

Character Building for Early Childhood Learners Through The Shadow Puppet-Based Javanese Language Manners

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Abstract: Character education has played an important role in children's psychological growth. Building positive characters during an early age can be a firm commitment to foster education in the subconscious state of mind. Children learn through what they see, hear and experience. Fun learning is inseparable from learning methods and media. The accuracy of learning methods and the use of media can influence the success of a learning process. Shadow puppet media and project-based learning method can indirectly instill character education for children. Aside from being a character-building strategy, the shadow puppet media can be a Javanese language manner-based vocabulary learning strategy. This study aims to improve students' ability to use Javanese language in order to instill education on the first night. The method used is a learning-based project with wayang kulit media. The data in this study are the results of interviews with students of education and teaching and learning activities. Data sources used were events and informants. The analysis technique in this study is comparative descriptive. The conclusions from this study indicate that through project based learning methods with shadow puppet media can improve students' ability to use various Javanese manners in the framework of planting character education in early childhood. Students are able to use Javanese language vocabulary according to the expected level.

Keywords: *Character building, shadow puppet media, project-based learning methods, character education, Javanese language manners (unggah-ungguh)*

Introduction

Character education plays a significant role in the children's growth and development. Early childhood character education will stay longer in the children's memory. In general, children will imitate what they see, hear, and experience in their lives. Therefore, a child's character is strongly determined by the surrounding environment. Through a game, a child will be interested in hearing, and understanding the message in it. Playing puppets becomes an alternative way to instill character education for children. The shadow puppet has the puppet character played by a puppeteer and it is appropriate as a medium of learning for children. In fact, character education is an integral part of elements of Javanese language manner-based character education. In Javanese culture, children not only see the shadow puppet show, but also involve directly to play the puppet characters. Sulistyowati (2012: 27) explained that character education is basically the development of values derived from the Indonesian nation's life view or ideology, religion, culture, and values formulated in national education. This opinion is in accordance with the character building program in this study which is based on cultural values.

Early childhood character building can improve children's mindsets and behaviors. In Javanese culture, character education is in line with the Javanese language manners (*unggah-ungguh*). Children who master *unggah-ungguh* will always have a self-control of negative things around them. This character building can be undertaken both informally and formally. In an informal environment, the family plays a crucial role, because children interact with each other within a longer duration. On the other hand, the school has a role that is quite influential for the development of children's character. Character education materials integrated with

optimal teaching materials will increase the success of children's character building. Lickona (2012) argues that the internalization of character education will be effective and meaningful if students not only understand goodness, but also make goodness as an attitude and trait, and manifest it in daily behaviors and actions. Character education for children is expected to develop affective abilities, can shape character, and can develop national civilization. Therefore, character education is necessary for students to reach success considerably.

The success of a learning is determined by the way the teacher delivers the subject matter. In addition, the method of teaching must also be adjusted to students' characteristics. Teachers are required to be creative when delivering information related to learning materials. One method that can be used by the teacher is to use the project-based learning method. This method is easily accepted by students because in this shadow puppet performance, they do activities while learning and having fun. Submission of learning materials using innovative methods can form a more enjoyable learning atmosphere. Students' activities in learning is related to the use of innovative methods. A pleasant learning atmosphere and students' activities in learning will support the ease of understanding the teaching materials. Saberan (2012: 1) suggests that learning media is necessary in the teaching and learning processes because it can provide stimulation and learning experience as a whole through all senses especially the sight. Students who actively ask or answer questions indicate good attention to the learning processes.

In addition to the accuracy of learning methods, the use of media also influences the success of a learning process. Shadow puppet media is a graphic media that depicts puppet-shaped characters. This media seeks to improve students' listening and speaking skills. Visualization of attractive shadow puppets can encourage students to actively pay attention to their sense of vision, while the delivery of materials through storytelling can encourage students to be more active in listening. These language skills are strengthened by involving students directly in shadow puppet shows.

Method

This research is qualitative research. The method used is project based learning that focuses on students with researchers as facilitators. The steps are; (1) determine basic questions; (2) making project designs; (3) scheduling; (4) monitor project progress; (5) assessment of results; (6) experience evaluation. The data used is primary and secondary data. Primary data in the form of student work in the form of Javanese shadow puppet shows, while secondary data in the form of students' attitudes in carrying out classroom activities. The research subjects were Lazuardi Kamila students in kindergarten category B with a Kalimantan class sample. The determination of the sample is based on the consideration of the results of class teacher interviews, namely the Kalimantan class including the active class category so that it is more conducive to be used as research subjects.

This research activity applied four methods, namely (1) expository method (explanation), (2) group discussion method, (3) assignment method, and (4) observation. The expository method in this service activity applied innovative learning models along with modeling from experts. The submission of materials to students is carried out by using expository methods and group discussions. Required materials discussed in learning include (1) the use of good and correct language, (2) the use of Javanese language in various contexts of the situation as the basis for the character building in early childhood, (3) the relevance of using good and correct Javanese language in project-based activities, learning media and shadow puppets.

The assignment activity was undertaken to improve students abilities to use Javanese language properly and correctly. Meanwhile, the assignment method provided an opportunity for students to practice Javanese language in accordance with situational contexts. Assessment activities were designed and undertaken using an observation method to find out the students' mastery of Javanese language. The following is a flow of thought to clarify certain stages in implementing research activities.

Result and Discussion

Early childhood character education influences children's attitudes. As an effort to overcome moral conditions of society that increasingly abandon the eastern culture, character education is a gateway to ethics or moral philosophy. Etymologically ethics is derived from the Greek *ethos* that means a habit, while morality is derived from the Latin *mos* that means a custom (Zuriah, 2015: 17). Meanwhile, Lickona (2012: 82) elaborates that character education has three integral parts namely moral knowledge, moral feelings, and moral behavior. The three parts support each other's character building. The Ministry of National Education of the Republic of Indonesia has formulated 18 character values to build the nation's character, as follows.

- 1) Religiosity, namely obedience in understanding and implementing religious teachings (personal beliefs) including a tolerant attitude towards the implementation of other religious services (personal beliefs), and living in harmony with one another.
- 2) Honesty, namely attitudes and behaviors that reflect the unity between knowledge, words and deeds (knowing what is right, telling the truth, and doing what is right) so that a person can be trusted.
- 3) Tolerance, namely attitudes and behaviors that reflect respect for different religions, schools of belief, ethnicity, customs, language, race, ethnicity, opinions, and other things that are different from each other consciously and openly, and can live peacefully amid the diversity.
- 4) Discipline, namely habits and actions that are consistent with all applicable forms of regulations or rules.
- 5) Hard work, namely behavior that shows earnest effort (fighting to the last drop of blood) in completing various tasks, problems, jobs, etc.
- 6) Creativity, namely attitudes and behaviors that reflect innovation in various aspects to solve problems, so that they always find new ways, even new results that are better than before.
- 7) Independence, namely attitudes and behaviors that are not dependent on others in completing various tasks and problems. However, this does not mean that it is not permissible to collaborate, but not to ignore tasks and responsibilities to others.
- 8) Democratic, namely the attitude and way of thinking that reflect equality of rights and obligations fairly and evenly with one another.
- 9) Curiosity, namely ways of thinking, attitudes, and behaviors that reflect curiosity about everything that is seen, heard, and studied more deeply.
- 10) Nationalism, namely attitudes and actions that place the interests of the nation and state above personal or individual and group interests.
- 11) Love of the homeland, namely attitudes and behaviors that reflect a sense of pride, loyalty, caring, and high appreciation for language, culture, economy, politics, and so on, so that it is not easy to accept the offer of other nations that can harm the nation.

- 12) Appreciation of achievement, namely an open attitude towards the achievements of others and acknowledge their own shortcomings without reducing the spirit of higher achievements.
- 13) Communicative, friendly or proactive, namely attitudes and open actions towards others through polite communication so as to create collaborative cooperation well.
- 14) Peaceful love, namely attitudes and behavior that reflect the atmosphere of peace, security, calmness, and comfort in the presence of others in a particular community.
- 15) Love to read, a habit with no compulsion to provide time specifically to read a variety of information, books, journals, magazines, newspapers, and so on, giving rise to knowledgeable policies.
- 16) Care for the environment, namely the attitudes and actions that always strive to preserve the surrounding environments.
- 17) Social care, namely attitudes and actions that reflect concern for others and the people in need of help.
- 18) Responsibility, namely the attitude and behavior of a person in carrying out duties and obligations, both relating to himself or herself, community, nation, state, and religion.

In general, character education functions as a system of development, improvement and screening. Therefore, it is necessary to emphasize character education in early childhood. Involving children in an activity will provide a stimulation for the brain development. The project-based learning method enables all children's senses, so that all aspects of their language skills can be honed. After listening to the material, the children are asked to play a role using a puppet media. The children play puppet characters that have been provided.

The shadow puppet media is played using a storytelling system, so that children will be more interested in listening and can indirectly learn the message delivered. Storytelling is the art of communication that requires an interaction between storytellers and spectators (Suwardi, 2009: 54). Storytellers really need to build an atmosphere. A fun (flat) mimic will make the listener interested and focus on what is told. A dialogue with listeners also needs to be inserted to provoke opinions from listeners and build an atmosphere of intimacy. This positive interaction will help listeners convey their ideas or opinions without the need to feel afraid, ashamed, or depressed. A pleasant atmosphere will make students understand the message delivered more easily. Another way that can be done to attract students' attention through the storytelling method is to ask one student to advance or use certain media.



Figure 1. Shadow Puppet Media

The media in the learning process has a function to generate students' learning excitement and allow more direct interactions in the learning processes (Sadiman et al, 2014: 17). Media that can be used to encourage storytelling activities include pictures or puppets. In this research activity, using shadow puppet media solely depends on lighting, as stated by B. Yudi Dwiandiyanta, etc. (2012):

Shadows are formed because light travels in straight lines. When an opaque object or material is placed in the path of rays of light, shadows are created. Usually shadow refers to an area without direct light or with weak direct light due to an object blocking light to other objects. Shade refers to light variation caused by change of shape of the object itself. shadows and shade all refer to the darker part in an area. In shadow areas, there is no direct light but only scattered and reflected light [17].

Puppet becomes a center of learning from various aspects of life. The figures in the puppet reflect the character of Javanese community. Puppet is displayed in a performance by presenting a puppeteer as a staging director. In the performance, the puppet requires lighting, because what is displayed is the shadow of the puppet.

Leather puppets in Javanese society can be classified as shadow puppets. The lighting highlighted on the puppet makes shadow puppets live. In addition, shadow puppet shows also depend on the puppeteer who plays the role. Stories that are packed in shadow puppet shows for students will be more interesting when linked to everyday life. Storytelling is full of meaning by delivering Javanese language vocabulary that will further add to the children's vocabulary stocks.

Shadow puppet shows display audio-visuals. The language used is Javanese language manners that aim to introduce students to speak Javanese language in a variety of manners. The use of shadow puppets will be more effective if done regularly and pleasantly. Every learning activity at school is closely related to the language process. When delivering materials, a teacher must speak clearly in a language that can be understood by students. One method of teaching that can be applied is storytelling. Expressions and movements that are highlighted in storytelling activities can attract students' attention and facilitate students in receiving information. This is corroborated by the opinion of Bashir (2011: 36) that students may duplicate gestures and movements to show comprehension. Observations of the expressions and movements displayed will facilitate students in learning.

The use of audio visual media is certainly more interesting and easily accepted than teaching methods that only rely on speech. Shadow puppet media is a graphic media that depicts puppet-shaped characters. The storytelling method and shadow puppet media are the right combination used to improve students' speaking, reading and listening skills. The activity of listening to stories allows students to get a lot of information. The amount of information received by students is directly proportional to the mastery of students' language skills. The learning process of each individual begins with the process of listening-gathering information that is processed and delivered again. Listening to fairy tales with shadow puppet media can help improve students' ability to speak, read and write according to the Javanese language manners.



Figure 2. Application of Project Based Learning Method for TK Lazuardi Kamila Students

Wayang figures used are Mahabarata figures namely Pandhawa Lima. Five Pandhawa are five brothers consisting of Yudhistira, Bima, Arjuna, Nakula, and Sadewa. The puppet character is played by students using everyday language which is associated with the use of various types of manners in certain vocabulary which aims to pay homage to the older speech partners. Following are excerpts of the student dialogue in playing the Pandhawa Lima figures.

- Bima : “Kakang apa njenengan wis dhahar?”
‘Are you eating?’
- Yudhistira : “Durung dhimas, manawa Sadewa apa ya durung mangan ta?”
‘Not yet, if Sadewa doesn't eat yet?’
- Sadewa : “Kula ugi dereng nedha kangmas.”
‘I haven't eaten mas, either.’
- Bima : “Becike awake dhewe bebarengan jajan ana warung ngarep omah wae.”
‘It's good that we eat together at the front restaurant of the house.’
“Kula angsal ndherek?”
- Arjuna : ‘Can I join?’
“Nggih kakang, manga mawon.”
- Nakula : ‘Yes, please.’
“Aku krungu kabar manawa Drupadi lagi lara wis telung dina suwene.”
- Bima : ‘I heard the news that Drupadi was sick for three days.’
“Lha kepiye manawa bubar maem, banjur tilik Drupadi?”
- Yudhistira : ‘What if after eating we continue to look at Drupadi?’
“Sarujuk kangmas, kula ndherek.”
- Nakula : ‘Agree, I'm coming.’
“Ya, ananging awake dhewe kudu pamit karo biyunge dhewe sik.”
- Yudhistira : ‘Yes, but we must ask for our mother permission first.’
“Iya mas, bener kandhamu manawa arep lelungan pancen becike pamit karo bapa biyung utawa wong sing ana ing omah. Supaya ora padha bingung nggoleki.”
- Bima : ‘Yes, you really say that if you are going to travel it is better to ask permission from your mother or someone at home. So as not to confuse searching.’
“Kangmas, Drupadi punika nandang sakit punapa?”
‘What is Drupadi sick?’
“Sakngertiku lara watuk lan awake anget.”
- Nakula : ‘I understand cough and fever.’
“Kadospunsi menawi mangke ditumbaske gedhang kangge angsul-angsul?”

- Yudhistira : ‘What if you buy bananas for souvenirs later? ’
 “Ngono ya apik dhi, pancen becike yen tilik wong lara sakliyane ndongakake
- Sadewa : supaya ben ndang mari lumrahe ya nggawa angsul-angsul.”
 ‘It's also good to know, it's good if you look at a sick person besides praying for a quick recovery, it's commonplace to bring souvenirs. ’
- Nakula : “Ayo gek ndang pamit marang biyung banjur mangkat!”
 ‘Let's immediately ask permission from the mother and leave!’
 “Ya.”
 ‘Yes.’
 “Ayo.”
- Yudhistira : ‘Come on.’
 “Yo.”
- Bima : ‘Let’s go.’
 “Nggih kakang.”
- Arjuna : ‘Yes man.’
- Nakula :
- Sadewa :

The text of the dialogue is made by the student directed by the researcher as a facilitator. In the excerpts of dialogues made by the students, it contains elements of character education in the form of religious, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creative, independent, democratic, communicative, and socially caring. In addition, the use of various types of manners in some parts shows respect for older speech partners. The use of the multi-level manganese-nedhadhahar word 'meal' starts with the level of prayer where the placement must be adjusted. If for yourself you can use ngoko-madya, while for others you use manners.

In this sense, Javanese language manners are elements of character education for children. This requires elements of politeness, respect for others, mutual respect, love of peace, even care for the social environment. A Javanese language manner is divided into two levels, namely a variety of *ngoko* (a more informal level of Javanese language) and a variety of *krama* (a more formal level of Javanese language). Both levels are concerned with the speech partners involved in speech events. Age aspect, familiarity, social relations are the basis for the use of these two Javanese language varieties.

Conclusions

Using shadow puppets helps students know and memorize Javanese language vocabulary more easily. Learning two levels of Javanese language is one of the alternatives to preserve the language that is increasingly being abandoned by the community. Speaking Javanese language in the shadow puppet is a pride because the mother tongue learning for early childhood learners is very useful for the survival of the Javanese language itself. In addition, shadow puppet media can indirectly instill character education in early childhood. Character education for children is expected to develop affective abilities, can shape character, and can develop the national civilization.

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