

Implemented Positive Language to Build Positive Characters of Children as Cultural Heritage

Amrina Rosyada^{1*}, Ayu Bandu Retnomurti², Agustina Ramadhianti³

¹English Education Program Universitas Indraprasta PGRI, DKI Jakarta, Indonesia.

²English Education Program Universitas Indraprasta PGRI, DKI Jakarta, Indonesia

³English Education Program Universitas Indraprasta PGRI, DKI Jakarta, Indonesia.

*Corresponding author. Email: 4mrin4@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

As the basic rights of children, the language was the most important thing to build children's characters. The use of positive language in the family as the closest environment of the children would build children's positive characters. However, the massive use of digital technology has disrupted every single home where language seemed to lose its meaning and fail its functions. Regarding this situation, this research was administered in the women community of Moslem society where the participants were young mothers who have searched for the best formula for building children's characters. They have restricted the use of digital technology and spend intensive time with their family. Though, family communication remained insipid. By conducting a longitudinal survey design, this research was examining the use of mothers' positive language from 2016 to 2018. This research was engaged by 118 mothers in 2016; 86 mothers in 2017; and 47 mothers in 2018. Findings showed that the need for using positive language has been significantly increased, and the use of positive language has been significantly implemented. Most mothers committed that positive language was not only a tool for communication but also as one of the important tools to build positive characters, as the cultural heritage.

Keywords: *Cultural heritage, Positive characters, Positive language*

1. INTRODUCTION

Language is not only a tool for communication and knowledge but also a fundamental attribute of cultural identity and empowerment, both for the individual and the group ^[1]. Thus, the language of a person shows the characters, how he or she has been raised by the environment particularly by the closest environment, the family. Therefore, language education as the required basic right for children is the important thing in building their characters and should be started from home. Children's characters become the responsibility of their parents and family, a place where the education began. Parents' approach to their children-their level of warmth, responsiveness, control, and discipline- are strongly influential on children's characters of their future capability development [2]. Mother is the first person who touches directly to their children and because of her approach and language can develop the children's fundamental characters. In this way, the use of mothers' positive language will develop the children's positive characters. The more mothers use positive language, the more children build their positive characters.

The crucial role of mothers' positive language has been investigated by several researchers worldwide. In Porto, Portugal, research on home environment quality that affects children's language, communication, and literacy outcomes had been examined. This research was engaged by 95 children ranged from two years old to five years old, and their families. Findings showed that there is a significant effect between home environment quality and children's developmental outcomes [3]. The finding proves that the success of children at school is governed not only by the children's social background; moreover, the children's communication environment and children's language at age of 2 contribute significant influences [4].

Another investigation on the relations between positive language and positive characters on children's developmental outcomes was shown in the USA. A longitudinal study was examined on the influences of parenting behaviors, well-being, and risk factors of low-income adolescent mothers on the cognitive and language abilities of children from infancy to the age of 3. Findings showed that maternal age had an indirect effect on the child's cognitive and language abilities at age 3 through effects on parenting behaviors [5]. This finding shows that the children's positive characters should be built from the

very beginning stage of maternity and deliver an indirect effect on children's developmental outcomes.

It is important to manage a positive family environment by all the members of the family, particularly by the adults. When children are surrounded by a positive family environment, this childhood environment will be stored in their minds. This environment will be copied and experienced in other environments outside the family environment. Oppositely, when children experienced a negative environment in their family, they would bring this experience throughout their life. The children who experienced a negative family environment would face difficulties in communication and different environments including school environments. Moreover, the children would be emotionally exposed the depression and would be low achieved in their developmental outcomes [6], [7].

Regarding the above investigations, this research is determined to examine the use of mothers' positive language to overcome children's behaviors, particularly in the Muslim society where the mothers play a very important role in developing the children's positive characters. This society covers the women's community to learn both Muslim principles and scientific achievements in the global era. This women's community has been searching for the best guide in raising their children both for the children's success in this life and life after. In this way, formulating the best guide of positive language becomes the prime output of this research. Once a formula is proposed, several implementations can be considered by mothers. The more implementations are proposed, the more opportunities for mothers to apply the best formula of positive language to the children.

2. METHOD

2.1. Participants

The research was engaged by mothers in Women Community under the Muslim Society named *Baitul Hasan Jagakarsa* Foundation, located in the district of *Jagakarsa*, South Jakarta. The participants were taken from 118 mothers in 2016, 86 mothers in 2017, and 47 mothers in 2018. This is because the participants migrate to other districts or cities, the participants' engagement is decreased from 2016 to 2018. Though, in percentage, the participants are involved in 98%. Most mothers are housewives and high school graduates. The participants' age was ranged from 25 to 50 years old and most of them had more than 1 child. Even though different participants were studied each year, the participants represented the same population of mothers who had strived for the best formula in building children's positive characters.

2.2. Procedures

Since the research is identifying and describing the use of positive language by the participants from time to time, a longitudinal survey design was conducted [8]. This research monitored trends in the participants' implementation of positive language during 2016, 2017,

and 2018. The data was collected and statistically measured based on the participants' answers to the research questionnaire and small group discussion of 3 to 5 participants.

The questionnaire required 15 minutes to complete and consisted of three main parts of the questions. Question 1 asked mothers what they know about positive language. This question allowed mothers to perceive what positive language is based on their understanding. Question 2 asked mothers how they implement positive language to their children. This question listed ten values of positive language and mothers should express their implementation due to the scaling system. In the last part, question 3 asked mothers about how important positive language to be implemented in their family. This question let mothers choose the provided answers of Yes or No. After the accomplishment of the questionnaires, the data was collected and documented. The collated data then was calculated, analyzed statistically, and yielded in the result and discussion.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the collecting data and the statistical calculation, the results are performed in a form of tables and figures. The collecting data are converted into a percentage to see the trends equally and to be easily understood. The following descriptions are detailed based on the research questions' answers.

3.1. Positive Language Perceptions

Due to the answers to the first question which is what mothers know about the positive language, the answers are classified into three groups of perceptions. Each perception is narrated in mothers' daily life examples. The three perceptions are described in percentage in each year of 2016, 2017, and 2018.

First, the mothers perceive positive language as the word choice that motivates children; for instance, "I know you can do it, good boy!" Second, positive language is related to polite words; for instance, "Do you mind washing your hands first before you eat?" The last, positive language is performing the positive role model to children; for instance, "Let's pray together!" The percentage of the data are distributed from 2016 to 2018 and performed in Figure 1 for the result of 2016, Figure 2 for the year 2017, and Figure 3 for the year 2018. The first figure shows that in 2016 there were 38.14% of mothers who answered positive motivation; 49.15% answered polite words, and 12.71% answered positive role model.

Positive Language Perception in 2016

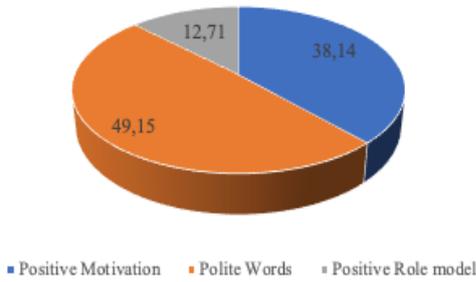


Figure 1. Positive Language Perception 2016

The next figure shows the distribution score in 2017 which was distributed into 50% for positive motivation; 32.56% for polite words; and 17.44% for a positive role model.

Positive Language Perception in 2017

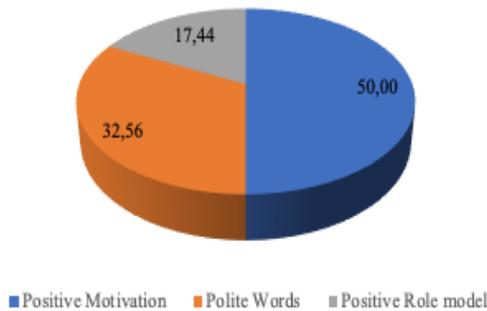


Figure 2. Positive Language Perception 2017

The following figure shows the calculated data in 2018 which were distributed into 25.53% for positive motivation; 61.70% for polite words; and 12.77% for a positive role model.

Positive Language Perception in 2018

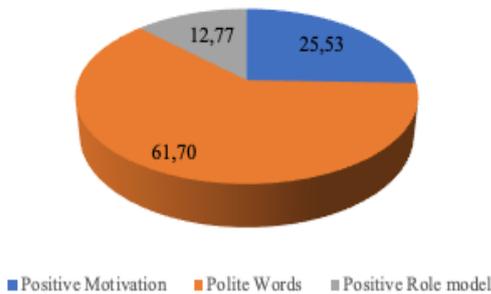


Figure 3. Positive Language Perception 2018

3.2. Positive Language Implementation

Regarding the second question which is how the mothers implement positive language to their children, there are ten values of positive language to be implemented. The values cover 1) the one and only Lord of their belief; 2) managing family rules through

discussion; 3) setting each child schedule; 4) using the word "please" when asking for help; 5) using the word "thank you" when expressing gratefulness; 6) using the word "do" than "don't"; 7) directing choices to be determined; 8) using the words "first ..., then ..."; 9) giving children sufficient time to think, and 10) dare to say "sorry" when doing something wrong. All the values are recorded and converted to a percentage and performed in Table 1 for each year of 2016, 2017, and 2018.

Table 1. Positive Language Implementation

Descriptions	Percentage Values (%)		
	2016	2017	2018
Allah is the one and only Lord	100	100	100
Manage rules through discussion	86	24	72
Set each child schedule	40	12	72
Use the word "please" when asking for help	78	100	100
Use the word "thank you"	81	100	100
Use the word "do" than "don't"	69	64	94
Directing choices to be determined	57	78	94
Use the words "first ..., then ..."	75	78	96
Give sufficient time for children to think	97	87	94
Say "sorry" when do something wrong	66	64	98

3.3. The Importance Use of Positive Language

The last question asked the mothers about how important the use of positive language is implemented in their family. The mothers had to answer yes or no. The results are shown in the graphics of Figure 4.

The Importance of Positive Language in Use

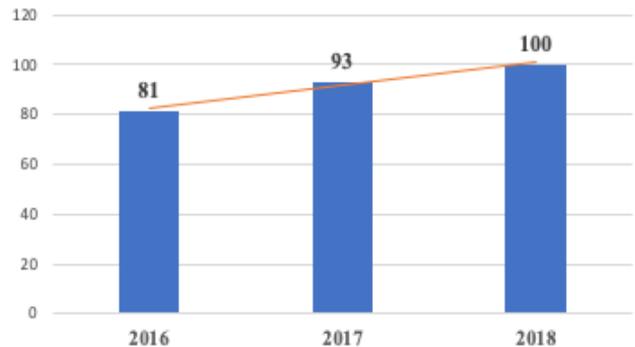


Figure 4. The Importance of Positive Language in Use

The above graphics show that mothers realize the importance of the use of positive language in their family.

In 2016, there were 81 % of mothers agreed with the important use of positive language. In 2017, there was an increasing percentage from 81% to 93% of mothers who believed in the important use of positive language. In 2018, with 47 mothers engaged in the research, all mothers or 100% of mothers agreed that the use of positive language is very important for their family, for their children.

3.4. Discussion

Based on the results, several interesting findings can be discussed and enriched. For the first question, there are three categories of positive language understanding, which are positive language as the positive motivation; positive language as the polite words; and positive language as the positive role model. Most mothers understand positive language as polite words in 2016 and 2018. This understanding is related to mostly mothers' cultural backgrounds who are mostly Javanese. However, in 2017, most mothers perceive positive language as positive motivation. In the same year of 2017, mothers who understand positive language as a positive role model is increased from 12.71% to 17.44%. The increasing value shows that mothers get more knowledge about positive language as the positive role model and divide the perceptions based on the experiences or implementations. In general, the three perceptions are accepted since all mothers understand the meaning related to the functions of the positive language.

Secondly, there are ten values of positive language that should be implemented by mothers to the children. All mothers agree that the first value is about delivering the understanding of Allah, the one and only Lord of the universe. The value is fundamental for all mothers' beliefs and should be implemented to strengthen their children's beliefs. This value is strictly consistent 100% from time to time which means that mothers continuously deliver this value to the children. For the value of "please" and "thank you", all mothers also crucially agree to use the words to their children. The values are shown in the increasing engagement from 2016 to 2017 and 2018, from 78% to 100% and 81% to 100%. Mothers find the words are very effective to build children's positive behavior. They identify that the children are highly motivated to do things with the word "please". Moreover, children look very happy when mothers say "thank you" to the children. In this way, children follow what the mothers say to them and apply the words in their daily activities every time they ask for help and express their gratitude.

Oppositely, mothers seem to avoid discussion with their children in managing rules at home. This is shown in the decreasing value score from time to time, particularly in 2017 when the value was implemented only by 24% of mothers. This condition shows that both mothers and children don't have sufficient time to stay face to face with and discuss several things including managing rules at home. This condition is getting harder when the children are provided with digital devices, especially smartphones or gadgets. In the beginning, mothers thought that gadgets would help mothers to educate children due to the digital era. Lately, mothers realize that this little gadget is not

entirely proper for the children. Mothers should manage the limitation of time-consuming, limitation of the age levels, and the attachments by mothers while children using the gadget. At the beginning of 2018, most mothers committed that the use of gadgets or smartphones should be limited to children at senior high school and above. For children under senior high school, the use of the gadget should be attached by mothers and limited to 1 hour per day for maximum usage. In this way, children are directed to do more religious activities and physical activities, such as reminding the holy Quran, the martial art of *Pencak Silat*, and *Pramuka* (Boy Scout). All those activities are proved to bring more excitement for the children, mostly with the supports of the mothers.

Besides the value, mothers also ignore to set the children's schedule for mothers think this value is not crucial. When mothers ignored the schedule, they had a difficult time controlling their children's activities. The lowest implementation was shown in 2017 when only 12 % of mothers implemented this value. By ignoring the value, mothers had to remind the children from time to time in a day, and even from day today. The reminder worsened the relationship between mothers and children, and children were getting spoiled for they had to be reminded to do everything by mothers. Fortunately, in 2018, mothers realize to apply this value then they can overcome the difficulties in controlling their children's activities. Besides, this value also helps children in controlling their activities and achieve their value of self-responsibility.

Another interesting value is the word "sorry" which had been decreasing from 2016 to 2017 but then increased from 2017 to 2018. This value became crucial when mothers realize that the magic word "sorry" from mothers to children, has amazed the children. Mothers follow the word "sorry" with several explanations and deliver the meaning of forgiveness. Related to the Muslim belief, children are told to be brave in truth and honesty. At the same time, the children are also challenged to be brave in admitting their faults and mistakes, and brave to ask for forgiveness and forgive others. This is related to the Muslim Prophet, Muhammad SAW words to forget two things in our lives. The two things are to forget our kindness to others and to forget others' badness to us.

4. CONCLUSION

The massive use of digital technology has disrupted every single home where language seems to lose its meaning and fail its functions. This situation is not an ideal environment for children, since they need to be interacted and involved with others. In this community, most mothers concern about how to let their children catching up the advanced of technology of the digital era without losing their best characters and identity, both as the Muslim and as the citizen of the nation. These mothers would survive the best children's best characters as preserved. Therefore, the positive language with the ten values which are the one and only Lord of their belief; managing family rules through discussion; setting each child schedule; using the word "please" when asking for help; using the word "thank you" when expressing

gratefulness; using the word "do" than "don't"; directing choices to be determined; using the words "first ..., then ..."; giving children sufficient time to think, and dare to say "sorry" when doing something wrong, is needed to be implemented.

The implementation shows that the major values of Allah are the one and only Lord, use the word "please" when asking for help, and use the word "thank you", are proved to be effective to develop the children's positive characters. With these values, children follow what the mothers say to them and apply the words in their daily activities every time they ask for help and express their gratitude. Moreover, the minor values in 2017 and getting increased in 2018 which are managed rules through discussion and set each child schedule, have helped children in controlling their activities and achieve their value of self-responsibility. In this way, the children's characters show that they are adopted as the culture of the family environment. Here, mothers are proved to be the center of family education, the first person who puts and creates the children's positive characters [9]. In general, when every single family adopts the values, it would positively affect the surrounded environment where three themes of pedagogies principles are constructed. The three themes framework is relational pedagogies center learning and developing in warm human relationships; pedagogies of mutual engagement include doing, speaking, and inquiring together in participatory processes of making meaning; and pedagogies of conscious awareness that aim to make visible purposes, reasons, and principles behind Islamic principles [10]. As well as the implementation of positive language values, screen time management is also required in dealing with the changes of the era [11]. Conclusively, in the implementation of all values, the positive language has a crucial role in developing children's positive characters that have to be preserved as the cultural heritage.

REFERENCES

- [1] J. Ball, *Enhancing Learning of Children From Diverse Language Backgrounds: Mother Tongue-Based Bilingual or Multilingual Education in the Early Years*. 2011.
- [2] J. Lexmond and R. Reeves, "'Parents are the principal architects of a fairer society...': Building Character," *Notes*, 2009.
- [3] A. I. Pinto, M. Pessanha, and C. Aguiar, "Effects of the home environment and center-based child care quality on children's language, communication, and literacy outcomes," *Early Child. Res. Q.*, vol. 28, no. 1, pp. 94–101, 2013.
- [4] S. Roulstone, J. Law, R. Rush, J. Clegg, and T. Peters, "Investigating the role of language in children's early educational outcomes," 2010.
- [5] Y. Rafferty, K. W. Griffin, and M. Lodise, "Adolescent Motherhood and Developmental Outcomes of Children in Early Head Start: The Influence of Maternal Parenting Behaviors, Well-Being, and Risk Factors Within the Family Setting," *Am. J. Orthopsychiatry*, 2011.
- [6] D. Aufseeser, S. Jekielek, and B. Brown, "The Family Environment and Adolescent Well-being: Exposure to Positive and Negative Family Influences," 2006.
- [7] A. M. Luebbe and D. J. Bell, "Positive and negative family emotional climate differentially predict youth anxiety and depression via distinct effective pathways," *J. Abnorm. Child Psychol.*, 2014.
- [8] J. W. Creswell, *Educational Research: Pearson New International Edition: Planning, Conducting and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research*. 2014.
- [9] A. Rosyada and A. B. Retnomurti, "The Use of Positive Language on Children Education to Build Children's Positive Behaviour," *Scope J. English Lang. Teach.*, vol. 1, no. 01, p. 1, Mar. 2019.
- [10] C. Alkouatli, "Pedagogies in Becoming Muslim: Contemporary Insights from Islamic Traditions on Teaching, Learning, and Developing," *Religions*, vol. 9, no. 11, p. 367, 2018.
- [11] A. Rosyada and A. Ramadhianti, "Implementasi Bahasa positif dan screen time management dalam membangun karakter terbaik anak," *PkM Pengabd. Kpd. Masy.*, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 87–95, 2019.