# TEACHERS PERCEPTION OF CHARACTER EDUCATION INTEGRATION IN LANGUAGE LEARNING

#### Atmazaki, Agustina, Vivi Indriyani, and Abdurahman Universitas Negeri Padang email: atmazaki@fbs.unp.ac.id

**Abstract:** Education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century currently requires students to be intelligent and of character. Because of the various demands that teachers must have in order to meet all current learning goals, knowledge, and skills, sometimes the teacher forgets to focus on shaping student character. This is reflected in the increasing crime, violations of human rights, legal injustice, and various forms of bad behavior that are increasingly reaching all sectors of life. The teacher has an important role to overcome these problems. Based on this background, this study aims to determine teacher perceptions regarding the formation of student characters. This research is a descriptive study with a questionnaire collection technique. The instrument used was a questionnaire sheet. The questionnaire was developed via Google Form and distributed online through WhatsApp social media on the group discussion of English subjects group in West Sumatra. The number of respondents who filled out the questionnaire was 62 teachers. The results show that for now some teachers have integrated the strengthening of student character through intra-curricular, extra-curricular, and non-curricular activities in language learning.

Keywords: character education, teacher perception, language learning

## PERSEPSI GURU TERHADAP INTEGRASI PENDIDIKAN KARAKTER DALAM PEMBELAJARAN BAHASA

**Abstrak:** Pendidikan di abad ke-21 saat ini menuntut siswa untuk menjadi cerdas dan berkarakter. Karena berbagai tuntutan yang harus dimiliki guru agar dapat memenuhi semua tujuan pembelajaran, pengetahuan, dan keterampilan saat ini, terkadang guru lupa untuk fokus pada pembentukan karakter siswa. Hal ini tercermin dari meningkatnya kejahatan, pelanggaran hak asasi manusia, ketidakadilan hukum, dan berbagai bentuk perilaku buruk yang semakin merambah semua sektor kehidupan. Guru memiliki peran penting untuk mengatasi masalah tersebut. Berdasarkan latar belakang tersebut, maka penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui persepsi guru tentang pembentukan karakter siswa. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian deskriptif dengan teknik pengumpulan angket. Instrumen yang digunakan adalah lembar angket. Kuesioner dikembangkan melalui *Google Form* dan disebarkan secara online melalui media sosial *WhatsApp* pada kelompok diskusi kelompok mata pelajaran bahasa Inggris di Sumatera Barat. Jumlah responden yang mengisi kuesioner adalah 62 guru. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa untuk saat ini beberapa guru telah mengintegrasikan penguatan karakter siswa melalui kegiatan intrakurikuler, ekstrakurikuler, dan nonkurikuler dalam pembelajaran bahasa.

Kata Kunci: pendidikan karakter, persepsi guru, pembelajaran bahasa

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Education is always faced with the demands of society that are needed in order to produce high-quality graduates, having knowledge and moral provisions (Ishomuddin, 2015). Aristoteles once questioned whether education was more concerned with intellectual or moral virtues (McKeon, 1941). Skills in the field of education alone are not enough without the provision of strong morals and character (Masrukhin, 2013). To create a balance between students' intellectual abilities and student characters, these two things are important. Students who have good intellectuals but don't have good character do not have a guarantee that they will succeed in facing challenges and problems in the social environment (Nurhasanah & Nida, 2016). Even the learning process that only focuses on cognitive aspects tends to make students apathetic with their social environment (Zurqoni, *et al.*, 2018). Therefore, character education is important because character education is an engine of social change (Cooley, 2008).

Character education becomes an important education that must be applied to realize students who can challenge social and community life both regionally and globally. Through character education, students can protect themselves, form independent personalities based on their beliefs, have a good attitude in mutual respect between people who have differences (Widyahening & Wardhani, 2016). Character education also has a positive relationship with academic success and effective for the formation of positive social perceptions (Diggs & Akos, 2016; Nurhasanah & Nida, 2016). Such situations illustrate that good character will not only contribute to the development of social-emotional aspects but also to influence the cognitive aspects of students (Zurqoni, et al., 2018). When someone is considered to have good character as is commonly used, that person also has several other qualities such as trust, integrity, passion, and reliability (Pike, 2010).

Development of the nation's character that has been pursued in various forms, until now it has not been implemented optimally. This is reflected in the increasing crime, violations of human rights, legal injustice, and various forms of bad behavior that are increasingly reaching all sectors of life. The description of this phenomenon shows that this nation is experiencing a moral crisis that confirms the uncertainty of national identity and character (Abidin, 2012; Hanasah, 2013; Setiawan, 2013; Suyitno, 2012). That became one of the triggers for the formation of Strengthening Character Education (PPK). President Joko Widodo has signed Presidential Regulation (Perpres) No. 87 Years of PPK. KDP is an educational movement under the responsibility of the education unit to strengthen the character of students.

Education as an institution is still considered appropriate as a systemic vehicle in building the character of the nation's children. However, decades of public trust in educational institutions as a systemic vehicle for character development has not provided optimal outcomes for students' character building. It is presumed that education today is more likely to prioritize academic competency achievement rather than character competency achievement (Setiawan, 2013; Suyitno, 2012). That causes many people to point their finger at education as one of the causes for the failure of the formation of intelligent and characterized people (Abidin, 2012).

Novick, Kress, & Elias (2002) states that character education must explicitly emerge in learning and at the same time be the soul and purpose of learning. The teacher must find a way to instill curriculum with character building (McElmeel, 2002). Teachers can use various methods to integrate character values in the teaching and learning process (Hadi, 2015; Milson & Mehlig, 2002). However, teachers are hesitant to integrate character values in the teaching and learning process because they are too focused on learning material (Marini, 2017). Lickona (2004) states that the formation of character and academic ability in a learning process can be done if a teacher is able to choose and use the right learning model. The use of learning models

as a means of character education seems more effective and tends to approach the actual concept of character education (Abidin, 2012).

Based on this background, this study aims to determine teacher perceptions about the formation of student characters. The teacher's perception is based on government decisions that have been decided from 2018. This data is also used as a basis for finding what problems are found and become the basis for further research in finding solutions to these problems.

## METHOD

This research is a descriptive study using survey methods (Irwin & Stafford, 2016). The survey was conducted by asking the teacher's opinion by filling out the questionnaire that was provided. The number of respondents who filled out the questionnaire was 62 teachers. The correspondent consisted of Indonesian language teachers of junior high school students (80.6%) and Indonesian language teacher high school level students (19.3%). Correspondents consist of undergraduate graduates (64.5%) and master's graduates (33.9%). The instrument used was a questionnaire sheet. The questionnaire was developed through a Google form and distributed online through WhatsApp social media in Indonesian subject group discussion groups in West Sumatra. Data were analyzed by describing the findings obtained through a questionnaire that was described through descriptive statistics.

# **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION Results**

Integration of character education in learning can be done and is a necessity for teachers in Indonesia today. These attitudees and characters have been recorded in the Core Competencies (KI) contained in the learning curriculum. The teacher can decide what character values can be integrated in learning activities. Although these values have been included in the curriculum, the teacher can determine the character values that are suitable for the current learning topic. After deciding on these values, they are then integrated into learning which can be stated in the syllabus and lesson plan (RPP). Based on curriculum analysis, the Core Competencies have been formulated regarding integrating the values of attitude and character in Indonesian language learning. First, the Spiritual Attitude Competency, "Appreciate and live the teachings of the religion it adheres to". Second Competency Social Attitude, "Shows honest behavior, discipline, responsibility, caring (tolerance, mutual cooperation), polite, confident, in interacting effectively with the social and natural environment within the reach of association and existence". The competency is achieved through indirect learning, taking into account the characteristics of the subjects and the needs and conditions of students.

Based on this it shows that integrating character reinforcement must indeed be done in the language learning process. Although it has been formulated in the learning implementation plan, integrating these values is not easy. Teachers may be only good at planning teaching programs but not on their implementation. That might have happened because they assumed that it was only a formality to fulfill the administration required by the school.

In addition to the syllabus, the learning process also uses textbooks published by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The book was published to help teachers and students learn. All teachers use the textbook, but not all teachers can develop their own textbooks for additional teaching material in the learning process (Atmazaki & Indriyani, 2019; Ramadhan, *et al.*, 2020; Ramadhan, Asri, & Indriyani, 2018; Ramadhan, *et al*, 2020). So we need to see, whether the character values have been integrated in the teaching materials used by the teacher.

Based on the analysis of student textbooks it was concluded that the textbooks did not yet integrate character values. It might also be caused by the publication of textbooks used by teachers and students ahead of the government's decision on Strengthening Character Education (PPK). Therefore, it is important for teachers to

use, adapt, adopt, or develop their own teaching materials and learning media that integrate the reinforcement of character education. In addition, teachers can also integrate learning and assessment models in the language learning process. It can also realize the formulation of spiritual and social competencies listed in the syllabus. To find out about the integration of strengthening character education in the Indonesian learning process, teachers are asked to fill out a questionnaire. The questionnaire was filled by 62 Indonesian language teachers in West Sumatra. The results of the questionnaire analysis can be seen in the following table.

 Table 1. Teacher Responses to the Integration of Strengthening Character Education in School Activities

Statements	Yes	Maybe	Not
1. In my opinion, schools have an important role in strengthening	98.4%	1.6%	0.0%
student character education.			
2. Strengthening Character Education has been carried out in the	90.3%	9.7%	0.0%
school I teach.			
3. Strengthening character education is done by carrying out special	61.3%	29.0%	9.7%
activities.			
4. Strengthening character education is done through extracurricular	66.1%	32.3%	1.6%
activities.			
5. I have an important role in strengthening character education in	80.6%	17.7%	1.6%
the school I teach.			
6. I contribute in giving ideas and opinions to the activities of streng-	72.6%	24.2%	3.2%
thening character education in schools.			
7. I contribute to the activities of strengthening character education in	72.6%	22.6%	4.8%
schools, both in special activities and extracurricular activities.			

Based on Table 1 it can be concluded that the teacher believes that schools have an important role to strengthen student character education. Strengthening student character education can be done in noncurricular and extracurricular activities carried out in schools. However, not all Indonesian language teachers (research respondents) participated in the activity. In addition to non-curricular and extracurricular activities, strengthening of character education can also be carried out in classroom learning activities. To find out this, can be seen in Table 2 below.

	Statements	Yes	Maybe	Not
1.	As an Indonesian language teacher, I play an important role in integrating character education strengthening in the classroom.		0.0%	0.0%
2.	Before the President's decision to Strengthen Character Education (PPK) was made, I had integrated it first in learning Indonesian.	71.0%	25.8%	3.2%
3.	Strengthening character education can help students in learning.	93.5%	6.5%	0.0%
4.	I developed my own character grading rubric to assess affective students.	51.6%	35.5%	12.9%

 Table 2.
 Teacher Responses to the Integration of Strengthening Character Education in Class

Based on Table 2 it can be concluded that all teachers agree that language learning can be integrated strengthening character education. This has also been applied by some language teachers (research respondents). However, teachers still find it difficult to assess the character of students, because the assessment rubric still cannot be developed by the teacher himself.

Based on the previous explanation, strengthening character education can be integrated in all aspects of learning tools in the classroom. However, not all teachers can integrate this. To find out, can be seen in the following Figure 1.



Figure 1. Integration of Strengthening Character Education in Learning Tools

Based on the results seen in Figure 1, it shows that more teachers can integrate the strengthening of character education in the syllabus and learning implementation plan. For learning methods, teaching materials, learning media, evaluation and assessment only obtain a smaller percentage. It can be concluded that in integrating the strengthening of character education the teacher can only plan it, but the implementation in learning is not yet fully done.

Based on the integrated regulations for strengthening character education in schools, the aspects of character that must be integrated consist of five aspects. Based on the questionnaire analysis that has been done, aspects that have been integrated by language teachers in learning can be seen in the following Figure 2 and Figure 3.



Figure 2. Integration of Aspects of Character Education in Language Learning



Figure 3. Integration of Character Values in Language Learning

Based on the figures, it appears that almost most teachers have been able to integrate character values in language learning. However, there are still teachers who have not been able to integrate some of these character values. Some character values still have a medium percentage, which is between 50-70%. Supposedly, the character value must be implemented as much as 100%.

In addition to strengthening the character education that is integrated in the learning process, the character of students must also be assessed by the teacher. Based on the analysis of data obtained, character assessment by the teacher can be done every day to get a percentage of 27.4%. Character assessment by the teacher can be done every period to get a percentage of 27.4%. Character assessment by the teacher can be done every semester to get a percentage of 29%. Teacher's character assessment can be done every year to get a percentage of 12.9% and the rest do not choose between the four ways of assessment. Based on these results, the period of character assessment is still varied by the teacher. To find out more ideal assessment, further research can be done.

### Discussion

The results showed that character education can be integrated in language learning. However, the learning tools that have been used by language teachers are not currently integrated in character education. Therefore, schools and teachers have an important role to integrate character education in non-curricular and extracurricular activities carried out in schools and language learning activities. Schools function as arenas where students can practice

good virtues and transcend their school life (Milliren & Messer, 2009). Most importantly, the promotion of character education should not only be a leap service but have an action plan for practice (Cooley, 2008). In other words, educational policy must lead to the realization of moral education in the school system. Schools as educational institutions are one important source for developing curricula that explicitly cover character education. Character education cannot be formed only through one or two activities, so the design of a sustainable development program and integrated character in learning are prepared, in which the process also involves all teachers, staff, and other institutions in the educational institution, so that the benefits of character building can be felt (Kamaruddin, 2012). Characters do not form automatically, these are developed over time through the teaching process (Pala, 2011). One such learning is language learning (Indriyani & Ramadhan, 2017).

Character education can be integrated in all aspects of classroom learning tools. However, not all teachers can integrate this. Based on research results show more teachers can integrate the reinforcement of character education in the syllabus and learning implementation plan. It can be concluded that in integrating the strengthening of character education the teacher can only plan it, but the implementation in learning is not yet fully done. Based on the opinion of Faiziyah & Fachrurrazy (Marini, 2017), that there is an integrated character value in the lesson plan learned. Character education planning in class is usually designed by the teacher based on the applicable curriculum. The lesson plan not only contains the sequence and delivery of material systematically (transfer of knowledge), but also integrates character values in the

process of knowledge transfer (Zurqoni, et al., 2016). Positive student characters can be developed through the educational process as part of a regular evaluation system with observations (Hokanson & Karlson, 2013). Teachers can use various methods to integrate character values in the teaching and learning process (Hadi, 2015; Milson & Mehlig, 2002). In addition, teachers can also integrate character strengthening in learning models and supporting teaching materials in language learning (Atmazaki, et al., 2019). To support this, affective assessment is also needed to see the improvement of student character in language learning (Romanowski, 2015; Retnawati, Hadi, & Nugraha, 2016).

The balance between science and technology and faith and piety has increasingly been recognized by society and its level of effectiveness in dealing with modern life (Ishomuddin, 2015). This is consistent with the results of research showing that religious character is the character most widely integrated in learning. In addition to religious character, honest character, tolerance, discipline, communicative, love to read, and care have a high percentage. Daniel Goleman (Adisusilo, 2014) said that character education is a value education consisting of 9 basic values, namely responsibility, respect, justice, courage, honesty, citizenship, self-discipline, care and perseverance. Accordingly, Pala (2011) states that character traits must include, courage, good judgment, integrity, courtesy, kindness, perseverance, responsibility, tolerance, selfdiscipline, respect for school personnel, responsibility for school safety, service to others and good citizenship. Walker & Hennig, 2014) emphasize justice, courage, and kindness as important aspects of moral character. Graham, Haidt, & Nosek (2009) emphasize compassion, justice, respect for

authority, loyalty, and simplicity. That wisdom, courage, humanity, justice, simplicity, and transcendence, each of which consists of its own subdimension on character values. Although there are many experts who state the value of this character, in the curriculum and education policy in Indonesia has included all of these characters (Goodwin, 2015). However, there are still some characters that are difficult to integrate such as the values of the spirit of nationalism, love for peace, democracy, caring for the environment, and valuing achievement.

Based on the results of the study indicate that character assessment needs to have more attention in education. Although there is a policy regarding the assessment, teachers still have different perceptions about when to assess this character.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion it can be concluded that the strengthening of character education can be integrated in language learning. These character values can be integrated in learning tools such as syllabus, learning methods, teaching materials, learning media, and assessment. In learning materials and media, character values can be integrated in text-based learning. Based on this, it is recommended that teachers be able to integrate the strengthening of character education in learning. The integration is not only in the planning of learning, but also seen in the learning process. Recommendations for future researchers, in order to develop teaching materials, instructional media, and learning models that are integrated in strengthening character education so that teachers can be used in the learning process. In addition, the development of student character education evaluation is highly recommended.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author would like to thank all those who have helped the completion of the research until the writing of this article. In particular the authors would like to thank you to the teachers involved as respondents of our research.

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