

# CHARACTER RECOGNITION THROUGH FOLKLORE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD

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## ABSTRACT

*Based on local folklore culture has noble values that can shape the character of the child. This is consistent with the results of studies related to character recognition for early childhood through local folklore culture. But the way the children think concretely hinder the child's understanding of folklore that happened in the past and often describe abstract values in it. The results showed that there is increasing recognition indicator of the average child's character some 26 percent. The steps to be taken in developing the folklore educators in early childhood learning are 1) the identification of the character to be introduced in accordance with the needs of the child, 2) designing an instrument for measuring characteristics, 3) sort of folklore in accordance with the character you want to develop , 4) modify the folklore to fit the child's stage of development thinking, 5) makes visualization (illustrations) to make it more interesting story, and 6) perform storytelling activities with a variety of exploration activities. As for some of the stories of Yogyakarta used in this study are Kali Gajah Wong, Karangwaru, Desa Kembang, Terjadinya Kedung Bolong, Mbok Randa Bintara dan Lurah Cakrajaya, Kisah Rusa Menjadi Bertanduk, Kijang dan Lintah, Kunang-kunang Kelip dan Impiannya.*

*Keywords: character education, early childhood, folklore*

## INTRODUCTION

Crisis hit Indonesia in various fields such as in the areas of education, economic, social and cultural. Improving the quality of human resources through education is the key character to anticipate this problem. Characters need to be established and nurtured as early as possible in order to produce a better quality of the nation. Early childhood education is the beginning of the formation of human education. At the age of 80 percent of the brain develops until the age of 8 years. Research shows that children are born with 100 billion brain cells. When entering an early age, growing up the connection several times the initial connection is about 20,000 connections (Jalongo, 2007). Erikson in Papalia, et al (2008) and Brewer (2007) also said that the success of the child to resolve conflicts at an early age to determine the child's success in the social life of future adulthood. For that character education has the potential to be developed at an early age.

Environment around children include family, school, and community. Culture is a part in that environment. Education in the family inherited cultural values for generations to come. Parents will educate children in accordance with how the parents got the discipline from his parents earlier. Family environment, school and civilized society to provide opportunities for character education to develop the great value a positive culture in the world of education. Therefore, education should be developed based on local culture to preserve local culture positive. One way to preserve the culture is to introduce and familiarize the child to hear, and read the stories of the people of the region.

So many folk tales that have inherited the noble values to shape the character that had been lost and unknown. Facts on the ground indicate that educators prefer stories translated from abroad to tell. This happens due to lack of available media read from the local culture itself. Some of the many available books are a book of fairy tales western countries. Story books suitable for young children with a picture from the local culture are not available so the fairy tale book world consumption is more widely used. In addition, some local folklore of many cultures contains stories that are not logical so it is difficult to be understood by children. And if observed these stories contain moral values and good character to be introduced to the child.

## **CHARACTER EDUCATION IN FOLKLORE FOR CHILDREN**

Character comes from the Greek meaning "to mark". This term focus on the actions or behavior. According Muslich (2011) character has two terms, namely showing how people behave and are associated with personality. In connection with an act that, if someone behaves well as helpful, honest, shows the true character of this noble and vice versa. Character personality relates to a person's intention is called if the character according to the rules of moral behavior. According to Indonesian dictionary associated with the nature of the character. Character is a human trait that influences the entire inner thoughts and behavior; manners, and character. Thus, the character is a form of behavior that are performed in accordance with the rules of moral and character.

Likona in Muslich (2011) emphasizes three components of good character and must be inculcated early knowing that moral (moral knowledge), moral feeling (sense of morality), and moral action (moral behavior). Three of these components is necessary to be able to understand, feel, and work on policy values. It is to answer the needs that moral education in learning not

only given in the form of rote learning (cognitive), but rather on the moral development of the internalized in man. This fits well with the notion of character education in PP No. 58 education involving the cultivation of knowledge, love and kindness that investment behavior into a pattern/habit. Based on the understanding of the character education is education that shapes a person's behavior to conform to the moral code both in terms of cognitive, affective and psychomotor.

Character formation in early childhood can be done through habituation. The aim is for children to practice these values directly and used to do good things with the expectation value can be internalized in the child's life. Planting the value of character education in early childhood in PP No.58 curriculum supplement includes four aspects: spiritual, aspects of personal, social and environmental aspects. Values are considered good and important to be introduced and internalized to early childhood appropriate supplement that covers PP No.58; love of Almighty God, honesty, discipline, tolerance and peace-loving, self-confident, independent, mutual help, cooperation and cooperation mutual, respect and courtesy, responsibility, hard work, leadership and justice, creative, humble, caring environment, love of nation and homeland.

Folklore by Kiefer (2010) in the quotation is: "folktales have been defined as all forms of narrative; written or oral, roomates have come to be handed down through the years". Thus epic, ballads, legends, myths and fables can include types of folklore. Mustakim (2005) also stated that folklore is the story told orally by word of mouth; from generation to generation that does not know the name of the author. Thus, folklore could not be ascertained but it is believed the truth because it is associated with the existence of evidence that can still be found today. For example, the story of Prambanan temple, to this day the children were able to see the historical sites. Children also learn the story of Prambanan Temple, although not necessarily the truth.

Folklore has special characteristics. Kiefer (2010) made some folklore characteristics that can be distinguished from other stories for children. The characteristic that is associated with the groove structure, character, style, themes, and motifs. Flow structure in the form of folklore is simple and leads, consisting of repetitions of responses, songs and poetry. Time and place in the story does not tell you anything specific but beautiful. Opening section typically show conflict in the story, the characters and places. Conclusion The story follows the climax very fast and detail. Structure in folklore is usually introduced very quickly. Character in folklore for children unequivocally demonstrate the merits or otherwise behave cruelly and even evil. Styles in many

folk tales provide opportunities for rich language and consist of a broad pattern of language. The themes are often interested in the kids has a conflict and ends with the completion of the beautiful. At its core theme in folklore must contain entertaining stories for children. Motif in folklore characters contained in the figures contained in the story.

Early childhood generally have characteristics in its development. Cognitive development of children aged 4-6 years according to Piaget (Jamaris, 2011) included in the preoperational stage of concrete thinking. This stage is characterized child's curiosity is very big on something, ask lots of questions, be able to know the logical reasons that primitive, yet able to understand the principles of conservation, and the children learn through the examples seen when playing the so-called intuitive thinking stage. Children's understanding of folklore should be supported by direct observation of the historical evidence of the stories and pictures that help children to understand the storyline.

Social development of children of kindergarten age in Sujiono (2005) that the ability of children to be free to talk to yourself, other people and toys; speak fluently; playing in groups; began enjoys the story of a person / character in a film or story. Planting social values prevailing in society through which the child through the process of imitation, identification, and internalization. Phase imitation, imitation stage to the child's behavior or the attitudes and perspectives of adults (models). Phase identification, phase equate social behavior of people around him later in the appropriate role. Internalization stage, the stage of planting and absorption values are relatively settled so that it becomes embedded value and belongs to the person. Folklore of aspects of social development helps children to be able to go through the process of planting these values in his life.

Children's language development includes four aspects: listening, speaking, reading and writing. The fourth aspect of developing sustainable with the understanding that aspects of reading and writing aspects formed of listening and speaking skills first (oral language). There are three stages of reading books for children that include reading the beginner stage, developing stage, and independent stages (Jalongo, 2007). Reading beginner or early stage is characterized by the short and predictable, repetitive, using simple language, using rhythm, the text is simple, memorable, images and text fit, very dominant image. Characteristics of the developing stages of reading its contents are longer, more complex stories, more vocabulary, writing and drawing balanced. Reading for independent phase characteristics of the little illustrations, vocabulary and

more challenging, more characters are introduced to the children, more developed story elements. Do demonstrate that folklore gives children the opportunity to develop language skills if supported with pictures, descriptions patterned narrative, and presented in a simple sentence.

Interest in the child's development can be seen from the observation during activities. it can also be seen from a child's question is given continuously, which leads to the subject of children's interests, choice of reading books, drawing spontaneous outcome, the spontaneous answers to questions phrased adults to children, and all forms of children's work. Based on his research, Hurlock (1979) identifies some common interest in children is an interest in the human body, appearance, dress, name, symbol status, religion, gender, and work in the future. Children's play interests therein including the interest to read. Interest in children is very influential on the books chosen by the children. Based on this study, children love and remember the theme of animal folklore. This is evident from the questions presented in children. Children more quickly gave the story that has to do with animals.

Child's moral development by Kohlberg (Crain, 2007) is divided into three levels, namely pre-conventional morality, conventional, and post-conventional. Pre-conventional morality is divided into two phases: first, the child-oriented compliance and penalties. The morality of an action is judged on the basis of physical effects. The second stage, the child adjusts to the social expectations to earn the award. Conventional morality is built on the basis of compliance with the rules to get the approval of others and to maintain good relations with others. This phase is divided into two phases: an adjustment to the rules to get the approval of others and to maintain a good relationship with them.

The second stage, the child must live up to the regulations in order to be accepted in society and avoid social disapproval. Last post-conventional morality is the true morality, does not need to be told is the self-consciousness of the people. This stage is also divided into two stages: the stage where the person needs flexibility and the modifications and changes can be beneficial if the moral standards of the group as a whole. The next stage is the stage of a person adjusting to the social standards and ideals, especially to avoid internal dissatisfaction with myself. Folk tales help children to understand the moral values of life experiences of others.

Folklore for children should be tailored to the characteristics of the child's development. Musfiroh (2008) describes the seven characteristics of a suitable story for children that are related to the theme, the message, plot, character and characterization, perspective, background,

and linguistic means. Theme for kindergarten children should be single, themed social or deity, is the traditional (contrary good and bad, right and wrong). Folklore was selected in this study with respect to them. For the selection process was carried out first before the story was given to the child. Some folk tales that can not be logically understood by children can be modified in order to be understood without eliminating important value in the story.

Mandate can be interpreted as a moral message. For early childhood mandate must be either explicit or implicit. Mandate also related to planting character needs to be developed in children. Folklore presented in children leads to such values. In this case, the teacher plays a role in choosing a story that contains the message to the child. Message or mandate in a story for children affects child's interest in the story. Musfiroh (2008) suggest choosing a story that contains the mandate is not too close to the problems of the child because the child feels as objects of satire in the story. Plot or a plot in the story for early childhood should be simple, not too complicated to understand, sequential, repetitive and easy to guess, the duration of time the story is not too long, given the child has a fairly short attention span. Folklore that has been selected in this study has an average flow long enough. For that story is supported with pictures to simplify the story. Researchers who can represent the image illustrate footage in the story.

Character and characterization to be fictitious child, has similarities with individuals in real life, plain and simple (fine properties or just bad), limited number, easy to remember, and is known to the child. Characters in selected folklore developed according to the needs of the introduction of the characters that have been identified previously. For the names of the people in folklore, based on this study is rather difficult to be remembered by the child. One reason is the name of a character in a story that did exist in antiquity. Character name changes are not permitted because it would alter the way the story itself. Point of view in the story should facilitate the child to identify, interpret, and understand the story. Children's understanding of this story can be assisted by a narrator who convey about the characters, events, actions, and motivations of the story. In this study, teachers were asked to tell stories, read the script and observe the illustrations first. The goal is that the teachers are telling stories can help children to understand the story. Children's understanding of the story is also expected to understand the character that became the main goal in this activity.

Background stories for children freely in any setting, in accordance with the cognitive and moral development of the child, the right background can be used tomorrow and now, avoid

the details of the time that children are not burdened with remembering details of the time, and not described in detail. In this study, the background story to the child can still be observed today. Place and location can still be visited. This makes it easy for children to remember stories to current location or the place is still there.

Linguistic means of stories for children should be adjusted to the child's stage of language development in terms of vocabulary and sentence structure appropriate to the child's level of acquisition. Vocabulary for kids contains simple words, contains some basic numerical concepts, some adjectives, adverb, preposition the word reference, conjunctions. Vocabulary should be unambiguous and not connotative, oft-repeated words, especially words that are important, simple, precise, easy to digest and remember the child. Structure of the sentence in the story to children contain a 4 word sentences for children aged 4 years, 5 words to 5 years, 6 words for 6 years. Short sentences, sometimes containing negative sentences, sentences more active than passive voice sentences, compound sentence contains slight rise, provides direct and literal sentences. In this study, the language used is Indonesian and Javanese language punctuated by figures associated with the speech directly in the story. Teachers use simple sentences and easy to understand.

This study succeeded in improving child character recognition through local cultural folklore as much as 26 percent. This success is also supported by the first, the ability of teachers in bringing the story; develop the instruments associated with the introduction of the character and ability of teachers to choose the story. Teachers are very communicative when told that the children's attention. For critical values that have been identified to be introduced to children is emphasized in this story. The goal is that the child can imitate a good value and avoid bad behavior in everyday life. Stories are selected according to the child's interests and match the character you want to develop.

Second, folklore given to children has been modified so that the storyline more simple and easily understood by children. Folklore presented lengthy and difficult to understand children then simplified in its delivery to the child. As for the goal that children do not have difficulty in understanding the story. This study uses nine folktales from Yogyakarta. The stories include Karangwaru, Desa Kembang, Terjadinya Kedung Bolong, Mbok Randa dan Lurah Cakrajaya, Kisah Rusa Menjadi Bertanduk, Kijang dan Lintah, Kelip Kunang dan Impiannya

(Prabowo, 2008), and Kali Gajah Wong (Yudhistira, 2012). All the stories in this study modified to be easily understood by children.

Third, storytelling in this study is using illustrations. Images made with attractive color and image size ratio balanced by the number of children. For the purposes of this study, researchers sought to create illustrations of folklore long. Each title is presented in folklore only six to seven illustrations. Image cultivated according to the child's imagination and fits with the story. Researcher and illustrator are discussions to get a picture that fits the storyline. Previous illustrators were asked to read the script of the first in order to portray the story in a visual form.

Fourth, folk tales selected and adapted to the child's interests close to the child's environment. Children love the animal themed story. This is evident from the enthusiasm of a child when listening to folklore themed animals at the time of the study. Another indicator of a child's interest in this story is the child's ability to remember the story and the characters in the story. Look different when the teacher gives the folklore that is not themed animals. In the story instead of animal themed, children are able to answer and retelling stories yet to name the characters in the story, the child needs help from the teacher. This happens because the character's name is almost similar and difficult to distinguish.

Fifth, the story is not too long so that the children do not get bored. Researchers and teachers understand that young children's attention span is very short. For the strategy to be done to improve a child's attention when listening to the story is to make a long story becomes simpler. The story has said previously made in six to seven images alone, it is intended that the child can imagine related to elements of the story are not presented visually. Thus, this process is expected to maintain the child's attention in order to hear the story well.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on folklore studies can develop characters for early childhood. This occurs due to several factors: teacher skills when bringing stories, folklore has been modified so much simpler and easier to understand, this activity comes with media images as illustrations, folklore theme chosen according to the characteristics of the child and the child's interest, and the story is not too long so kids do not get bored.



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