

## **Character Building in English Language Teaching Involving The Use of Social Media**

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### **Abstract**

Recently, character building has been promoted in the world of education. Teachers and educators are aware of students' characters building. They play an important role in education. Teachers have a duty to teach character values in the English instructional process. This paper presents how an English language teacher can possibly promote character building among his/her students. The teaching-learning process of building good morals is integrated into the teaching and learning process (Zubaedi, 2011). Firstly, the teachers should have sufficient knowledge about what morals are taught and trained among the students. Secondly, they have to be aware of the process in moral teaching which consists of (a) the phase of transferring knowledge about a moral (b) the phase of the feeling of moral (c) the phase of acting on the moral (Zubaedi, 2011). These three phases are to be integrated into the teaching of English, in any approach.

**Keywords:** *Character building, English Language Teaching, social media*

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### **Background**

At this time character building has been promoted in the world of education. It becomes awareness to us, teachers and educators that the building of students' characters becomes our concern, our duty as a teacher in the English teaching process. We, educators are supposed to find ways of educating the students' moral.

Tamansiswa have three centers of education- the school-the society and the family. All these three centers have to educate children in the morality. Naturally, these three centers give effects to the children life because they see and listen throughout the three. They listen, see and read what their teachers and friends act, speak. They listen, see and read what their parents, siblings act, and speak. They listen, see and read their

surroundings- their neighbours, TV, internet, including social media, and so on. If the three present good things, the children will be good and vise-versa.

The minister of education states (2014) that character building is supposed to be firstly carried out at home and the role of the teachers in this case is when the students are at school. Anyway, the teachers have a good position in moral education since they have a function in formal education in which the students must show their good behaviors. Therefore, teachers have a very significant responsibility in this job. The minister testifies that teachers are to become model in favorable morals.

This paper will focus on the character building around the school, especially in the classroom during English teaching and learning process. Social media is involved in this teaching and learning process.

## **Literature Review**

### **1. Some principles of character building in the teaching process**

The teaching learning process in building good morals is integrated in the teaching and learning process in each school subject (Zubaedi, 2011). Character building should not become a special subject to be taught in the school. Developing good characters is carried out while teaching a subject, either English, history, mathematics etc.

A teaching learning process needs various activities and texts in which elements about morals are added. The morals are introduced in the texts and the activities. It is in line with the syllabus of Botswana Misnitry of Education which states that literature is intended to make a significant contribution to moral and intellectual development of the students (Adeyemi, Moumakwa, Adeyemi, 2009). The product of is the behavior or the inner side of the students which indicates the existence of the good moral developed or taught by the teacher.

There are some phases in character building. Firstly, the teachers should have sufficient knowledge about what morals are taught and trained among the students. (Zubaidi, 2011). This is a must, since they have to know what behaviors or actions are to be the outcome of the characters. Secondly, they have to be aware of the process in moral teaching consisting of (a) the phase of transferring knowledge about a moral (b) the phase of the feeling of moral (c) the phase of acting on the moral (Zubaedi, 2011).

It is a demand that the teachers at school are supposed to act on some requirement (Zubaedi, 2011). They need to (a) be involved in the teaching and learning process (b) give an exemplary model in their behaviors (c) encourage the students to be active in improving the students' moral and personality. These requirements needs practices carried out by both parties, teachers and students.

One of the tools to investigate on the moral is diary which is defined as strictly a record of personal and daily experience ([english.stakexchange.com/questions](http://english.stakexchange.com/questions)). About the use of a diary in language learning, it is used in language learning strategies for strategy assessment (Oxford, 1990). Accordingly, it is likely to be used for assessing the action on

morals. It is believed that it will encourage the students to act on it as it will be looked upon by the teachers.

## 2. Integration of character building in the English teaching and learning process.

Character building is probably integrated with any approach or method in language teaching and learning. No matter what methods a teacher do, it will work. As long as there are texts and activities, there are opportunities for the learners to teach morals.

The process of the three phases is integrated in the genre based approach with the stages of Building Knowledge of Field (BKOF), Modelling of Text (MOT), Joint Construction of Texts (JCOT), and Individual Construction of Texts (ICOT) - the approach of the 2006 curriculum which is supposed to be used again recently. Transferring knowledge about the moral and the feeling of the moral are possibly inserted in the texts provided either in the BKOF or modeling of text. The acting on the moral is on all the stages- of BKOF, Modelling of texts, JCOT and ICOT. It is acted either by the teacher or the students. The teacher is supposed to act on the moral which becomes an example to the students and the students are encouraged to act on the morals during the English teaching and learning.

## 3. Social Media in Teaching

Social media is forms of electronic communication ( such as websites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages and other content (such as video). In presenting the social media should be through careful selection for teaching. It must not be a hoax and is not a political practice either. It is something real of a good experience of someone or people showing a good moral. Some benefits of social media in teaching are (a) a lot of people watch social media (b) it is popular, real, attractive and impressive (c) because of that students/learners are willing to discuss it (d) they have a lot of various oppinions to the objects being discussed ( e) they can have more and different sources about a certain object. Therefore it will arouse motivation to continue the discussion

## 4. Planning the Teaching Material

When planning the material, a certain moral is inserted. The moral must not be taught as it is but integrated in a certain topic. As an example is when the goal is ability to write a recount text. The moral taught is bravery and helpfulness.

Before the teacher teaching the moral, he/she is supposed to analyze the moral of bravery and helpfulness. He/she asks first what is meant by bravery and helpfulness. What action shows bravery and helpfulness? According to Paguyuban Ngesti Tunggal (2013) a good help is a help which is in accordance with the need of the person being helped and the capacity of the helper. Bravery belongs to self-confidence, the feelings of sure that you can do things well.

- a. During the stage of Building Knowledge of Field (BKOF)

In this stage, it is explained first about BKOF or building knowledge of field which is basically the development of overall knowledge of the cultural and social contexts of the topic built (Hammond, Burns, Joyce, Brosnan, Gerot, 1992, Helena, 2005). During this phase the teacher is supposed to suggest things in order that the moral is passed to the students while brainstorming the topic. The social media showing the action presenting bravery and helpfulness is presented. As an example is the series of pictures of Joni, a hero in a flag ceremony.



*Figure 1 Example of media*

In BKOF, structure and vocabulary is also taught in support to the understanding of the text and writing a similar text. In giving the tasks of vocabulary and grammar lessons some sentences are also about the moral trained. It is stressed here that only some sentences convey the moral otherwise it will be boring.

b. Modelling of Text

An example of a text with the topic “Joni, a hero in a flag ceremony is as follows.

Joni is a student in Belu, NTT. He is very popular recently. It was because he showed his bravery in a flag ceremony.

At that time, a flag ceremony took place in his area. A lot of people attended the ceremony. There were also important people and one of them was the bupati.

He felt unwell because he had a stomachache. His teacher took him to the school health center (UKS)

After a while, he knew a terrible thing outside. There was a problem with the rope of the flag. That is why the flag could not go up. The leader of the ceremony said “ Who will go up the pole ?

Hearing that, Joni woke up and went to the pole. He climbed up the small but tall pole. It was very dangerous but he went up. It showed his bravery, and helpfulness. He wanted to help the people in the ceremony.

His bravery was exposed in the social media. Important people in this country recognized that. They wanted to see Joni.

President Jokowi also invited him to the palace. Then, he flew to Jakarta with his parents. He looked very happy. In the airport, he was picked up by the officers.

Joni got a lot of rewards because of his action. The rewards was a scholarship, 50 millions rupiah and a house.

His bravery, self-confidence and helpfulness gave him happiness and luck.

Questions about the text can be given. The questions are about the content which also involves the characters/moral which are presented in the text. When giving questions to the students, some questions about characters can be asked like (a) why should we help others? (b) What are other behaviours showing that you help others (c) how can we have self-confidence?

c. JCOT ( Joint Construction of Texts)

This is the phase when the students are supposed to create their own text in writing. The text in MOT can become a model in writing. It is about writing a recount text which is possibly entitled Andika, a kind boy in a market. Andika is one of the students in a group who has an experience in helping women in a market carry their goods. A good moral about Andika should be presented in an action/actions. They can also about some one else they know even from other countries.

d. ICOT ( Individual Construction of Texts)

In ICOT, the students are supposed to create their own texts. In writing, the students are asked to write their own text - in this case it is about themselves as what is given in the model. Before they write the text they have to make actions showing moral taught in the class before. In this case it is about bravery/ self confidence and helpfulness.

## **Conclusion**

There are some principles of character building in English education. Some of which are (a) character building is integrated in the class of each subject at school (b) The phases followed consists of the teachers' sufficient knowledge about what morals to be taught, awareness of the teacher in moral teaching, feeling of the moral, acting on the moral. In English education character building can be integrated in any approach or method. Being integrated in genre based approach, the character building is in all the stages- building knowledge of field, modeling of text, joint construction of text, individual construction of text.

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