

## **INVESTIGATING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CHARACTER EDUCATION IN AN INDONESIAN EFL CLASSROOM**

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### **Abstract**

Character education has been central to the Indonesian education system due to promote outstanding generations as the building block of the nation's future. Anchored in the concept of character education, this study aimed to investigate the extent to which the concept was implemented at an Indonesian Senior Secondary private school in terms of the types of character education and the methods employed by the English teachers in the school. This mixed method research collected the data from the English teachers teaching English at the eighth grade through interviews and documentation of their lesson plans and students' textbook. The data were analyzed based on the Miles and Huberman data analysis procedure. The results demonstrate that the implementation of the character education performed by the English teachers was overall optimally implemented given the percentage of 87.5%. Another finding also evidenced that the types of character education incorporated by the English teachers referred to self-potential and religious value based character education, while the methods they employed were exemplary method, habituation, story method and reflection.

**Keywords:** *Character Education, English Teaching and Learning, EFL*

## **INTRODUCTION.**

Discussing about education in Indonesia, the multidimensional crisis that occurred in late 1998 had many impacts on several aspects such as aspects of government, society and also education. One crisis that occurred in Indonesia is a moral crisis. As stated by Listrianti(2019), the crisis that occurred in Indonesia was experienced by almost all segments of life including the education segment. The most crucial crisis in education is a moral crisis or a crisis of character. Moral crisis is closely related to how moral education is taught in families, schools and society. Some moral crises that occur are: immorality, violence, sexual harassment, crime and theft, cheating habits, drugs and pornography have become social problems and up to now have not been completely resolve.

Good education is education that is able to produce excellent and competitive students. For that reason, the education process is always evaluated and improved. One of efforts to improve the quality of education is the emergence of ideas about the importance of character education in the world of education in Indonesia. The Indonesian government through the National Ministry since 2010 has launched character education, both from school to college. It is because so far, Indonesian education is considered less successful in forming noble national character. In The Ministry of Education and Culture regulation no 20 of 2016 regarding the competency standards of Junior High School graduates, several dimension are listed. One of the dimensions is attitude dimension and has the expected ability qualifications, which is to have behavior that reflects the attitude of people who believe in god, people who are honest, caring, responsible, true learner, physically and mentally healthy in accordance with the development of children in family, school, society, and the surrounding environment, nation and country.

As a result schools must apply character education to form students' attitude and social behavior. The attitude dimension is integrated into all subjects including English lessons. There are several studies that have been done related to the implementation of character education in schools. Firstly, the implementation of character education in Kristen Pelita Nusantara Kasih Senior High

School Surakarta by Santosa, Nurkamto&Haryanto (2019). This research depicted about character education planning, implementation of character education, supporting factors and inhibiting factors in implementing character education. Secondly, the implementation of character education in Auckland University technology faculty education by Restian (2019). This research showed that the application of character education was very effective. Thirdly, the implementation of character education through school culture in SMP N 14 Yogyakarta by Safitri (2015). This research showed that school culture was an important aspects requiring close attention in the process of internalizing character values at school.

However, the implementation of character education on English teaching learning in Indonesia has never been observed. Therefore, this research focused on the implementation of character education on English teaching learning in Indonesia especially at 8<sup>th</sup> grade of SMP Darul Ulum 1 Unggulan. Meanwhile the purposes of this study were: (1) to find the quality of the implementation of character education in English teaching learning (2) to describe the types of character education that was implemented in English teaching learning and (3) to describe the methods used by the teacher in implementing character education in English teaching learning.

For that reason, the following research questions were formulated:

- (1) what was the quality of implementing character education in English teaching learning at SMP Darul Ulum 1 Unggulan?
- (2) what were the types of character education implemented in English teaching learning at SMP Darul Ulum 1 Unggulan?
- (3) what were the methods used by teachers in implementing character education in English teaching learning at SMP Darul Ulum 1 Unggulan?

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

In terminology, the meaning of character is presented by Lickona. According to Lickona (Marzuki, 2017) character is reliable moral to respond the situation in a good way. Lickona adds three interrelated parts: moral knowing, moral feeling and moral behavior. Character education aims to instill values and norms in students. So that the students have character as a whole, integrated and balanced. Students who have moral values will apply all their knowledge skills and emotions in solving all problems encountered (Ningsih, 2014). In addition, Kusuma (2011) recognizes that the purpose of character education formal education is to develop and strengthen life values that are considered important and improve student behavior that is not inappropriate with life values. The purpose of character education according to Wahyuni(2012), is to develop the potential of students as human beings and citizens who have character values, invest the spirit of leadership and responsibility in order to prepare the next generation of the nation, make students independent, creative, national-minded, and develop the school environment as a safe learning environment, honest and friendly.

Ningsih(2014), mentions that character education in schools aims to help students understand behavior related to god, fellow human beings, themselves, the environment and nationality manifested in thoughts, feelings, attitudes, words and deeds to conform to the norms. Based on the opinions of the experts above, it can be concluded that character education is aimed to educate students to be accepted in society while preparing students become the next generation of the nation.

Several studies have been done by researchers related character education. The first is the implementation of character education in Kristen Pelita Nusantara Kasih Senior High School Surakarta (Santosa, Haryanto, & Nurkamto, 2019). This research showed that character education planning entailed school and family, the implementation of character education integrates on no-curricular and extra curricular, the result of implementation of character education can be shown from the improving of the student behavior and the enhancement of the student learning

achievement, the supporting factors of the implementation education character was infrastructure, the qualities of teacher and the attention of the parent to students meanwhile the inhibiting factors was the attention of the teacher which not average, the environment was not conducive. The second is the implementation of character education in auckland university technology faculty education by (Restian, 2019). This research showed that the application of character education was very effective. Application of character education, in learning such as on the stage of performance so that students' character are held individually, the learning process all uses digital.

The third is the implementation of character education through school culture in SMP N 14 Yogyakarta by (Safitri, 2015). This research showed that school culture was an important aspects requiring close attention in the process of internalizing character values at school. Several strategies in implementing character education were routine activities, spontaneous activities, role-modeling, teaching and strengthening the school environment.

From the literature stated above, the researcher identified two research gaps. First, they are still no researcher who observed types of character education. Second, there are no researchers who investigated the methods used by teachers in implementing character education.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study employed mix method. The researcher used quantitative research method to find the quality of the implementation of character education in English teaching learning. Meanwhile, descriptive qualitative research method used to describe the types of character education in English teaching learning and the methods used by the teacher in implementing character education in English teaching learning. The subject of this study is the English teacher at 8<sup>th</sup> grade of SMP Darul Ulum 1 Unggulan which handle three classes. The researcher used data collection technique interview and documentation. This research was conducted in SMP Darul Ulum 1 Unggulan specifically at 8<sup>th</sup> grade in the academic year of 2019/2020. The data got were from

the interview to the English teacher and documents of lesson plan, syllabus and students' textbooks. The research instrument in this study was interview guide. The researcher analyzed the data collected using Miles and Huberman data analysis model.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **a. The implementation of character education in English teaching learning**

The researcher analyzed English lesson plan to find out character education listed in the steps of learning. The researcher explained the results of learning activities. The researcher put the code on each meaningful unit of learning steps. List of codes was used in the results of the learning activity checklist. Each point got a score of 4.

Then, it could be examined the relevant data sources for description which were used for the research finding. The learning activity checklist was obtained through an English lesson plan analysis. The table below presented the results of learning activities

Table 1

*The Results of Learning Activities*

Activities	Code	Yes	No
The teacher delivers greeting before learning begins	TSL-ID	√	
The teacher asks students to pray before starting learning	TSL-ID	√	
The teacher provides motivation and apperception	TSL-ID	√	
The teacher	TSL-ID	√	

conveys the learning objectives

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The teacher uses games in learning activities

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The teacher gives simple questions related to the material to be studied

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The teacher gives examples of the material to be studied

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The teacher asks students to identify social functions and linguistic elements in the material

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The teacher instructs and guides students to emulate the examples contained in the material and respond to it in English and Indonesian

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The teacher provides opportunities and

TSL-CA

√

TSL-CA

√

TSL-CA

√

TSL-CA

√

TSL-CA

√

TSL-CA

√

guides students  
to ask questions  
about the  
material

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The teacher asks  
students to listen  
and pay attention  
to the various      TSL-CA      √  
examples  
contained in the  
material

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The teacher asks  
students to  
imitate the  
examples of      TSL-CA      √  
interactions  
contained in the  
material

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The teacher asks  
students to  
compare  
expressions      TSL-CA      √  
about the  
material being  
studied

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The teacher gives  
feedback to  
students about  
the social      TSL-CA      √  
functions and  
linguistic  
elements that has  
been used

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The teacher asks      TSL-CA      √

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students to use English whenever there is an opportunity either inside or outside the class, with language elements that can bring closer interpersonal relationships

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The teacher gives punishment to the students who speak Indonesian.

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The teacher demands students to speak and write fluently in English

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The teacher uses ice breaking in learning activities

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The teacher asks the problem experienced by students in using English during learning process

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The teacher gives homework to students both individually and

in groups

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The teacher makes conclusion in the end of the teaching and learning process.      TSL-CL     

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The teacher and students reflect consistently on the learning that has been carried out      TSL-CL     

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The teacher tells about lesson plan at the next meeting      TSL-CL     

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The teacher asks students to pray at the end of the lesson      TSL-CL     

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The teacher delivers greeting at the end of the lesson      TSL-CL     

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**Average**      **3,5**      **0,5**

The researcher used interview guide to collect the data related to the implementation of character education in English teaching learning. The results of the interview can be explained as follows:

1. The teacher had implemented character education in English teaching learning. Character education that was implemented was involved in the steps of learning in lesson plan which was arranged by the teacher.

2. The teacher asserted that character education was very important for students because character education was implemented since they were children and would continue to be carried out until they are adults. In addition, if the student's character becomes better, it also influences the spirit of learning.
3. The effort to implement character education made by the teacher was integrating character elements into lesson plan then applied in learning and habituation activities.

Thus, the results above show us that character education was very important to be implemented in the English teaching learning activities. It is because character education can produce students who have good attitude. In line with this, Lickona(as cited in Pantu & Luneto, 2014)states that if learning activities do not include elements of character in education, as a result students who have moral decline.

**b. The types of character education implemented in English teaching learning**

The researcher has analyzed the lesson plan, then compared with syllabus and students' textbook and obtained the results related to the types of character education implemented at 8<sup>th</sup> grade of SMP DarulUlam 1 Unggulan. According to Maulana(2016) there are 4 types of character education that accomplished in the education process namely character education based on self potential, character education based on religious value, character education based on environmental insight, and character education based on cultural value. In this research, there were three teaching materials in English lesson plan namely text about appreciating good performance, text about the ability and willingness to take action, and greeting card text.These three materials involved character education based on self potential and character education based on religious value.

The materials were said to include character education based on self potential because the students were taught to have confidence in communicating using English, to respect each other, to be

responsible in learning process, to have discipline attitudes during learning, to have caring attitudes for others by providing help and gave greetings. These three materials have social function specifically to maintain interpersonal relationship with teachers, parents, friends and society. From these explanations, it could be understood that the type of character education applied to students was character education based on self-potential which built students' behavior to improve self quality. By having high self quality, students was hoped to be able to become useful human being and could develop the Indonesian nation. The nation required outstanding human resources to be able to advance the nation. One way that can be done was through education. As stated by Lickona (as cited in Sulton, 2016) that one of the important elements in the progress of the nation is human resources with good character.

While the type of character education based on religious value can be seen when students were accustomed to praying at the beginning and at the end of learning process and respond to greetings delivered by the teacher. By having religious attitude, students was hoped to be virtuous human. Students who have religious attitude must have a good character. By having religious attitude, students have signs that can protect themselves from doing despicable things that can destroy society and the nation. As stated by Yuningsih(2014) that religious attitude can produce individual who obey the rules both of rules of law and rules of religion.

Character education based on self potential and character education based on religious value contain several character values such as: respect value, self confidence value, responsible value, social care value, discipline value, communicative value and religious value. Below are the details explanations of them.

## **1. Respect Value**

Students are accustomed to respecting each other both for teachers and friends. At the beginning of learning the teacher said greetings, then students answered greetings. When the teacher explained the subject matter, students paid close attention. At the

time of core learning activities, students are told and taught to practice the value of respect in the learning material. At the end of learning activities, students are invited and required to reflect on the material that has been learned. In this case, character values are inculcated in students continuously. The statement is in accordance with Noor (2011) mentioned that students are able to understand character education through the activities and behavior of all school residents. Therefore, when students are at school, the teacher not only taught character education through science but also through the example taught by the teacher. Moreover, Wardani (2017) remarks that attitude of respect to older people have 6 influencing factors. The factors are personal experience, culture, people which is considered important, self emotions, the mass media, educational and religious institutions.

## **2. Self Confidence Value**

Based on finding above, students are required to have confidence in learning process. Moreover, students are asked to try something new and also to demonstrate their work in front of their friends. Students are trained to speak in English and have the courage to show their own abilities. From the statement, it can be seen that self confidence is essentials for individuals to develop activities and creativity as an effort to reach achievement. Syam(2017) interprets that self confidence grew from healthy process of interaction in someone's social environment and ongoing continuously. Thus, self confidence is an attitude or belief on someone's own ability, so that in their actions feel free to do things, polite in interacting with others, have encouraging achievement and can recognized their own strengths and weaknesses. Besides, Syam(2017) pointed out that self confidence is influenced by several factors namely self-concept, self-esteem, experience and education. Self confidence is required belief and courage to take risks and face all challenges, including the learning process in class. As a result, students are trained not to be easily discourages and not feel inferior to others.

### **3. Responsible Value**

Students are given the responsibility either individuals or groups to accomplish the task given by the teacher in learning activities. This is the character value contained in learning activities implicitly. In this case, students are trained to brave to do something and finish it. It means, students are prepared to be mature people who brave to be responsible for all the decisions that have been chosen. This is the goal in character education as mentioned by Wahyuni(2012) that the goal of character education is to develop the potential of students as human beings and citizens who have character values, invest the spirit of leadership and responsibility in order to prepare the next generation of the nation, make students independent, creative, national-minded, and develop the school environment as a safe learning environment, honest and friendly.

### **4. Social Care Value**

According to Fauziet al (2017)stated that social care is an attitude that always would like to provide assistance to others in need. Based on finding above, it can be seen that students are taught and trained to have caring attitudes for others by providing help and gave greetings. Students are trained and accustomed to have a sense of caring for others through English learning. This can be reflected in the learning process, when the teacher divided students into several groups. Students who are more understood the material can help students who did not understand. It indicated an effort to inculcate caring character in students. So that students understood the meaning of caring for others and will be inculcated in students through habituation. From the statement above, it can be concluded that inculcating the value of social care as an effort to realize the goals of character education.

### **5. Discipline Value**

Students are given examples and guided to have a disciplined character. This can be seen when the teacher asked students to collect the assignments given by the teacher and present them to their friends. Therefore, students can understand the value of

discipline in everyday life. As stated by Ningsih(2014) mentioned that character education in schools aims to help students understand behavior related to god, fellow human beings, themselves, the environment and nationality manifested in thoughts, feelings, attitudes, words and deeds to conform to the norms. From the statement above, it can be summarized that inculcating the value of discipline as an effort to realize the goals of character education.

## **6. Communicative Value**

Students are required to be communicative in socializing with teachers, friends or others. At the beginning of core learning activity, students are stimulated and guided to ask questions about the subject matter. Students are expected to become people who have broad insight and have confidence by having communicative attitude. Therefore students can face the demands of globalization where one of them provided qualified communication abilities. Communicative value inclusion is in accordance with the core competencies in lesson plan. It was also an effort to realize the goals of character education as stated by Wahyuni(2012), that the goal of character education is to develop the potential of students as human beings and citizens who have character values, invest the spirit of leadership and responsibility in order to prepare the next generation of the nation, make students independent, creative, national-minded, and develop the school environment as a safe learning environment, honest and friendly

## **7. Religious Value**

Based on finding, students are taught and accustomed to pray at the beginning and at the end of learning activities. Religious value is very important possessed by students. Religion is a principle and at the same time showed a person's identity. Students are expected to be human who have faith and have good character by holding to religious value. Thus, students are accustomed to obey the teaching of the religion. The statement reinforced by Kusuma(2011), rationalized that the purpose of character education of formal education is to develop and strengthen life

values that are considered important and improve student's behavior that is not inappropriate with life values.

**c. The methods used by the teacher in implementing character education in English teaching learning**

The researcher conducted interviews with English teachers to obtain the data related to the methods used by the teacher in implementing character education. The researcher asked several questions to the participants.

According to ET students have a different way in learning something. An important thing that must be concerned about learning activities is the method used in learning. She said as followed:

*... actually, the method can be various kinds but only a few methods are suitable for inculcate character to students. While I usually use exemplary method or story method. (ET-Interview 1)*

In addition, EW explained that the methods used to inculcate character in students must be adapted to the students' condition, learning material and learning activities. The statement as followed:

*... there are several things that must be adapted to applied character education method in English learning such as students' condition, learning material or learning activities. Therefore not all methods are appropriate for character building but I personally use habituation method and reflection method to deliver messages on English material. (EW- Interview 1)*

Based on the interview with ST, she said that story method and habituation method assist her to inculcate good character in students. Furthermore, she stated that improvement happened in their behavior and personality. ST uttered in details as follow:

*... based on my observations, there was an increase in students' character after I applied story method and habituation method in learning activities. The improvement can be seen from their confidence, their*

*responsibility towards themselves and the environment, and respect for others.*  
(ST-Interview 1)

According to Wijanarko (2017), in the process of learning especially to inculcate character to students, the teacher required appropriate methods to be applied in learning activities. This is closely related to the extent to which students understood the value of the characters taught and can apply them in life.

## **IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

Based on this research, the researcher concluded that character education was implemented optimally in English teaching learning. The types of character education that was implemented namely character education based on self potential and character education based on religious value. The methods used by teachers in implementing character education were exemplary method, habituation method, story method and reflection method.

3

This research is far from perfect. There are other character education methods that can be used to implement character in students during learning activities especially on English lesson

Researchers can use the results of this study to find other types of character education found in English lesson plan and also other methods used by teachers in implementing character education in students.

The issue of character education will never be expired, because the Indonesian nation requires qualified human resources. These qualified human resources can be produced through teaching and learning in schools that implementing character education.

The study implies that the teachers can apply exemplary method, story method, habituation method or reflection method in implementing character education in learning activities specifically on English lesson. Therefore, the purpose of learning can be achieved. Besides, the teachers can involve types of character

education to realize outstanding students either in academics or personality.

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