

**A MULTIPLE CASE STUDY THAT LOOKS AT THE IMPLEMENTATION  
OF CHARACTER EDUCATION IN ENGLISH CLASSROOM**

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**Abstract**

This research observed and analyzed the implementation of character education in English classrooms. It sought to find out how English teachers develop and select materials and strategies for implementing character education in their classroom, how the English teachers implement and integrate character education in their classroom, and what factors the teachers found to be the inhibiting and supporting system for implementing character education in their school. Three teachers from three schools – a public vocational school, a public senior high school, and a religious-based public high school – participated in this research as the respondents. The purpose of involving three different type of schools was that this research needed to observe the implementation of character education in three different settings. By implementing multiple case study, this research gathered data through interview and observation. This research found that teachers in the two schools – vocational and senior high school – begun the implementation of character education by developing a plan consisted of what character they need to develop and what materials that triggered students' interest. Moreover, this research also found that the two schools share similar strategies in implementing character education as follows: using authentic materials, verbal instructions, and cultural approach. Meanwhile, in the religious-based senior high school, the teacher did not specifically develop and select materials intended to implement character education since the school had already subjects and extracurricular programs in religion teaching and intended to develop students' character. Lastly, this research found that the three schools share similar supporting and inhibiting factors in implementing character education namely lack of good examples in school, family, and community, lack of partnership between school, parents, and community member, and lack of commitment among the school community members to support the character education in school. And the supporting system they had were that the schools had already developed code of conducts, rules, and extracurricular programs intended to develop students' character.

***Keywords: character education, English learning***

## **INTRODUCTION**

Basically, the most fundamental objective of education is to make people good and smart. In keeping with that objective, Megawangi (2010) claimed that well-educated people are supposed to be wise; those who can apply knowledge they have for noble purposes in every aspects of life including in family, neighborhood, community, and nation. Therefore, she concluded that a successful education system is supposed to be able to develop people who have good character; the people that are needed in developing a highly-respected nation in the world.

In Indonesia, character education have been implemented for years and in all schooling levels through two required courses such as religion and Pancasila. However, looking at current condition of Indonesian people, there is an indication that this nation has a very serious problem in moral and character. Every day, mass media, both paper and electronic, are presenting bad news about bullying in school, cheating on exam, and juvenile crime and sex conducted by young people and corruption, violence, robbery, homicide, and other crimes conducted by adults. Those phenomenon are indications that school have failed to develop people with good character. Therefore, the Ministry of Education and Culture (MONE) issued a policy to implement character education in all subjects in 2010. Since then, character education has become an important issue in Indonesia. According to the policy, character education should be integrated in curriculum of all subjects including English.

Foreign language learning has a very important role to support the implementation of character education in school. Since language learning and culture cannot be separated, students who study a foreign language learn the culture of the language at the same time. And culture and character are interrelated to one another. Therefore, it is very interesting yet important to conduct a research intended to find out whether character education has successfully implemented in English learning as a foreign language in Indonesia.

In general, the main problem to be investigate in this research is the integration of character education in English classroom activities in school. This research is interested in examining the way how English teachers build students' character through English classroom activities. More specifically, the problem of this research is formulated in the following questions:

1. How do the English teachers select and develop classroom activities for integrating character education? This question seeks information about reasoning behind the selection and development of classroom activities and the process of selecting and developing those activities.
2. In what ways do the English teachers build students' character through classroom activities? This question looks for facts and examples of activities that are used by the teachers to build students' character.
3. What factors inhibit and support the teachers in developing classroom activities for integrating character education and how they handle those

factors? This questions seek to collect information from teachers' perspective regarding what difficulties they found when integrating character education in their classroom activities.

### **The Underlying Theory: Social Cognitive**

This research was based on the following underlying theory: Social Cognitive Theory and Moral Development Theory. Bandura (1978; 1989) derived his social cognitive theory by postulating that learning takes place within an environment where observations can be made through social resources. People learn by watching and then choose to imitate, mutate, or disregard the observed action. This implicitly applies to learning since the triadic relationship between environmental factors, behavior, and personal factors, such as cognitive, affective, and biological events, influences, perceptions, and actions. This relationship, called reciprocal determinism, utilizes observations as the focal strength that supports the theory. According to the theory, an observation is critical to learning and modeling behavior. The division of a tetrad elemental process to heighten the effectiveness and pursuit of increased comprehension of modeled behavior was constructed. Attention, being the first element, involves the learner attending to the main parts of the observation in order to influence their sensory capacities, motivation and arousal levels, perception, and reinforcement ability. Then, the learner would retain (retention)

the observation through mental, verbal, and physical means.

### **What is Character Education and why is It Important?**

Buchori cited in Suigirin (2011) claimed that the destruction of the nation at present is due to the degradation of the people's national integrity. Corruptions, violence, law infringements, intolerance, uncontrollable freedom, dishonesty, and many other destructive traits, all emerge from the instability and corrosion of the national character. Sugirin (2011) later claimed that unless proper measures are taken, the current condition will develop into chaos. Therefore, character education has become a big issue in Indonesia.

Thomas Lickona was one of the most important figures in the movement of character education in the world. In 1991, he published a book entitled *Educating for Character: How Our School can Teach Respect and Responsibility*. According to Lickona (1991), character education is "a national movement creating schools that foster ethical, responsible, and caring young people by modeling and teaching good character through an emphasis on universal values that we all share." Meanwhile, the Character Education Consortium (2014) identifies that

Character education includes and complements a broad range of educational approaches such as whole child education, service learning, social-emotional learning, and civic education. All

share a commitment to helping young people become responsible, caring, and contributing citizens.”(par. 2).

Moreover, the consortium also determined that

To be effective in schools, character education must involve everyone—school staff, parents, students, and community members—and be part of every school day. It must be integrated into the curriculum as well as school culture. When this happens and school communities unite around developing character, schools see amazing results. (par. 4).

Looking at the current condition of our community, character education has to become a national movement in Indonesia. It must be integrated in all curriculum and subjects at all school levels in this nation. In school, character education must be implemented not only to make students understand what is wrong and what is right, but also to develop a noble habit that will lead them to become contributing, caring, and responsible citizens.

### **Character in Language Learning: What Previous Research Say?**

There are numerous research about character education in the field of language learning. In Indonesia, the focus of the research are varied ranging from developing of models for character education in language learning (Sugirin,

2011 and Marzuki, 2012), process of implementing character education in language learning (Triyono, 2012; and Lestyarini, 2012), inserting local culture in language learning (Sundartini, 2012), to language teaching methods (Proyatni, 2012). Those research addressed the issues of character education in language learning where they all found that language learning is one of the most effective tools for building students’ characters. However, those research lack in addressing what specific classroom activities that can be implemented to build students’ characters. Meanwhile, numerous research about character education were also conducted and found that moral education needs to be inserted in language learning in order to build students’ character (Shabaan, 2005); the integration of character education in English teaching and learning has successfully helped students to build their own character in China (Hung, 2014), and character education in language learning has successfully promoted the traits of respect in diversity in schools in the United States (Character Education Consortium, 2011). There are similarities between research conducted in Indonesia and in the world which are indicating that language learning is a powerful means for building students’ character.

### **RESEARCH METHOD**

#### **Research Method and Design**

Since this research is intended to make an examination of a contemporary phenomenon in context (Yin, 2003), it employed a qualitative multiple case study method. The greatest advantage of

a case study is the possibility of depth; it seeks to understand the whole class in the totality of the environment (Ary, Jacobs, Rezavieh, & Sorensen, 2010). In addition, case studies are good for describing and expanding the understanding of a phenomenon and are often used to study people and programs particularly in education (Stake, 1995). A case study can offer a refinement of understanding (Stake, 1995) of the context in which teachers care. "We take a particular case and come to know it well, not primarily as to how it is different from others but what it is, what it does" (Stakes, 1995, p. 8). This is done in part to be able to create thick description of a case in order to convey what the reader would have experienced if he or she had been present (Stake, 1995).

The contemporary phenomenon that investigated in this study is the integration of character education in classroom activities developed by English teachers in school. This study sought information, data, and facts from the investigated cases in order to get in-depth description about the phenomenon. However, in order to get more varied findings from different cases, this study conducted an examination of the phenomenon in more than one case. According to Ary et al, (2010), multiple case study is the best method to examine a phenomenon to be believed as not idiosyncratic to a single unit and studying multiple units can provide better illuminations. Furthermore, Merriam (2009) says that "the more cases included in a study, and the greater the variation across the cases, the more

compelling an interpretation is." (p. 49). Furthermore, Miles & Huberman (1994) in Merriam (2009) identify that by looking at a range of similar and contrasting cases, we can understand a single-case finding, grounding it by specifying how and where and, if possible, why it carries on as it does. We can strengthen the precision, the validity, and the stability of the findings." (p. 49-50). Thus, by applying multiple-case study, this research has successfully found many different phenomenon derived from different cases and improved the quality of its findings.

In addition, this study also followed an inductive approach to its design. According to Maxwell in Lloyd-Jones, Neame, and Medaney (2004), a research using inductive approach follows a progressed stage by stage allowing the emerging findings to be incorporated into subsequent lines of enquiry and data collection. Implementing this inductive approach will make this research easier to be carried out since it will follow stage by stage process from each cases. As the result, Lloyd-Jones et al (2007) identified that a research with inductive approach will became a series of interrelated research studies with subsidiary objectives and data collection methods. Moreover, they also claim that using an inductive approach will make researcher easier in presenting the findings since it will follow chronological outline with each successive research study presented in separate sections each with its own methods and findings sections. The following picture depicts the design of this research.



**Picture 3.** Basic Design for Multiple Case Study with Embedded Unit of Analysis

### **Context of the Research**

This research made an examination on the integration of character education in English classroom activities in three schools in Cirebon. The school to be chosen as the context of this research have already implemented the 2013 Curriculum. The three schools were a public senior high school (SMAN), a public vocational school (SMKN), and a religion-based senior high schools. The reasons why choosing different type of school was that this research needs to get better illuminations about the investigated phenomenon. In addition, those three schools surely have their own program for implementing character education. Thus, basically, this research is interested in finding out if those schools have their own special practices to integrate character education in English classroom activities. This research focused on examining the

integration of character education in English classroom activities in the first and second grade in each school. There were three English teacher from the three schools participated in this research as the respondents. The choosing of those three school was based on the purposive sampling method. Multiple cases are often preferable to single cases, particularly when the cases may not be representative of the population from which they are drawn and when a range of behaviors/profiles, experiences, outcomes, or situations is desirable (TESOL, 2014).

### **Data Collection, Instruments, and Analysis**

This research collected data through three techniques as follows: interview, observation, and documentary study. The first step for collecting the data was documentary study. This was the pilot study of this research. In this pilot study, the researcher collected information from documents such as lesson plan, learning materials, and teachers' agenda. The purpose of this pilot study was to get preliminary information about classroom activities that were integrating character education. The data collected from this pilot study was then analyzed and used as the basis for conducting the next steps of data collection process. Based on the result of the pilot study, the researcher then conducted observation in classroom. The purpose of this observation was to clarify and find out the practical implementation of classroom activities depicting character building based on the data found in the documentary study. Finally,

data collection process was concluded with interview with the teachers. The function of this interview was to clarify all findings gathered from documentary study and observations.

In order to collect the data, this research employed two main instruments as follows: interview protocol and observation sheets. The interview protocol consisted of list of questions that were used in interview. The questions listed in the protocol covered all items related to the investigated phenomenon. Meanwhile, observation sheets were used to collect data taken from classroom observation. In the sheets, this research recorded all the practices the teacher used in integrating character education in their classroom. The followings are the steps taken in the interview process:

1. The interviewer provided the interviewees with detail information about the research including the objectives and procedures.
2. The interviewer then required the interviewees to read and learn the consent form which elaborated their rights and responsibilities.
3. After the interviewees agreed upon the terms and conditions of the research, they signed the consent form indicating that they have fully understood and aware of the terms and condition of the research and determined that they were willing to be the respondents.

In order to guarantee the confidentiality of the respondents, and as an effort intended to comply with the code of ethics in conducting a research, this research did not reveal any

identifications of the respondents in any form including in the attached document to the research proposal. This research assigned all the respondents with a unique code as follows: Case 1, Case 2 and Case 3.

In qualitative research, data collection and analysis can be conducted at the same time (Merriam, 1998). In this research, data analysis was conducted through two stages as follows: within case analysis and cross case analysis. In within case analysis, the research analyzed the data taken from each case individually and draw the findings from the each case. Next, the cross case analysis was conducted which involved data examination and comparison from all the cases involved. The data analysis was then concluded through drawing findings from all the investigated cases. Overall, data analysis was carried out by using Coding Analysis Toolkit (CAT) developed by the Research Institute of the University of Massachusetts, USA. This is an open access qualitative analysis tools which available online on its website.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **Findings in Case 1**

Case 1 is a public vocational school in Cirebon. The findings are organized based on the answer to the research questions; and here are the findings:

1. Research Questions 1: *How do the English teachers develop and select materials and teaching strategies intended to integrate character education in their English classroom?*

**Case 1:** the teacher developed her plan to integrate character education by designing a lesson plan that outlined the lesson plan. Initially, she identified what character she will focus on her teaching. Based on the characters, she then identified what materials needed to support her plan. This plan was also in accordance with the topic and objective of the teaching. For example, when teaching narrative text, in addition to foreign stories such as Cinderella, she usually looked for local stories. It was intended to integrate local cultures into the teaching process. By using local culture items, the teacher was not only able to provide more interesting stories, but also connect the topic with the students' daily life. In addition, the teacher was a little bit different to the previous one in defining materials and strategies for integrating character education in classroom. She was more focused on the strategy, not on the materials. Although the teacher shares similarities with the previous teacher in term of how they develop a plan for the teaching, she was more interested in certain strategies she used in classroom. She did not use local culture materials, rather, she used the materials already available in the textbook but then designed certain strategies intended to facilitate character education. For example, for teaching narrative text, she was more focused in what kind of interaction among students and encouraged the students to pay attention and appreciation to one another.

2. Research Question 2: *How do the English teachers implement and integrate character education in their English classroom?*

**Case 1:** the teacher used authentic materials with the intention to make connection between the materials and the students' real-life situations. In addition during the learning process, the teacher always asked the students to pay attention, to appreciate others, and to ask permission whenever they wanted to do something. By implementing various strategies of teaching such as: discussion, presentation, and pairing. During the teaching and learning process, the teacher has always been active instruct the students to behave such as to pay attention, respect to each other, comply with rules in school and community, and prevent juvenile crime.

3. Research Question 3: *What factors the English teacher found to be as the inhibiting and supporting system to the implementation of character education in school?*

**Case 1** identified two factors inhibiting the implementation of character education in school: first, lack of good example both in school and in community; and second, lack of support from family and community members.

### **Findings in Case 2**

Case 2 is a public Senior High School located in Cirebon city. And here are the findings in the Case 2:

1. Research Questions 1: *How do the English teachers develop and select materials and teaching strategies*

*intended to integrate character education in their English classroom?*

**Case 2:** the main consideration when developing and selecting materials and strategy for teaching and integrating character education for the teachers was students' interest to the topic. The teacher identified and selected materials that has connection with the students' real-life situations. And so was with the strategies, the teacher employed strategies that might possibly facilitate the students to interact with each other.

2. Research Question 2: *How do the English teachers implement and integrate character education in their English classroom?*

**Case 2** implemented character education in their teaching through the following strategies: using authentic materials, always reminding the students to comply with rules in school and community members, encouraging students to pay attention and respect each other, pulling out moral values consisted in a text, and relating the topics with the students' real-life situations.

3. Research Question 3: *What factors the English teacher found to be as the inhibiting and supporting system to the implementation of character education in school?*

**Case 2** identified that lack of partnership between school and parents as the main inhibiting factors. In addition, she also said that lack of good examples was also another inhibiting factors. However, she believed that her school has provided necessary supporting facilities such as

rule enforcement in school and good cooperative work among the teachers and staff.

### **Findings in Case 3**

Case 3 was a religious-based public senior high school located in Cirebon. Here are the findings from Case 3:

1. Research Questions 1: *How do the English teachers develop and select materials and teaching strategies intended to integrate character education in their English classroom?*

**Case 3:** this case was a rather different to two other cases. The teacher said that building students' character was not the main part of his teaching. He said that since the school was a religious based school, in addition to extracurricular programs, the school has many subjects intended to develop students. Thus, he rarely put character aspects as one of the main considerations when developing and selecting teaching materials and strategies.

2. Research Question 2: *How do the English teachers implement and integrate character education in their English classroom?*

**Case 3**, as indicated in the answer to the first question, the teacher did not focused on character education specifically in English teaching. He said that he just did some additional efforts such as asking students to find moral value when studying narrative text and encouraging students to be more active and well-motivated in studying.

3. Research Question 3: *What factors the English teacher found to be as the inhibiting and supporting system to the implementation of character education in school?*

Case 3 found that the most supporting factors for character education in his school is the religious subjects and some extracurricular religious

activities. Meanwhile, he identified that lack of partnership between school and parents and lack of good example as the main inhibiting factors.

This research has successful found some interesting findings. The following table summarizes all the findings:

Research Questions	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3
How the teachers develop and select materials and strategies for integrating character education?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make a list of characters that will be included in the lesson plan.</li> <li>• Using authentic materials in teaching in order to make connection between the topic and the students' real-life.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using students' interest as the main consideration when developing and selecting materials.</li> <li>• Using authentic materials in teaching.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Character education is not the main consideration when developing and selecting materials and strategy for teaching.</li> </ul>
How do the teachers implement and integrate character education in their classroom?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using authentic materials.</li> <li>• Using verbal instructions to encourage students to pay attention, respect each other, and comply with rules both in school and community.</li> <li>• Using teaching activities such as discussion and presentation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using authentic materials in order to make connection between the materials and students' real-life situation.</li> <li>• Using verbal instructions to encourage students to have respects and comply with rules.</li> <li>• Pulling out moral values of the texts given.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher relied heavily on religious subject and extracurricular activities in implementing character education.</li> </ul>
What are inhibiting and supporting factors of character education in school?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting factors: school has developed rules and code of ethics.</li> <li>• Inhibiting factors: lack of good examples, lack of cooperative between school, parents, and community members, and lack of cooperative work among teachers and staff.</li> </ul>		

### Cross-case Analysis and Discussions

The findings of this research are a little bit unexpected. From the beginning, this research was carried out based on the assumption that the three schools, due to their different in context, would have their own of practice in integrating character education in English learning. Although there are some different, the schools, especially Case 1 and Case 2 share similar phenomenon. However, Case 3 was the most surprising of all.

In terms of how they develop and select materials and strategies for integrating character education, Case 1 and Case 2 shares similar strategies. Both schools began the efforts to implement character education with developing a lesson plan that outlines materials, strategies of teaching, and especially what character that will become the focus of the teaching in certain day. These practices are in accordance with the guidelines published by the Ministry of National Education (MONE) of Indonesia which states that character education strategies should begin with the integration of all character values in the syllabus developed by schools. The syllabus is then developed into lesson plans by teachers.

Meanwhile, in Case 3, since the school is a religious-based school, it has many religious subjects and extracurricular programs. Through those subjects and programs, the school developed character education strategies and materials which are later being used by teachers as reference when developing lesson plan. This strategies are also in accordance with the

guidelines issued by MONE. However, what make the Case 3 different is that the English teachers viewed that he does not need to specifically integrate character education in his teaching. This is due to the fact that the school has already many subjects and extracurricular programs in religion teaching. The teacher believes that he has only little responsibility to integrate character education in his classroom.

Meanwhile, the Case 2 and Case 3 share similar practices in implementing character education in English classroom. Both schools used authentic materials as one of the main materials for developing students' characters. In addition, the teachers in the schools also use cultural approach in integrating character education in their English teaching. For example, one of the teacher said that "*I chose to use local narrative text such as Timun Mas rather than Cinderella since I wanted to make connections between the topics and the students' real-life situation.*" Another teacher said that "*I made changes on the procedural texts of making cheese cake and replace it with the procedures of fixing flat tires.*" Cross-cultural approach is one of the best way to integrate character education in English learning. Language and character are interrelated to one another; when students learn about a foreign language, at the same time, they will also learn about the culture of the language. There are many research identified the benefits of cross-cultural approach in character education. For example, Setiawan (2011) identified that cross-cultural approach facilitate students to make adaptation and

judgment about appropriateness of foreign culture. Thus, the students will be able to avoid certain culture that is inappropriate to their own culture.

In addition, Case 1 and Case 2 also share practices in using teaching strategies and classroom activities intended to develop students' character. Both schools implement strategies and activities such as using verbal instructions to encourage students to pay attention, comply with rules both in school and community, to respect each other, etc. Meanwhile, Case 3 again used the same strategies in which it heavily relied on religious subjects and extracurricular activities. In classroom, the teacher has just used verbal instructions without developing and selecting specific materials intended to develop students' character.

However, when it comes to what factors support and inhibit character education in schools, the three cases – Case 1, Case 2, and Case 3, share similar phenomenon. The three cases found that even though they have already developed code of conduct and communicate it regularly to students – something they consider to be as supporting factors of character education – they found that lack of commitment of school community to reinforce the code is poor. Lack of good example, they said, as the main inhibiting factors. One of the teachers says, *“This school has a rule to inhibit all school community members prohibit to smoke. But, there are still many teachers and staff who do smoking in school.”* Another teacher says *“The school has always been in active efforts to reinforce students not to littering. But there are still many adults*

*in the school just intentionally or unintentionally di littering.* Good examples are not only rare to find in school, but also in wider community including in home. Things are getting worse when there is misconnection between school and parents.

This is a very poor condition. There are two basic requirements for character education to be successfully implemented. They are forming habit and good example. Those two requirements are interrelated to each other. It is difficult, not to say impossible, to form new good habit if there are so many bad examples available. Lickona (2011) identified eleven principles of character education implementation. The principles say that school community needs to have commitment as core ethical in implementing character education. In addition, the principles also say that involving parents, family, and community members is a must in implementing character education. There is no one of the principles implemented in the schools investigated in this research.

The findings of this research confirm that character education in classroom is still far from being appropriately implemented in schools. In addition to lack of understanding of the teacher about character education – they are still confused between teaching character and building character – limited supporting system is also another factors inhibiting character education in school. There is still huge gap between what school do to build students' character and what happens in family and community members.

### Conclusions

After analyzing all the data and elaborate the findings, this research have made conclusions as follows:

1. English teachers are still confused in implementing character education in their classroom. They are still teaching character, not building character. Thus, the implementation of character education through language learning is not fully implemented.
  2. However, this research has successfully revealed some meaningful practices – though they are not sustainably implemented – in which English teacher implemented character education in their classrooms. The practices are as follows: using authentic materials, using verbal instructions, and relating the topic of learning with students' daily life.
  3. Even though the schools have developed code of ethics and rules to guide students' behavior and develop their character, they also found that the inhibiting factors of character education are still huge to overcome. The most inhibiting factors are as follows: lack of good examples, lack of commitment of school community members to implement character education, and poor partnership between school, parents, and community members in implementing character education.
1. Teachers need to use many resources when developing and selecting materials and strategy for implementing character education in their class. There are many sources available both online and offline. In addition, in order to overcome the limited sources, teachers may establish a team teaching in developing and selecting materials and strategies of learning.
  2. The use of authentic materials and verbal instructions is interesting. Students' interest must always become the first and main consideration when developing materials and strategies for implementing character education in English learning. In addition to using authentic materials, teachers may also try to use realia or class outing in order to introduce students with real-life situation and direct them to develop understanding about current situations.
  3. Schools needs to maximize the role of school committee to bridge the gap between school, parents, and community members. Educating students is not merely a responsibility of teacher and school, it is also parents and community members' responsibility. In addition, schools need to initiate hard efforts intended to improve commitment of all school community members to implement character education.

### Recommendation

Therefore, this research develop some suggestions as follows:

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