

INTEGRATING CHARACTER BUILDING IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AT SCHOOLS: WHY AND HOW?

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Abstract

In line with the goal of national education, that is, to develop educated people with life skill and good character building, character education values should be engaged in designing and composing the material used in learning activities in the classroom. The issue of character education is still questionable. Those questions are mostly about its effectiveness in the classroom—partly due to the lack of practical evidence connecting character education to definite developments in academics, social interactions, and emotional and cognitive improvement. This paper is trying to discuss the reinforcement of integrating character education particularly in foreign language teaching.

Keywords: *character education, language teaching, national education*

INTRODUCTION

To prepare a golden generation for Indonesia, all people have to consider the three components of the main characters, namely moral knowledge, moral feeling (the moral sense), and moral action (moral conduct). All of these are related to one another. A good character starts from knowing a good thing, wanting a good thing, and doing good (Lickona, 2003).

The character is expected to manifest a custom in the way of thinking, habits and customs in the heart of the action. But this time the degradation of morality in Indonesia has attacked the youth. Juvenile delinquency is an example of the degradation of morality experienced by the youth. Morality is a key point that must be embedded in every individual. Deviations moral impact damage resulting in damage to the norms of goodness. Indonesian youth's morality degradation has reached the level of bad and experienced by students of Elementary School, Junior High School, High School, and Higher Education. Though youth is piling development that will strengthen nation. Therefore, degradation of morality that should be anticipated with measures and proven strategies that can restore youth to the glorious realm. Moral and character education is a moral solution to fix the problem. This big efforts must be realized in a big action. As a result, all teachers in all areas in Indonesia must pay big attention that teaching is not only to make the students smart in term of intelligence but also in smart in term of behavior. As Schwartz (2008) stated that at character education is a national movement encouraging schools to create environment that foster ethical responsible, and caring young people. The environment here can be meant as the situation or atmosphere where the students take a part in teaching and learning process at school. Classroom is briefly a part of school where the students spend most of their time. Students' gaining knowledge, skills, and strong characters is required and compressed in the Regulations made by the Government. In attempt to realize this intention, teachers, instructional materials, as well as schools are to be ready to come up with various innovations and strategies. One of necessary instructional materials to pay closer attention to is teaching material. Teaching materials are made not only to equip students with knowledge, but there is something bigger than that. They are aimed at building the characters of students (Pusat Kurikulum dan Perbukuan, 2011). The teaching of language is necessary to involve culture in the instructional activities. This is in line with what Buttjes (1990) emphasizes that language teaching is culture teaching. Furthermore, cultural background of the learners is one of the aspects that the teacher must pay attention. Brown (1994) also maintains that cultural background is one of aspects on which foreign language teaching may be dependent.

Looking at the fact that insertion of character education in instructional activities in classroom is highly necessary, the government then compose the guidance book for implementing the values in character education.

1. The Purpose of Language Teaching

—Language is central to education; linguistics is the discipline devoted to the study of language. But the study of language within the educational process takes us far beyond linguistics alone (Brumfit 2001, in We, 2006, p. 20). Similarly, language teaching requires more than the teaching of language. According to Stern (1992), there are four main content areas of language teaching:

1. The study of the target language
2. The study of the target culture

3. Communicative activities

4. General language education.

The first two areas involve the methodical study of language and culture, while the third represents a syllabus of global and integrated activities which involve the use of language in its sociocultural context. These three areas focus more on a specific language while the fourth area invites —the learners to take a wider and more detached view of their involvement and to reflect in a generalized way about languages, culture, and learning (Stern 1992, p. 103).

Language teaching in this sense transfers and reaches beyond a particular language being learnt. Of the four content areas, general language education is the most neglected one. A number of language teachers may indeed question its usefulness. Stern, however, believes that the general language education syllabus helps learners to generalize from their experience of the second language to the learning of other languages.

The argument for a general language education syllabus links up with another consideration in language pedagogy which arises from our view of language learning. The more learners know about language, culture and language learning, the better they should be able to control the learning process and be responsible for their own development (see Stern 1992: 244-245).

2. Character Education

There is a phenomenon that when a school could graduate the students who have high scores, it means that the school is a good school. Whereas, education is not only aimed at increasing intellectual quotient, but also developing emotional quotient, social quotient, adversity quotient, ecological quotient, and spiritual quotient. To say it more simply, making the students able to get score A in a subject is actually not the only goal of teaching. There is something much bigger that should be one of the teachers' priorities (Albantani, 2015: 402).

Indonesian national education system law number 20 year 2003, chapter 3 states that the goal of national education is to develop educated people with life skill and good character building. So that, all levels of our education should integrate character values into curriculum, syllabus, and lesson plan and also in the teaching learning materials. Indonesian minister of education develops grand design for implementing character values in all level of education. Through education based on character building the students will have opportunity to develop their potentials become optimal.

Talking about character education, there have been many studies and many experts who formulate what should be in the character education. Indonesian government (Kemendiknas, 2011) published Buku Panduan Pelaksanaan Pendidikan Karakter, it is stated that there are 18 values as the result of empirical study which is done by Center for Curriculum. Those values are sourced from religion, Pancasila, Culture, and the goal of national education. The values are (1) religiosity, (2) honesty, (3) tolerance, (4) discipline, (5) hard work, (6) creative, (7) independent, (8) democrat, (9) curiosity, (10) the national spirit, (11) nationalism, (12) respect for the achievements, (13) friendly/communicative, (14) pacifism, (15) love to read, (16) environmental care, (17) social care, (18) responsibility.

On the other hand, Koesoema A, as cited in Anugerahwati (2015, pp. 3 -4), proposes twelve pillars of complete and comprehensive character education. The pillars are appreciation of the body, transcendental, academic excellence, self-control, bravery, love of righteousness, skilled, democratic, appreciate to differences, responsibility, fairness, moral integrity.

From the two different statements related to the character education, it can be seen that they are actually not really different. There are many similarities such as tolerance with appreciate to differences and honesty with love of righteousness. Even they use similar wording like responsibility and democrat (Albantani, 2015: 455). Then, Lickona (2003) states that there are eleven broad principles identified to define character education:

1. Promote core ethical values as the basis of good character.
2. Define character comprehensively to include thinking, feeling, and behavior.
3. Use a comprehensive, intentional, proactive, and effective approach.
4. Create a caring school community.
5. Provide students with opportunities to engage in moral action.
6. Provide a meaningful and challenging curriculum that helps all students to succeed.
7. Foster students' intrinsic motivation to learn and to be good people.
8. Engage school staff as professionals in a learning and moral community.
9. Foster shared moral leadership and long-term support for character education.
10. Engage families and community members as partners in character education.
11. Evaluate the character of the school, its staff, and its students to inform the character education effort.

Character training as Stedje (2010) ought not to be viewed as an instrument that adjusts kids to negligent consistence. Character advancement is more than growing great conduct—yet rather

recognizing and developing an arrangement of between and intrapersonal aptitudes that give the structure to assemble and execute moral conduct and build community.

3. Why Character Education?

The core of character instruction was characterized in the accompanying quote: "The essence of character education was encapsulated in the following quote: The character education program helps children learn to think before they act, to understand fundamental differences between right and wrong, and to make good decisions" (Wake County, 2005, p. 2).

The advantages of character education are multilayered going beyond the apparent results of being a good person and responsible citizen. Ryan in Almerico (2014, p. 2) found that teaching and learning process emphasizing character development helped improve students' academic achievement and communication skills thus encouraging a tougher sense of independence and self-confidence. He recommended these endings of character education lead to the creation of trusting learning environments where students feel good about themselves and others.

According to Battistich, (cited in Haynes and Berkowitz, 2007), the effects of character education programs can have thoughtful effects on various problems that schools are fronting today including increased drug/alcohol use, aggression, low school attendance, fights and suspensions, school shootings, sexual activity, vandalism, and low academic achievement. Character education may help schools develop a more positive school environment. Viadero (2003) (as cited in Brown, 2007), senses that character education programs can be very beneficial in the sense of serving inhibit school violence, drug problems, and immoral sexual activity. Schools have a significant part to play in the growth of children's social and emotional development. Educators must discover ways to pervade the curriculum with character building (McElmeel, in Almerico, 2014, p. 2).

Character education programs in the schools strive to positively promote student success through various means such as encouraging them to speak respectfully toward others, volunteer throughout the community, and caring for others. These programs also provide students options for alternative activities that give opportunities to making positive choices (Benigni in Larson, 2009, p. 20). Schools proposing character education also report positive student qualities that lead to good character. Some of these qualities include self-respect, empathy, conflict resolution, kindness, responsibility, and cooperation.

Due to the importance of character education, some practices have been performed in many countries. To make an example, in Kansas, students, staff, and parents at the 4th, 7th, and 9th grade levels completed surveys over a four-year period (2003–2007). The results included: the number of students setting educational goals increased from 50% to 95% from 2004–2007. Attendance rates increased from 92% to 96.8% (based on unexcused absences). Then, the number of 3rd to 9th grade students in setting character goals totaled approximately 4,000 the last two years of the grant. (2006–2007). Graduation rates increased from 76% to 81%. Teaching a Foreign Language with Character Education

In learning a foreign language using the intercultural approach aims so that the learner has, **first**, the ability to understand something "unknown" (foreign culture) including the foreign values. This can only be achieved if the learners also recognize and understand their own culture. Therefore a good understanding of the culture itself became a base for moving foreign culture understanding through the language studied. Formation of self identity as a nation will be formed indirectly. This is in line with the pillars of character, the first of nine pillars of character that is the character of the love of God and all of his creations, because all the cultural diversity and richness of nature that also form the culture of the nation of Indonesia did not escape from the help of God. Furthermore, in the current era of globalization, it is likely that the learners in Indonesia to come out of their cultural environment and move into the new cultural environment are very large, such as when study or work abroad. Of course, we want them not to lose their identity as a nation of Indonesia and a love of Indonesia.

Second, learning a foreign language insightful intercultural have goals that are related to the area of affective on the learner, that is to develop the empathy and the tolerance on something "unknown" or anything that comes from outside the circle of their culture. If the ability of empathy and tolerance are developed properly, will help the learner to also be tolerant in the society. Sociological facts in Indonesia showed that the nation of Indonesia consists of various ethnic groups that are very multicultural, so the ability to empathize and tolerance become important to develop on the learner itself. This is in accordance with the ninth pillars of character, namely tolerance, peace, and unity as well as with the pillar of respect containing the values of tolerance and acceptance (acceptance).

Third, in learning a foreign language an insightful intercultural intends to eliminate the negative stereotype towards foreign cultures within the learners. An unreasonable Stereotype

often leads to a misunderstanding between the communicator of the two different cultures. The ability to eliminate the negative stereotype can be used in everyday life. As it was said before, Indonesia is a very multicultural society so that all Nations should be cautious in thinking or acting when dealing with other people that comes from cultural communities, or even other religions. We still remember from our memory, that some riots that happen in Indonesia cannot be separated from the inability of some older nation's to eliminate negative thinking towards other people from outside the circle of their culture. This excessive negative prejudice is one of the reasons. Because some people thought, recorded a negative stereotype against other religious or ethnic groups. One of the recommended way to integrate character education in learning a foreign language is to use the technique of discussion. The Practical Ways of Character Education Insertion Collins and Henjum (1999) prompted that the procedure for character instruction must be long haul and continuous. Additionally, they underlined that it is fundamental to associate character training with each part of school life so it procures significance for understudies. A techniques system for character training ought to be entwined into a few school components, including: (a) the whole school educational modules, (b) the school mission, (c) discipline approaches, (d) after-school exercises, and (e) educator proficient advancement exercises.

The integration of character education in foreign language teaching can be implemented through: (1) accommodating the character values with the lesson, (2) instilling character values in every learning activity, (3) delivering the character values through teaching method used, and (4) planting and practicing character education values through everyday life. Meanwhile, there are some challenges faced in the process of integrating character education, among others: (1) the difficulty of matching the character education values toward the materials available. Meaning to say, not all materials contain character values. Therefore, teachers, in this case, must be creative to connect character values in the materials available, (2) the diverse characteristics of learners. It is a common thing in a group of learners that they have different character one another, including the level of their competence. In this situation, the teachers must be able to manage the class well without ignoring some certain students. As a result, the competence as a teacher must be really comprehended and able to be practiced by the teacher, especially in pedagogical competence.

4.Character Values in Syllabus and Lesson Plan (RPP)

Instilling character education can be seen from three components, namely indicators, teaching and learning process and rubrics for teacher evaluation. By these steps, character teaching could be briefly observed.

1. Character values in Indicators

Formulating indicators should refer to the basic competence in accordance with certain subjects. Results of formulation indicators will be the basis for developing teaching materials, design of learning activities, and learning outcomes assessment and designing. Here is an example of indicator of English lesson for high school.

Lesson plan

Basic Competence Indicator :

1 a. Understanding the meaning of the conversation simple to destination Transactional interpersonal and interactive and non – interactive in formal and informal situations in communicating with the surroundings and / or the academic context.

b. Understanding the meaning of the conversation interpersonal and transactional is written in the interaction covering a wide range of expression language: ask, give, refuse, approve and deny information, inquire and give opinions, deliver, receive, and declined the invitation, stating and

ask for approval or disapproval, praise, give and respond to speech congratulations.

1. Request service

2. Giving service

3. Refuse services

4. Identify information in conversations presented during asking and refusing service.

2. Teaching and Learning Process

Character values can be inserted in the teaching and learning process. Overall, the character teaching plans in the learning process are twelve values, namely, polite, appreciative, creative, communicative, logical thinking, active, independent, hardworking, innovative, confident, honest and cooperative. The following is character teaching mapping in every skill:

a. Listening skill

In learning of listening there are eight kinds of learning characters that can be embedded by teachers. The eight characters are polite, appreciative, creative, communicative, logical thinking, active, independent, and work hard. The majority of teaching characters found in the pre-activity and whilst-activity. In the pre-activity there are four characters such as: polite, appreciative, creative, and

communicative. While whilst-activity, there are four additional characters which are being taught that is logical thinking, active, independent, and hard work. At the stage of post-activity, the appreciative character is shown again.

b. Reading skill

Same as listening skill, the character learning in reading skill also includes the character of appreciative, polite, and logical thinking in pre-activity. In whilst-activity, a character that is appeared includes in the seven characters and two of them have also been presented in a pre-activity. Five other characters are active, hard-working, creative, innovative, and confident. In post-activity, the teacher shows appreciative characters again.

c. Writing skill

Learning characters in writing skills also include eight characters which want to be implanted. Two of them were found in the pre-activity (appreciative and discipline) and five characters in whilst-activity (logical thinking, creative, hardworking, active, and teamwork). While the other one is in the post-activity (honest).

d. Speaking skill

In students speaking abilities, there are three kinds of character that can be found in pre-activity those are logical thinking, creative, and appreciative, and five characters in whilst-activity include communicative, honest, appreciative, hard work, confidence. The other two are found in post-activity those are creative and appreciative. The Implementation of Teaching the Values of the Characters in the Process of Teaching and Learning

There are four characters that can be integrated in learning on students, those are polite, appreciative, creative, and communicative. Whereas, in the implementation, the character appreciates the others which are taught in the phase of whilst-activity, while the teachers contain one other character that is social care which is also implemented in the phase of pre-release activity.

In the phase of whilst-activity, the teacher also inserts the character learning besides the appreciative ability. The value of the character's confidence is also integrated in this phase. Whereas, in the post-activity, the insertion of a character that is appreciative can also be done. Here are a few activities that demonstrate learning characters:

Pre-activity

1) polite : politeness towards others is taught through how to greet, not only the usual greeting which is used in a foreign language, but also the greeting in the local culture.

2) Communicative and creative: the value of the character in communicating taught through a short discussion between students and teachers. The character to be creative is also indirectly taught through this discussion. This is because the teacher asks a few questions that the answer may be different from one another. So that it takes a quick thinking to answer those questions.

3) Social Care: this character is taught when the teacher asked one of his students to help teachers to distribute instruments to other students. This can foster a desire of students to help others who need help.

4) Hard work and confidence: both of these characters are implanted when the teacher is giving the task to students. The tasks given is in the form of creating a dialogue with the situation or the theme specified by the teacher for then they present the result.

5) Appreciative: this character can be said to be one of the characters, most often planted to students. At this time, students are expected to appreciate the work of his friend by giving applause as a sign of appreciation.

Whilst-activity

1) Logical thinking: the implementation of the values of character to be able to think logically are implemented through the questions given by teachers after the students listen to some of the dialogue in a foreign language.

2) Hard work and independent: both of these character values are taught through a task given from the teacher to make an example of a sentence that contain asking for help and teachers ask the students to do the task individually.

3) Appreciative: in this last phase, the ability of the students in appreciating his friend's work is done through the teacher asked the students to give applause as a form of appreciation.

Post-activity

Honesty. Honesty is done through the questions given by the teacher at the end of lessons. This is done to find out if the students want to say the difficulty in learning the material. Integration of Character Education in the Foreign Language Learning Activities The integration of character education in the Foreign Language Learning Activities should follow the principles of the process of learning a language.

5. The Role of Schools and Teachers

Schools assume a fundamental part in the character instruction of future pioneers, as exhibited in this quote from Cali as referred to by Marshall (2006, p. 14): "all youngsters can be champs. They

require consolation and backing in the greater part of their endeavors to put forth a valiant effort and succeed. We should be dynamic players in creating and advancing character training and make a move to help our kids."

Otten (2000) hypothesized that character training, when coordinated into the school group, serves to: (a) keep understudies on undertaking, (b) re-connect with understudies, (c) manage struggle, and (d) include the group with urban and political life. Further, Otten stressed that school staff, alongside guardians and individuals from the group, have a commitment to address the issues of understudies and that the utilization of character training can build up common and minding groups. Thusly, this empowers instructing and figuring out how to occur in schools. Likewise, it is essential that center qualities be underlined by all concerned: (an) educators, (b) overseers, and (c) guardians (Lickona, n.d.). The test to class staff is to furnish understudies with: (a) bolster, (b) self-regard, and (c) stamina.

It has been shown ordinarily that educators, independently, can have any kind of effect. Frequently, educators are referred to as having profoundly affected their understudies' lives, by being a great good example (Kidder, 2000). Thusly, instructors are confronted with the examination of various character training research materials so they can outline powerful lesson arrangements that adequately show character attributes and center qualities (Anderson 2000). As per O'Sullivan (2004), showing center character characteristics, through writing intertwined into the main subjects, is a conceivable way to deal with accomplish this objective. Driving discourses on character qualities through writing guarantees that understudies know and grow great, adoring, and minding character attributes, maybe an educator's most critical part.

CONCLUSION

Character learning is naturally entwined in education, regardless of the possibility that the accentuation shifts from school to class. Teachers and groups frequently perceive the estimation of character instruction, however feel an absence of trust in knowing how to actualize a formal project. Be that as it may, when group and school pioneers team up and make character instruction and staff preparing a need, huge advantages can happen that can affect generation.

The result of character education has dependably been empowering, decidedly, and ceaselessly setting up the pioneers of tomorrow. This topic will require more concentration especially in the territories of similitudes/contrasts in character instruction, and that of good training. Thus, it is recommended the significance of the procedure of execution of character training in various regions keeping in mind the end goal to fit the requirements and objectives of every group, accordingly successfully impacting understudies' practices.

In summing up, all things being equal, character education is not a trademark or a course but rather a mission that is installed in the regular school life. Most imperative, the advancement of character education ought a jump administration as well as has an activity arrangement for practice

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