

**THE INTEGRATION OF CHARACTER BUILDING IN ENGLISH
LEARNING AT SMP NEGERI 18 PALEMBANG**

A THESIS

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents: (1) the background of the study, (2) the problems of the study, (3) the objectives of the study, and (4) the significance of the study.

1.1 The Background of the Study

The progress of a country is determined by the quality of human resources. The quality of human resources is not only seen from mastery of science and technology but also their character or behavior. To fulfill human resources who have competence and character, a good education system is needed. In everyday life, it can be seen through the media about the proliferation of behavioral activities including violence, anger, and brawl between the students. Brawl activities between the students are a complex problem because it is directly related to students' behavior. Besides brawl activities, various negative activities that commonly done by the students such as play truant from school, do cheating, often come late for school, do not do assignments, commit pornography, get involved in drugs, and so on. These problems do not only occur between the students sometimes it involves with the teachers. One of the examples of the problems occurs between students and teacher is the case of an honorary teacher at SMK NU 03 Kaliwungu, Kendal, Central Java, named Joko. Priyatin (2019) told that the students keep playing and throwing some papers in the classroom while Joko is explaining the material. Not only that the students are also challenge Joko to have a fight. Another case reported by Damanik (2014), a junior high school student from Krian, Sidoarjo, who got arrested in the murder case. These are only some examples of the students who get involved in criminal cases. Several of these actions indicate that character building policies launched several years ago by the Ministry of Education and Culture not yet felt the results from what the government has been expected.

According to Lickona (1999) Character education is the deliberate effort to influence the behavior of students. As a deliberate effort, it should base on the concept of character education and the specific context. Stiff-Williams (2010) states that

character education must be integrated with field studies and continuous through all classes and taught by all teachers. To develop students' knowledge subjects (e.g., English) and character (e.g., honesty), the Ministry of Education of Indonesia in 2013 launched a new curriculum called Curriculum of 2013. All subjects in this curriculum were claimed to be fully integrated with character education. Character education is an attempt to create the next generation who have a superior character. This expectation will not be achieved easily without the teacher's role as an educator, especially early childhood educators in character building.

Character education has been a quite hot issue in 2013 curriculum implementation. Affective aspects become one of the main focuses in 2013 Curriculum because character education has now become a central issue which is often discussed at the level of education and it is one of the important pillars in the life of the nation (Hidayanti, Zaim, Rukun, & Darmansyah, 2014). There is a strong indication of the loss of the character values in the nation, such as honesty, politeness, and togetherness and educational institutions have a duty and responsibility to conduct character education for the students to develop their morals (Kamaruddin, 2012). Therefore, in 2013 Curriculum, the government would emphasize the character building in society by having character education at school, since it is believed that good characters are reflected by good achievements at school and character becomes the vital core of education (Suherdi, 2013).

The current character education wave has caused some dilemmas over what should be taught and how it should be taught. Since public schools educate all students, there is a controversy about what behavior all people consider to be moral (Beane, 1985). Character building in education is a program that has been socialized by the government since 2010 to overcome these problems. All schools in Indonesia are required to implement this program. In line with the government's regulation, there are 18 character values to be developed (Ministry of National Education, 2010). They are religious, honest, tolerant, disciplined, hard-working, creative, independent, democratic, curious, nationalist, patriotic, achievement appreciative, communicative, peace loving, reading loving, environmental caring, social caring, and responsible.

Hadi (2015) points out that The Standard Competency of Graduates combines with the values of character education produce a good character should be supported by the knowledge about virtue, the will to do good and concrete action of doing well. When schools are implementing an effective character building program, they must provide appropriate class instructions and activities that educate and encourage each character trait they are teaching. Schwartz (2008) asserts that getting a good score is not the major purpose of education, but promoting the Character Education of the student is a significant matter. A study on the factor influencing character education insertion process is conducted by Pane and Patriana (2016) who investigated the environment as one factor in the character education process. They explored college students' opinions regarding the environmental contents in the subjects to contribute in improving the comfortable living in Jakarta. It indicated that environmental contents are highly relevant and effectual if used as one of the supporting components for character education since its contents are beneficial for improving students' abilities.

Character education leads to the establishment of school culture that underlines the attitudes, traditions, habits, and symbols practiced by all stakeholders of the school and its surrounding communities (Ministry of National Education, 2010). Therefore, character education is expected to support the construction of Indonesia's new generation. Character values are not taught directly, but they are integrated into the teaching and learning process, self-development activity and school culture (Ministry of National Education, 2010). Therefore, teachers and all school citizens should integrate those values into the existing curriculum, syllabus, and lesson plan including teachers of English. The integration of character education is essential for the development of Indonesia, mainly in the field of education in Indonesia which is not only creating smart people but also possessing good character. Therefore, it needs a holistic education by integrating character education with teaching learning of English. To make it clearer, Sugirin (2011) mentions that the implementation of character education should be integrated into relevant content subject instruction. Thus, Sugirin (2011) introduces two different modes in implementing character education in EFL learning namely explicit mode and implicit mode. In Explicit Mode, EFL teachers

should have a plan of what character values are expected to be included in the teaching and learning activity (Sugirin, 2011).

The EFL teacher chooses which part of the topic suits the inclusion of character values and the correct timing for this value to be brought into classroom discussion. The character value can be presented as a brief lecture or as a moral value in teaching and learning activities and it is expected to be discussed in the classroom with the students (Sugirin, 2011). The purpose of this lecturing is to raise students' awareness of the character value concerned with the topic chosen. Another mode in implementing character education is through Implicit Mode. In Implicit Mode, the EFL teacher can use any possible means to insert character education in the instruction, i.e. serving it as a hidden syllabus, as well as in other academic communications with the student (Sugirin, 2011). It focuses on enabling the students to acquire the character values unconsciously in teaching and learning activities. Having these two modes to be implemented in the classroom can help EFL teachers to apply character education in teaching and learning activities.

English becomes the most-learned foreign language in Indonesia. It is a compulsory subject that is taught from the lower education level to the higher education level. Language is beneficial to teach good character by using good words and expressing the words in a good way. Therefore, character values can be developed through an English subject. The character values development through English subject is expected to give a positive impact on the children and nation development. Before integrating character values in the teaching and learning process, the teacher should design lesson plans with character building included.

Jensen (2001) states, a lesson plan is an extremely useful tool that serves as a combination guides, resource, and historical document reflecting our teaching philosophy, student population, textbooks, and most importantly, our goals for our students. The goals were not only in the cognitive domain also in affective the domain. Therefore, a research in integrating of character building in teaching English subject was taken place at SMP Negeri 18 Palembang. The previous research has been conducted at SMP Negeri 18 Palembang was implementing the active knowledge model (Sari, 2016). The research aimed to make students be active and creative in

answering the teacher's questions. Another previous researched done by Permana, Inderawati, and Vianty (2018) conducted a research of the characters value that found in junior high school textbooks. The textbooks that used in that research were the same with the one that used by the teachers' at SMP Negeri 18 Palembang.

According to Ministry of National Education (2010) although the English language curriculum at the junior high school level itself is not directly explained the distribution of character building but in the high school English curriculum there is a distribution of character values based on the class. This shows that character building is true to be integrated by teachers of English in the learning and teaching process. Suggested values of character building for tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade could be seen in Table 1.

Table 1
Values of Characters Building at High School

Subject	Values of Character Building for Tenth, Eleventh, and Twelfth Grades	
English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicative • Social caring • Curious • Democratic • Independent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard working • Disciplined • Reading loving • Tolerant

(Sources:https://www.academia.edu/19974525/Integrasi_Unsur_Pembangunan_Karakter_Bangsa_dalam_Buku_Teks_Bahasa_Ingris_SMP_dalam_Perspektif_Holistik)

Based on the study done by Faiziyah and Fachrurrazy (2013) the result showed that the values that were mentioned in in teachers' lesson plans at Junior High School 3 Malang did not cover the six character values for English subject. Those values were not elaborated much in each learning activity in the learning procedure. These mean that the teachers need more guidance to implement the character building well. Fahmy, Bachtiar, Rahim, and Malik (2015) found out that the young generation is chosen to be an agent of change. It is started by the integration of character building but the impact of this program on the young students or young generation has not determined yet.

From those results, it can be concluded that the lower the level of education the more portion of character building must be given.

It means that junior high school students have a bigger portion of character building than senior high school and college students do. Meanwhile, in elementary school, English is not the compulsory subject anymore. In other words, it can be concluded that junior high school students are the best level to start the integration of the character building. In the curriculum of English for Junior High school level, the government does not state the specific characters that should be taught by the teachers like what has been mentioned in the curriculum of English for Senior High school. That is why it is important to know the characters values integrated by the teachers at Junior High school level. In line with that, the writer would like to conduct the advance research dealing with the integration of character building in teaching English at SMP Negeri 18 Palembang.

1.2 The Problems of the Study

The problems of this study are formulated into the following questions:

1. How is the teacher's understanding of character building prescribed in 2013 curriculum?
2. How is the integration of character building in English learning at SMP Negeri 18 Palembang?
3. Why does teacher apply certain character(s) in English learning?
4. What are the challenges of the integration of character building in English learning at SMP Negeri 18 Palembang?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

Based on the problems mentioned above, the objectives of the study are:

1. to find out the teacher's understanding of character building prescribed in 2013 curriculum.
2. to find out the integration of character building in English learning at SMP Negeri 18 Palembang.
3. to find out why teacher applies certain character(s) in English learning.

4. to find out the challenges of the integration of character building in English learning at SMP Negeri 18 Palembang.

1.4 The Significance of the Study

Theoretically and practically, the findings of this study are expected to give a contribution to several parties. Theoretically, the writer expects the result of the research could give information about the integration of character building in English language teaching as prescribed in the 2013 Curriculum, especially in the level of Junior High School. Practically, first, this study would be beneficial for English teachers in teaching character education. By knowing the integration of character values, could lead teachers to deliver the values appropriately and effectively and it can help them to be more selective in deciding which characters that appropriate with the teaching material in the classroom. Second, this study could be a model for the other school and give the motivation for the teacher or the student to build character in formal education. Last, this study could be used as a reference for other researchers who are interested in conducting advanced research or relevant research related to the integration of character building in junior high school.

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