

Teachers' Strategies for Enhancing Students' Civic Knowledge through the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) Approach at SMAN 1 Karangnongko

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Abstract

The level of civic knowledge among students in the Pancasila Education course remains low, which will continue to pose an ongoing challenge in various high schools, including Karangnongko State High School 1. A preliminary study at this school indicates that a large number of students exhibit passive behavior during learning activities, lack confidence in participating in class, and have significant gaps in their understanding. This situation is largely due to the continued dominance of conventional, teacher-centered teaching approaches, which limit students' opportunities for active engagement. This study aims to describe: (1) teachers' strategies in implementing the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach in Phase E of the Pancasila Education course for 10th-grade students; (2) the challenges teachers face in its implementation; (3) the solutions teachers implemented to overcome these challenges; and (4) the impact of CTL implementation on improving students' civic knowledge. A descriptive qualitative research design was used. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis. Sampling was conducted using purposive sampling, and data validity was ensured through source triangulation. Data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, which consists of data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The research findings indicate that teachers implemented CTL through seven core components: constructivism, inquiry, questioning, learning community, modeling, reflection, and authentic assessment, which were integrated into the learning activities for Pancasila Education Stage E. Teachers connected citizenship concepts to real-life contexts through case studies, small-group discussions, and community-based modeling, resulting in increased student engagement, better conceptual understanding, and a stronger internalization of Pancasila values. Key challenges faced include limited instructional time, disparities between active and passive students, and teachers' insufficient readiness to design CTL-based activities. To address these challenges, teachers implemented a phased integration strategy, participated in professional development, and designed authentic and contextually relevant assessments. These findings indicate that the CTL approach is an effective and appropriate strategy for enhancing students' civic knowledge in Pancasila Education at the high school level, and it is expected to serve as a practical guide for Pancasila Education teachers in developing more innovative, contextual, and student-centered teaching practices.

Keywords: Civic knowledge; Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL); Phase E Pancasila Education; teacher strategies; constructivism.

Introduction

Education is the most important factor in a nation's development; fostering a generation of excellence and preparing them to face the challenges of the future are the

key roles of education. According to Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System, "Education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning environment and learning process so that students actively develop their potential to

possess religious and spiritual strength, self-control, character, intelligence, noble moral values, and the skills required by themselves, society, the nation, and the state.”

Pancasila and Civics education are essential subjects that must be taught; as stipulated in Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System. National education serves to develop abilities and shape the character and civilization of a dignified nation in order to enlighten the nation's life, with the aim of enabling students to become individuals who are faithful, God-fearing, of noble character, healthy, knowledgeable, creative, independent, and who become democratic and responsible citizens. These values are a direct embodiment of the principles of Pancasila.

Pancasila education deserves to be taught again, especially to the general public living in today's era. Many are unable to apply the values of Pancasila to various aspects of their lives because they have become intertwined with Western cultures that emphasize instant gratification. The sense of social connection among people in close proximity is gradually fading, replaced by new technologies that lead people to prioritize life in the virtual world. This is because Pancasila is a robust ideology in Indonesia, where all aspects of societal life are guided by Pancasila, especially in interactions among people of different ethnicities, races, and religions (Anggraini, D., Fathari, F., Anggara, J. W., & Al Amin, M. D., 2020). Therefore, Pancasila serves as a unifying force for the Indonesian nation and a source of values in social, national, and state life. Furthermore, Pancasila also functions as a moral foundation or set of norms and a standard for distinguishing between good and bad, right and wrong attitudes, actions, and behaviors among the Indonesian people.

In the learning process for Pancasila Education, it is important for teachers to implement learning strategies designed to apply key teaching steps so that the outcomes of the learning process align with the learning objectives and predetermined learning outcomes. Furthermore, these learning strategies take into account students'

ability to understand the subject matter and their individual characteristics in responding to instruction.

However, in reality, the problem faced by the education sector is a weak learning process, particularly in Pancasila and Civic Education. Students show low interest in studying PPKn in class. This has led many students to believe that PPKn is a boring subject. The reality of the PPKn learning process tends to emphasize rote memorization rather than critical, creative, and analytical thinking, and can even lead to apathy among students and a perception that the subject is uninteresting (Pratiwiet et al., 2022; Wadi et al., 2021). Consequently, this situation causes students' enthusiasm to simply fade away. For this reason, the role of teachers is crucial in providing and creating a learning environment that is enjoyable and meaningful for students, thereby influencing the quality of the learning process and outcomes in Pancasila and Civic Education (Hadijah et al., 2022).

The implementation of Pancasila Education faces challenges; for example, research by Sitopu & Alim (2025), based on observational findings, indicates that students do not yet fully understand the norms of politeness. In classroom interactions, various behaviors were observed, such as speaking rudely, disrespecting teachers, and a lack of awareness regarding the importance of behaving politely. These conditions indicate gaps in the teaching strategies that have been implemented thus far. Preliminary data indicate that only 5 out of 24 students (21%) met the Learning Objective Mastery Criteria (KKTP) for the topic of etiquette. The main cause of this problem is a learning approach that remains conventional in nature, such as the lecture method, which tends to make students passive (Sitopu & Alim, 2025).

In line with previous research conducted by researchers at Teras State High School 1, which found through observation that teaching activities for 10th-grade students still relied on a teacher-centered approach and that assignments did not meet the standards of a 21st-century learning approach where the learning system prioritizes engagement and ease of teaching and learning. This issue is supported by the

results of an analysis of student response questionnaires regarding the learning conducted by teachers in Class X-A, which indicated that 42% of students found the teaching materials used by teachers to be uninteresting, and 58% of Class X-A students experienced difficulty understanding the material on Indonesia's national defense and security system, leading 86% of students to require alternative learning materials. This has become a problem for students in Class X-A at State Senior High School 1 Teras, as the school has not yet been able to improve students' learning competencies through instructional media.

Furthermore, the most common learning obstacle faced by teachers as indicated by research from Wirdaningsih et al. (2017), based on observations and surveys at State High School 7 Padang is that while some teachers have attempted to implement varied teaching methods and engage students in the learning process, student engagement in the classroom remains insufficient. Students are hesitant to ask questions about lesson material they do not fully understand because they feel embarrassed and afraid that their questions might be perceived as trivial. During group discussions, only a few students participate actively, while the rest merely listen and refrain from sharing their opinions out of fear that their views might be incorrect or dismissed as trivial. Furthermore, the material presented is too brief; the types of questions remain unchanged from year to year; the sentences in the worksheets tend to be difficult for students to understand; there is no emphasis on sections considered important; and the material presented is not sufficiently linked to daily life (Wirdaningsih et al., 2017).

According to preliminary research conducted by the researcher at SMA 1 Karangnongko, some students in each group still appear passive and lack confidence during Pancasila Education learning activities. Furthermore, the distinction between active and passive students remains quite evident. This is also influenced by differences in students' abilities to grasp instructions given by the teacher—whether quickly or gradually. Therefore, it is necessary to link their learning to the digital

experiences and information relevant to each student; this can serve as a relevant and contextual learning resource. Consequently, learning becomes active, easily understandable, and students are able to respond and actively participate in discussions by sharing their digital experiences and the information they have obtained.

One approach to overcoming various challenges and obstacles in the learning process and outcomes is to implement an appropriate and effective learning strategy. Wina Sanjaya, in her book **Learning Strategies**, presents a theory regarding strategies in the field of education. A strategy is defined as “a plan, method, or series of activities designed to achieve a particular educational goal” (J.R. David, 1976, as cited in Sanjaya, 2006). Kemp (1995) explains that a learning strategy is a learning activity that must be carried out by both teachers and students so that learning objectives can be achieved effectively and efficiently (Wina, 2006). Based on the background of the problem described above, one learning strategy that can be applied is the contextual learning strategy.

Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) is a learning strategy that emphasizes the process of engaging students in discovering the material being studied and connecting it to real-life situations. This encourages them to apply what they have learned in their daily lives. This approach is based on the philosophy of constructivism, which emphasizes that students construct knowledge within their own minds. Through the CTL approach, students are encouraged to understand lessons in a meaningful way by relating them to real-life contexts, whether related to their personal, religious, socioeconomic, or cultural environments (Gibran, A. F., Lisnawati, S., & Alim, 2025, p. 32).

Through the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach, teachers can provide stimuli in Pancasila Education by giving opportunities to every student. Furthermore, the presence of newly graduated PPG (Teacher Professional Education) teachers at Karangnongko State High School No. 1 serves as a key support

for teachers in applying engaging teaching techniques and methods that address students' needs and help them achieve a better understanding (Javiarma, Adelia et al., 2025).

Therefore, teachers should explore alternative approaches in the learning process to make students more interested in reading activities. After understanding the reading challenges faced by students, the researcher needs to determine the most effective methods to engage students in the reading learning process. One innovative approach that makes students more active and creative in learning to read is Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL).

Method

Descriptive qualitative research aims to describe a situation or phenomenon regarding what actually occurs under real-world conditions. In addition, this research also examines various answers to questions related to the status of the research subject, and the research is presented in the form of qualitative narratives covering both short- and long-term time frames (Sudaryono 2017). In conducting this study, the researcher first carried out observations to collect initial data, followed by in-depth interviews with informants selected through purposive sampling, as well as a documentary analysis of instructional materials and various other supporting documents relevant to the study's focus.

The approach used in this study is a qualitative approach. According to Sugiyono (2017), qualitative research is a research method grounded in postpositivist philosophy, used to study objects in their natural state, where the researcher serves as the key instrument, data collection techniques are triangulated, data analysis is inductive or qualitative in nature, and research results emphasize meaning over generalization. In line with this view, Moleong (2017) explains that qualitative research is research intended to understand phenomena specifically, what research subjects experience in a holistic manner through descriptive language within a specific, natural context, utilizing various scientific methods.

The type of research used is qualitative descriptive research. Qualitative descriptive research was chosen because this study aims to describe, depict, and analyze in depth the strategies used by Pancasila Education teachers in applying the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach to enhance students' civic knowledge at Karangnongko State Senior High School 1. As stated by Sukmadinata (2011), qualitative descriptive research is intended to describe and depict existing phenomena whether natural or human-made with a greater focus on characteristics, qualities, and the interrelationships among activities.

The choice of the descriptive qualitative method in this study was based on several considerations. First, the focus of this study is not to measure the statistical magnitude of one variable's influence on another, but rather to gain a deep understanding of how CTL strategies are implemented by teachers in the real-world context of Pancasila education. Second, the required data consisting of the perspectives, experiences, and understandings of the informants (teachers, school principals, and students) are best collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. Third, this study requires flexibility in data collection because the phenomenon of CTL implementation in the classroom is highly dependent on the context, interactions, and situations that evolve dynamically during the learning process (Creswell, 2014).

By using this descriptive qualitative approach, the researcher serves as the primary instrument (human instrument), directly engaged in the field to observe, gather information, and interpret the data obtained. The researcher's presence at the research site is an integral part of the data collection and analysis process, thereby enabling a comprehensive and contextual understanding of the phenomenon under study (Moleong, 2017).

Result and Discussion

Teachers' Strategies for Implementing the CTL Approach in Phase E of Pancasila Education Instruction

Based on the results of theoretical studies and a preliminary study conducted at Karangnongko State Senior High School 1, effective Pancasila education instruction requires an approach that connects the material to students' real-life experiences. Pancasila Education teachers who successfully implement CTL generally structure their lessons around seven core components: constructivism, inquiry, questioning, learning communities, modeling, reflection, and authentic assessment (Gibran, Lisnawati, & Alim, 2025; Gunawan & Daulay, 2024).

In the constructivism component, teachers encourage students to build their own understanding of Pancasila values through class discussions and question-and-answer sessions that connect the material to real-life social situations in their communities. CTL is a pedagogical strategy that promotes students' active engagement, thereby enabling them to derive meaning from their learning by connecting the material to real-world issues they encounter in their environment (Gibran, Lisnawati, & Alim, 2025). This is highly relevant in the context of Phase E of Pancasila Education, which requires 10th-grade students not only to memorize concepts but also to analyze and internalize the values of Pancasila within a democratic society.

And in the inquiry component, students are guided to independently discover the meaning of civic issues through real-world case studies, such as examining issues of diversity, social norms, or phenomena of local democracy. The implementation of CTL has been shown to simultaneously enhance conceptual understanding and value retention, as students are encouraged to build their understanding through contextual and relevant learning experiences (Latifah, Sabrina, Widodo, & Toba, 2025). The learning community component is realized through small-group discussions that require students to collaborate, exchange perspectives, and respect differing opinions a practice that directly fosters civic knowledge regarding the principles of deliberative democracy (Winarno, 2013).

The modeling component is implemented when teachers demonstrate how to argue critically and respectfully about civic issues,

or invite community speakers as examples of citizen participation in real life. At the end of each session, a structured reflection takes place in which students discuss the relevance of the material to their lives as young citizens. Authentic assessment is conducted not only through written exams but also through participatory observation, portfolios, and presentations based on real-life issues (Nasution & Yusnaldi, 2024).

Challenges Faced by Teachers in Implementing CTL

The implementation of CTL in Pancasila Education instruction at the high school level is not without challenges. Identified barriers include limited facilities and infrastructure, a lack of comprehensive understanding among teachers regarding CTL procedures, large class sizes, minimal parental support, an uncondusive community environment, and limited instructional time (Nasution & Yusnaldi, 2024).

Time constraints are the most significant obstacle, as discussion- and project-based activities in CTL often take longer than conventional methods (Nasution & Yusnaldi, 2024). This aligns with the findings of an initial study at Karangnongko State High School No. 1, which revealed significant differences between active and passive students in learning activities, making it difficult for teachers to facilitate equal engagement for all students (Sitopu & Alim, 2025).

In terms of teacher readiness, the implementation of CTL requires the adaptation of teaching strategies. Teachers must be able to design activities that are not only engaging but also have clear objectives, facilitate discussions and group work effectively, and ensure that every student is actively involved in each activity (Nasution & Yusnaldi, 2024). Therefore, the presence of teachers who are recent graduates of the PPG program at Karangnongko State High School 1 has the potential to be a supportive factor, as they possess more up-to-date knowledge regarding innovative learning models (Javiarma et al., 2025).

Solutions Implemented by Teachers to Overcome Obstacles

A number of strategic solutions can be implemented to overcome obstacles in the implementation of CTL. First, the integration of CTL must be carried out gradually and adapted to the existing curriculum so as not to disrupt the established schedule and learning objectives. Second, teachers need training in designing and implementing CTL activities effectively, for example, through workshops, seminars, or peer-to-peer sharing sessions. Third, the school needs to provide adequate support.

Conclusion

This study is important because the low level of civic knowledge among students taking the Pancasila Education course at Karangnongko State Junior High School No. 1 is a real problem stemming from the prevalence of traditional, teacher-centered teaching methods. The lecture-based approach, which still dominates, results in students becoming passive, losing self-confidence, and being unable to relate the material from the “Pancasila” course to their real lives as young citizens (Sitopu & Alim, 2025; Wirdaningsih et al., 2017). This situation directly results in an inadequate understanding of the concepts of democracy, the rights and responsibilities of citizens, and the values of “Pancasila” in social and civic life.

Furthermore, this study confirms that the CTL approach, which is based on constructivist theory, is an appropriate and relevant solution to address these issues. CTL enables “Pancasila” subject teachers to design meaningful, active, and contextual learning experiences, in which the content of civic education is co-constructed with students through real-world experiences, case-based discussions, critical reflection, and authentic assessment (Gibran, Lisnawati, & Alim, 2025; Creswell, 2014).

Therefore, the researcher considers it necessary to proceed to the stage of comprehensive field data collection and analysis at Karangnongko State Junior High School. The steps that will be taken include:

(1) in-depth observation of the learning process of the “Pancasila” subject for 10th-grade students in Stage E; (2) conducting in-depth interviews with the “Pancasila” subject teacher and students as key informants selected through purposive sampling (Moleong, 2017); and (3) analyzing CTL-based teaching materials that have been implemented (Sugiyono, 2017). The results of this field research are expected to provide a complete picture of the strategies, challenges, solutions, and impact of applying CTL in enhancing students’ citizenship knowledge, which will later serve as a guide for “Pancasila” teachers in high schools to develop more effective and innovative learning methods aimed at shaping intelligent, principled citizens who are oriented toward “Pancasila” (Rizqiyani, Dewi, & Legiani, 2022; Winarno, 2013).

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