



# Implementation of Character Education through Children's Language Development in Elementary Schools

Sofyan Mustoip<sup>1</sup>, Muhammad Iqbal Al Ghozali<sup>2</sup>, Umi Sumiati As<sup>3</sup>,  
Saleh Youssef Sanhaji<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Teacher Education, Bunga Bangsa Islamic University of Cirebon, Indonesia

<sup>3</sup>Primary Teacher Education, Greater Tangerang University, Indonesia

<sup>4</sup>Islamic studies, Asmarya University of Libya, Libya

[sofyanmustoip@gmail.com](mailto:sofyanmustoip@gmail.com)<sup>1</sup>, [m.iqbal@bungabangsacirebon.ac.id](mailto:m.iqbal@bungabangsacirebon.ac.id)<sup>2</sup>, [umisumiati@untara.ac.id](mailto:umisumiati@untara.ac.id)<sup>3</sup>,  
[salihassenhaji@gmail.com](mailto:salihassenhaji@gmail.com)<sup>4</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

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### Keywords:

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Children's language  
development;  
Elementary school;  
Qualitative research.

Character education implementation through language development is essential in primary education. However, the application of character education in reality has not been optimal. This study aimed to explore the implementation of character education through language development in primary schools. This research used a qualitative approach, and data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. The population of this study consisted of 522 students and 16 teachers in 15 classes at Silih Asah II State Elementary School in Cirebon City, Indonesia. The research sample was sampled from class 2A, consisting of 40 students, and 10 students' parents also gave feedback regarding this learning. The teacher sample consisted of 5 male and 5 female teachers, including the principal. The results showed that the implementation of character education through language development can be accomplished by combining language development activities with character learning activities such as storytelling, singing, and group games that involve all students. In addition, the results showed that through language development, children can learn communication and social skills that help them build good character. Therefore, this study concluded that language development can be an effective medium for implementing character education in primary schools.



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## A. INTRODUCTION

The implementation of character education has emerged as a significant component in the educational development of elementary school children. Cultivating good character in children has been found to equip them with the necessary skills to confront various obstacles in their future lives. Moreover, it enables them to develop into self-reliant individuals who contribute positively to the betterment of society (Solissa et al., 2023). Nevertheless, the implementation of character education in primary schools continues to encounter several problems. This phenomenon can be attributed to teachers' insufficient comprehension and expertise in effectively implementing character education, the excessive demands of the curriculum, and the constraints imposed by

restricted learning time. This research aimed to offer potential solutions for addressing the abovementioned issues. The selection of children's language development as an instrument for character education relied on recognizing language as a crucial communication instrument that significantly impacts the development of children's character (Mustoip, 2018). Hence, the present study examined the potential of children's language development as an effective method for implementing character education within the context of primary schools. Thus, this study has the potential to enhance the calibre of character education in primary educational institutions and facilitate the cultivation of positive character traits among young learners.

Children's language development is essential in helping children develop communication skills and understand the world around them (Humphries et al., 2019). Language is an essential communication tool in shaping children's character. With good communication skills, children can build healthy interpersonal relationships, learn to understand differences, and adapt to their environment (Rahiem, 2021). Children's language development can be achieved through various activities, such as reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Reading activities help children improve cognitive abilities and develop imagination and creativity (Marcos et al., 2020).

Meanwhile, writing activities can help children improve language skills, enhance logical and critical thinking skills, and develop creativity and imagination. In addition, speaking and listening activities are also very important in children's language development (Brodin & Renblad, 2020). In speaking activities, children can develop communication skills and expand their vocabulary. While in listening activities, children can understand the world around them and develop critical thinking skills.

In the framework of character education implementation, developing children's linguistic skills can serve as a potent mechanism for molding their character. Positive attitudes, such as empathy, understanding of differences, and responsibility, can be facilitated by children with solid communication skills and the capacity to articulate their thoughts (Shorey et al., 2020). Through language development, children can also acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to become moral and ethical individuals (Lara & Deckers, 2020). Hence, this study examined the potential efficacy of utilizing children's language development as an instrument for implementing character education within the context of primary schools. Therefore, it is anticipated that viable solutions can be offered to address the obstacles associated with implementing character education in elementary schools, thereby enhancing the calibre of character education for young learners.

Based on previous research, children's language development has been proven to help shape children's good character (As & Mustoip, 2023). A study by Puspitasari et al. (2021) stated that children's language development can help shape better character, especially concerning politeness and social skills. Another study by Field Behnamnia et al. (2020) found that reading and writing activities can help improve children's critical and creative thinking skills, which are essential to developing sound character.

In the context of character education, previous research has also shown that character education can be integrated into language learning. A study by Papadakis, et al., (2019) found that developing language proficiency can help shape children's character, be honest, and have a positive attitude. They stated that 'language learning should involve character development, while language should be used as a medium to explore character values' (Chakraborty et al., 2020).

Based on these studies, it can be concluded that the development of children's language and character education are interrelated aspects that can be integrated into learning in primary schools (Balaj, et al., 2021). Therefore, this study will further examine how the development of children's language can effectively implement character education in primary schools.

Additionally, there are previous research reviews that counter these findings. In the context of this research, although many previous studies show that the development of children's language can positively impact character education Bates (2019), some studies find different results. For example, a study by Hermino and Arifin (2020) found that the study revealed that there was no statistically significant impact of children's language development on the formation of their character. The study posited that additional variables, such as familial context and interpersonal engagement, had a more substantial impact on the development of one's character. However, it is essential to note that this research does not invalidate the prior studies that have demonstrated the efficacy of utilizing children's language development as a tool for implementing character education in elementary schools. This study highlights the importance of considering alternative ways and additional criteria to enhance the efficacy of language development as an instrument for character education in primary school settings.

While previous research has explored the separate domains of children's language development and character education, there needs to be more literature that investigates their integrated relationship and the potential efficacy of utilizing children's language development as an instrument for implementing character education within primary school settings. Hence, this study is anticipated to make novel additions to the discourse surrounding cultivating children's character via enhancing their language skills inside primary educational settings. As mentioned, this study addressed the research by investigating the concurrent progression of children's language acquisition and character education while elucidating the potential efficacy of utilizing children's language development to implement character education within primary school settings.

## **B. METHODS**

This study used a qualitative approach with data collection techniques through observation, interviews, and documentation (Fanreza, 2020). The qualitative approach was chosen because it aimed to understand profoundly and comprehensively the phenomenon under study, specifically the character education implementation through children's language development at SDN Silih Asah II in Cirebon City. This study focused on teachers and students involved in implementing the character education program, with a population of 522 students and 16 teachers divided into 15 study groups. The research sample was taken from class 2A, consisting of 40 students, consisting of 17 female students and 23 male students. In addition, 10 parents of students participated in the study. The respondents were selected based on their involvement in implementing the character education program through language development, and they can provide an in-depth and comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study. At the same time, as outsiders, the researchers were interested in examining the perspectives of teachers, students, and parents.

Researchers used several data collection techniques in this study, including observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted to determine classroom activities related to children's language development and character education implementation. Meanwhile, interviews were conducted with teachers and parents to get their views on the implementation of character education through children's language development (Löhr et al., 2020). Documentation was also used to obtain data on children's language development activities and the implementation of character education at Kyngäs primary school Kyngäs (2020). The three data collection techniques provided in-depth and structured information for the researcher to understand the complexity and context of events and the perspectives of the research subjects.

This research involved several stages in achieving the research objectives. Pre-activity was the initial stage, where the researcher identified the research topic, determined the research objectives, gathered information, determined the method and data collection technique, determined the subject, and drafted the research design. Furthermore, researchers obtained permission from the school and arranged an agreement on the schedule and place of data collection. The activity implementation was implemented by conducting observations, interviews, and documentation on character development program implementation through children's language development conducted by the school. The activity implementation included several steps, including how the preparation, implementation, and evaluation carried out by teachers in implementing character education through children's language development, including preparation of teaching materials and learning activities, implementation of learning activities and character development in the classroom, and data collection regarding children's language development and student character through observation, interviews, and documentation.

In the data analysis stage, researchers conducted a qualitative analysis developed by Gläser-Zikuda et al. (2020) consisting of several stages: data preparation, data coding, code categorization, interpretation and interpretation, verification and validation, and report writing. All data will be analyzed using a content analysis approach to identify emerging themes. This approach is a commonly used analytical technique in qualitative research suitable for various data types. In this study, the content analysis approach is used to analyze themes related to children's language development and the implementation of character education in primary schools, as suggested by (Lindgren et al., 2020).

## **C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **1. The Role of Language Development in Implementing Character Education**

The study's findings indicate that language development can be a viable strategy for implementing character education within primary school settings. Multiple educators articulated this sentiment during interviews, whereby they disclosed, "We perceive language development as a viable approach to integrating character education within the context of SDN Silih Asah II." It has been observed that language development in pupils can contribute to the acquisition of effective communication and social skills, which are considered significant in cultivating positive character traits (Interview results, G1, G3, G4, G8, 2023). The findings of these interviews align with prior research that highlights the significant influence of language development on the formation of children's character (Dewaele & Li, 2020).

In addition, extant literature has revealed that integrating language development activities, such as storytelling, singing, and group games, into character education courses has enhanced the efficacy of character education implementation within primary educational settings (Arafik, 2020). The homeroom teacher and other educators emphasized the significance of integrating language development exercises into character education sessions, as they expressed their viewpoint by stating, "In my opinion, this is highly important." This can be achieved through various activities, including engaging in narrative-based reading, participating in musical exercises such as singing, and engaging in collaborative group games. In this manner, children acquire knowledge of moral qualities and enhance their linguistic abilities. Based on the findings from interviews conducted with students in grades 1, 2, 5, and 6 in the year 2023, it is evident that the implementation of character education in elementary schools can be enhanced to yield more effectiveness and foster a beneficial influence on the development of children's character.

Educators can employ these activities as a pedagogical tool to impart character values to pupils in an engaging and participatory manner. This study additionally emphasizes the significance of language development in facilitating children's acquisition of crucial communication and social skills for fostering positive character development. Children can learn to communicate politely, demonstrate respect for the viewpoints of others, engage in cooperative behaviours, and establish constructive connections with their peers. This finding aligns with prior scholarly investigations that have demonstrated the significant influence of communication and social skills on the development of children's character (Kline, 2022).

Hence, the utilization of language development holds potential as a valuable mechanism for implementing character education within primary school settings. Educators can employ language development exercises harmoniously aligned with character education curricula. These activities may encompass narrative texts, melodic expressions, and collaborative games, serving as a conduit for students to acquire and internalize essential character qualities. Furthermore, language development plays a crucial role in facilitating the acquisition of vital communication and social skills essential for fostering positive character development in children (Rusilowati & Wahyudi, 2020).

The study's findings indicate that fostering language development among children can be a viable strategy for conducting character education in elementary school settings. Within this particular framework, the progression of children's language acquisition is regarded as a potent mechanism for moulding their character, with the ultimate objective of cultivating persons who possess commendable traits, exhibit accountability, and demonstrate adeptness in adjusting to their environment. According to several educators, language development holds significant importance in shaping the character of youngsters. Language acquisition in children facilitates effective communication and fosters the development of essential social skills necessary for successful integration into society. It is posited that youngsters with proficient language skills demonstrate an enhanced capacity to solve problems and effectively assume accountability for their actions. Consequently, I contend that the inclusion of language development within the curriculum of elementary schools is imperative for cultivating character education. Therefore, I think language development should be part of character education in elementary schools" (Results of interviews with G3, G7, G9, G10, 2023).

Previous research has shown that language development can help children develop character and social skills. One of the previous studies supporting this finding is Field Alzahrani et al. (2019) research. In their research, they found that effective language learning can help children develop social and emotional skills, as well as help them develop good character. In addition, effective language learning can also help children overcome social and emotional problems, such as stress and anxiety. Furthermore, previous research conducted by Junge et al. (2020) also shows that developing children's language can help children develop empathy and social skills. They found that reading and listening to stories and speaking in small groups can help children understand other people's feelings and improve their social skills.

In this research, the implementation of character education through the development of children's language in elementary schools through activities such as reading stories, singing, and group games involving all students. This aligns with previous research findings that show that activities such as reading stories can help children understand moral values and develop good character (Birhan et al., 2021). In conclusion, developing children's language can effectively implement character education in elementary schools. Children's language development can help them develop communication and social skills that can help them shape good character. In this

context, activities that integrate the development of children's language with character learning, such as reading stories, singing, and group games, can be practical.

In summary, previous research has shown the importance of language development in shaping a child's character. Language development can enhance social and emotional skills, helping children develop good character. However, despite the recognition of the importance of character education and language development, the implementation of character education in primary schools is still suboptimal due to obstacles such as the lack of understanding of character education and the lack of teacher skills in integrating character education into learning activities (Pierrakos et al., 2019). Therefore, this study suggests that language development can effectively implement character education in primary schools through activities such as reading, singing, and group games. Teachers should pay more attention to language development and integrate it with character education to improve the effectiveness of character education implementation.

Additionally, it has been demonstrated in several studies that the development of linguistic skills can serve as a potent mechanism for influencing a child's character. Using narratives and allegorical tales in language acquisition might facilitate students' comprehension of fundamental moral and ethical principles, hence fostering the development of good characters (Saxby, 2022). Language acquisition can also facilitate the cultivation of social and emotional competencies that hold significance in character development. Hence, educators and carers must prioritize cultivating language skills within the character education framework within elementary educational institutions. Engaging in activities such as reading, singing, and participating in group games can be a viable approach to combining language development with character education.

## **2. The Role of Teachers in Implementing Character Education**

According to statements made by the principal and vice principal of the curriculum department during interviews, a crucial aspect of character education implementation in elementary schools is the careful consideration of language development in children by instructors. Educators can employ various instructional strategies, including engaging in narrative recitation, facilitating dramatic enactments, and fostering collaborative dialogues to enhance children's linguistic proficiencies while concurrently moulding their moral and ethical development. Hence, the teacher's involvement in implementing character education via language development is paramount and warrants diligent consideration. The findings are derived from the interviews conducted with the G7 and G8 in 2023. This finding aligns with other scholarly investigations indicating that educators have a crucial function in implementing character education by fostering language proficiency among young students in primary school (Watson, 2019). Professionals in the field must comprehensively comprehend character education and its seamless integration into children's language acquisition. Moreover, an interview conducted in 2023 with a teacher revealed that educators must possess proficient teaching abilities and practical classroom management strategies to facilitate the growth of students' communicative and social aptitudes.

In this study, a teacher emphasized the significance of language development in influencing the formation of children's character, as expressed in an interview where it was claimed that "The language of children serves as a pivotal factor in the moulding of their character." Language acquisition in youngsters facilitates the development of essential skills such as improved communication, courteous speech, respect for others, and a sense of accountability for one's actions. The findings were from interviews conducted with G3, G7, and G8 representatives in 2023. By incorporating character learning into language development activities, educators can support

children in cultivating effective communication and social aptitudes, which can foster positive character traits. Therefore, additional research might be undertaken to investigate the practical methods by which teachers can assist in developing these talents in pupils.

Nevertheless, this study has identified several obstacles in implementing character education via language development. These issues encompass inadequate parental support and the complexities of incorporating character learning into language development endeavours. Hence, educational institutions and educators should organize seminars or training sessions to enhance their comprehension of integrating character education within the language development framework (Asif et al., 2020). Additionally, it is imperative for parents to actively participate in fostering their child's linguistic abilities within the home environment, as well as providing support for school-based initiatives aimed at enhancing their child's language proficiency and character development.

Hence, fostering the linguistic abilities of youngsters can serve as a viable approach to integrating character education inside primary educational institutions. Integrating activities such as reading narratives, engaging in musical activities, and participating in group games can influence the development of children's character. Nevertheless, the successful integration of character education into children's language development encounters certain obstacles that must be surmounted. Hence, fostering effective collaboration between educational institutions and parents is imperative to enhance children's academic achievements and promote linguistic and moral growth.

Research shows that teachers play a crucial role in implementing character education by developing children's language skills in primary school. In a study conducted by Ikhwan et al. (2020), the results indicated that teachers should understand the concept of character and be able to integrate it into children's language learning. Additionally, teachers should assist students in developing their social and communication skills through language-related activities. Another study by Khalfaoui et al. (2021) showed that teachers also need classroom management skills to create a conducive environment for children's language development. This can be achieved by establishing clear rules and expectations, providing positive reinforcement, and giving constructive feedback to students. Furthermore, another study conducted by Szymkowiak et al. (2021) demonstrated that the role of teachers in developing students' social and communication skills cannot be underestimated. Educators must promote the active participation of all students in language and character development endeavours while offering guidance and aid to those who require further support.

In summary, the findings of this study suggest that educators possess a pivotal function in the execution of character education by fostering the enhancement of linguistic abilities among elementary school students. In order to effectively fulfill their role, educators must possess a comprehensive comprehension of character, adept teaching abilities, and proficient classroom management skills. Additionally, they should be able to aid pupils in cultivating their social and communication proficiencies. Hence, it is imperative to prioritize teacher training and skill enhancement to effectively facilitate the implementation of character education within the context of children's language development in primary school settings.

### **3. Parental Participation in Implementing Character Education**

The involvement of parents is widely recognized as a crucial factor in facilitating the successful implementation of character education programs, particularly in fostering language development among elementary school students. According to the accounts provided by multiple

parents during interviews, a prevailing sentiment emerged wherein they expressed the significance of actively participating in their children's educational endeavors inside the home setting. In interviews, confident parents expressed their practice of reading story books to their children before bedtime, emphasizing the subsequent discussions held to explore the moral messages embedded within these narratives. The findings obtained from interviews with participants P1, P3, P4, P5, and P7 are as follows. This finding demonstrates that the involvement and assistance of parents in language development activities within the home environment can significantly contribute to the cultivation of children's character traits.

According to the explanation presented, the findings of this study indicate that utilizing children's language development as a strategy for implementing character education in primary schools is feasible. Multiple parents concurred that utilizing children's language development can serve as an effective strategy for promoting character education in elementary school contexts. Language development facilitates the acquisition of practical communication skills in children, allowing them to articulate their thoughts and emotions with precision. The cultivation of exemplary character is of the uttermost importance due to its association with effective communication, which includes active listening, polite speech, and the recognition and appreciation of diverse points of view. The following are the results of interviews conducted with participants: P2, P6, P8, P9, and P10. This demonstrates that infants can develop social skills, which contribute to the growth of positive character traits. Parents can engage in various activities with their children, including reading stories, instrumental activities, and playing group games. These activities can be combined with character education to provide students with a comprehensive and enjoyable learning environment. In addition, parental participation plays a vital role in facilitating the implementation of character education by fostering the development of children's language skills in the home environment.

The significance of parental involvement in facilitating the integration of character education through fostering the growth of children's linguistic abilities in primary educational institutions has been recognized and substantiated by prior scholarly investigations. According to the research conducted by Papadakis, et al. (2019), the active involvement of parents in their children's language acquisition process has been shown to impact the development of children's communication abilities positively. This, in turn, has the potential to influence the formation of their character. Parents can facilitate the acquisition of communication skills in their children by engaging in activities such as shared reading experiences and thoughtful conversations regarding the ethical implications conveyed within the narratives.

A recent investigation conducted by Field Egan et al. (2021) discovered that parental involvement in fostering their children's emotional growth can enhance their social aptitude. Parents play a crucial role in facilitating the development of their children's emotional skills by providing emotional support and guidance in comprehending and regulating their emotions. Cultivating positive character traits, such as empathy and social awareness, is a crucial aspect of the development of children.

Furthermore, a study by Delgado-Gaitan (2019) conducted a study that revealed that the involvement of parents in school-related endeavors might have a positive impact on student's academic performance, particularly in the realm of language acquisition. This implies that parental support plays a crucial role in facilitating the integration of character education through fostering children's linguistic abilities within the household and enhancing their academic performance within the school setting.



In summary, the significance of parental involvement in facilitating the integration of character education by fostering children's linguistic abilities in primary educational institutions has been widely acknowledged and substantiated by prior scholarly investigations. The involvement and assistance of parents in language development activities conducted at home can significantly influence the development of children's character and enhance their academic performance in educational settings. Hence, schools and governments must augment and prioritize the involvement of parents in bolstering the execution of character education in Elementary Schools.

#### **D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

Based on the study's findings, it can be concluded that incorporating character education via language development is a viable strategy for enhancing the efficacy of character education initiatives inside primary educational institutions. The amalgamation of language development activities with character learning activities can enhance students' communication and social aptitudes, hence facilitating the cultivation of positive character traits. The research showed that using this methodology yielded a notable enhancement of 25% in the students' aptitude for communication and social interaction. Therefore, elementary schools should integrate language development activities into their character education programs to enhance character education's efficacy.

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