

# PROMOTING STUDENTS' GOOD CHARACTERS AND IMPROVING THE STUDENTS' WRITING SKILL THROUGH INDONESIAN CULTURE-BASED STORY

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## Abstract

*This article focused on improving student's writing skill and promoting students' good character through Indonesian culture-based story. The objectives are to know how Indonesian culture-based story gives contribution in promoting students' good characters and improves student's writing skill in the second semester students of IKIP PGRI Semarang. This study used true experimental design. The population is the second semester students of IKIP PGRI Semarang. Then, the samples are 67 students as the samples. The instrument of this study are questionnaire and test; which are given as pre-test and post-test. The goal of questionnaire is to know the students' reflection of good character and the aim of test is to measure the student's writing skill of the second semester of IKIP PGRI Semarang. Based on data analysis, there were some significance improvements of the student's score both of students' reflection of good character and student's writing skill. It means that Indonesian culture-based story can promote students' good character and also improve students' writing skill. From the result of this study, the writer concludes that using Indonesian culture-based story as material is effective and had good effect of students' good characters and also improve students' writing skill. Then, this study is expected to be useful for the teachers/lecturers, students, and the readers. The writer proposes to use Indonesian culture-based story as an alternative material in promoting students' good character and to improve students' writing skill.*

**Keywords:** *Indonesian culture-based story, good characters, writing skill*

## Introduction

In this century, much information uncontrolled flows through multimedia of modern technology that all people including students can access it. Besides modern technology, globalization also brings acculturation between local and global cultures. This acculturation forces all people including students to live in complexity and diversity, and if there is no control, we will lose our own cultures. Based on this condition, positive character, national consciousness and identity are crucial to be inculcated to the youth through lesson subject. In this case, not only parents but also school and university have the primary responsibility for transferring character education to the students.

However, teaching and learning process in school today still gives a priority to cognitive aspect than balancing the other aspects like affective, psychomotor, and character education. So, in practice, the teacher has to contribute moral education through the media, teaching activities, or the material given. English as one of subject taught in schools and universities also

has to contribute in inserting the character education. The ability to use language effectively is linked to students' abilities to become responsible, contributing citizens, and lifelong learning (Alberta Education, 2005:52). Meanwhile, a problem arises when English teachers including lecturers of English Department of IKIP PGRI Semarang find it hard to choose supporting media or materials in teaching English as well as inserting good character education which is appropriate with Indonesian culture. In the curriculum of IKIP PGRI Semarang, there is Writing 1 as subject for the second semester that one of the materials taught is narrative. It is not easy to insert character education in teaching English. Hence, the writers want to change this condition by integrating both character education and English materials for teaching and learning process by Indonesian culture-based story. As we know that Indonesia is a country with a variety of cultures. It has approximately 33 provinces and 2000 ethnic groups that spoke an estimated 650 local languages (National Portal, Republic of Indonesia: 2011).

Story folktales as narratives serve

teachers and learners in the classroom as a highly natural means of teaching in two main ways: they provide a rich cultural content and a means of teaching language. From a number of different genres, narrative is one of the genres of literary text. Narrative gives moral values and it has formed the bases for transmitting culture and history. Moreover, it provides examples of positive traits and moral lessons (for example, folktales, Aesop's fables, and a variety of fairy tales).

From the statements above, the writers used folktales stories and choose Indonesian culture-based story as an alternative material to promote students' good character and to improve students' writing skill..

## REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

### A. Theoretical Framework

#### 1. Indonesian Culture-based Story

##### a. Definition of Indonesian Culture-based Story

Culture-based story here means Indonesian folktales. In this study, the writers used Indonesian fairy tale and myth/legends as the materials because these belong to narrative—one of some materials taught in Writing I. Folktales are stories passed down through generations, mainly by telling. The stories have not been proven to be real, but we can find moral of the story. Different kinds of folktales include fairy tales, tall tales, trickster tales, myths, and legends (online article taken from <http://www.aaronshp.com/stories/folk.html>). Macken (1990: 16) interpreted myth/legends as "stories which belong to a particular ethnic group and which attempt to explain the way of nature and the universe e.g. Aboriginal legend".

##### b. Using Stories to Teach Good Character

Stories belong to literature. As well as developing reading literacy and other cognitive skills, most experts agree that literature can be an important tool in teaching about character. Lopez (1991, p.48) in Alberta Education (2005: 124) states,

The stories people tell have a way of taking care of them. If stories come to you, care of them. And learn to give them away where they are needed. Sometimes a person needs a story more than food to stay alive. That is why we put these stories in each other's memory. This is how

people care for themselves.

The characters actions provide a starting point for students to discuss 'appropriate' and 'not so appropriate' behavior in a manner that is respectful of all.

## 2. Character Education

### a. Conception of Character

According to Alberta Education (2005:4), character can refer to:

(1) Personality traits or virtues such as responsibility and respect for others (2) Emotions such as guilt or sympathy (3) Social skills such as conflict management or effective communication (4) Behaviors such as sharing or helping, (5) Cognitions such as belief in equality or problem-solving strategies.

### b. Good Character

Lickona (1991, p.51) stated "Good character consists of knowing the good, desiring the good, and doing the good...." This Dr. Lickona's model tells us that we need to engage our kids in activities that make them think critically about moral and ethical questions, inspire them to become committed to moral and ethical actions, and give them ample opportunities to practice moral and ethical behavior.

### c. Character Education

Character education is a learning process that enables students and adults in a school community to understand, care about and act on core ethical values such as respect, justice, civic virtue and citizenship, and responsibility for self and others. Berkowitz in his report of Educational research (December 2011-January 2012) explains,

For our purposes here we will define "character education" as the deliberate development, in schools, of youth's tendency and capacity for responsible, pro-social, and respectful democratic citizenship in our society.

### d. Approaches to Values/Character Education

Like concepts and ideas, values exist only in our minds. Although we can't see the individual's values, we can see the individual's behavior. One's actions are excellent indicators of reflecting the character. In teaching good values or characters, the teacher has to choose the right approaches. Superka, Ahrens and Hedstrom (1976) outlined five basic ap-

proaches to teaching values:

1. Inculcation (having students incorporate the standards and norms of his/her referent group or society primarily through modeling, rewards, and sanctions)
2. Moral Development (having students move through the stages of moral reasoning based on higher sets of values, using primarily discussions of "moral dilemmas")
3. Analysis (helping students use a rational, scientific investigation to decide issues of values and ethics, often using case studies)
4. Values Clarification (helping students identify their own and others' values, often with role playing, games or simulations as well as discussions and self-analysis)
5. Action Learning (using values clarification and/or other approaches, providing students with opportunities to put values into practice with social action)

#### **The Most Common Values/Characters**

The writers adopted the most common values/characters from *GatIKIP PGRI KU* book. They are presented below:

#### **Writing Skills**

Writing skill is defined as a productive written language skill which is a level academic achievement. Brown (2004:220) explains that writing skills are divided into micro- and macro-skills. Micro-skills apply more appropriately to imitative and intensive writing and macro-skills are essential for the successful mastery of responsive and extensive writing.

#### **Method Design**

In this study, the writers used quantitative research or true experimental design. The writers gave pre-test for both experimental and control classes before treatment was given only to the experimental class. After treatment was given, post-test was given for both experimental and control classes to measure the students' final result. The design can be represented as:

#### **Subject**

The writers took 2 classes as the subjects of

the research which divided into control class (2D) and experimental class (2E).

#### **Instrument**

In this study, the writers used paper test and questionnaire to collect the data. The paper testis responsive writing essay as pre-test and post-test in the both experimental and control class to know students' writing ability in expressing their idea of an analyzing a folk-tale in simple and compound sentences. For the questionnaire, the writers used 30 statements including favourable and unfavourable items and applied rating scale type of questionnaire in scoring the students' response.

#### **Data Collection**

In this study, the writers applied procedure of data collection such as pre-test, normality test, treatment and post-test.

#### **Data Analysis**

The writers analyzed two kinds of data; the result of students' achievement in writing skill and the students' good characters reflection.

##### **1. Method of Writing Task Score Analysis**

Followings are the steps of writing task score analysis:

- a. Measuring the student individual competence in writing,
- b. Measuring the mean score of both pre- and post-tests of experimental and control classes,
- c. Measuring if there is significant difference between experimental and control classes by using t-test, and comparing the result of t-test with the table of t-distribution (Sudijono, 2010:345)

##### **2. Method of Questionnaire Score Analysis**

In analyzing the data of questionnaire, the items were tabulated by inverting the weights of the responses. For favorable items, the writers gave higher score for positive response. However, for unfavorable items, the writers gave the higher score for negative response. In getting the result of the score, the writers used the following steps:

- (1) Counting the total score of favourable and unfavourable items of the students' responses,
- (2) Measuring the mean score of pre- and post-test of both experimental and control classes,
- (3) Applying t-test, then comparing the result of t-test with the table of t-distribution to know if there is significant difference of students' good character reflection between experimental and control classes.

##### **3. Method of Normality Test Analysis**

NILAI		IMPLEMENTASI	TRANSLATED TO
I	Iman dan Takwa	Religius, amanah, taat dan patuh, cinta damai, cinta tanah air, semanga tke-bangsaan.	Religious, trust-worthy, obedient and loyal, love peace, love fatherland, patriotic.
K	Kejujuran	Keterbukaan, objektif, tulus, ikhlas, terus terang, transparan.	Openness, objective, honest, sincere, straightforward, transparent.
I	Integritas dan Komitmen	Disiplin, tanggung jawab, konsisten, komit, respek.	Discipline, responsible, consistent, commit, respect.
P	Peduli	Peka, santun, adil, sukamenolong, empati.	Sensitive, polite, fair, helpful, empathy.
P	Profesional	Mandiri, efektif, efisien, komunikatif, kompeten.	self-independence, effective, efficient, communicative, competent
G	Gigih	Sungguh-sungguh, kerjakeras, konsisten, pantang menyerah, focus, semangat, antusias.	Perseverance, hard work, consistent, never give up, focus, spirit, enthusiastic.
R	Responsif	Peduli, ramah, empati, peka, tanggap.	Care, friendly, empathy, sensitive, perceptive.
I	Inovatif dan Kreatif	Proaktif, ingin tahu, antisipatif, berfikiralternatif.	Pro-active, curious, anticipative, alternative thinking.
K	Kerjasama	Saling membantu, sinergi, kolaborasi, delegasi, berbagitugas, solider demokratis	Helpful, synergy, collaborative, delegation, solidarity, democratic
U	Unggul	Prestasi, kepemimpinan, visioner, percayadiri, optimis.	Achievement, leadership, visionary, confident, optimistic.

After getting the result of pre-test, the writers analyzed students' score of its normal distribution by using chi square formula.

- a. Defining the number of interval class. In this case, the ranges of normal curve are six with each percentage; 2.7%; 13.34%;

33.96%; 33.96%; 13.34%; and 2.7%.

- b. Defining range by applying the formula:

$$Range = \frac{(Highest\ score - lowest\ score)}{\Sigma\ interval\ class\ (6)}$$

- c. Arranging the data in distribution of frequency table.

- d. Counting the data with formula:

$$\chi^2 = \frac{(f_o - f_h)^2}{f_h} , t$$

then using the table of chi square-distribution to know if there is normal distribution.

## Findings and Discussion

### Findings

1. The students' reflection of good characters of the second semester students of IKIP PGRI Semarang.

For the first questionnaire in pre-test of experimental class, the writers got mean score: 83.46, and for the second questionnaire in post-test, the writers got mean score: 89.63. From that computation, the result of the mean score of the experimental

<b>Experimental</b>	RO <sub>1</sub>	X	O <sub>2</sub>
<b>Control</b>	RO <sub>3</sub>	-	O <sub>4</sub>

class increased 6.17 points. This implies that the score improves significantly. Meanwhile, for the first questionnaire in pre-test of control group, the writers got mean score: 86.36, and for the second questionnaire in post-test, the writers got: 84.08. It means that the students' questionnaire score in the control class did not increase.

2. The students' writing skill of the second semester students of IKIP PGRI Semarang.

Before giving treatment to the sample, the writers gave pre-test for both the experimental and control classes to know the students' achievement in writing sentences and analyzed the normality test in the two classes by using chi square to find if the condition in both of classes was the same.

Based on the result of computation in the experimental class, the writers found that chi square value is 8.58 and chi square table in df 5 in significance degree 5% =11.070 and in significance degree 1% =15.086. It means that chi square value < chi square table. This indicated the data were normally distributed. In the other words, experimental class was in the normal condition. Also, in the control class, the writers found chi square value is 7.42 and

chi square table in df 5 in significance degree 5% = 11.070 and in significance degree 1% = 15.086. It means that chi square value < chi square table. This indicated the data were normally distributed or control class was in the normal condition. In short, the condition between experimental and control class were the same—they have equivalent ability in writing. After being given treatment, the students were also given post-test to find if the treatment affected the students' achievement or not. For the pre-test of experimental class, the writers got mean score: 54.25 and for the post-test, the writers got mean score: 80.19. It can be seen that the result of the students' mean score of writing test in the experimental class significantly increased 25.94. However, in control class the writers got that the mean score for pre-test was 54.51 and the students' mean score of post-test was 69.54. It means that the result of mean score of the control class only increases 15.03 points, or in the other words, the score did not increase significantly.

3. The significant difference of students' reflection of good characters between the second semester students of IKIP PGRI Semarang taught using culture-based stories and those taught without culture-based stories.

By using t test formula, it was found that from t table with df 65 in significance 5%,  $t_t = 2.00$ ; in significance 1%,  $t_t = 2.65$ . Because of  $t_0 = 3.68$ , the writers got that  $t_0 > t_t$ , so alternative hypothesis stating Indonesian culture-based story can promote students' good character is accepted

4. The significant difference of students' writing skill between the second semester students of IKIP PGRI Semarang taught using culture-based stories and those taught without culture-based stories

By using t test formula like finding number 3, it was found that from t table with df 62 in significance 5%,  $t_t = 2.00$ ; in significance 1%,  $t_t = 2.65$ . Because of  $t_0 = 3.79$  the writers got that  $t_0 > t_t$ . So, alternative hypothesis stating Indonesian culture-based story can improve students' writing skill is accepted.

## Discussion

1. The students' reflection of good characters

From the analysis, the writers found that 87.50% students increased their behavioral progress of 'never give up' character that was implied in item 27. In the early time, most of the students did not have posi-

tive thinking about kind of task given. After getting a series of treatment, the students had more positive thinking of task given. It means that Indonesian culture-based story have good effect in promoting students' good character.

2. The students' writing skill

From the result, the mean score of experimental class after getting the treatment had increased 25.94 points. It means student's writing skill in experimental class improved after getting treatment. In other words, Indonesian culture-based story can improve students' writing skill.

3. The significant difference of students' reflection of good characters between the second semester students of IKIP PGRI Semarang taught using culture-based stories and those taught without culture-based stories.

In teaching good characters, the writers have applied the fourth basic approach, as Superka, Ahrens and Hedstrom (1976) outlined; that is values clarification to help students identify their own values with self-analysis by filling questionnaires. From the computation of t value, the writers got  $t_0 = 3.68$ . This means  $t_0 > t_{table}$ . Thereby, Indonesian culture-based story can promote students' good character.

4. The significant difference of students' writing skill between the second semester students of IKIP PGRI Semarang taught using culture-based stories and those taught without culture-based stories

The difference between experimental and control classes could be seen clearly from the t-test value for students' writing score; that is 3.79. It means  $t_0 > t_{table}$ . That indicated that there was significant difference of writing skill in second semester students of IKIP PGRI Semarang taught using Indonesian culture-based story and those taught without Indonesian culture-based story.

## Conclusion

It can be concluded that Indonesian culture-based story can promote students' good character and improve students' writing skill. First, students' good characters and students' writing skill of experimental class are better than before. Second, both the significant difference of students' reflection of good characters and students' writing skill between experimental and control classes are clearly seen from the t-test result.

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