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HISTORICA LEARNING STRATEGY: A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON LEARNING ABOUT HISTORICAL FIGURES AND STUDENT COLLABORATION

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ABSTRACT

The development of history learning in the Merdeka Curriculum demands a paradigm shift from the passive transfer of chronological facts to interactive, collaborative, and contextual learning experiences. However, observations in the 11th-grade class at SMAN 1 Blitar reveal a gap, where instruction remains dominated by conventional, textbook-oriented methods, resulting in low student engagement, limited connection to local history, and a high degree of individualism among students in a competitive academic environment. The purpose of this study is to design the HISTORICA (Historical Investigation and Roleplay Collaborative Learning) learning strategy using the systematic framework of Dick and Carey's instructional design model. The research method employed is descriptive-qualitative, limiting the development process to the stage of designing the strategy and instructional materials. Initial data were collected through a needs analysis questionnaire administered to students and history teachers. The data analysis techniques used included data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results of the study produced a tactical instructional design in the form of a draft of the HISTORICA strategy that integrates six main elements: role-play, deductive thinking, critical investigation, group decision-making (voting), historical reflection, and intensive collaboration. This strategy serves as a conceptual recommendation for bridging the complexity of understanding historical figures while reducing students' sectarian attitudes through a mechanism of binding cooperation.

Keywords: *HISTORICA Strategy, history education, historical inquiry, role-playing, collaboration.*

INTRODUCTION

Under the current Merdeka Curriculum, history education is required to go beyond merely transferring chronological facts; rather, it must facilitate interactive, contextual, and collaborative learning experiences so that students can reflect on the values of the past for their present lives (Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, 2022). To achieve these systematic and measurable learning objectives, a comprehensive instructional design is required. One approach that has been deemed effective and proven in developing competency-oriented instructional designs is the Dick and Carey instructional model (Dick, 2015). This model emphasizes needs analysis, the formulation of specific performance objectives, and the development of instructional strategies aligned with student characteristics to create an optimal and meaningful learning environment (Carey, 2018).

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However, the reality in the field reveals a gap between the demands for interactive, contextual, and collaborative history learning and the teaching practices observed in Grade 11 at SMAN 1 Blitar. Based on field observations and a needs analysis involving 31 students from Class XI-6 and one history teacher as an informant, history instruction still tends to rely on conventional methods and is text-based. Survey results indicate that 93.5% of students stated that lectures remain the most common teaching method they experience. Meanwhile, interactive learning and games were experienced by only 32.3% of students, while PowerPoint-based assignments were experienced by 25.8% of students. These findings suggest that interactive and experience-based learning activities have not yet become a dominant part of the history learning process. The results of interviews with history teachers further reinforce these findings. Instruction has generally been conducted through individual assignments, group presentations, the use of PowerPoint, and class discussions. Teachers also noted that students' levels of engagement are not uniform. Some students actively participate in learning, while others tend to be passive and require additional motivation to engage in the learning process. Furthermore, students' low reading readiness and literacy skills present a challenge that must be considered when designing history learning strategies. Thus, learning challenges are not only related to the methods of delivering content but also to the need to provide learning experiences that can encourage more equitable student engagement.

This issue is also evident in the utilization of local historical resources. A total of 86.2% of students reported being aware of the existence of historical buildings or events near SMAN 1 Blitar, such as Bung Karno's Mausoleum, Gebang Palace, the TRIP Monument, Penataran Temple, and the PETA Monument. However, only 48.4% of students stated that these historical sites had been introduced or utilized in their learning, while 51.6% stated that instruction still relied on textbooks and had not yet optimally utilized the history in their immediate surroundings. This situation indicates an opportunity to connect history curriculum content with the historical environment closely tied to students' lives . On the other hand, the needs analysis revealed a positive response from students toward more active and enjoyable forms of learning. All students who participated in the survey stated that they enjoy interactive learning and learning through games. When asked about their preferred learning delivery methods, 74.2% of students chose games, a higher percentage than field trips (38.7%), project-based assignments (32.3%), and lectures (25.8%). These findings are all the more relevant because 93.1% of students stated that they enjoy history lessons. Thus, the problem identified is not merely a lack of student interest in history, but rather a gap between students' interests and learning preferences and the still largely conventional forms of instruction.

In addition to cognitive issues, serious challenges were also identified in the social-emotional domain. Findings from observations at this elite school revealed a high degree of individualism among students due to the competitive academic environment. An overly competitive learning culture can reduce social interaction and cooperation among students because learners are more focused on individual achievement than on group collaboration (Lie, 2008). Furthermore, research by Sofyan and (Pratama, 2021) confirms

that the emphasis on individual-theoretical history learning in schools with a highly competitive climate further exacerbates the crisis of social empathy and fuels individualistic attitudes among students in the classroom. Learning that lacks collaborative activities tends to make students socially passive and underdeveloped in cooperation skills (Huda, 20013). Although some researchers, such as (Sanjaya, 2020), have attempted to address boredom in text-based learning through standard group discussion methods, this model is considered ineffective in reducing students' sectarian egoism due to the absence of role assignments that engage students both cognitively and emotionally. Research by Sofyan and Pratama (2021) also shows that *role-play* learning can increase student participation, but it has not been accompanied by in-depth historical investigation and group decision-making. Furthermore, Setiawan and Lestari (2022) found that history instruction that is overly textbook-oriented leads to low recognition of local historical figures among students. Therefore, teaching strategies are needed that not only address overreliance on textbooks but also encourage students to be more active in collaborating and interacting during the learning process.

Given these conditions, a learning strategy is needed that not only reduces the dominance of text-based learning but also provides space for students to interact, collaborate, recognize historical figures, and connect the material to the historical context of their surrounding environment. This need serves as the empirical basis for the development of the HISTORICA (Historical Investigation and Roleplay Collaborative Learning) strategy as an alternative learning approach that integrates role-playing, historical investigation, peer-to-peer interaction , group decision-making, and historical reflection. The development of this strategy is also aimed at addressing the gaps and limitations of interventions in previous studies through a systematic design based on the stages of Dick and Carey's instructional design model.

The novelty of the HISTORICA strategy lies in the tactical integration of six instructional elements: role-based learning (roleplay), deductive thinking, critical inquiry, group decision-making mechanisms (voting), historical reflection, and intensive group collaboration—adopted from the social deduction mechanism (Zahrah, 2024). This integration distinguishes the present study from previous research, which tended to use learning components separately. The study " , for example, focused on the use of role-play in history learning without integrating it with in-depth historical investigation, whereas " placed greater emphasis on group discussion without structured deduction and decision-making mechanisms. In contrast to these approaches, the HISTORICA strategy guides students to conduct critical investigations into the characters of national and local figures, play the roles of these figures in historical simulations, and solve group problems through discussion and tactical voting.

Thus, the HISTORICA strategy is designed using Dick and Carey's instructional design model to deliver a more interactive, collaborative, and contextual history learning experience. This strategy is designed to help students recognize, understand, and remember figures in historical events characterized by complex roles and interrelationships among figures. Through the integration of investigative activities,

discussions, role-playing, collaborative decision-making, and historical reflection, HISTORICA aims to provide a learning experience that fosters social interaction and cooperation among students. Thus, this strategy not only addresses the need for more active and contextual history learning but also offers an instructional design that integrates the understanding of historical figures with collaborative experiences within a single learning sequence. Based on these needs, this study aims to develop the HISTORICA (Historical Investigation and Roleplay Collaborative Learning) learning strategy using Dick and Carey's instructional design model as an alternative history learning strategy that integrates understanding of historical figures, historical investigation, role-playing, group decision-making, historical reflection, and collaboration among students.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a descriptive-qualitative approach by applying the Dick and Carey instructional design model (Dick, 2015). This approach was chosen to systematically design and develop the HISTORICA (Historical Investigation and Roleplay Collaborative Learning) learning strategy to address challenges in history learning in schools (Carey, 2018). The design of the strategy is based on the results of initial observations at SMAN 1 Blitar, which showed that the history learning process in the classroom is still dominated by conventional, textbook-oriented methods. This situation is linked to students' limited familiarity with local historical figures who have contributed to local historical events. In fact, recognizing and understanding the roles of these figures is a crucial aspect of history learning, enabling students to reflect on exemplary values and develop historical empathy. In practice, students may also face difficulties in identifying, distinguishing, and remembering the numerous figures involved in a complex historical event.

Preliminary research data were obtained through observation, a needs analysis questionnaire, and interviews with history teachers. The subjects in the needs analysis consisted of 31 students from Class XI-6 at SMAN 1 Blitar and one history teacher. The students were selected because they constituted the target group for the development of the HISTORICA learning strategy, while the teacher was chosen as an informant to provide insights into the state of history learning based on classroom teaching experience. Subject selection was conducted using a purposive approach, taking into account the alignment of the subjects' characteristics with the initial needs analysis for the development of the HISTORICA strategy. The needs analysis questionnaire was administered to students in the form of closed-ended questions with multiple-choice answers, allowing for the descriptive calculation of data on learning experiences and preferences, as well as questions related to students' experiences in history learning. The questionnaire indicators included (1) learning methods that students had previously used or experienced, (2) experiences with interactive and game-based learning, (3) the use of the local environment and local history in learning, (4) preferences regarding forms of history learning, and (5) students' interest in history learning. Meanwhile, interviews with

teachers were used to obtain supporting information regarding the learning patterns implemented, the level of student engagement, challenges in learning, as well as students' readiness and literacy skills.

The results of the data collection indicate that history learning still faces challenges in terms of student engagement, methodological variety, the utilization of local historical contexts, and peer interaction. The highly competitive academic climate in schools is also a context that requires attention, as it can influence group dynamics and foster individualistic tendencies. Based on these conditions, the HISTORICA strategy was developed as a learning design that integrates simulations of historical events based on critical inquiry, role-playing, collaborative decision-making, and collaboration among students. Simple quantitative data from questionnaires, in the form of response percentages, were used to describe students' needs, while data from observations and interviews were analyzed descriptively and qualitatively.

Data analysis was conducted interactively through three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions/verification. During the data reduction stage, the researcher selected, grouped, and focused the data from observations, questionnaires, and interviews based on the established learning needs indicators. Next, the data were presented in the form of narrative descriptions and percentage tables to reveal patterns of problems and trends in students' needs. The final stage involved drawing conclusions and conducting repeated verification by comparing findings from various data sources. Data validity was assessed through triangulation of sources and techniques, specifically by comparing information obtained from students with teachers' accounts and by cross-checking questionnaire results with findings from observations and interviews. The results of this analysis were then used as an empirical basis for determining learning needs and as a foundation for designing the syntax and components of the HISTORICA learning strategy using Dick and Carey's instructional design framework (Dick, 2015).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Issues in History Learning in Schools

The results of observations and needs analysis in Class XI-6 at SMAN 1 Blitar indicate that history instruction remains teacher-centered and textbook-oriented. Survey data from 31 students revealed that the lecture method was perceived as the most dominant by students (93.5%), while interactive learning/games accounted for only 32.3% and PowerPoint-based assignments for 25.8%. Furthermore, although 86.2% of students were aware of local cultural heritage sites such as Bung Karno's Mausoleum, Gebang Palace, the TRIP Monument, Penataran Temple, and the PETA Monument, 51.6% of students stated that the potential of this local history had not been optimally utilized in the learning process. This situation results in a teaching-learning process that tends to be one-sided, narrative-driven, and monotonous. Consequently, student engagement levels are uneven, and students spend more time memorizing facts than understanding historical significance. History instruction that relies too heavily on textbooks results in students being less active in the process of historical thinking because

the instruction emphasizes only one-way information transfer (Aman, 2011). A similar view explains that history instruction should not be oriented solely toward memorizing facts but should cultivate *historical thinking* skills through the interpretation and analysis of historical events (Wineburg, 2001).

In fact, 93.1% of students generally enjoy history lessons and have a very strong preference for active learning methods. All students (100%) stated that they enjoy interactive, game-based learning, with 74.2% of them choosing games as their preferred method of presenting material—far surpassing field trips (38.7%), project assignments (32.3%), and lectures (25.8%). These findings indicate a clear gap between students' high interest and the conventional teaching methods currently in use. Based on this empirical evidence, the HISTORICA learning strategy was developed as an alternative solution that integrates games, character introductions, peer interaction, and collaborative work to make history learning more active, contextual, and meaningful.

In addition, students also tend to have difficulty understanding and memorizing the complexities of historical figures within a historical event. History material often features many figures with different roles, conflicts, and relationships, making it difficult for students to distinguish the contributions of each figure. This situation is exacerbated by conventional learning patterns that only present historical figures in the form of textual narratives without incorporating contextual learning experiences. Effective history instruction must help students understand the interconnections among figures, the social context, and the decision-making processes within a historical event so that students can develop a deeper historical understanding (Seixas, 2013). Another issue identified is the lack of exposure to local or regional figures in history education. History instruction in schools still predominantly features "*grand* narratives" focused on national figures, while the contributions of local figures often receive insufficient attention (Kartodirdjo, 1993). In fact, local history plays a crucial role in fostering students' historical awareness and sense of identity within their own social environment. Integrating local history into the curriculum can enhance students' emotional connection to historical material because they feel a closer connection to figures and events originating from their own region (Wasino, 2005).

Furthermore, the observation process revealed another issue indicating a tendency toward individualism among students, particularly in group work activities. High levels of academic competition lead some students to prefer working independently rather than collaborating with a group. This situation results in low levels of social interaction and cooperation among students during the learning process. Learning that does not provide space for collaboration can result in students lacking social skills and the ability to work together (Johnson, 2009). In fact, collaborative skills are one of the key competencies in 21st-century learning, encompassing communication, cooperation, and group problem-solving (Skills., 2019). These various issues highlight the need to develop history learning strategies that can address the complexity of historical events in a more contextual, interactive, and collaborative manner. History instruction should be designed not only to help students understand the material but also to encourage active engagement, social

interaction, and the development of students' critical thinking skills and historical empathy (Levstik, 2011). Therefore, learning strategies are needed that can integrate historical inquiry, role-playing, discussion, and collaboration so that history learning becomes more meaningful and relevant to students.

The HISTORICA Learning Strategy as a New Perspective in History Education

The HISTORICA strategy (*Historical Investigation and Roleplay Collaborative Learning*) was developed as a history learning strategy that integrates historical investigation, *role-playing*, collaborative discussion, voting, and historical reflection into a single learning sequence. This strategy is designed to help students more easily become familiar with historical figures, understand the relationships between figures within a historical event, and increase students' social engagement in the learning process. History education should not only emphasize the memorization of facts but also cultivate historical thinking skills, foster an understanding of social context, and help students construct meaning around a historical event (Wineburg, 2001). The development of the HISTORICA strategy utilized the Dick and Carey instructional design model because this model features systematic steps ranging from needs analysis, identification of student characteristics, formulation of learning objectives, strategy development, to learning evaluation (Dick, 2015). The Dick and Carey model was chosen because it facilitates the development of instructional strategies tailored to students' needs and real-world conditions in the classroom.

Systematic strategy development is crucial because history learning involves complex material that encompasses numerous figures, conflicts, and social relationships within a single event. According to Dick (2015), systematically developed learning strategies can help teachers design learning experiences tailored to students' characteristics and learning objectives. This is particularly relevant to the needs of students in the field who struggle to understand historical figures, are unfamiliar with local historical figures, and tend to be individualistic during group activities. The HISTORICA strategy was developed as an adaptation of several learning approaches, one of which is role-playing. The role-playing strategy enables students to understand the perspectives of historical figures through social simulation and role dramatization (Joyce, 2015). According to Hamalik (2005), role-playing is a form of simulation used to understand social relationships and human interactions through the dramatization of specific situations. Role-playing instruction also helps students become more active and better understand the material because they are directly involved in the learning experience. Research on role-playing indicates that this strategy can enhance communication skills, speaking confidence, and student engagement in learning (Aderoben et al., 2024). In the context of history education, both role-playing and interactive simulation approaches play an essential role in fostering historical empathy (Husna et al., 2020).

Theoretically, historical empathy is a combination of cognitive and affective dimensions that uses historical evidence to understand the thought processes, beliefs,

emotions, and decision-making contexts of historical figures or groups without imposing present- s (Aderoben et al., 2024). The integration of these two dimensions fosters ethical judgment and a deep reconstruction of perspectives, so that students do not merely memorize facts but are able to relate them to contemporary moral learning (Aderoben et al., 2024). In the cognitive domain (cognitive empathy or truncated empathy), students are trained to objectively analyze the reasons and contexts behind the actions of historical figures based on the conditions of their time (Husna et al., 2020). Meanwhile, in the affective domain, students are encouraged to explore historical imagination and open-mindedness to experience the emotional conditions and sociopolitical situations surrounding those events (Aderoben et al., 2024). The development of historical empathy through the stages of introduction, source investigation, reenactment/simulation, and reflection has been shown not only to hone 21st-century critical thinking skills but also to have the potential to mitigate the empathy crisis, prevent bullying, and strengthen students' tolerant, democratic, and caring character (Aderoben et al., 2024).

The second approach is *collaborative learning*. Collaborative learning is used to foster cooperation, communication, and social interaction among students. It enhances students' shared responsibility, positive interactions, and social skills within groups (Johnson, 2009). The HISTORICA strategy employs group discussions, argumentation, and collective decision-making to reduce students' individualistic tendencies, which arise from intense academic competition in schools. The third approach is *historical* inquiry. This approach positions students as active historical investigators who analyze information, conflicts, and relationships among historical figures (Levstik, 2011). Through historical inquiry, students do not merely passively receive information but learn to identify evidence, construct arguments, and draw conclusions about a historical event. Thus, history learning becomes more contextual and fosters students' critical thinking skills.

In addition, the HISTORICA strategy also adapts the concept of *social deduction learning* through activities such as voting, argumentation, character analysis of historical figures, and group decision-making. These activities help students develop evaluation, communication, and social reasoning skills in their learning. The process of discussion and voting enables students to learn how to defend their arguments based on historical information and to collectively consider group decisions. Through the integration of these various approaches, the HISTORICA strategy is expected to create a more interactive, collaborative, and contextual history learning experience. This strategy not only helps students gain a deeper understanding of historical figures and events but also fosters their critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and *historical empathy* in history learning.

When directly compared with some of the latest research on history education, the design of the HISTORICA strategy offers pedagogical novelty while also presenting several practical limitations. Previous research on pure role-play has demonstrated that role-playing simulations effectively increase students' emotional engagement; however, this model risks becoming merely a superficial dramatic performance with minimal

cognitive depth (Pratama, 2021) . HISTORICA addresses these limitations by integrating evidence-based historical inquiry with social deduction mechanisms (voting and debate). This integration aligns with the views of Aderoben et al. (2024) and Husna et al. (2020), who emphasize that historical empathy must be developed in a balanced manner between cognitive empathy and affective empathy to prevent historical anachronisms (presentism). Furthermore, unlike Sanjaya's (2020) study—which found that standard group discussions were less effective at reducing individualistic tendencies—HISTORICA employs an interdependent division of roles among national and local figures, thereby addressing the challenges highlighted by Lestari (2022) and Widja (2018) regarding the limited familiarity with regional figures due to an overreliance on textbooks (textbook-oriented approach). Nevertheless, the HISTORICA design faces technical and pedagogical limitations during implementation. Unlike conventional role-playing, HISTORICA requires significantly more time—it is time-consuming—for the role-analysis phase through to the social deduction process. HISTORICA's primary limitation arises when applied to historical material characterized by high complexity and a very large number of figures (such as events surrounding the Proclamation of Independence or national assemblies). In high-density material, the distribution of roles risks creating an imbalance in participation; students playing the main characters will dominate the debates, while students with supporting roles may become passive due to the lack of available historical clues. Furthermore, the voting and debate mechanisms risk shifting students' focus from empathetic historical reflection to a mere guessing game if the teacher does not promptly clarify historical facts at the end of the session.

Syntax of the HISTORICA (Historical Investigation and Roleplay Collaborative Learning) Learning Strategy

A learning strategy is a conceptual framework containing systematic steps in the teaching and learning process to achieve specific educational goals (Dick, 2015; Kemp, 1994). In history education, particularly when teachers are required to facilitate material that is rich in the complexity of historical figures and the dynamics of events, a specific strategy is needed that can accommodate these needs interactively. Therefore, the HISTORICA (*Historical Investigation and Roleplay Collaborative Learning*) strategy is presented as an alternative instructional design for the classroom.

The development of the HISTORICA strategy's syntax is based on a combination of critical investigation methods, role-based learning (*roleplay*), and group decision-making mechanisms through the adaptation of *social deduction learning*. The tactical integration of these three components constitutes the primary novelty of this study. Unlike previous studies, which generally isolated the *role-play* method to the extent of affective dramaturgy Pratama, (2021) or used standard group discussions that were unable to address students' ego-sectoral tendencies (Sanjaya, 2020), HISTORICA presents an integrated, mutually reinforcing syntactic structure. In this design, critical inquiry ensures cognitive depth grounded in historical evidence (Wineburg, 2001), *role-playing* fosters empathy and emotional engagement (Joyce, 2015), while *social deduction learning*

facilitates interactive engagement through debates and group *voting* (Zahrah, 2024). The synergy of these three approaches not only shifts the paradigm of history learning from a passive, textbook-oriented approach to a more interactive and collaborative one but also offers a new instructional formula that simultaneously hones students' *historical empathy*, critical thinking skills, and spirit of cooperation within a single integrated learning pathway. Through six structured stages, the HISTORICA strategy is designed to invigorate classroom dynamics, reduce students' tendency toward individualism through intensive collaboration, and help students understand the interconnections among figures in complex historical events. In detail, the explanation of the six syntactic phases in the HISTORICA strategy, along with the theoretical framework supporting them, is as follows:

Selection and Presentation of Material

In this initial stage, the teacher acts as a facilitator who presents the conceptual foundation regarding historical events characterized by complex relationships among figures and conflicts. Presenting the background chronologically is crucial as prerequisite material so that students do not become disoriented when the simulation begins. Theoretically, presenting a conflict map and initial chronology provides *a cognitive anchor* for students. According to Ausubel et al. (1978), in the theory of *meaningful learning*, the systematic organization of prior information helps students organize new information into the cognitive structures they already possess. This stage ensures that students have a strong foundation before conducting in-depth investigations.

Character Segmentation and Role Assignment

The second step is to map out the roles of historical figures (both national and local) and randomly distribute character profile cards to students in heterogeneous groups. The use *of role-playing* in history education has proven effective in enhancing students' emotional and cognitive *engagement*. According to Joyce (2015) in the book **Models of Teaching**, role-playing helps students delve into the inner world, motives, and social backgrounds of the characters they portray. Through engaging character cards, students are encouraged to step out of their individualistic comfort zones and begin to take on the responsibilities of their roles within the group.

Discussion and Historical Investigation

This phase is the core of the HISTORICA strategy, in which the teacher moderates a social deduction game (such as **Werewolf** or **Among Us**) filled with debates, investigations, and critical discussions. Students must analyze other students' statements and match them with the historical clues they have investigated. This step is strongly supported by Lev Vygotsky's theory of Social Constructivism, which states that higher-order cognitive processes develop through social interaction and intensive dialogue. Here, students actively reconstruct historical narratives through tactical debate, which directly hones their critical thinking skills.

Voting and Character Elimination

In the fourth stage, the group makes a collective decision through *voting* to determine which figure is deemed to play an "antagonistic role" or to "deviate" from the historical mission based on the group's reasoning. This process trains students to conduct historical evaluations and make collective decisions under the pressure of argumentation. Theoretically, this activity adopts the principles *of Problem-Based Learning* (PBL) and conflict resolution, in which students learn to synthesize perspectives from various ego-sectarian viewpoints to reach consensus (Jonassen, 2011). This collective reasoning reduces students' individualistic tendencies in a competitive classroom setting.

Role Clarification and Historical Reflection

After the elimination process, the teacher reveals the figure's true identity and aligns the simulation with actual historical facts. This step is crucial for preventing chronological misconceptions. From a historical pedagogy perspective, this phase marks the development of *historical empathy*. According to Levstik (2011), historical empathy is not merely sympathy, but rather the ability to analyze why a figure took certain actions during their time based on the contextual circumstances of that era. Students reflect on the values of the past as they relate to present-day life.

Conclusion and Evaluation

The final stage involves the teacher reinforcing the material, clarifying the course of the debate, and having students complete an evaluation instrument or self-reflection exercise. The formative evaluation at the end of this session aligns with the *Assessment* and *Satisfaction* components of the instructional design model to ensure that instructional objectives have been met and students experience learning satisfaction (Johanson & Brooks, 2010). This process ensures that the role-playing experience concludes with measurable cognitive understanding. The complete syntax of the HISTORICA learning strategy is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Syntax of the HISTORICA Strategy

Syntax	Teacher Activities	Student Activities
Selection and Presentation of Material	1. Selects historical material that features complex characters, conflicts, and dynamic events. 2. Systematically presenting the chronology, background, and relationships among the figures.	1. Listen to the teacher's introduction to the material. 2. Taking notes on important information. 3. Understand the historical context of the events being discussed.
Character Segmentation and Role Assignment	1. Identify the main characters and supporting characters in historical events. 2. Distribute role cards to students at random. 3. Explain the rules of the social deduction game and the learning objectives to be achieved.	1. Accept the character's identity as indicated on the role card received. 2. Understand the characteristics, background, and roles of these characters. 3. Develop a group strategy for the game.

Discussion and Historical Investigation	1. Act as a moderator who leads the social deduction-based game. 2. Guide the learning process through phases of discussion, investigation, and debate among the characters.	1. Conducting intensive group discussions. 2. Presenting arguments and maintaining each character's identity. 3. Analyze other characters' roles based on available historical clues.
Voting and Character Elimination	1. Leading the collective decision-making process through a voting mechanism. 2. Determine which character should be eliminated based on the character with the most accumulated votes from the group discussion.	1. Conducting the voting process objectively within the group. 2. Presenting rational reasons and historical arguments for the decisions and actions taken.
Revealing Roles and Historical Reflection	1. Revealing the true identity of the figure who was successfully eliminated. 2. Explain that figure's actual contributions to history. 3. Connecting the simulation game's plot with actual historical facts.	1. Reflecting on the course of the social deduction game that has been played. 2. Comparing the results of the group debate simulation with actual historical facts.
Conclusion and Evaluation	1. Reinforce the historical material that has been simulated. 2. Clarifying various misconceptions that arose during the game. 3. Evaluating the overall learning activity.	1. Summarizing the learning material together. 2. Filling out the self-reflection sheet or evaluation instrument provided by the teacher.

Source: Personal Document

Overall, the six phases of the HISTORICA syntax form a student-centered instructional sequence by integrating historical inquiry, role-playing, social deduction, group decision-making, reflection, and collaboration. This integration provides a pedagogical foundation for history learning that is not merely focused on memorizing content but also allows students to explore relationships among historical figures, consider different perspectives, and build understanding through group interaction. The relevance of this approach is supported by research on role-playing in history education that examines student engagement and motivation (Kusuma 2021), as well as research on educational history games featuring non-player characters portrayed by humans to foster an understanding of historical figures and historical empathy (Chan 2024).

Furthermore, Perrotta et al. (2024) show that student engagement in local history research projects can support understanding of historical perspectives and contexts. These findings provide a foundation for the development of HISTORICA as an alternative instructional design for history content that involves numerous historical figures, conflicting interests, dynamic relationships, and decision-making processes. HISTORICA stands out because it integrates historical analysis into six learning strands:

investigating historical figures, constructing arguments, making collective decisions, and reflecting. Building on these developments, HISTORICA offers a syntactic framework that positions social deduction as an integral part of the historical inquiry process: students not only take on roles but also gather information, test hypotheses based on evidence, present arguments, and reflect on decisions within the context of their time. Thus, HISTORICA's conceptual contribution lies in establishing a systematic relationship between historical evidence-based reasoning, social interaction, group decision-making, and reflection. This claim should be understood as a proposed design innovation based on a conceptual comparison with previous research, not as evidence that no other model has ever combined similar elements. A more robust establishment of novelty still requires a systematic comparative literature review.

In terms of application, the HISTORICA framework allows educators to adapt the historical figures, information sources, role assignments, investigative questions, and decision-making mechanisms to suit the characteristics of both the subject matter and the students. This flexibility opens up opportunities for application to historical material featuring dynamic figures and complex decisions, such as the BPUPKI/PPKI Sessions, the Rengasdengklok Incident, the dynamics of the Youth Pledge, and the Round Table Conference. Nevertheless, this flexibility remains a conceptual implication of the strategic design, not evidence of HISTORICA's effectiveness across all subject matter or school contexts. Further research is needed to evaluate the feasibility of the syntax, student responses, and its potential contribution to the understanding of historical figures, historical empathy, and collaboration.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the needs analysis and instructional design using the Dick and Carey model, the HISTORICA (Historical Investigation and Roleplay Collaborative Learning) strategy has been systematically designed as a conceptual alternative to address history learning challenges at SMAN 1 Blitar. The design of this strategy is based on the results of a needs analysis, which revealed the continued dominance of textbook-oriented learning, the limited use of interactive learning and games, and the suboptimal utilization of local historical contexts in instruction. Based on these needs, HISTORICA was designed through six syntactic phases, including material selection, character segmentation and role assignment, discussion and historical investigation, voting and role revelation, historical reflection, and conclusion and evaluation. The integration of these six phases is designed to provide a student-centered learning experience by combining historical investigation, role-play, social deduction, group decision-making, reflection, and collaboration. Thus, the contribution of this study lies in the design of the HISTORICA instructional framework as an alternative history learning strategy that conceptually integrates character understanding, historical investigation, group interaction, and historical reflection into a single learning sequence. The effectiveness, feasibility, and impact of the HISTORICA strategy on students' understanding of

historical figures, historical empathy, and collaboration still require testing through implementation and evaluation phases in future research.

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