HOW SHOULD THE FIVE PRINCIPLES OF CHARACTER BUILDING BE INTEGRATED INTO ENGLISH LESSONS?

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Abstract

In line with the Decree of the Ministry of Education and Culture No.20 year 2003, and the President of the Republic of Indonesia's Goal for the nation, which is termed "Nawa Cita" (the nine goals of the Republic of Indonesia), schools (teachers) have to integrate the five principles of character in their day-to-day lessons. The five principles are Nationalism, Religiosity, Integrity, Independence, and Collaboration. Those five principles are explicitly stated in the President's 8th "Nawa Cita", and schools should apply them in all subject areas. This paper tries to propose some ways to integrate the principles into English lessons in Junior High Schools. Examples are given for certain text types, in the form of suggested teaching-learning activities during one meeting (2x40 minutes).

Keywords: five principles, character building, English lesson, Nawa Cita

INTRODUCTION

Based on the Decree of the Ministry of Education and Culture number 20, year 2003, on the national system of education, the president of the Republic of Indonesia deemed it necessary to strengthen the character building of Indonesian students. The Decree states that national education has the function of developing ability and shaping the character and civility of the dignified nation, in the effort of developing an intelligent nation, and the potentials of the students, so they can grow into religious, pious citizens, with good morality, noble characters, good health, knowledgeable, creative, independent, and responsible people.

In line with the objectives of the national education as stated above, the Ministry of Education and Culture, under the President's instructions, then created the contents of the eighth priority (*Nawa Cita* number 8), which particularly deal with the building of character of the Indonesian students, through education. It is stated in the *Nawa Cita* (Nine Priorities) that the 8th priority deals with the strengthening of the nation's character through the implementation of good conduct and character development of the learners. This character building or character education is part of what President Joko Widodo calls the Mental Revolution, which, in turn, is part of the Republic of Indonesia's Mid-term Development Plan (*RPJMN*) 2015-2019.

In this "Mental Revolution" in education, the Government designs the character building by developing a harmony between Ki Hadjar Dewantara's values of *Olah hati* (ethics), *olah rasa* (aesthetics), *olah pikir* (literacy and numeracy) and *olah raga* (kinesthetics) and the 18 core character values which should be internalized within students, which cover religiosity, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard working, creativity, independence, democracy, curiosity, spirit of citizenship, love of one's country, respect for achievements, communicativeness, peace-loving, love of reading, care for the environment, care for the society, and responsibility. The synchronization of those two sets of values is then crystalized into the five main values of character: nationalism, religiosity, integrity, independence, and collaboration (*Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan*, 2017). This character education is part of the three targets of the 2013 Curriculum which prepare Indonesian students for the Indonesian Centennial, as the Golden Generation 2045 (the other two of which are the Literacy Movement and the teaching of 21st Century Skills).

Below are the elaborations of each of the core values.

1. Religiosity refers to the attitudes, apart from practicing one's own belief and worships, of respecting others' belief and religion, and living in harmony with people of other beliefs and religions. The sub-values of religiosity, are, among others, peace-loving, tolerance, anti-bullying, and love for the environment.
2. Nationalism refers to the ways of thinking, behaving, and acting, which shows high loyalty, care, and respect for language, and the physical, social, cultural, economy, and political environment of the nation, putting the interest of the nation and country before one's own. Some of the sub-values of nationalism are appreciation of one's own culture, preserving the heritage of one's culture, willingness to sacrifice, and striving for high achievement.

3. Independence is the attitude and acts of not being dependent on others, and utilizing all energy, thoughts, and time, to realize one's hopes and dreams. Some sub-values of independence include commendable work ethics, professionalism, and the spirit for life-long learning.

4. Collaboration involves the acts of respecting spirit of teamwork to solve a common problem, developing communication and friendship, and helping those in need. Sub-values of independence are solidarity, emphathy, anti-discrimination, and volunteerism.

5. Integrity refers to responsibility as a citizen, being actively involved in social life, through the consistencies in speech and action, all of which are based on truth. The sub-values of integrity include honesty, love for truth, faithfulness, holding to moral committment, anti-corruption, fairness, and responsibility. (source: https://mutudidik.wordpress.com)

One can then ask, what is actually character education? According to Bialik et.al (2015), character education is about "`the acquisition and strengthening of virtue (qualities), values (ideals and concepts), and the capacity to make wise choices for a well-rounded life and a thriving society". Still in the same article, the authors delineate the following broad aims of character education:

- to provide a basis for life-long learning
- to enhance healthy relationships, both at home, and in the society, as well as in the job field.
- to enable citizens to participate actively in the global world, by building personal values and virtues

Budhiman (2017) states that classroom-based character education should pay attention to: the integration of the character values into subject matters , the optimalization of local contents, and the class management.

In the case of English classes, the lessons should also inculcate the values within the teaching-learning process. This is in line with the "rule" that the building of character should be classroom-based on three key issues; 1) it should be orientated towards the development of the potentials of the learners holistically and integratedly; 2) there must be modelling in the implementation of character building, and 3) the implementation should continually be carried out through modelling.

Dr. Leila Mona Ganiem, (http://walizahid.com), in discussing the President's *Nawa Cita*, explains the eighth priority, which consists of different points. Here the writer focuses on two of them, as follows:

Overhauling the character of the nation. The most relevant of this eighth priority which specifically deal with character education are these points**:**

- Rearranging the educational system by making the inclusion of civic education, history, character-building and patriotism the priorities
- For elementary education, 70 percent of the teaching must focus on building attitude and character

Furthermore, it should be borne in mind that successful character education at the secondary level depends on identifying and supporting teachers who can be models of creativity and caring attitude. This paper presents a sample of a lesson which teaches a certain text-type in which some core values are inserted.

A. Transactional Text (7th Grade)

Basic Competence

3.8 *Menerapkan fungsi sosial, struktur teks, dan unsur kebahasaan teks interaksi transaksional lisan dan tulis yang melibatkan tindakan memberi dan meminta informasi terkait keadaan/tindakan/ kegiatan/ kejadian yang sedang dilakukan/ berlangsung saat diucapkan, sesuai dengan konteks penggunaannya. (Perhatikan unsur kebahasaan present continuous tense)*

4.8 Menyusun teks interaksi transaksional lisan dan tulis sangat pendek dan sederhana yang melibatkan tindakan memberi dan meminta informasi terkait keadaan/tindakan/kegiatan/kejadian yang sedang dilakukan/ berlangsung saat diucapkan, dengan memperhatikan fungsi sosial, struktur teks, dan unsur kebahasaan yang benar dan sesuai konteks

According to the Basic Competences 3.8 and 4.8, the lesson focuses on transactional dialogs on present conditions/activities/actions, or, in other words, on situations which require the speakers to use the present continuous tense. In that light, the teaching of this text type should cover the following three components:

- *Social Function*
- Giving information: telling, reading, mentioning, adding

- Asking for information: asking, checking, asking for approval

- *Text Structure*
  - Initiating conversation: telling, asking, reading
  - responding: answering, denying, confirming, asking back
- *Linguistic features*
  Using
  - declarative and interrogative sentences, using verbs in 'present continuous'
  - related words and expressions (verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, phrases),
  - grammar (sentence, clauses, verbs, nouns, etc.)
  - correct pronunciation and intonation,
  - correct Spelling and punctuation,
  - clear and neat handwriting.

A. Learning Activities

1. First meeting: (2JP)

Teaching-learning activities	Description	Time allotment
Opening activities	Students, with teacher's guidance: - Greet the class and the teacher - Indicate their attendance by answering to the roll call, pray, and get ready for the lesson in a conducive atmosphere - Ask and answer questions on descriptions of a person (e.g. name, characteristics, habits) - mention the objectives of the lesson - mention learning activities which will be carried out.	10'
Main activities **)	During the teaching-learning activities in class, students actively participate, work together, and make use of teacher's assistance: - listen and repeat after the teacher mentions the actions done in class, schools, and other places with correct pronunciation and intonation. - pay attention to the expressions which show actions happening at the moment of speaking - asking and answering questions about the actions done by classmates. - asking and inquiring the objectives, topics, and expressions used in the text. - practicing doing some interactions to ask for and give information on actions which are in progress at the time of speaking During the teaching-learning process always get feedback from the teacher and classmates to improve the mastery of the language features.	60'
Closing activities	Students, under the guidance of the teacher: - Get feedback about the learning process - Discuss problems faced in doing the learning activities - Sum up the process and results of learning - Mention the home work, in the form of a *script* of the teacher which iis based on several pictures - Mention the activities and the topics for the next meeting.	10'

2. Second meeting: (2 JP)

Teaching-learning activities	Description	Time allotment
Opening activities	Students, with the guidance from the teacher: - Greet the class and teacher - Respond to roll call, pray, and get ready for a conducive learning atmosphere. - Conduct question-and answer session about things which are happening - review previous lesson - guess/mention the objectives of the lesson - listen to teacher's explanation about the teaching-learning activities that day	10'
Main activities **)	During the learning activities in class, students actively participate, work in groups, and get assistance from the teacher: - observe a video on actions/things which are still in progress. - mention acts which are happening according to the visuals (picture, video) - conduct question-answer session based on the visuals. - conduct reflections on the learning process and the results. During the learning process students get feedback from teacher and classmates to improve their mastery of the language features, both in oral and written forms.	60'
Closing activities	Students, under the guidance of the teacher: - discuss the benefits of the lesson. - discuss the problems faced during the learning process. - conclude the results of learning - state the commitment to continuously use English in interactions.	10'

On the basis of the teaching-learning activities above, we can see that the character values can be inserted in some of the activities, while teaching the language (English). Let us scrutinize them;

- in the opening activities, we can build the value of **reliogisity** through the conduct of prayer. It is advisable that the prayer be conducted in English, not only to train the students to use the language, but also to avoid the prayer to be conducted in any particular religion's way. That way, students can be trained to respect other religions and not force their ways to other people. (Of course, this can be done in "general/public" schools, not those religion-based schools).

- During the main activities, the character values will include **collaboration** (from the phrase "actively participate, work together"), **independence** (in doing the tasks and conducting the question-answer activities; in taking notes during the teacher's explanation, in watching the video, in eagerly practicing the role-play interactions, etc.), and **integrity** (in doing the individual tasks honestly and responsibly, without cheating or looking at others' work, in giving and receiving feedback openly and honestly)

- In the closing activities, we can see the integration of **independence** values, when students discuss the problems they faced during the learning process, discuss the benefits they get from the lesson, as well as make committments that they will use English during interactions in class.

Other things might be inserted during the teaching-learning activities; first, before class starts, the teacher can explain that the lesson will contain some character building, such as respect, honesty, and independence. Explicit statement that those good behaviours and attitudes will be observed will ensure the students that they should really work on them. The teacher can also make rules of the

good conduct in class,such as strictly no-name calling, no bullying and no cheating in all activities. Penalty for violation of those rules will result in reduction of scores or other "punishents".

During the main activities the teacher can show some visuals (situational pictures, photographs, or video clips) of some activities, then have students make sentences in present continuous tense, and have them discuss whether the acts being done in the visuals are good or bad.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

When we scrutinize the character values that can be integrated into the English lessons, we can see that learning a language can indeed go hand in hand with the building of character in the students. According to the priorities in *Nawa Cita*, the eighth priority, which deals with character education, is expected to meet the "reversibility" rule: "would you want to be treated this way?", and the rule of unversalizability: "how would you feel if all people behave and act this way?"

As is stated in the article "What is Character Education?", it occurs in all realms of school life, one of which is the teaching-learning process. However, as is also stated further in the article, "everything that occurs in school life is character education, since character is affected by all things".

In conclusion, as aforementioned, character education in most part depends on identifying and supporting teachers who can be models of creativity and caring attitude. It is crucial that teachers be the models of noble characters and commendable acts and virtues, people who show care and kindness towards students and other members of the school community. By seeing and experiencing the kindness and care, the students would internalize, and hopefully practice them in their own life and society. When that is fulfilled, then it can be hoped that the goals of the national education, which is expressed in the eighth priority of Nawa Cita, will be met. After all, as is stated in the website of education.cu-portland.edu, teachers can do character building "through planned actions and activities within the classroom".

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