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Integrating Character Education Into English Language Teaching

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Abstrak

Artikel ini berjudul Mengintegrasikan Pendidikan Karakter ke dalam Pengajaran Bahasa Inggris. Artikel ini mengeksplorasi integrasi pendidikan karakter ke dalam pengajaran bahasa Inggris, menekankan pentingnya hal ini dalam mendorong perkembangan akademik dan moral di kalangan siswa. Memanfaatkan metodologi penelitian kepustakaan, penelitian ini mengumpulkan data dari berbagai sumber, termasuk buku, artikel jurnal, dan publikasi online, untuk menggambarkan pentingnya pendidikan karakter dalam praktik pendidikan kontemporer. Temuannya mengungkapkan bahwa pendidikan karakter tidak hanya meningkatkan kemahiran berbahasa siswa tetapi juga menumbuhkan nilai-nilai moral penting dan perilaku etis yang diperlukan untuk menjadi warga negara yang bertanggung jawab. Lebih lanjut, buku ini menguraikan strategi efektif untuk mengintegrasikan pendidikan karakter ke dalam kurikulum bahasa Inggris, termasuk perencanaan pembelajaran, aktivitas kelas yang menarik, dan metode evaluasi yang komprehensif. Dengan menanamkan pendidikan karakter dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris, pendidik dapat berkontribusi secara signifikan terhadap pengembangan siswa secara holistik, mempersiapkan mereka untuk menavigasi kompleksitas masyarakat global dengan integritas dan empati.

Kata Kunci: Pendidikan Karakter, Pengajaran Bahasa Inggris, Integrasi.

Abstract

This article entitled Integrating Character Education into English Language Teaching. This article explores the integration of character education into English language teaching, emphasizing its significance in fostering both academic and moral development among students. Utilizing a library research methodology, the study compiles data from various sources, including books, journal articles, and online publications, to illustrate the importance of character education in contemporary educational practices. The findings reveal that character education not only enhances students' language proficiency but also cultivates essential moral values and ethical behaviours necessary for responsible citizenship. Furthermore, it outlines effective strategies for integrating character education into English language curricula, including lesson planning, engaging classroom activities, and comprehensive evaluation methods. By embedding character education within English language learning, educators can significantly contribute to the holistic development of students, preparing them to navigate the complexities of a globalized society with integrity and empathy.

Keywords: Character education, English Language Teaching, Integration

INTRODUCTION

Education is an effort to prepare students with planned and conscious process aim at developing the potential of individuals through teaching and learning. It enables students to develop their potential skill including intelligence, moral, personality and society. In the rapid development of technology with its disruptive impact on learners' morality and character, character education must be inserted in each learners' activity. Character education is recognized as a vital component and become an essential aspect of modern educational practices. The character education not only enhances students' academic skills and fosters moral and ethical development of students. Character education aims to develop students' moral values and ethical behaviours, which are essential for their overall growth as responsible citizens. According to Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System, the purpose of education is to enhance students' abilities to become individuals who are pious, noble, educated, and responsible (Fardita et al., 2022). It stresses that education should focus not only on intellectual development but also fostering responsible and ethical individuals.

In the landscape of global educational, academic excellence is not the only main priority but also it has evolved the development of ethical, social, and emotional competencies in students. According to Zubaedi (2012) in Fardita et.al (2022), she stated that character education as the act of cultivating gratitude in the way of thinking, intellect, attitude and discipline in acting in accordance with the value of goodness, their identity is reflected in their actions with God and the environment. Thus, it is appropriate to teach

them earlier. Character building is effectively learnt in early ages and children because it is believed that whatever the children are in the future has a significant link with the characters embedded in them (Putri et al., 2017). Respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and trustworthiness are taught explicitly through character education and it has gained significant attention in the 21st century. Thus, it is the need of learners to develop their moral foundations and effective communication skills as the world becomes increasingly interconnected. Integrating character education in the context of English language teaching can simultaneously enhance students' language proficiency and personal and social development of students. In Indonesia, English has become an essential subject in schools due to its global significance. Nowadays, English language teaching helps students to learn the world globally and develop their academic skills. Integrating character education into English learning and teaching not only helps students improve their language skills but also prepares them to face societal challenges with integrity and empathy.

English is considered as an essential subject for students to enrich their skills. It being taught as the local content subject and it was started in elementary school. English is being taught as formal ELT education since the early nineties, and it was started from the fourth grade of elementary school (Widiati & Cahyono, 2006). Nowadays, English is still being taught for elementary school students and as the first foreign language taught at schools and needs to be mastered. Therefore, many elementary schools in Indonesia teach English for the students as the local content subject to develop communication (Istiqomah, 2016). However, English is still considered as an essential subject to be taught for elementary school students, and it is one of the subjects in the national exam.

However, the integration of character education within English language teaching remains a critical area for exploration. Integrating character education in English language teaching can enrich learners' skills and competencies, then avoid negative behaviour which can influence learners. Furthermore, having good character is an urgent for learners to equip them with the skills required to face challenges and problem in their social environment (Wanti, 2022). This article explores the strategies for integrating character education into English language teaching and teaching.

METHOD

The research data collected through several references in the form of books, articles, and online scientific publications. Researchers collected the journal articles as a sample related to the research title from articles and online scientific publications.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Character Education and Its Importance

Character education is not a new concept in educational field particularly in Indonesia, it has been a part of educational philosophy and practice for century and has existed since the contribution of ideas by Ki Hajar Dewantara based council character education such as religious values, discipline, honesty, and responsibility that can be utilized as a framework in the construction of moral education in the twenty-first century (Yulianafeza, 2022). It has been exists because of phenomena ranging from the moral decline of students to the emergence of acts of violence suggests that character education is one thing that should not be ruled out (Nurlela, 2023). Character education is related to values and norms, thus cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects must be involved in it. Furthermore, The good character should have involved three aspects namely the moral aspect of knowing, the moral aspect of feeling, and the moral aspect of action (Lickona, 1991 cited in Wanti, et al., 2022: 40).

Character education is not only knowledge, but also knowledge and action. Therefore, it must be optimized to avoid bad behaviours of students. Although this concept of character education has been widely adopted by countries and educational institutions, it still faces biggest challenges such as lack of in-depth understanding, of character education, limited resources, and resistance from many parties are obstacles in achieving this ideal goal of education (Suardi, 2023). Furthermore, many cases in schools reflect a moral crisis, such as increasing incidents of bullying, cheating on exams, plagiarism, disrespect for teachers and classmates, and other antisocial behaviours (Sitopu et al., 2024); (Guna et al., 2024).

B. Character Development in English Language Teaching

In the modern educational landscape, English language teaching (ELT) has expanded its role and purposes included the development of global citizenship, intercultural competence, and moral values. It plays a crucial role in shaping learners into active members society, responsible, empathetic, and prepare students for effective communication in the global community. The version of character values are different from each country and depend on the core value, religion, and culture. Hence, based on the guideline of character education published by Kementrian Pendidikan Nasional (2010) which explains the character values that should be developed for English subject, they are: (1) respect for diversity, (2) polite, (3) confidence, (4) independent, (5) cooperate, and (6) obey the social rules. Thus, it focuses on the certain main values that are closest to the characteristics of the subject concerned. Moreover, building students' character through education is a crucial aspect to create good quality of the students. On the other hand, today's fact shows that there is a

moral decadence. There are lots of issues related to Indonesian students that need to be solved effectively for instance discipline.

Integrating Character education through English Language Teaching

Integrating character education into English Language Teaching (ELT) becomes a powerful way to develop language skills and moral values in students. In English classes, students get excellent opportunity to learn how to communicate effectively and how to think critically, develop empathy, and responsibility with others in their communities. By embedding character education within the language curriculum, teachers can foster students' social, emotional and ethical growth while enhancing their language proficiency. In Indonesia, English is taught in most every schools that can be seen from the school curriculum. Then, Indonesian government demanded that character education must be integrated in every subject including English subject. Furthermore, the need to learn and use English in communication has put English as the most important foreign language in Indonesia (Sudartini, 2012). While, Hutami (2012) stated that by applying it in English language teaching, students can get positive influence for the academic achievement and good behaviour. Integrating character education in English teaching need some stages, namely planning, implementation, and evaluation (Fardita, et al, 2022).

A. Planning

In this stage, an English teacher should make lesson plan based on the existing syllabus. The English teacher must pay attention to every detail that must be conveyed and achieved and carried out in the classroom.

B. Implementation

English teachers create learning activities based on lesson plan and syllabus made to integrate with character education. There are three stages of learning carried out by the teacher.

1. Introduction

At this stage, the teacher carries out several activities. It lasts approximately 15 minutes. Starting activity with greetings and praying, checking the attendance of students. Next, connecting the materials/activities with the experience of students with the previous materials/activities and asking questions to remember and link with the next material. Then, motivating students related to the objectives and benefits that can be obtained by studying the material. Last, giving explanation about the things to be learnt, the competencies to be achieved, and the learning methods to be applied.

2. Core Activity

At this stage, there are 5 stages, namely literature activities, critical thinking,

collaboration, communication and creativity. The teacher carries out activities that are in accordance with the material to be taught, asking students to do something so that the core activities can be carried out properly. At the first stage, teachers motivate and guide students to see, observe, read and rewrite the material given. The second stage, students are given opportunity to identify as many things as possible that are not understood, starting from factual questions to hypothetical questions. Furthermore, teachers describe the moral message of the material. The third stage, students try to give response, understand the material, and appreciate it. The fourth stage, students practice reading, listening, and imitating the material orally. Then, the last stage, students write relevant meanings related to the material given that reflect their experiences.

3. Closing

This phase lasts about 15 minutes. the teacher conducts several activities to conclude the learning session, ensuring that students remain attentive while the teacher is instructing and verifying the integration of character education within the teaching and learning process. Students share messages related to specific sections and reflect on their learning experiences and outcomes. The teacher then summarizes the lesson, highlighting the key points that emerged from the new learning activity.

C. Evaluation

At the evaluation stage, there are two types of assessments to be conducted: knowledge assessment and skills assessment. 1) Knowledge Assessment involves multiple-choice written tests, written descriptions, oral tests or observations during question-and-answer discussions, conversations, and assignments. 2) Skills Assessment includes oral and written evaluations, assignments, performance assessments, and product portfolios. Additionally, the English teacher assesses whether the goal is to enhance character education through the integration of character education in English teaching via skills assessment.

English teachers should carry out teaching activities as accordance with the existing syllabus and lesson plans to integrating character education in teaching English. Various activities can be applied to integrate character education in English language teaching.

Table 1. The activities that the teachers used in implementing character education in

English Language teaching (ELT)

No	Activities	Character Education Traits
1	Opening class activity by praying God almighty	Religious character
2	Giving Brainstorming to the students	Curiosity, Critical thinking
3	Asking permission before asking/ answering	Polite, Respect, Appreciation
4	Encouraging peer support and helping classmates	Empathy, Cooperation, Social responsibility
5	Group discussion and collaborative learning	Communicative, Creative, Tolerance , Teamwork
6	Assigning individual and group tasks with deadlines	Responsibility, Independence, Discipline
7.	Using role-playing activities to act out moral scenarios	Empathy, Problem solving, Compassion
8.	Providing constructive feedback to students	Growth-mindset, Encouragement
9.	Closing class activity by praying	Religious

CONCLUSION

Integrating character education into English language teaching is a powerful way to enhance students' language proficiency while also promoting their social and emotional growth. By incorporating literature, discussions, role-playing, and other interactive activities, teachers can foster key character traits such as empathy, responsibility, and critical thinking. This holistic approach to education not only improves students' English language skills but also prepares them to become compassionate, responsible, and active members of society.

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