gakuen and other schools near Tomoe Gakuen.

Ada beberapa sekolah dasar yang berada di dekat Tomoe. Di sana, murid perempuan mengenakan seragam model kelasi dan murid laki-laki mengenakan jas berkerah tinggi dan celana pendek. Murid-murid Tomoe mengenakan pakaian sehari-hari ke sekolah. Guru-guru mengizinkan mereka bermain sepuasnya tanpa perlu memikirkan kebersihan dan keutuhan pakaian mereka. [13]

3 Conclusion

Environmental Education contained in the novel *Totto Chan: Little Girl at the Window* by Tetsuko Kuroyanagi creates a personality which includes (1) being aware of and caring for the environment and the surrounding community, (2) having knowledge, skills, attitudes and behavior, motivation and commitment to work together, both individually and collectively, (3) being able to solve various environmental problems, and prevent new problems from arising, which these three characters are in line with the objectives of Environmental Education according to UNESCO.

Totto Chan: The Little Girl at the Window is an educational novel with very light language, so that readers from all walks of life, both researchers, parents and childrens, are able to understand the messages conveyed by the author. This novel can be a very interesting introduction, especially to know and apply Environmental Education in everyday life. The problems contained in this novel are still correlated with today's life. The solutions presented for dealing with various problems that occur are also very clear and practical in nature, so they can be applied in real life.

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