

## Building Character Education in Elementary School Students through the Cultural-themed Literacy Book

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**ABSTRACT :** Many countries promote literacy activities for their citizens, especially for students as the state's future successors. Literacy needs to be held to broaden public insight. The building of character education can be conveyed through literacy books. The topic of this study is character education contained in media literacy that is used to broaden the insight of elementary school students. This study aims to explain the character education value delivered in children's literacy reading activity. The sample is a cultural-themed literacy book provided by the government for elementary school students. Data is in the form of character education values in the literacy book. The validation technique uses triangulation theory. The analysis technique uses content analysis. The results of this study show that character education needs to be built since the students are in the elementary level. They still need a lot of information and direction. The existence of character education in literacy books is very beneficial for their character development.

**KEYWORDS :** *Character education, elementary school, media literacy, language learning*

### I.INTRODUCTION

The activity of promoting literate society is currently done in various countries. As stated by Zaid (2016: 17) that many countries are intensifying literacy activities, including Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Haiti, Indonesia, Malawi, Mozambique, Nepal, Pakistan, and South Africa. The state that promotes literacy activities aims to make its citizens into broad-minded communities. UNESCO (2005: 19) says that literate society cannot only be seen from the height of literacy activities, but also from people who have broad insights. In accordance with the statement, the purpose of literacy is to increase people's insight and knowledge.

The literacy activities procurement can be done in various ways. In Indonesia, literacy is promoted at school by reading activity for 15 minutes. This activity is an effort to broaden the students' insight and knowledge in actualizing literate society. The activity can be a bridge for the students to improve their insight and knowledge. Malloy, Marinak, Gambrell, and Mazzone (2014: 277) stated that increasing students' reading motivation can improve their achievement, so teachers need to give them appreciation.

This activity is based on the reality that many people are lack of reading. When people do not like reading, they will have limited insight and knowledge. This will obstruct the state's development. In addition, the character education values that needs to be fostered in the community is also a consideration for selecting media literacy that contains character education value. This is the reason why school promotes character education through literacy activities. Literacy activities need to be activated in schools as revealed by Kikkul (2014: 375) that school is a place for social children who have very fast development so that the habituation experienced by them is also influential.

Character education is a very important value for children. The existence of the children educational value will later form the good character that they need in life. This shows that the building of character education is very important. This is corroborated by the statement of the US Department of Education Contract (2007: 3) which states that character Education are terms that contain all aspects for example, how schools, social institutions, and parents can support the positive development of the character of children and adults.

Based on the description above, this article will discuss the character education that is instilled in elementary school, the benefits of character education in elementary schools, as well as its relevance to language learning in schools. These three things will be discussed in this article.

## II.METHOD

This is a qualitative research. Referring to Creswell (2007: 37 ; 2009: 4), qualitative research is research that begins with understanding and exploring research problems that investigate social problems both individuals and groups. In accordance with this statement, this study uses qualitative research methods because the thing being studied is about the literacy books of elementary school students and the character education values contained in it.

The data in this study are character education value data while the source of data in this study is the literacy book provided for elementary school students. The selected literacy book is a cultural-themed literacy book. The reason for choosing cultural themes is because culture reflects the character of a nation so it is interesting to study more deeply. The following is a list of cultural-themed literacy books that serve as research samples.

**Table 1. Samples of Cultural-themed Literacy Books**

Title	Writer	Publisher
Berselancarke 34 RumahAdat Indonesia Yuk! (Book 1)	Kiki RatnaningArimbi	BadanPengembangandanPembinaanBahasa
MengenalRancangBangunRumahAdat di Indonesia (Book 2)	Faris Al Faisal	BadanPengembangandanPembinaanBahasa
RumahAdat Nusantara (Book 3)	IntaniaPoerwaningtyas Nindya K.Suwarto	BadanPengembangandanPembinaanBahasa

Altheide and Schineider (2013: 1) claimed that the development of qualitative methods can be performed by a search through books and journals, interviews, biography, autoetnography, and analysis of documents that had guidelines on document searches more specific for short atan specifically towards qualitative research. Creswell (2009: 176) reinforces the opinion that says in collecting qualitative data researchers usually collect various forms of data, interviews, observations and documents, not just rely on a single data source. Data collection techniques in this study is analysis of documents such as books themed cultural literacy at elementary school and interview with primary school teachers.

This study uses data triangulation to test the validity. According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2000: 112), triangulation can be defined as the use of two or more data collection methods to collect research data. This study uses two methods to collect data by analyzing documents in the form of cultural-themed literacy books and by interviewing elementary school teachers.

Analysis of the data carried out in this study consisted of three strands. This is in accordance with what was expressed by Miles and Huberman (1994: 16) that data analysis consists of three activities that are carried out simultaneously, namely data reduction, data presentation, and inference/ verification. The first thing to do in this study is sifting through the data to be used that the entire book of literacy, after determining the book were used then sorting the data containing the value of character education. After that the data is presented and concluded.

## III.RESEARCH RESULT

### 1. Character Education in Cultural-Themed Literacy Books

The result of this study indicates that cultural-themed literacy books have a lot of character education values. The values of character education contained in the cultural-themed literacy books are suitable for elementary school students. This can be seen from the results of this study regarding the values of character education contained in the cultural-themed literacy book.

The values of character education contained in the cultural-themed literacy book include moral knowledge, moral feelings, and moral action. All kinds of characters are contained in cultural-themed literacy books.

The values of character education includes religious character education , honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creative, independent, democratic, curiosity, national spirit, nationalism, respect for achievement, friendly/ communicative, love peace, love to read, care about the environment, care about social, and responsibility. All of these values are good character values instilled for children of elementary school level. These values can form good character in children later in the future.

**Table 2 . The Character Education Value in Cultural-Themed Literacy Books**

Character Education Value	Book 1	Book 2	Book 3	The Total of Character Education Value
Religious	10	5	3	18
Honest	8	4	7	19
Tolerant	1	3	0	4
Discipline	3	0	0	3
Hard work	2	0	0	2
Creative	6	3	3	12
Independent	2	0	0	2

Democratic	4	0	0	4
Curios	33	0	0	33
Spirit of nationality	0	1	0	1
Love the country	0	2	0	2
Appreciate Achievement	4	1	0	5
Friendly / Communicative	8	0	0	8
Love peace	4	0	0	4
Like to read	9	0	0	9
Environmental care	4	9	5	18

The value of character education that reflects religious attitudes, including: 1) the building used for worship or study, 2) the habit of praying in everyday life, 3) the belief of asking parents for blessing will bring success in the world and the hereafter, 4) architectural buildings that have religious philosophies, and 5) religious speech.

The value of character education that reflects honest attitude, including: 1) honesty in answering questions, 2) validity in providing information about the traditional house discussed, 3) and expressing awe to students.

The value of character education that reflects the attitude of tolerance, including: 1) copying respect for others even though different ethnicity, religion, or age and 2) traditional house architecture that reflects the tribe that has a sense of brotherhood.

The value of character education that reflects the attitude of discipline, includes the characters who carry out activities in accordance with what has been scheduled. The value of character education is reflected by surfing traditional houses and daily tests in class, according to what has been scheduled.

The value of character education that reflects the attitude of hard work, including figures who try to find answers from questions in earnest. This is indicated by the figure asking about the traditional house section while looking for answers in the book.

The value of creative character education, including : 1) the use of easy learning methods using mind maps, 2) the implementation of creative learning by making presentations with Microsoft Power Point, 3) making a schedule on a laptop, 4) making custom homes that are adapted to the surrounding environment, and 5) the mention of Sulawesi Island which is like the letter K.

The value of independence character education, including the command in the form of the task of making mind maps. This command was given after they studied together. Therefore, the teacher gives a personal assignment to check students' independence.

The value of democratic character education, including the provision of opportunities for students to express their opinions or arguments after learning and implementation of group learning that runs smoothly. The existence of group work that went well showed that there was a democratic attitude because everyone must have a different opinion. In addition, the teacher also has a democratic attitude because it gives an opportunity for all students to ask questions.

The value of curiosity character education, contains curiosity about the architecture of traditional houses. Characters also seek information from encyclopedia sources to obtain information. In addition, they also actively ask questions when surfing to find out about traditional houses in the archipelago.

The national spirit character education value contains the value obtained when students study the traditional house. Students who study national traditional houses will develop an attitude of love towards the ancestors who have built the traditional house of the archipelago. This is not another for traditional houses will proof that the ancestors have good skills in designing traditional houses in Indonesia.

The value of character education in the homeland love, contains a proud attitude towards what the nation already has. The author also invites mutual respect and tolerance with others because all remain one nation.

The value of character education in appreciating achievements, contains: 1) admission to the ancestors who designs traditional with reliable, 2) teachers recognize students' ability. These two things become evidence that the value of character education is contained in the literacy books.

The character education value about friendly/ communicative includes: 1) harmony in cooperation with relatives, 2) being polite to others, 3) learning together and sharing knowledge with others, and receiving guests well.

The value of peace-loving character education includes: 1) traditional house buildings that were built to establish intimacy, friendliness, and family, 2) the treatment of customary chiefs is very good.

The value of character education likes to read, contains about: 1) making mind maps for easy learning, 2) reading encyclopedias in search of information about traditional houses, and 3) reading information sources such as books to find out the location of the region.

The value of character education of cares about the environment including the design of houses that are adjusted to the state of the surrounding environment. The adjustment is adjusted to the geographical situation or disaster that is prone to threatening. In addition, it is also adapted to many wild animals in the environment.

The value of social care character education including: 1) caring to entertain visiting guests, 2) reminding independent assignments to his friends, and 3) accompanying around to see traditional houses.

The value of character education of responsibility including a teacher who fulfil the promise made. The promise is a promise to hold daily tests. On the specified day the oral test was carried out according to what was difficult to say before.

This indicates that the book can be used as a medium for imparting education contain many characters as it proves the value of character education. The values contained in it are also values that need to be embedded in cultural-themed literacy books. These values will be useful as provisions to future life in the future.

Aside from document analysis in the form of a cultural-themed literacy book, interviews were also conducted with elementary school teachers in various school backgrounds. The results of the interview can be concluded that the cultural-themed literacy book has the value of character education. This is shown from the interview data which states that cultural-themed literacy books have a character education value that is intentionally tucked inside a cultural-themed literacy book. The value of character education is very necessary to form the character of students especially for elementary school students who still need guidance.

## **2. Benefits of Character Education in Cultural-Themed Literacy Books**

Based on research conducted, character education needs to be instilled since elementary school. The inculcation of the value of character education is needed because the young generation is the next generation of the nation. If they are not inculcated with good character related to national culture, then a nation can lose its identity. This reason makes character education related to national culture needs to be instilled early in elementary school students.

The existence of character education values tucked into cultural-themed literacy books makes children's reading more meaningful. What is read by children is not only empty reading without meaning but reading that contains the values of character education. This statement is proven by research data which shows that many literacy books contain the values of character education.

The results of the interview showed that the values of character education contained in the cultural-themed literacy books are beneficial for students since they can imitate the activities or habits contained in the cultural-themed literacy book. Many good habits are shown in cultural-themed literacy books.

Primary school age children are they who are still at the age who need guidance. This is the reason why good values need to be instilled in elementary school students. Good information received by children can provide a good stimulus for their future.

What children get will be processed as data stored in the memory of their brain. When they are in a situation that is almost similar or even similar to the one exemplified in the text, they will remember the information they had ever obtained. They will make the information as a reference to determine their attitude.

Children who are in elementary school age still need guidance from the teachers or parents. The things they see, hear and read must be positive. If not, then they can easily imitate the negative behavior.

## **3. Relevance Books Literacy with Language Learning in School**

Based on interview with elementary school teachers, it is mentioned that the character education book published by the government for students has relevance to learning Indonesian. The book can be used as a text reference that can support learning. When learning, the teacher can take the text found in the appropriate iteration book to support the material to be given.

Some material that can use the text in the literacy book is to determine the main and explanatory ideas, information texts, question sentences, and interview texts. The material determines the main ideas and explanatory text and information can choose all the texts in the book at random. This is due to all the texts in the literacy books including information texts that contain information about the culture of the archipelago. In addition, each text also has main ideas and explanatory ideas so that this book can be used as a learning medium.

The next material that can use this book is the question sentence and interview texts. The text in this book is in the form of interviews or visits to the chiefs to find out one of the cultural heritages, namely traditional houses so that the text can be an example of interview texts. The question sentence is one of the sentences used in the interview text so that they can learn the question sentences contained in the literacy book.

## **IV.DISCUSSION**

Leexmond and Reeves (2009: 12) believed that character is something that is used as a benchmark for personal abilities that can reflect good behavior in life. Furthermore, Lickona (2013: 82-83) said that the components of good character are: moral knowledge, moral feeling and moral action. Moral knowledge is matters related to

moral actions connected the human mind, whereas moral feelings are matters related to the human conscience, and moral actions are matters related to the actions of human beings as a form of character. Based on some experts, it can be concluded that character is a measure of someone's good-bad behavior.

Thomas and Jolls (2005: 6) say that literacy education can be used as an interesting medium because students can learn to criticize the things they need to accompany their learning process towards the future. Hiebert and Raphael (2013: 7) add that literacy is a language process that can build and expand children's knowledge. Based on these two opinions, it can be concluded that literacy is an activity that can be used to educate children in order to instill the values needed for the future through fun activities.

Schoenmakers (2012: 96) says that culture is the thing that has the power and ability to affect human related to the area of social and scope of activities. Further, Geertz (1773: 17) said that culture is a symbol of a system that has an internal relationships in characterizing whole organized system. Based on the experts' opinion it can be concluded that culture is a characteristic of an environment that can influence the people in the surrounding environment.

This study discusses the inculcation of the value of character education in cultural-themed literacy books aimed at elementary school students. The results of this study indicate that literacy books contain many values that are useful for the provision of later life for elementary school students. These books can be used as a medium for imparting education to the children's character in fun way.

The values contained in cultural-themed literacy books are values required for elementary school students. At the elementary school level is the time children still need direction and still very much need to inculcate the values of character education so that literacy books with various values of character education are very beneficial for students.

The value of character education contained in the book is also in accordance with the educational value of the character that is being activated by the government in learning. The educational values include reflecting religious attitude, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creativity, independence, democracy, curiosity, national spirit of national love, respect for achievement, friendly / communication, peace-loving, fond of reading, caring for the environment, caring social, and responsibility.

The delivery of character education values for each book is different. The first book was delivered through surfing stories or adventures to various traditional houses of the archipelago carried out by Arsiwan and Arsiwati. The second book and the third book convey the values of character education through presentation on the design of the archipelago traditional house. Although the delivery method is different, however, both of them contain the value of character education required by elementary school students.

The first book contains more value in character education because it is presented in the form of a twin brother's adventure story to learn the traditional house of the archipelago. This book will be more interesting to read because students will like reading the story of two twin sisters but actually in the book contains important things needed by students. The important thing is in the form of the value of character education and the delivery of information about the traditional house of the archipelago so that children know the culture of the nation.

Research in tian had similarities to studies conducted by Whitehead in his research entitled justifying the Design and Selection of Literacy and Thinking Tools in 2008. This study provides criteria for the design and the tools used by teachers and schools in supporting literacy programs. The equation of this study is that they both research media literacy but have differences in the subject of their research and the value of character education studied in this study. The research contains criteria to make media literacy appropriate, while this study contains media literacy in the form of books that have a lot of character education value.

The next relevant research was conducted by Asraf, Abdullah, and Zamin conducted a type of case study on literacy programs in Malaysian primary schools with the title Literacy among Malaysian Primary Schoolers: How do Boys Perform Relative to Girls? in 2016. This research equation with the author's research is equally researching about the literacy program at the elementary school level while the difference is that this type of research is in the form of case study research conducted at grade 1, 2 and 3 elementary school students, while this author's research is a qualitative study conducted on literacy books used by students in grades 4, 5, and 6.

Furthermore, Yanik and Yasar in their research in 2018 with the title An Ethnographic Approach to Peer Culture in a Turkish Preschool Classroom have relevance to this study because this study is equally studying culture and carried out at the level of elementary school students but the difference is in this study examining culture in a group of preschoolers in Kahramanmaraş Province, Turkey. While this research examines the value of character education that students can find in cultural-themed literacy books.

Digby and Bey, in their 2014 study entitled Technology Literacy Assessments and Adult Literacy Programs: Pathways to Technology Competence for Adult Educators and L Earners have relevance to this research that is equally discussing about literacy. The research shows that there is treatment to increase literacy awareness in adults. The similarities study literacy while the difference is that this study examines the values of character education that exist in literacy books.

Furthermore, Kew, Given, and Brass in their research entitled Teachers as Researchers of New Literacies: Reflections on Qualitative Self-Study have relevance to research conducted in 2011. The similarity of the

research is to study literacy together with language learning. This study shows an independent learning to increase the level of literacy in teachers while the research conducted examines the value of character education in literacy books required by students.

### V. CONCLUSION

This study can be used as an insight that character education value can be done through one of the media used in literacy activities. The media used can be in the form of books as reviewed in this research. Instead of containing educational values, this book also contains cultural values such as the literacy books that became the sample in this research. Literacy books can also be used as learning support media with informative texts.

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