THE ROLE OF TRADITIONAL CHILDREN'S STORIES IN CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT IN THE GLOBAL ERA FOR THE STUDENTS OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Abstract

Entering this era of globalization and increasingly sophisticated technology, literature is not only seen as a part of art and culture that aims to entertain but is a means of learning language, studying history, developing character, and so on. Literature has become an important part of education. One of the objectives of literature, especially related to traditional children's literature in education, is to internalize the character values seen in the daily life of society, especially elementary school students. The rapid development of the internet and followed by increasingly sophisticated technological developments has influenced the lifestyle and character of most elementary school students. Coupled with the condition of the corona pandemic and all activities carried out at home, surfing activities on the internet are increasingly out of control. This is very worrying because the flow of information displayed on the internet and offers of online games, which are not all safe for children, are milling about on the internet and these things can affect the character of children, especially children in elementary schools. To overcome this, the role of children's stories as part of literature can be used in developing student character to be better because the stories displayed contain very good moral values. The role of teachers and parents is also very important to overcome the impact of the internet on elementary school students, namely through storytelling activities. With storytelling activities, students can learn various characters contained in children's stories. The purpose of writing this article is the existence of problems related to the decline in the level of community morality, especially students in elementary schools during the corona pandemic which is due to uncontrolled internet use. One solution that can be done is to strengthen the understanding of character education through traditional children's stories told by teachers and parents to students in elementary schools.

Keywords: Traditional Children's Stories, Literature, Character Education, Internet.

Introduction

The very rapid advancement of technology and communication in this modern era of globalization not only has a positive impact on the development of human development but also has a very worrying negative impact especially for the younger generation who are commonly called the millennial generation. Millennial generation is commonly referred to as generation Y or known as echo boomers. Experts classify them based on those born in 1980-1990 or early 2000. Millennial generation is a generation that is identical to

social media users or commonly referred to as netizens. Today, children from an early age, adolescents and young adults tend not to be able to live without gadgets. Let alone for a means of seeking knowledge, this gadget is used more for playing and surfing on social media so they spend a lot of time there. The flow of globalization that is increasingly widespread and increasingly rapid has brought significant changes to this millennial generation. They tend to be enslaved by online media which is growing rapidly from time to time. This can also affect the formation of their character into antisocial human beings. So, character education is needed to anticipate and minimize the behavior of each individual so as not to follow the negative globalization trend or culture of games on gadgets or content on social media. With this character education, it is hoped that the millennial generation can pay more attention and filter every culture that enters, in other words they can sort out what is good and what is bad wisely.

In this era of rapidly growing globalization, the flow of information is also increasingly rapid and this makes it easier for millennials to absorb various types of information in certain fields via the internet with the help of their gadgets. Social media such as Instagram, Tweeter, YouTube, Face Book, Line, and others are the entry points for information from various parts of the world that should enrich our knowledge. The freedom of social media in this era of globalization has a negative influence also on the perspective of the millennial generation, which is mostly an unstable generation if social media contains content that is not constructive but instead incites, influences to do bad things, and makes people antisocial. The globalization factor brings a very rapid flow of information through the internet so that it is difficult to stem and it is felt that it has a very large contribution to the various cases that befell millennials as the nation's next generation. This is where character education is needed which can lead to better character building. However, this character building should be started early, that is, since someone enters elementary school by re-instilling values that can be a control for the next generation of the nation without having to be immersed in the current of globalization which has a negative impact on their lives in particular and the lives of those around them in general. The government of Indonesia recognizes the importance of character education for the younger generation and this is stated in the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 Article 3 Chapter II concerning on the National Education System as follows: *Pendidikan nasional berfungsi mengembangkan kemampuan dan membentuk watak serta peradaban bangsa yang bermartabat dalam rangka mencerdaskan kehidupan bangsa, bertujuan untuk berkembangnya potensi peserta didik agar menjadi manusia yang beriman dan bertakwa kepada Tuhan Yang Maha Esa, berakhlak mulia, sehat, berilmu, cakap, kreatif, mandiri, dan menjadi warga negara yang demokratis serta bertanggung jawab.* The above law states that good morals, fearing God Almighty, and being responsible are the goals of national education in Indonesia. This means that the Indonesian government fully understands the importance of good character for national development because without good character, the Indonesian nation will undoubtedly not become a strong nation. Given the importance of shaping the character of the nation, the government has determined that character education needs

to be instilled in schools from an early age. One way that can be used to shape children's characters is through children's stories.

Children's stories are a medium that can be used in character building starting from elementary school. The influence of this children's story is beyond doubt. Children's stories, in this case traditional children's story, become a means which is very effective in providing value education to children, because in a very simple way of delivery, it is easy to understand and fun because it is accompanied by attractive illustrations so that children are interested and voluntarily want to read and get the values contained in the story, especially the traditional children's story written by Murti Bunanta which contains a lot of moral values and captivating illustrations in it, for example *Suwidak Loro, Si Molek,* and *Putri Mandalika.* The selected children's stories are children's stories that contain ethical, moral, and ethical values (noble, high, noble). These three aspects are related to character or character education, namely directing children towards good, noble, and noble character. The characters in the children's stories that are read can provide good and valuable life examples for children. The character of a child is a tendency to imitate and identify with the character he or she admires. Through children's stories, children will easily be able to understand the good and bad traits, figures, and actions represented by the characters in the story. Based on the above background, this article discusses the problem of (1) children's stories, (2) characters, (3) values in traditional children's stories, and (4) character building strategies through traditional children's stories. This problem was expressed with the aim of providing insight to educators on the importance of ethical values in traditional children's stories as a means of building children's character based on local wisdom.

Character Education

Nurchasanah and Lestari (2008) state that character means temperament (morals) to be able to measure good or bad and right or wrong to something. Human nature distinguishes a person from other people or nations. In addition, the Directorate General of the Ministry of National Education (in Dani, 2013) explains that character is a way of thinking and behaving that characterizes each individual to live and work together, both within the sphere of family, society, nation and state. Individuals with good character are individuals who can make decisions and are ready to take responsibility for any consequences of the decisions they make.

Character education is also interpreted as moral education, character, character that guides students to be able to decide and create good and noble things in everyday life. Mulyasa (2012) states that character education is not only about understanding and attitudes towards ethics, morals, and character, but also the habit of living in an atmosphere of choosing and doing good and noble and rejecting the bad and low.

According to Lickona (2012), the character component consists of 1. Sincerity or honesty. 2. Compassion; 3. Courage; 4. Affection (kindness); 5. Self-control; 6. Cooperation. According to Naim (2012) character refers to a series of attitudes, behaviors and skills.

All aspects that are components of character are done positively by a person. Character education does not only produce cognitive aspects, but also affective (positively addressed) and psychomotor (in the form of actions in accordance with what is required. Characters that contain character meaning (which are noble, noble, and ethical) are manifested in action.

Furthermore, James Arthur (2013) states that character education is related to moral education which includes 3 aspects that must be fulfilled, namely: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action, which basically means that one's morality is not only sufficiently understood, but also lived out, and implemented in action. In moral knowing a person must have moral awareness, have high moral values, have a moral perspective, moral reasoning, make moral decisions, and self-knowledge about morals. At the level of moral action, someone behaves based on morals, has the competence to apply morals, has a desire to uphold morals, and acts morally are habits (*Ibid* .: 45-50).

The Ministry of National Education (2010 in Wibowo 2013) develops the thoughts of Ki Hadjar Dewantara and Lickona (2012) detailing the aspects of character education into 18. In this study, the 18 aspects of character education became the basis for determining the children's stories chosen. The eighteen aspects of character education are: religious, honest, tolerant, disciplined, hard work, creative, independent, democratic, curiosity, national spirit, love of the country, friendly (communicative), fond of reading, respect for achievement, love of peace, social care, environmental care, and responsibility (Lickona, 2012; Dewantara, 1967; Kemendiknas, 2010). The children's stories selected in this children's story book are traditional children's stories which of course contain the character values mentioned above. These stories are the work of Murti Bunanta entitled *Suwidak Loro, Si Molek,* and *Putri Mandalika.*

Children Stories

Children's stories are stories that tell about children's problems. The authors and readers may not be children, but adults or parents. There are children's stories composed by children, but there are also (perhaps more) children's stories composed by adults (Hunt, 1995: 61). Murti Bunanta, Enid Blyton, Hans Christian Andersen, Dian K, and Mark Twain are some of the authors of children's stories who are adults. Sarumpaet (2010) states that children's stories are stories that children read with the guidance or direction of adult members of a community. She (ibid, 2010) added that children's stories can be in the form of early childhood stories in the form of games, books on numbers and calculations, children's experiences during the period, classic stories, traditional folk tales, fantasy stories, relistic stories, historical stories, and also biographies.

With regard to children's stories for education, efforts must be made to read the children according to the children's character development. Sarumpaet (2010) mentions 3 theories of children's psychological development, namely Jean Piaget's theory which states that children's psychological development is in accordance with their motoric development. Meanwhile Erickson's theory stated that in addition to cognitive

development, children also experience social development and every human development always experiences social conflicts that mark their development. Meanwhile, Lawrence Kohlberg states that children's development is based on the existence of moral reasoning judgments (moral awareness of good and bad). The three figures mentioned earlier children's cognitive, social and moral development.

Kohlberg (Arthur, 2003) mentions 3 stages of the development of moral judgment, namely: the preconventional, conventional and postconventional stages. The three stages are broken down into six, namely: one and two egocentrics, three are little less egocentric, four and five are respect for socially defined norms, and number six is the abstractly and universally defined general principles stage. The sixth stage can be said as "faith orientation".

In contrast to Kohlberg's moral reasoning, Richards Stanley Peters (in Arthur, 2003) said children's psychological development as rational morality which consists of 4 stages, namely: 'a rationality, egocentricity, conventionality, and reasonableness. These stages of development are based on the child's intellectual ability to understand complex moral ideas and the ability to judge morality to determine decisions taken.

Characteristics of children's stories are: (1) the language is easy to understand, in short, with common terms; (2) entertaining and fun; (3) the message conveyed in the form of moral values, education, and character is adjusted to the intellectual and emotional development of children (Nurgiyantoro, 2005). Various types of children's stories have moral values that can be used as a source of character building for children. It's just that educators need to choose children's stories that are appropriate to the child's age and psychological development and interests.

The role of children's stories, especially traditional children's stories, is very important in shaping children's character, moreover children's stories have several benefits, namely 1) Teaching character to children; 2) Getting used to a reading culture; 3) Develops imagination. Providing reading in the form of interesting children's stories will also train children to learn about the character values that exist in the story. If good habits like this are continued to be applied, it will have a positive impact on children's mental development, and even have a good impact on their future life amidst this increasingly advanced era of globalization.

Character Development Strategy Through Traditional Children's Story

There are several strategies for character building through traditional children's stories, namely:

1) Storytelling: Storytelling activities can be done at home as well as at school. Hence, the role of people parents and teachers are very important to cultivate appreciation of students in reading activities. In the classroom, storytelling can be done using text, namely reading a book or it could be without text. The advantage of reading a book is that you can train the child or students to speak accordingly good and correct language, while

the advantages storytelling without text is a child or student can express himself. By involving students in this activity then they are the ones to start shyness and closeness will change attitudes. Generally, fantasy and humor stories are more striking when read to children or students aged 8-13 years (Bunanta, 2008). It is important to note that choosing a good story also needs to consider the story is written in a good sentence and uses a broad vocabulary and attractive illustrations. Folk stories are stories that are very suitable to be told because of their educational value very thick and in accordance with Indonesian culture and also flexible because the elements can be removed or added according to the opinion of the storyteller about which parts are important and need to be highlighted. The stories written by Murti Bunanta and adapted from folk tales in Indonesia, the four of which are entitled 1) *Bujang Permai*; 2) *Suwidak Loro*; 3) *Putri Mandalika*; and 4) *Si Molek*. Therefore, folklore is the most effective story when it is told because it can be adapted and listeners and storytellers will enter into the same situation. The story that is told or read is read or told to the end so that the result does not interfere with the continuity of the storyline. By way of storytelling or reading this story, the teacher also easily introduces students to the content of stories or literature books and appreciates them. Storytelling or reading stories must be done naturally and not done in an exaggerated manner so that the attention of the child or student is not on the storyline but on the style of the storyteller.

2.) Role-Playing: In addition to storytelling, teachers can also use Role-Play strategies to foster appreciation, interest in reading, and build students' character through the characters they play. In this activity, the teacher gave the students a story book which is a folk tale by Murti Bunanta with interesting illustrations in the form of groups to read. After they finished reading, the teacher asked them to retell the story they had just read in groups in front of the class. Next, they were asked by the teacher to create a simple dialogue whose storyline matched the story they had read earlier. This activity also has benefits for students, namely that it cannot only foster interest in reading and appreciation of literary works but also students are able to express their imagination and creativity and work together in providing brilliant ideas in the dialogue writing process. After the four groups made the dialogue, the teacher asked them to practice reading the dialogue with the intonation or tone of voice adjusted to the dialogue script. Furthermore, at the next meeting, the teacher asked them to perform it in front of the class using costumes and accessories that they made themselves and adapted to the dialogue they wrote themselves. All members in the group must participate in role playing in front of the class but beforehand they have to live up to their respective roles by practicing at home or at school after learning.

3.) Sharing: The teacher becomes a role model for students. After finishing reading a book, the teacher needs to share it with them. Telling them that the teacher felt a positive influence after reading the book. Make students curious, so that they want to know more about the book.

The Values in a Traditional Children's Story by Murti Bunanta

Murti Bunanta's traditional children's stories are written in two languages, namely English and Indonesian. In addition, the stories are illustrated which are very interesting and compelling. In addition, the stories written by Bunanta use language that is simple, flexible, and easy to understand and easy to absorb for children. In this article, there are three works of Murti Bunanta that will be discussed, entitled *Suwidak Loro, Si Molek,* and *Putri Mandalika.* The contents of this folklore not only provide learning about the use of language, both Indonesian and English, but also provide moral learning that is full of local wisdom for children. This folk story is very well packaged and illustrated by a skilled painting expert. The illustrations that are displayed in this folklore are very 'alive' and are able to represent the contents of the stories in them. This makes children interested in reading the contents of the story, both in Indonesian and English.

The first folk tale introduced to children is *'Suwidak Loro'.* This story tells of a girl who was born with an ugly face. But her mother loved her very much and always prided her daughter as a very beautiful child to the people she met. The news spread throughout the village and finally the King heard it. Then the King was interested and wanted to marry Suwidak Loro. In this story, there is a moral value that can be taken and absorbed, namely the love of a mother who always prays for her child to have a happy life even though the child is ugly and as if there is no hope of a bright future; boast of the child and continue to believe that God answered his prayer; and motivate her daughter to have self-confidence, determination, kindness, and love for her mother.

The second story is *'Si Molek'.* This story tells of the jealousy felt by Molek's sisters who find out that Molek has a very handsome husband and lives happily. This jealousy made them plan to kill Molek. The main moral value contained in this story is that of not having jealousy and envy towards siblings or ones own relatives.

Then the third story is *'Putri Mandalika'.* This story tells of the daughter of a king who is very beautiful and loves her people. Her beauty made two kings from all over the country vying for her love. However, because the princess did not want a fight between the two kings, she finally sacrificed herself for all her people and the people of the two kings by immersing herself in the sea. Since then, *Putri Mandalika* has been called *Putri Mandalika Nyale. Nyale* means light. According to residents of Lombok Island, in February and March many marine animals are found shaped like worms. This sea animal is called *Nyale.* The main moral values contained in this story are about sacrifice, love, teaching not to be selfish, cultivating sympathy and empathy and giving the best to fellow living beings.

When reading this traditional children's story, children not only enjoy the storyline and acquire moral values that can shape their character, but they also learn about the local culture contained in the story. For example, the folklore entitled 'Putri Mandalika' is a folk tale from the island of Lombok, then the folklore entitled 'Si Molek' comes from Riau, then the folklore entitled 'Suwidak Loro' originates from Central Java. Therefore, folklore

is an alternative that plays an important role in developing children's character in an era of globalization that is increasingly rapid and instantaneous.

Conclusion

Traditional children's stories are stories that contain ethical values, moral values, and social values that are useful for shaping children's character. The formation of children's character is not only done in learning at school, but can also be done in the home or family environment. Character building strategies that can be implemented in schools are storytelling, role playing, and sharing. This can be carried out well and interestingly through teacher guidance. The role of the teacher is also very important so that these activities can motivate students to enjoy the stories being told, be able to take the moral values contained in the stories, and be able to apply them in real life by role playing and sharing. Character building is also carried out in the family environment by means of parents or siblings reading fairy tales at bedtime or in their spare time; provide readings in the form of interesting children's stories at home so that they can attract children's reading interest; then parents can ask questions to children to see the child's understanding and memory of the contents of the story; and parents can take children to bookstores and give children the opportunity to buy books they like, including traditional children's stories. As much as possible, keep children away from excessive use of gadgets and bring them closer to the world of traditional children's stories that are interesting and engaging.

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