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Integrating Character Education in English Language Teaching

Dewi Suriyani Djamdjuri*, Herawati

Applied Linguistic program, Postgraduate Faculty of Universitas Negeri Jakarta, the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Ibn Khaldun Bogor

*Corresponding author

dewi.djamdjuri@gmail.com

Hp: +6287841991682

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ABSTRACT

Character education is now part of the vital issue. Integrating character education in English

language teaching is one of the attempts to create favorable environments for learners to

acquire English while becoming accustomed to the principles of character that can often be

seen from the content of Islamic materials. Clearly, in truth, the majority of Indonesians are

Muslim. They need teaching materials that are accustomed to their living habits as Muslims.

These learning experiences can make it easier for students to understand the content in order

to better achievement of English proficiency. For these purposes, this study aims to examine

the understandings of the students about the integrated principles of character in Islamic

teaching materials, and how the academic achievements of the students are. Using descriptive

qualitative approach combined with quassy-experimental method, this research found that the

students gain some positive impacts due to the use of Islamic materials as teaching material

in English language teaching. The students' understandings on character values integrated are

mostly deals with six characters: religiosity, honesty, independence, curiosity, friendliness

and responsibility. The students not only understood but they could also apply the character

values directly in the real life. Moreover, there is an improvement on the students'

achievements between pretest and posttest in experimental groups after treatment. It means

that Islamic materials are able to give significantly greater contribution to the students'

achievements.

Keywords: character values, english education, mix-method, islamic teaching materials

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Introduction

One of the important ways to assistance one of Indonesia's education priorities is to integrate Islamic character education into English Language Teaching (ELT). Thomas Lickona claimed that two great educational goals are to help youth be smart and help people get good character (Lickona, 1991). Since the establishment, national education is not only intended to produce intelligent and educated human beings, but also to have an honorable character (Sukardi, 2016). To address the issue of moral decay and character, there is no question that educational institution has a significant role to play in transforming the face of this nation's future (Iplih, 2017). Several institutions use the blended curriculum to cover the religious element and science in education. They teach science in a religious sense and integrate in the teaching of religious knowledge some present modernist way (Syah, 2015).

Life has a spiritual good intent, the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h) said, 'only to complete the noble spiritual qualities has he been sent.' Awareness of the Qur'an is considered excellent as the primary source of Islamic teaching; those who know and those who do not know are not equal (QS. Az-Zumar: 9). It is encouraging people, scientists, or scholars to read, search, and think of any Qur'an-based knowledge, and make it a source of investigation (QS. Al-Ja'atsiya: 12-13). This statement shows the importance of the institution in facilitating religious education (Mwwatamu, 2012). The formation of the character of future generations is a responsibility that all levels and institutions must undertake and implement (Juharyanto, 2017). Lubis noted that one possible definition of integrated is co-existence between science and non-science subjects (Lubis M. A., 2015) and that several scholars have demonstrated the value of religiosity (Salleh, 2012). In addition, Muslim trusts that religion regulates all aspects of life of its believers as individuals, members of society and their environment (Djamdjuri, 2020).

Different instances of crime and moral deviations indicate that the character of most people is already at a distressing level. As a result, incorporating the concepts of character into the English teaching and learning operation is important (Islami, 2016). One research showed English textbook review tailed witheleven Islamic characters. The characters are making ukhuwah insaniyah in terms of successes, good behavior and aptitude, caring for friends (empathy), acknowledging God, kindness, squad work, and supporting one another, commending others, caring for animals and plants, and even reporting news (information) (Elmy, 2016).

In the 14th century, the term character frequently used in French, which was known as 'character', then spread into the English language, namely 'character', eventually becoming 'karakter' in Indonesian (Elmubarok, 2008). Al-Attas believed that the primary aim of education is to lead people to know their Creator and to recognize him. In obedience and devotion to His commandments, this is embodied (Al-Attas, 1980). The Quran labels it ideal for communicating with Allah whatever actions man conducts. As Allah said in the Qur'an, "My prayer, my sacrifice, my life, and my death are all for Allah, the Cherisher of the Worlds" (QS. Al An'am: 162). (QS. Al An'am: 162). In other words, Islamic education 's primary aim is to create the good being, who emerges accordingly through all his / her capacities (Al-Hafiz & Salleh, 2015).

While revelation is the fundamental Islamic source of understanding, it never avoids the understanding of purpose and sense (Tahir, 2013). Prominent Islamic philosophers such as Al-Ghazali said that, as well as advancing moral and ethical attributes, the primary objective of education was to cultivate character such as simplicity, obedience, modesty, and good attitudes such as total submission to God's will, dependence on God, and gratitude to Him alone, as Ibn Khaldun, Ibn Sina, and Ibn Maskawih stated: Through learning the Qur'an and religious sciences, it will lead to good action and good character, and help them become a

good Muslim and a good member of society. In addition, education is not aimed primarily at intellectual growth and the accumulation of knowledge, but at the creation of personality, body, mind and character (Al-Hafiz & Salleh, 2015).

The connectivity of knowledge and 'adab' (morality or Islamic behavior) in Islam becomes one of some important issues, such as two inseparable sides of a coin, that they are being merged together. Prophet Muhammad was ordered by Allah the Almighty to always inquire for beneficial knowledge (QS. Taha: 114). Ibn Uyainah said the Prophet Muhammad was still looking for beneficial knowledge till the end of his life (Husaini, 2013). Islamic acts, good deeds or good conduct, as one of the basic teachings in Islam, have a central role in education. In the implementation of education, the present generation encounters moral decadence that shows less traces of the construction of student character (Muhibah, 2014). In particular, high moral expectations can be converted by training and disciplining students to have the best manners and personal characteristics (Nuriman, 2017).

Meanwhile, Behaviorism stresses the importance of outlays of these performances in learning theory, and deals with certain responses that are tailed by reinforcement are more likely to reappear in the future (Winn 1990) as cited in (Ertmer & Newby, 2013). The learner is regarded as being sensitive to conditions in the environment as contrasting to taking a dynamic role in exploring the surroundings. While behaviorists reflect on both student and environmental factors, environmental conditions gain the greatest emphasis. However, the most important aspect is the pre-arrangement of stimuli and implications within the atmosphere (Ertmer & Newby, 2013). Unlike behaviorists' views, the constructivists interpreted learning as an examination of meaning. However a behaviorist will remain concerned about the material to be learned and the effects of the environment on the learning, a constructivist would be more concerned about how the learner is attempting to construct meaning (Weegar & Pacis, 2012). Although the theory of constructivism has different

highlights with the theory of behaviorism, they meet in this study on the presence of the context experiences of learners who undergo the cognitive ending with the behavior or behaviors of the learners. From those backgrounds research questions are formulated as follows: How are the understandings of the students towards the values of character in Islamic materials and how the students' academic achievements are.

Materials and Method

Most of Indonesian people or English learners are obviously Muslims. They need teaching materials that have become accustomed to Muslim living. Such learning materials will prompt them through content and will encourage their understanding of the form. In addition, integrated learning with Islamic values offers students the opportunity to share information in real life as Muslims with their thoughts and experiences so that students can feel meaningful about their learning (Purwanti, Zubaidah, Corebima, & Mahanal, 2018). These factors lead the author to discuss the use of such Islamic teaching materials. Teaching materials are paired with an education in Islamic character and used in the classroom as teaching materials. The researcher applies a mixed method, namely a qualitative descriptive approach combined with the quassy-experimental design. These methods combine in a single study. The aim is to draw on the synergy and strength between quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis to describe a phenomenon more completely than is possible using either quantitative or qualitative methods alone (Mills & Gay, 2019).

Variables of the Research

Since this research used mix method, a part of the research needs to determine the variables for the quantitative study. Beside the analysis of descriptive qualitative study on students' understanding on character values, there are two variables in this research. The independent variable (X) is: Character Education integrated in Islamic teaching materials, while the

dependent variable (Y) is: the students' achievement on the use of Islamic materials integrated in character values.

Result and Discussion

Students' Understanding on Character Value

As mentioned in Pusat Kurikulum (2010), the character values that were administered to the students were 18 characters. The researcher answered four open-ended questions that students would answer in order to obtain students 'comprehension of the character or moral meaning of each of the texts. The questions were answered to the A and B experimental class members. Sixty students were as participants.

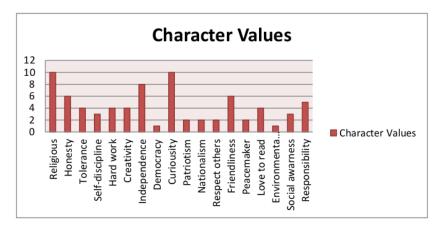


Figure 1. Character values that the students get from learning English through Islamic materials

Figure 1 displays the character values identified by the respondents. All respondents were able to recognize all characters, but six character values were the majority of the character values they dealt with. There were 10 respondents who reported religious character, 6 respondents reported integrity, 4 respondents reported tolerance, 3 respondents reported self-discipline, 4 respondents reported hard work, 4 respondents noted creativity, 8 respondents noted independence, 1 respondents noted democracy, 10 respondents noted curiosity, 2 students noted patriotism, 2 students noted nationalism, 2 respondents noted respect for

others, 6 students noted friendliness, 2 respondents noted peace, 4 students noted love of reading, 1 student noted environmental sensitivity, 3 students noted social consciousness, and five respondents noted responsibility. From the data it can be interpreted that most characters are six characters selected by students; religiosity, honesty, independence, curiosity, friendliness, and responsibility. These results are reliable with the assumption of behaviorists which would like to look at the quality of learning and the effects of the environment and a constructivist will be more interested in understanding how the learner attempts to make meaning (Weegar & Pacis, 2012).

Furthermore, the character values occurring in the text were understood by all the respondents. They claimed that they could not only understand but also explicitly apply the character in their real life, as claimed by (Syah, 2015). The argument also proved that the learner is seen as adapting to atmospheric conditions as contrasted with taking a dynamic part in the exploration of the surroundings (Ertmer & Newby, 2013). As well religion also governs all aspects of the life of its adherents as individuals, members of society and their environment, in accordance with Muslim trusts (Djamdjuri, 2020), owing to the use of Islamic materials as instructional materials in English language teaching can be concluded that the students have some beneficial results. This shows that learning Islamic materials leads to good conduct and good character, which will make them a good Muslim and a good member of society (Al-Hafiz & Salleh, 2015).

The Students' Achievements

This section concerns the outcome of the research and the interpretation of the quantitative method findings. The findings obtained in this chapter consist of data analysis obtained via the instrument (test) to see the achievement after being taught in two experimental groups of Islamic materials and non-Islamic materials in another treatment group.

Grades of students from the Experimental Group and the Control Group

There are 30 students in the experimental group A as well as in the group B. The data indicates that from the grade points of the pre-tested students, the cumulative or total grade points of the students are 1585 and the grade point average is 52.83. Whereas after treatment, the cumulative grade points of the students in the post-test are 2627 and the grade point average is 87.57. Meanwhile, in the Experimental Category B, the data reveals that from the grade points of the students pre-tested, the cumulative or cumulative grade points of the students are 1399 and the grade point average is 46.63. After care, the overall grade point for post-test students is 2337 and the grade point average is 77.90. This means that the average grade point student improves from 46.63 before the treatment to 77.90 after the treatment. Meanwhile, in the control group, the results indicate that from the student grade point pretesting, the student's cumulative or complete grade point is 1381 and the grade point average is 46.03. After treatment, the overall grade point for post-test students is 1879 and the grade point average is 62.63. It means that the students grade point average increase slightly from 46.03 before the treatment to 62.63 after the treatment. Those results are in line with the behaviorists who concerns at the material to be learned and the impact of the environment on the learning (Weegar & Pacis, 2012).

The mean score and standard deviation of the students

The tabulation of the student achievement data analysis can be found in the table below. It shows that the total number for each group in experimental group A is 30 and group B is 30 and the control group is 30. The data indicates that there is a substantial increase in student achievement. Table 1 and Figure 2 below display that before some treatments, the mean score of the pretest from the experimental group A and the control group are approximately in the same score level.

Table 1. The Students' Achievement Results in Pretest and Posttest

	Pretest			Posttest		
	Exp. A	Exp. B	Control	Exp. A	Exp. B	Control
Respondents	30	30	30	30	30	30
Mean	52.83	46.63	46.03	87.57	77.90	62.63
SD	14.508	12.133	9.182	8.958	7.194	11.766

It is represented more clearly from the chart below:

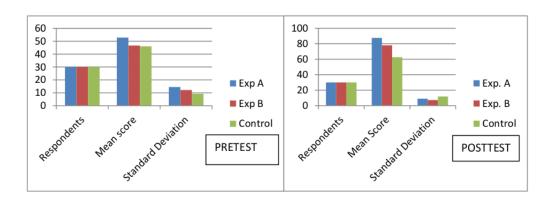


Figure 2. The Students' Achievement in Pretest and Posttest

Table 1 and Figure 2 shows that the students' score before treatment are 52.83 for the experimental group A, 46.63 for experimental group B and 46.03 for the control group. After given the treatment, the posttest score to both groups show a difference score of mean score. They are 87.57 for the experimental group A, 77.90 for experimental group B and 62.63 for the control group. It means that there is a significant improvement of the students' achievements of the experimental group A and B after giving the treatments. In the contrary there is no significant improvement of the students' achievements in the control group. The mean score and standard deviation show difference in pretest and posttest to the three groups.

The T-test for the experimental and control groups

From the result of t-test was calculated using inferential statistic through SPSS program version 20.0, the data shows that the probability value or significance (2-tailed) from both experimental groups is smaller than α , (0.000 < 0.05). It means that there is a significant difference before treatment in pretest and after treatment in posttest. In other words, there is an improvement on the students' achievements between pretest and posttest in experimental groups after the treatment. In addition, from the calculation of t-count and t-table of both Experimental groups and control group, with the t-table value in DF = N-2 = 28, it is gained t-count > t-table (9.235 > 1.70113) for experimental group A and control group, and (6.063 > 1.70113)1.70113) for experimental group B and control group. Because the t-count > t table for both groups, it means there is a significant difference between the results of both experimental groups and control group or in the other words H 1 is accepted and H 0 is rejected. So, there is significant difference on the achievements of the students using Islamic teaching materials before and after the treatment. The Islamic materials are able to give significantly greater contribution to the students' achievements. It proves that the primary aim of Islamic education is to create the good being that emerges accordingly through all his / her capacities (Al-Hafiz & Salleh, 2015).

Conclusion

Students' responses to open-ended questions indicate that students have some positive influence on the use of Islamic tools as instructional materials in English language teaching. The interpretation of ELT-integrated character values by students using Islamic teaching materials is also about six characters: religiosity, honesty, independence, curiosity, friendliness and responsibility. The character values in the text were, however, understood by all students. They said they not only understood but were able to apply the character directly

in their real life. In the experimental group, meanwhile, the pre-test and post-test performance of the students was calculated using inferential statistics. It is concluded that between pre-test and post-test grades, there is a noticeable difference. That is, the students achievements are improving. From this research, we can see that Islamic materials are capable of making a significantly greater contribution to the achievement of students.

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