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## **FOLKLORE IN LITERATURE LEARNING AS A MODEL FOR DEVELOPING CULTURAL CHARACTERS AND STUDENT'S PERSONALITY**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Folklore is one of the literary genres which is a cultural product of society and belongs to the community. As a cultural product, folklore contains noble cultural values that are upheld and respected by the people. The messages conveyed in the folklore contain character education values that should be emulated by the reading community. Therefore, folklore can be a vehicle for learning and character building in students that can be conveyed through literary learning. Literature learning must be able to generate and foster good moral values in students that can make students behave in an acceptable manner by the community. Literature learning must be able to develop critical, creative, polite, responsible, disciplined, respectful attitudes to students, both in relation to themselves, relationships with others, and relationships with worship. These individual, social and religious values can be found in folklore. Therefore, learning literature should put more emphasis on the appreciation of folklore to foster local wisdom values in students.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Learning is an interaction between students, educators, and learning resources in a learning environment to share information with each other to form learning experiences. Learning is a combination composed of: (1) human elements, consisting of students, teachers and other personnel, (2) materials, such as books, blackboards, chalk, slides and films, audio and video tapes, (3) facilities and equipment, such as classrooms, audio-visual equipment, as well as computers, and the last one is (4) procedures, consisting of schedules and methods of delivering information, practice, study, exams

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and so on (Hamalik, 1995). These components influence each other to achieve learning objectives. In other words, learning is a process of reciprocal interaction between educators and students to exchange information, with the support of various elements including materials, facilities, equipment, and procedures to achieve learning objectives.

In a broader context, learning functions as an effort to cultural inheritance, character building students to become good citizens of society, as well as a process that helps students face cultural and social life. In Law Number 20 of 2003, it is stated that education is a conscious effort to create an atmosphere of learning and the learning process so that students actively develop their potential to have religious spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and the necessary skills. himself, society, nation, and state (Suyitno, 2012). In a broader sense, the learning process as part of education is not merely aimed at transferring knowledge, but more than that, learning is a process of cultural inheritance, character building, and efforts to shape students into individuals who are ready to engage in social life. , as a manifestation of what they have got in the learning process at school.

One of the Indonesian language learning materials in schools is literature learning. Literature learning in schools is generally focused on prose learning (short stories and novels) and a small part of poetry. Learning about drama is considered to be lacking and only limited to cognitive aspects. In fact, literature reflects human life in which there are values of life (Primasari, 2016). Many literary works are inspired by or take events from life, such as the novel Tere Liye entitled *Negeri di Ujung Tanduk*, which tells of a country led by a despotic leader. In this world, there are many countries with various problems, including unjust leaders. Because literature is closely related to life, literature learning can be used as a forum for government, educators, and society to shape character in students from an early age and can be carried out in character education through literary learning. Therefore, literature learning is not limited to reading and understanding but also appreciating his work.

Literature can be the most effective container for passing on the culture and the wise values of life from generation to generation. Because literature is also entertaining and fulfills aesthetics, the values of local wisdom related to culture and life can be conveyed more flexibly and not boringly. If children have a habit of reading, they will find it easier to understand various types of writing. The character of these students can be done through habituation from an early age, especially in reading literary works.

Literary works, especially folklore, can be a means of conveying moral messages for the community because they contain various values of local wisdom that are useful for educating the public. Folklore can also be a good means of cultural learning for children because in folklore there are many cultural characteristics that are diverse including the various cultural and historical riches that each tribe has in various regions. However, on the other hand, there are some folk tales which are said to be controversial because they are deemed unsuitable for children's consumption. Therefore, folklore that can be consumed by children must be filtered by changing part of the story through adjustments or removing parts that are considered unsuitable for children's consumption (Wachidah et al., 2017). Even though it has gone through a process of adjustment, the values contained in the folklore are not lost and can still be conveyed.

The development of literary activities, especially the culture of folklore, for children needs to be carried out more actively in schools to support literary activities. This hope is supported by the Ministry of Education and Culture with the School Literacy Movement program to support children's reading habits. By being proficient in reading, students can gain better insight into cultural knowledge and experiences.

Literature learning can be an introduction to strengthening character education to face the current era of globalization of the AEC (Rondiyah et al., 2017). Literary works in the form of folklore contain moral values that are depicted in the form of figures, such as courage, a sense of responsibility, honesty, wise character, sincerity, never giving up, and others. Literary texts are able to describe moral values that inspire readers to imagine and learn from the subconscious. Literature which has an important role in everyday life and in lessons should get a greater portion of attention in learning at school.

In line with the description above, this article describes and explains the role of literary learning as a vehicle for character and cultural development of students in schools. The explanation focuses on (1) literature and culture, (2) literary learning, (3) cultural values in literature, (4) character development and culture through literary learning. An understanding of these topics is important for teachers, especially in developing a more meaningful quality of learning. The success of learning is not just the mastery of a number of cognitive knowledges possessed by students, but a number of knowledges that is implemented in life and shapes the personality attitudes possessed by students.

### **Literary and Cultural Works**

Literature is a beautiful language that is manifested in essays containing messages and noble values. Beauty in literature does not only contain physical but also inner meanings (Esten, 1987). Literature is not only what appears physically in his work, such as the use of diction, the function of the language, the choice of words, but the inner elements that do not appear like things that can be learned from the work, the message the writer wants to convey, the meaning of each word. Literature as a means of expressing what has happened in the lives of others, what other people have experienced and felt through their language. The emergence of literature is caused by the human desire to express / express himself, to take interest and talent in the reality of his life, and the desire to become imagined / imagined. (Hardjana, 1985).

Literary works are created by writers to be enjoyed, understood, and utilized by society (Damon 1979: 1). Literary works have a function as entertainment, that is, they are read by connoisseurs of literature for pleasure. Readers enjoy these literary works as entertainers without seeing the potential in reading these literary works. In addition, literary works also have an understanding function, which means that the reader understands a work that will directly relate, touch and play with the reader's mind, such as poetry, the reader must guess what the author means and imagine what the author wants to convey. A good literary work is a literary work that can make the reader feel carried away when reading it. Through good literature, readers can enjoy stories and can entertain themselves.

Quality literary works provide benefits to readers. Readers find it useful to broaden their horizons about life. Literary work is the result of the author's imagination, which is developed from experiences, events of himself and others. In this work, the author conveys messages and values of kindness that can provide lessons so that readers can take goodness / wisdom from literary works. Readers can pick messages that can broaden readers' horizons about life.

In line with the description above, it can be argued that literary works in the form of folklore can be a vehicle for the development of character education. Fakry Gaffar (in Kesuma, Cepi, and Johar, 2011: 5) explains that character education is a process of changing the values of life in a person's personality so that they are integrated into that

person's life behavior. Character values include character values in relation to God, oneself, fellow humans and the environment, and nationality (Kemendiknas, 2010).

Literary works, including folklore, are cultural products that are owned by the community. What is meant by culture in this context is all types of human activities and their results that are patterned, both perceptible and non-sensable. Culture that develops in society can be grouped into two major divisions, namely culture as a product and culture as the whole way of life of society. As a product, culture includes values, beliefs, norms, symbols, and ideology, while as a way of life, culture is in the form of relationships between people and human attitudes or behavior in establishing relationships with others.

Anthropologists divide culture into two, namely large culture and small culture. Great culture is a culture of achievement, which includes geography, history, institutions, literature, art, music, and ways of life. Meanwhile, small culture is a culture of behavior, which includes attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, especially those expressed in language and influenced by local culture (Tomalin and Stempleski, 1993). Duranti (1997) explains that culture (a) is different from nature, (b) as knowledge, (c) as communication, (d) as a system of mediation, and as a system of practice. As a matter that is different from things that are natural (culture is distinct from nature), culture is something that is learned, transmitted, passed down from generation to generation. In this case, culture is inherited through human action in the form of prominent interactions and language communication.

Based on the description above, it can be argued that culture is essentially about the way of life of humans. Therefore, this culture includes three forms relating to what humans do, what they know or think about, and what they make or use to fulfill their daily needs. The three forms by Spradley (1985) are mentioned in terms of cultural behavior, cultural knowledge, and cultural objects. He explained that although cultural behavior and cultural objects can be seen easily, these two forms only reflect their surface. Actually, what is more basic and more important is what is hidden as cultural knowledge because it is that knowledge that shapes behavior and interprets experiences.

E.B. Tylor as quoted by Saifuddin (2005: 23) explains culture from an anthropological point of view. Tylor views culture as the totality of human experience. Therefore, he said that culture is a complex totality which includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs, and other capabilities and habits that humans as members of society have. Koentjaraningrat (2003: 80–81) classifies cultural elements into 7 groups, namely language, knowledge systems, social organizations, systems for living tools and technology, systems for livelihoods, religious systems, and arts. Each element of universal culture also has three forms, namely the cultural system, the social system, and the elements of its physical culture. For example, the religious system has a form as a system of beliefs and ideas about God, gods, spirits, etc., has a form of ritual, and prepares sacred objects.

Every society has a culture, which means that every society has a folk tale. If it is returned to its function that culture was created by humans to fulfill their daily needs, this shows that each society also has a unique folk tale that describes its culture and this story is different from folk tales in other cultures. There is no single universal culture that can govern and fulfill the needs of all people. In fact, the reality in society is that there are a number of cultural subsystems that are owned by different communities, for example the cultural subsystem for the economic community, regional community, social community, and so on. Porter and Samovar (2005) explain that there are

differences in each cultural subsystem that is owned by one community with the cultural subsystems of other communities in one culture or society that surrounds it. Folklore as a unique cultural work was created by people to solve their own problems. Because of their uniqueness, it is incorrect to compare the values of folklore in one culture with the folklore of another culture in a hierarchical position (Sumardjo, 2005).

### **Learning Literature in Schools**

Literature learning still requires serious attention both in the community and in the sphere of formal education. As a learning tool, in literature learning there are literary elements (Rozak & Mulyati, 2018: 49). Many do not understand and are not correct in interpreting and implementing literary learning correctly. In learning literature it is not only to introduce, memorize, and understand the history and definition of literature, but also regarding the main function of literature, namely through literature, literary experience activities can be conveyed so that sense Budi can be cultivated through literary appreciation activities, literary studies and literary expression. So that with maximum literary learning, an attitude and ability to appreciate the presence of literary works that have meaning and meaning in real life will be obtained. In the current era, it is often found that literary works do not get enough appreciation from readers. The presence of literary works really needs appreciation from readers without appreciation of literary works in life cannot enter and maximize the optimization and strengthening of character values in the reader's life.

In order for the presence of literature to be able to make a large contribution in real life, literature learning must be carried out appropriately so that minor and difficult problems that arise in society can be resolved. Without proper literary teaching, the objectives of teaching literature cannot be maximally conveyed. The final goal of teaching literature is to cultivate, instill and develop a sense of sensitivity to the problems faced by humans, the introduction of both individual values and social values (Khomsilawati, 2017).

The teaching of literature must be carried out as much as possible so that it can contribute to self-change in the reader towards a more positive character change. These changes are expected to foster broad thinking in readers so that they affect the level of maturity in solving real problems in life. The more mature in solving problems in real life, a person can be said to be more mature in living life in society. Optimal literature learning will foster individuals who have personalities and increase the intelligence of each student. Teaching literature must be able to increase students' understanding of culture, sharpen the level of sensitivity, improve language skills and support character building. These four areas are important aspects of literature teaching.

Character building through literary learning is one way that is able to develop character values in students. Character in students is formed due to a gradual habituation. Character cannot be created without an habituation because it requires a process of practice, continuous habituation to become an attitude in a person (Setiawati, 2015). The things that are expected in learning literature are refinement of character that is reflected in every action or behavior every day. Through literary learning, it is expected that the polite character of students in communication is manifested in the language used (Wirajayadi, 2016).

Learning literary appreciation in schools aims to shape the character and behavior of students that lead to a dignified national civilization (Waryanti, 2015). With the existence of literary learning, the values of national character can be instilled and embedded in learning. Through literary appreciation, students are trained to build their

own character through analytical understanding of the elements of literary works. The character in question is the inner structure seen in the behavior / actions that are permanent which are characteristic of a person (Anshori, 2017).

### **Cultural Values in Folklore**

Cultural values are core values in human life in society. These values are upheld, respected, and obeyed to be applied in social life. These values become the rules that direct the behavior of community members in carrying out socio-cultural activities. Koentjaraningrat (2003) states that cultural values serve as the highest guideline for human behavior. These values have been inherent in every member of society so that it is difficult to replace or change in a short period of time because they involve major problems in human life (Sukidin, Basrowi, and Wiyaka, 2003).

Apart from cultural values, in life in society there are cultural norms. These values and norms are essentially societal rules that control and regulate the socio-cultural activities of a society. These cultural values and norms serve as guidelines and guidelines for life that are upheld and obeyed by all members of society. These cultural values are abstract and contain ideas that are considered good, correct, and shared by community members. Because cultural values are abstract and general in nature, it is possible to have a variety of different social behaviors from one community member to another. As long as the diversity of behavior is in accordance with the values adopted, conflicts between members of the community within the same ethnicity will not occur. Meanwhile, cultural norms are guidelines for more specific cultural behavior. In this case, norms regulate and direct the way of behaving, thinking, and speaking of individual members of society in certain situations (Conklin, 1984).

The cultural values and norms of a society always regulate and direct the way individual members of society behave and act as expected by the community. These cultural values and norms are reflected in the perspective and cultural attitudes of community members in carrying out cultural practices. Viewpoints and cultural attitudes of community members can be seen from 5 main problems for human life. The five main problems include (a) the nature of human life, (b) the nature of work for humans, (c) the nature of time for humans, (d) the nature of nature for humans, and (e) the nature of relationships between individuals. Based on the five main problems, Thompson, et al. (1990) states that there are 5 perspectives and attitudes of society towards socio-cultural life, namely hierarchical, egalitarian, fatalistic, individualistic, and autonomous. These five points of view shape and determine the socio-cultural style of society.

In relation to the main problems in human life, Sukidin, Basrowi, and Wiyaka (2003) explain the attitude of human life in relation to the nature of life and the nature of work. According to them, there are 3 basic views that reveal the meaning of life for humans, namely (a) living to work, (b) living to do charity and worship, and (c) living to have fun. Meanwhile, the meaning of work for humans is (a) to earn a living, (b) to maintain life, (c) for honor, (d) for satisfaction and pleasure, and (e) for acts of worship.

Folklore as a form of literary genre is a cultural product that belongs to the community. As a cultural product, folklore contains messages and cultural values that reflect the culture of the people who belong to it. Folklore records the noble values that are expected and upheld by society. These values are taught to the community so that they are understood and preserved in cultural and social life. Through the process of reflection, readers of folklore can seek experiences in the messages contained in the story. Messages that contain character / character values can be found in folklore.

Through these character messages, each individual can build and get used to behaving consistently and systematically based on his beliefs so that it becomes a habit in everyday life (Hidayah, 2015). The content of character values in folklore is the core of the mandate contained in folklore. The existence of folklore cannot be separated from the presence of the mandate because without the mandate, the story will lose its function.

As a literary genre, folklore has a building element consisting of intrinsic elements and extrinsic elements. The intrinsic elements of folklore include the theme, plot, setting, character & characterization, mandate, language style and point of view, while extrinsic elements include the social and cultural background of the community. The content of character values in folklore becomes the content of the story contained in the message that is conveyed. In the message, readers can find the value of the characters that are inserted into the story. In literary works that take human and life as the object of study, these stories generally present interesting issues that should be followed. Based on events and character traits in the story, readers can easily understand the contents of the message (Isnanda, 2015). The character values contained in folklore are better understood and accepted by readers because the stories provide direct examples in the story line. This is in accordance with the principle of character education which requires an example or role model, only theory is conveyed through words (La Madi, 2017).

Lately, character values with cultural personalities are increasingly unfocused and are increasingly missing from students' attitudes and personalities. The increasing number of acts of radicalism carried out by adolescents is evidence of the impact of weakening character values on each teenager. This is due to the lack of efforts to optimize the cultivation of character values in adolescents (Supriyono et al, 2018). Therefore, the times that are increasingly globalized need to be balanced with optimal character strengthening. Through the empowerment of folklore, the cultivation of character values can be optimized. Folklore can be a medium that can be used to strengthen and foster character values in students. Strengthening character in students has significant benefits as a basis for developing learning achievement (Kirom, 2018).

### **Character Education in Folklore**

Education can be interpreted as a conscious effort made longitudinally by humans in adjusting their personality to the values that are believed by society and their culture (Murtiningsih, 2004). Education must be able to carry out its function as a vehicle for developing intellectual intelligence, moral intelligence, interests, talents and other potential personalities that exist in students. The effort to balance intellectual and moral needs is one of the foundations for developing character education. In order to form quality human resources, it requires not only a cognitive assessment, but also an assessment in terms of norms, ethics, and culture.

Learning literature in schools should not only introduce knowledge about literature, but also bring literature closer to it through values that are useful for understanding life (Noor, 2011). This is in accordance with the objectives of character education, namely learning that seeks to instill the values of life so that students can distinguish good and bad behavior and are able to apply the good behavior they understand. Learning literature should be able to develop politeness values in communication so that students are able to communicate well in everyday life. Literature learning is at least able to make students aware of their abilities, talents, and interests so that they can get to know themselves better and express themselves in the

form of directed actions. Through literary learning, teachers can instill values that become the basis for character education.

In developing character education, teachers can use folklore texts as their learning material. As previously stated, folklore is a cultural product that belongs to the community, and records various phenomena and cultural events of the community. Folklore conditions with the moral values of life that are upheld and respected by every member of society. The values in folklore need to be understood by students because they can expand knowledge and insight, arouse imagination, and provide experiences to readers. By reading folk tales, readers can arouse their feelings and thoughts so that they have a good reading experience.

As literary works, folk tales are created with the intention of providing life values so that readers do not need to experience what they have read, but simply take lessons from the problems that have been described in the story (Sumardjo, 1993). Therefore, folklore can function as a medium to develop the values contained in the literary work itself. Thus, folklore can become a medium in the development of character education in schools. Character are unique, good values that are embedded in oneself and are manifested in behavior (Abidin, 2012). Character can show how someone behaves. A person can be called a character if his behavior is in accordance with the moral rules prevailing in society. The characters found in folklore include religious characters, social characters, and individual characters.

Religious values have relevance with the eighteen values of character education, among others; faith and piety, *tawakal*, *ihsan*, sincerity, patience, and gratitude. Religious values in the form of faith and piety can be explained by carrying out worship obligations, diligently reading the holy book, praying before and after doing something. The religious value in the form of *ihsan* can be explained by feeling that God knows all human actions and thoughts, feels that God is always with us, does actions in the name of God. The religious value in the form of *tawakal* can be seen by asking for help only from God, always praying and trying, being patient with all calamities, accepting decisions given by God for all efforts made. The religious value in the form of sincerity can be seen as an indication of helping sincerely by hoping for God's pleasure, not discriminating in helping to hope for God's pleasure, always doing good deeds in God's way. The religious value in the form of patience can be seen with an indication of not being easily angry, not hasty in acting. The religious value in the form of gratitude can be seen as an indication of being grateful for all God's gifts, avoiding arrogance, never feeling inadequate, using property appropriately.

Social values have relevance to the eighteen values of character education, among others; respect other people's work, polite, democratic, care for the social environment, care for the environment, social values in the form of appreciating other people's work can be indicated by giving appreciation to other people's work, giving praise to other people's work, recognizing other people's work, looking at other people's work useful, trying to make useful work. Social values in the form of courtesy can be indicated by respecting older people, respecting younger people, saying words that don't hurt, behaving politely, not yelling and shouting when talking to others. Social values in the form of democracy can be indicated by providing opportunities for other people to realize their ideals, seeing others in an objective way, not discriminating in treating others, feeling that everyone has their respective rights. The social value in the form of caring for the social environment can be indicated by caring for others, helping others in need, not staying silent when other people get disaster. The social value in the form of



environmental care can be indicated by protecting the natural environment, repairing natural damage, avoiding actions that can harm living things.

Individual values have relevance to the eighteen values of character education, among others; honest, responsibility, discipline, hard work, confidence, creative and innovative, independent, high curiosity. Individual value in the form of honesty can be indicated by saying what it is, saying what has been done, there are similarities between conscience and deeds. Individual value in the form of responsibility can be indicated by courageously taking the risk of the actions that have been done, willing to admit mistakes and dare to apologize. Individual values in the form of discipline can be indicated by complying with existing regulations, implementing applicable rules, not acting carelessly. Individual value in the form of hard work can be indicated by being serious in doing daily work, not knowing despair, being serious in completing tasks. Individual values in the form of self-confidence can be indicated by not being easily influenced by others, stable in acting, daring to dream and trying to make it happen, able to make changes. Individual values in the form of creative and innovative can be indicated by utilizing used goods that are still fit for use, creating and creating new methods. Individual values in the form of independence can be indicated by trying to complete tasks on their own, not depending on others. Individual values in the form of high curiosity can be indicated by searching for information through various media, not giving up in looking for information even though they encounter obstacles, not being satisfied quickly when knowing information.

## Conclusion

Literature and culture are two fields that cannot be separated. All literary works, including folk tales, are cultural products of society and the culture of society is recorded in these literary works. To understand the culture of a society, one can study his literary works because through the study of the messages contained in the work, the cultural behavior of the community will be reflected. It can be understood that the creation of literary works, including folklore, is based on the writer's long experience based on what he has done himself or experienced by others. The literary writer's imagination contained in the work is a dream, wishful thinking, or aspiration of the expected good. Therefore, the purpose of studying and studying literary works is to try to understand and imitate the good behavior contained in the story. This insight is important to understand by literature teachers and connoisseurs of literature so that reading and teaching literature does not only prioritize cognitive knowledge so that they forget about moral values and personality attitudes which have great benefits in developing student character education.

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