

An Analysis of Character Education Values in English Textbook Entitled "Interactive English"

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ABSTRACT

Character education holds a significant role in Indonesia's educational framework, particularly within the context of the Merdeka Curriculum. This research explores the extent to which character values are embedded in the Grade VII English textbook entitled *Interactive English*. Despite the widespread emphasis on character education, its application in instructional materials has not been extensively examined. Employing a qualitative content analysis approach, this study concentrates on the textbook's reading sections and utilizes the 18 character values defined by the Ministry of National Education as an analytical reference. The analysis reveals that, although all character values are intended to be included, their distribution throughout the textbook is inconsistent. Only 14 of the 18 character education values were identified, with "independence" being the most frequently featured. These findings underscore the importance of a more uniform integration of character values in educational content to support national educational objectives. The study suggests that enhancing the design and planning of textbooks is crucial to effectively foster character development alongside language instruction.

Keywords: *Character Education, English Textbook, Education Value, Reading Text, Content Analysis*

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INTRODUCTION

Character education is a vital component of Indonesia's educational system, playing a significant role in enhancing the overall quality of education. One of the primary goals of character education is to cultivate students with positive attributes and strong moral values. As cited by Agboola, Skaggs and Bodenhorn emphasize "respect, truth, fairness, and responsibility" as essential qualities of good character (Agboola, 2012). Integrating character education into school programs aims to instil core virtues like respect, fairness, and honesty in students. This approach not only focuses on intellectual development but also on fostering character and personality (Hapsari, 2013). Achieving a character-based education requires collaborative efforts from informal sources such as families, community-based non-formal education, and especially formal institutions like schools (Pala, 2011). In addition, education emphasizes enhancing the quality of services and the management of primary and secondary education, while also maintaining cultural values (Zainal et al., 2022).

Character education is a key focus of the independent curriculum in Indonesia and plays a vital role in the educational system. Schools are recognized as significant contributors to character development, as highlighted by Sandra (2014), who notes that while character development is not solely the school's responsibility, it remains a primary arena for fostering these values. Education aims to develop individuals to their fullest potential, creating smart, skilled, and morally upright citizens. As emphasized by Saidah (2018), character education is crucial for maintaining educational quality, prioritizing not only theoretical mastery and intelligence but also the cultivation of positive attitudes. Furthermore, the current curriculum promotes character education as part of a national movement to foster a responsible and caring

young generation through a character-based teaching model that emphasizes universal values (Aboujirle, 2002).

Indonesia has introduced the independent curriculum, which prioritizes the inclusion of character education values within the teaching and learning framework. The quality of character education in schools significantly impacts the overall effectiveness of education. Currently, character education is woven into various facets of the educational system across Indonesia. This updated curriculum emphasizes character education, outlining 18 core values aimed at shaping students' personalities (Hidayati, 2014). Developed by the Ministry of Education and Culture, the independent curriculum places character education as a central objective and guiding principle.

The Ministry of Education and Culture has mentioned that there are 4 character education ideals that need to be implemented in the Indonesian educational system. These principles, which include religiosity, honesty, tolerance, and discipline, are drawn from the Pancasila religion (the official ideology), culture, and national educational objectives. That is character education's importance, which is one of the issues with the autonomous curriculum.

From the discussion above, it is clear that implementing character education in schools is essential for shaping students' character in alignment with the goals of the independent curriculum. The emphasis on character education within this curriculum stems from numerous instances where student behavior has not aligned with Indonesia's societal norms.

Although there are many activities designed to promote character education, this research specifically focuses on textbooks used in teaching, as they are essential resources for educators. Consequently, character education should be emphasized not only during instruction but also within the learning materials themselves.

In the independent curriculum, character education is embedded across all subjects, including English. In English classes, students are encouraged to develop both language skills and positive character traits. A major part of implementing character education in classrooms involves using textbooks throughout the teaching and learning process. To evaluate the extent to which character education is integrated into the independent curriculum materials, the researchers intend to examine the textbooks for character education elements.

A textbook is an essential tool for independent learning, offering a structured presentation of content, a source of ideas and activities, and a reliable reference for students. It also serves as a syllabus aligned with specific language goals and provides support for teachers who are still gaining confidence (Ruth, 2016; Maulina et al., 2022). Incorporating textbooks into the teaching and learning process benefits both teachers and students, as it provides a reference for the material being taught. Additionally, textbooks enable students to engage with the content independently before it is discussed in class.

According to Brown (2001), textbooks are the most prominent and commonly used resource in language teaching, underscoring their vital role in the learning process for both teachers and students. Textbooks serve as valuable tools in schools, providing structured guidance on the material to be taught, organized according to the appropriate grade levels for effective learning.

In this section, the researchers present three earlier studies that lend support to the current study on in. Helendra's (2017) study sought to analyze the moral values present in English textbooks for grades seven to nine, published by the National Ministry of Education and Culture. Through content analysis, the study identified various moral values, finding that: 1) Of Borba's moral values, self-control appeared most frequently at 25%, followed by kindness at 22%, respect at 20%, conscience at 16%, and empathy at 11%, with tolerance and fairness being the least common at 4% and 2%, respectively; 2) These moral values were expressed through diverse elements such as chapter titles, learning objectives, quotes, reading passages, illustrations, song lyrics, exercise prompts, and example sentences; 3) Most teachers affirmed that these values were embedded in all formal textbooks and effectively integrated into learning activities, including role-plays, group discussions, interactive learning, and collaborative tasks; 4) All students recognized the inclusion of moral values within the textbooks.

Hidayat's (2018) study focused on reading skills, using content analysis and a descriptive method. Data was drawn from English textbooks for tenth-grade students in their second semester of senior high school, with Character Education Values used as benchmarks to identify character values within the materials. The results showed that, of the 18-character values, the following were found in the reading sections of English textbooks for SMA/SMK: The textbook is categorized high or 77.8% of the textbook contains character education values. This result means that the textbook is recommended for the English teacher and it is a suitable source for learning English to be used as the material and guidance for the tenth-grade students of Senior High School, especially the reading materials. The authors of the textbook represented the values into three strategies, namely instruction, text, and exercise, even the number of the values found in each part is not balanced. From the analysis result, the values are suitable with local culture that requires the students to have good attitudes not only in the class but also in daily life. It is called as a solution of today's era that students' habits are less good. By implementing character education, the students will be trained at least in learning English to be known and practiced as well as become the identity as a student characterized.

Ubay's (2019) study used a qualitative approach to examine character education values in reading texts. The findings revealed the presence of values such as religiousness, honesty, tolerance, independence, hard work, curiosity, appreciation of achievements, friendliness, love of peace, environmental awareness, social awareness, and responsibility. However, values such as discipline, creativity, democracy, nationalism, patriotism, and love of reading were not included in the reading texts of the English textbook.

Renette et al. (2021) carried out a content analysis to explore character values in English textbooks for senior high school students in grades 10, 11, and 12, also noting significant variations in character values across these textbooks. This qualitative study focused on identifying character values within the material, analyzing all passages from the three English textbooks using an observation checklist for efficient evaluation. The researchers assessed the data based on the character values present in each textbook, with particular attention to the most prominent values identified.

Nursamsi's (2023) recent study aimed to describe character education values in English textbooks for senior high school students in grades one through three in Sidrap Regency. Using content analysis and a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected from English textbooks published by the Ministry of Education and Culture (KEMENDIKBUD) through documentation techniques. Data analysis followed Ary's (2010) model, involving organizing, coding, and interpreting the data. The results showed that the first-grade English textbook included all 18-character education values, while the second-grade textbook contained 15, lacking independence, appreciation, and nationalism. Similarly, the third-grade textbook included 15-character values but omitted tolerance, democracy, and patriotism.

From the five journals reviewed by the researchers, the differences between the previous researchers and this research are the textbook used by the researchers. In this case, the researchers used the Merdeka curriculum textbook entitled "Interactive English" that has integrated with character education values. So, the researchers analyzed the character education values in the reading text in this textbook.

Finally, the aim of this research was to analyzed character education values Integrated with the reading text in the English textbook of Merdeka curriculum entitled "Interactive English".

Character is a distinctive trait, quality, and moral strength in a person or group. Puskur (Curriculum Center) defines character as a person's nature, morals, or personality, which is formed by internalizing virtuous values that can become beliefs and serve as a foundation for perspective, thinking, behavior, and actions (Baginda, 2018; Putra et al., 2021). Hignasari (2020) defines character as a set of values that form the foundation for a person's thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors, highlighting that character is not solely innate but also shaped by external influences. According to this perspective, individuals who give up when faced with challenges are seen as having weak character, while those who continually strive to improve are viewed as stronger. Thus, character is developed within each person through their approach to life

and is expressed through their authentic self. Moreover, character can evolve due to both internal and external influences, whether voluntary or imposed. Character is comprised of two essential dimensions: personal and social, which reflect an individual's integrity both personally and in relation to society. Character encompasses moral values, attitudes, and behaviors that shape a person's overall conduct and interactions with others. A person is seen as having good character when their actions and attitudes reflect positive behavior, and as a result, character is often demonstrated in an individual's daily habits (Rokhman et al., 2014, Rasyiid et al., 2021). Additionally, character can be developed and reinforced through educational institutions, especially through character education. Singh (2019) describes character education as a process that fosters both moral and performance virtues. Moral virtues include qualities such as integrity, affection, empathy, and trustworthiness, while performance virtues focus on effort and perseverance. Character education goes beyond teaching what is right; it also motivates individuals to reach their full potential and should be a central priority for everyone within the school community. The goal of character education is to enhance students' intellectual, emotional, social, and ethical capabilities. Furthermore, it helps students cultivate essential human qualities like justice, perseverance, compassion, respect, and courage, while emphasizing the importance of living by these values.

The Ministry of Education and Culture has developed a set of character education values that are central to the independent curriculum. These values, as outlined by Kemendiknas in 2011, include: Religious, Honesty, Tolerant, Discipline, Hardworking, Creative, Independent, Democratic, Curious, National Spirit, Love of the Homeland, Appreciation of Achievement, Friendly/Communicative, Peace-loving, Avid Reader, Environmental Stewardship, Socially Responsible, and Responsible.

Haynes (2007) suggests that character education programs are essential in addressing various challenges faced by schools, such as rising drug and alcohol use, aggression, poor attendance, violence, suspensions, school shootings, sexual activity, vandalism, and low academic performance. By integrating character development into all areas of school culture and curriculum, character education contributes to creating a more positive school environment, fostering students' social, ethical, and academic growth. Strong character is developed by guiding students to understand, value, and act upon core ethical principles such as respect, responsibility, honesty, fairness, and compassion. The aim of education is to encourage deep, critical thinking. Almerico (2014) states that true education aims to integrate intelligence with character. He emphasized that a teaching and learning process centered on character development not only boosts academic performance and communication skills but also promotes greater independence and self-confidence. He highlighted that character education results in creating trusting learning environments where students develop a positive view of themselves and their peers.

There are four types of character education that have been recognized and implemented in the educational process. First, character education is based on religious values, rooted in the truth of God's revelation (moral conservation). Second, character education is based on cultural values, including the character of virtue, Pancasila, literary appreciation, and exemplary historical and national figures. Third, character education is based on environmental values (environmental conservation). Fourth, character education is based on personal potential, which involves personal attitudes developed through the awareness and empowerment of one's self-potential, directed toward improving the quality of education (Khan, 2010).

Among the many types of media, printed materials commonly used as teaching and learning resources in schools, textbooks are particularly important because they serve as a key source of information and guidance for both students and teachers. A textbook is a book that provides instructions on a specific subject, commonly used in educational settings, and serves as a standard reference for the formal study of a subject and an essential tool for teaching and learning. In the realm of language learning, Richards (2015) highlighted that textbooks are a crucial source of language input, supplying the content for lessons, maintaining a balance of the skills being taught, and directing the language practice activities in which students engage.

This underscores the importance of textbooks as vital tools for students at all stages of language learning.

The use of "Interactive English" textbooks in the Merdeka curriculum has become a topic of interest among educators and experts in the field of language education. These textbooks are designed to provide an engaging and interactive learning experience for students, focusing on the development of language skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Their integration into the Merdeka curriculum reflects an ongoing effort to modernize and enhance the quality of English education for students, particularly in Indonesia. Overall, the incorporation of "Interactive English" textbooks into the Merdeka curriculum represents a strategic step that supports the vision of a more quality and relevant education in Indonesia. By adopting a more interactive and technology-based approach, it is hoped that the younger generation will be better prepared to face global challenges and make positive contributions to society. Textbooks are created to promote unity in the language teaching and learning process by delivering targeted language instruction, guidance, and activities that offer students practical experience in the classroom, ultimately fostering efficient and accelerated language acquisition (Cunningsworth, 1995). Textbooks should also be clear and straightforward, matching the author's intent, with a focus on clarity to support effective communication between the teacher and students (Murniasih, 2022).

"Interactive English" textbooks have an important role in the independent curriculum. An independent curriculum is an educational concept that aims to give schools the freedom to develop a curriculum according to the needs and characteristics of students. "Interactive English" textbooks play a key role in supporting this goal by providing interactive and relevant material to help students learn English in an engaging and effective way. According to the Ministry of National Education (2008, p.12, as cited in Zein et al., 2020, p. 22), textbooks fulfill three main functions. First, they serve as a guide for teachers in managing learning activities and as a reference for the specific competencies that students are expected to achieve. From this, it can be concluded that "Interactive English" textbooks have a significant role in supporting the independent curriculum by providing interactive, relevant, and effective material for learning English. Additionally, according to Tandlichova (2014), textbooks fulfill seven key roles: they provide information, stimulate and develop learners, integrate knowledge, motivate and educate, contrast and transform ideas, facilitate and connect concepts, and assess understanding.

METHOD


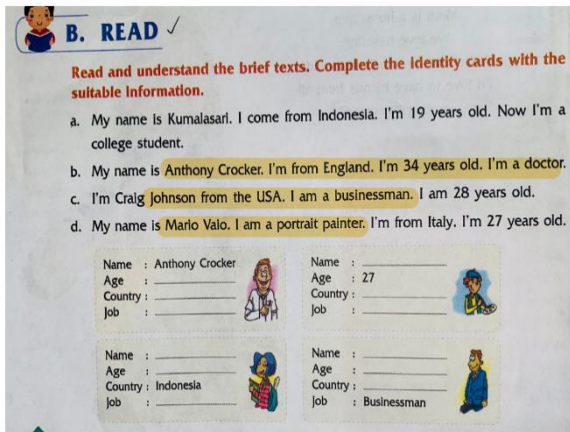

















This study adopted a qualitative content analysis methodology to identify the character education values in the English textbook "Interactive English" for junior high school students in grade VII. This study focused on systematic text analysis to interpret communication content, identify patterns, themes, and meanings, which is a common approach in social sciences, media studies, and marketing research. To collect the necessary data, the researcher used a content analysis framework as an instrument, by developing a coding scheme and creating a checklist or rubric based on 18-character education values set by the Ministry of National Education (2011), such as religious, honest, tolerant, and responsible. The data collection process involved reviewing, studying, researching, and analyzing textbooks in depth, including examining each reading skill unit to understand the structure, presentation of content, diversity of materials, and relationships between units, as well as the depiction of character values throughout the book. Finally, the data analysis technique applied was the analysis of speech data that represented the character education values in each unit.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings


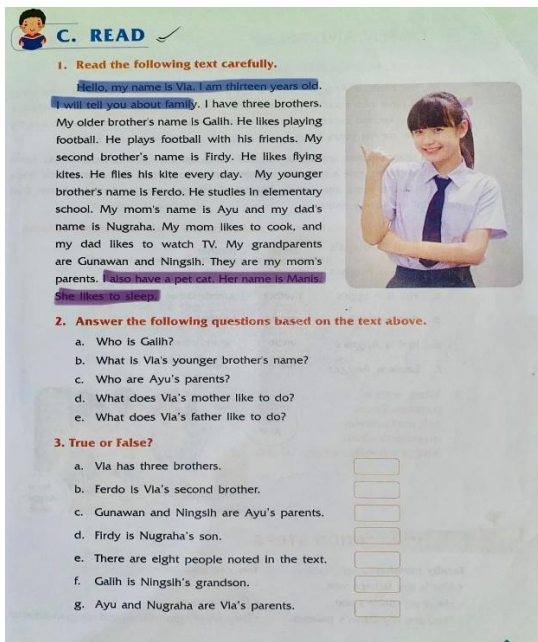

















The findings focus on reading texts within each unit that reflect any of the 18 character education values. Through the analysis of speech data, the following eighteen character values were identified:

Table 1. The Observation Checklist of Character Education Values in Unit 1

No	Character Value	Page	Title	Utterance
1	Religious		<p style="text-align: center;">Friend Around The World</p> 	3
2	Honesty			
3	Tolerance			
4	Discipline			
5	Hard Work			
6	Creativity			
7	Independent			
8	Democracy			
9	Curious			
10	National Spirit			
11	Love of the Homeland			
12	Respect Of Achievement			
13	Friendly/Communicative			
14	Peaceful			
15	Fondof Reading			
16	Care Of Environment			
17	Social Care			
18	Responsible			


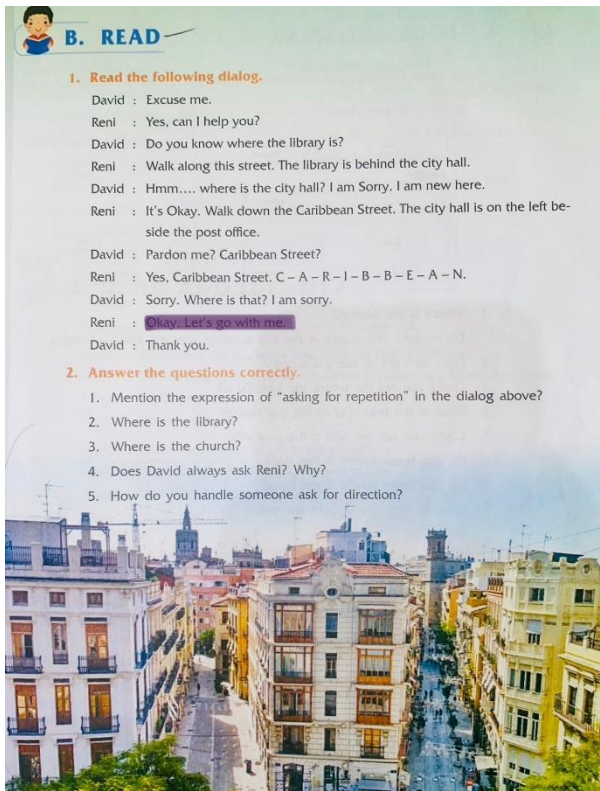

















"The first unit reveals one character value derived from the utterance data, which is Hard Work. This value has been visually marked with color in the provided image."

Table 2. The Observation Checklist of Character Education Values in Unit 3

No	Character Value	Page	Title	Utterance
1	Religious		<p style="text-align: center;">This Is My Beautiful Family</p> 	2
2	Honesty			
3	Tolerance			
4	Discipline			
5	Hard Work			
6	Creativity			
7	Independent			
8	Democracy			
9	Curious			
10	National Spirit			
11	Love of the Homeland			
12	Respect Of Achievement			
13	Friendly/Communicative			
14	Peaceful			
15	Fondof Reading			
16	Care Of Environment			
17	Social Care			
18	Responsible			


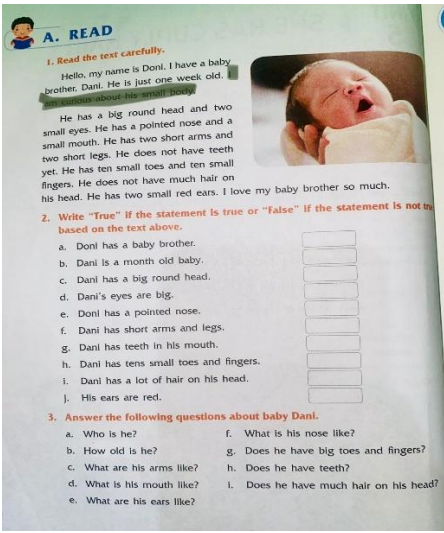

















"The third unit features one character value identified from the speech data, which is Friendly/Communicative. This value has been visually highlighted in the accompanying image."

Table 3. The Observation Checklist of Character Education Values in Unit 4

No	Character Value	Page	Title	Utterance
1	Religious			
2	Honesty			
3	Tolerance			
4	Discipline			
5	Hard Work			
6	Creativity			
7	Independent			
8	Democracy			
9	Curious			
10	National Spirit			
11	Love of the Homeland			
12	Respect Of Achievement			
13	Friendly/Communicative			
14	Peaceful			
15	Fond of Reading			
16	Care Of Environment			
17	Social Care			1
18	Responsible			

"The fourth unit reveals one character value derived from the speech data, namely Social Care. This value has been visually marked with color in the provided image".


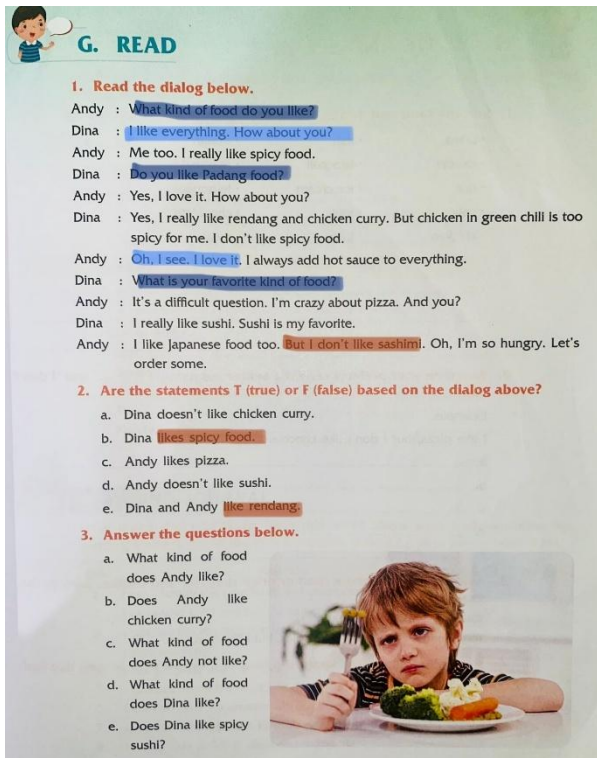

















Table 4. The Observation Checklist of Character Education Values in Unit 5

No	Character Value	Page	Title	Utterance
1	Religious			
2	Honesty			
3	Tolerance			
4	Discipline			
5	Hard Work			
6	Creativity			
7	Independent			
8	Democracy			
9	Curious			1
10	National Spirit			
11	Love of the Homeland			
12	Respect Of Achievement			
13	Friendly/Communicative			
14	Peaceful			
15	Fond of Reading			
16	Care Of Environment			
17	Social Care			
18	Responsible			

"The fifth unit reveals one character value derived from the speech data, namely Curious. This value has been visually marked with a color in the provided image."




















Table 5. The Observation Checklist of Character Education Values in Unit 6

An Analysis of Character Education Values in English Textbook Entitled "Interactive English"

No	Character Value	Page	Title	Utterance
1	Religious			
2	Honesty			3
3	Tolerance			2
4	Discipline			
5	Hard Work			
6	Creativity			
7	Independent			
8	Democracy			
9	Curious			
10	National Spirit			
11	Love of the Homeland			
12	Respect Of Achievement			
13	Friendly/Communicative			3
14	Peaceful			
15	Fond of Reading			
16	Care Of Environment			
17	Social Care			
18	Responsible			

"In the sixth unit, three character values are identified from the speech data: Honesty, Tolerance, and Friendliness/Communication. These values have been highlighted using colors in the accompanying image."


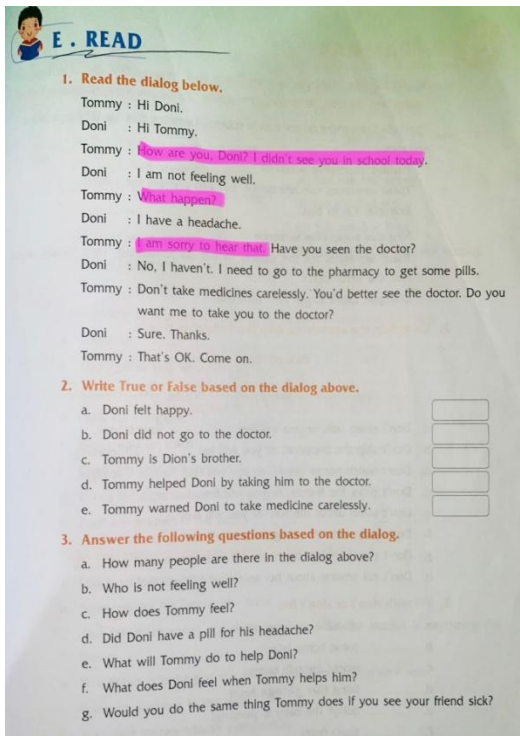

















Table 6. The Observation Checklist of Character Education Values in Unit 7

No	Character Value	Page	Title	Utterance
1	Religious			2
2	Honesty			
3	Tolerance			6
4	Discipline			
5	Hard Work			
6	Creativity			
7	Independent			10
8	Democracy			
9	Curious			
10	National Spirit			
11	Love of the Homeland			5
12	Respect Of Achievement			
13	Friendly/Communicative			
14	Peaceful			
15	Fond of Reading			
16	Care Of Environment			
17	Social Care			1
18	Responsible			

"In the seventh unit, five character values are extracted from the speech data: Religiosity, Discipline, Independence, Patriotism, and Social Awareness. These values are visually represented using color in the corresponding images."


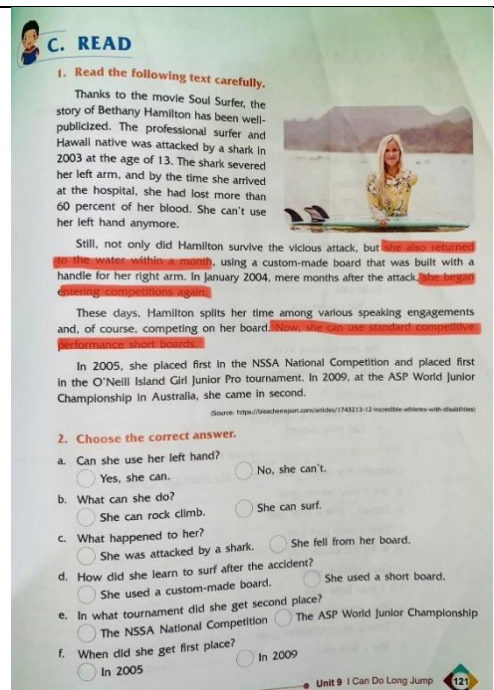

















Table 7. The Observation Checklist of Character Education Values in Unit 8

An Analysis of Character Education Values in English Textbook Entitled "Interactive English"

No	Character Value	Page	Title	Utterance
1	Religious			
2	Honesty			
3	Tolerance			
4	Discipline			
5	Hard Work			
6	Creativity			
7	Independent			
8	Democracy			
9	Curious			
10	National Spirit			
11	Love of the Homeland			
12	Respect Of Achievement			
13	Friendly/Communicative			
14	Peaceful			
15	Fond of Reading			
16	Care Of Environment			3
17	Social Care			
18	Responsible			


"The eighth unit highlights a single character value identified from the speech data, which is Environmental Awareness. This value is visually indicated through the use of color in the accompanying image."

Table 8. The Observation Checklist of Character Education Values in Unit 9


















No	Character Value	Page	Title	Utterance
1	Religious			
2	Honesty			
3	Tolerance			
4	Discipline			
5	Hard Work			
6	Creativity			
7	Independent			
8	Democracy			
9	Curious			
10	National Spirit			
11	Love of the Homeland			
12	Respect Of Achievement			
13	Friendly/Communicative			
14	Peaceful			
15	Fond of Reading			
16	Care Of Environment			
17	Social Care			
18	Responsible			

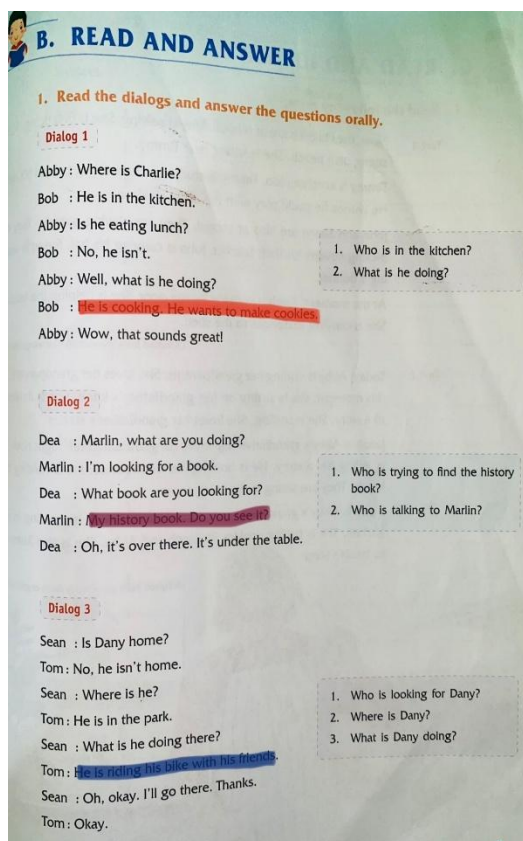
"The ninth unit highlights one character value identified from the speech data, namely Independent. This value is shown visually through the use of color in the accompanying image."

Table 9. The Observation Checklist of Character Education Values in Unit 10

No	Character Value	Page	Title	Utterance
1	Religious	 35	What Are You Doing	



















An Analysis of Character Education Values in English Textbook Entitled "Interactive English"

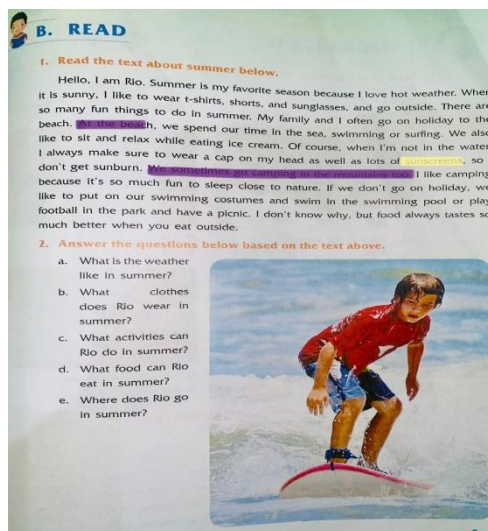
2	Honesty		
3	Tolerance		
4	Discipline		
5	Hard Work		
6	Creativity		
7	Independent		
8	Democracy		
9	Curious		
10	National Spirit		
11	Love of the Homeland		
12	Respect Of Achievement		
13	Friendly/Communicative		
14	Peaceful		
15	Fond of Reading		
16	Care Of Environment		
17	Social Care		
18	Responsible		



"The tenth unit highlights four character values identified from the speech data, namely Creativity, Independent, Friendly/Communicative, and Social Care. These values are shown visually through the use of color in the accompanying images."

Table 10. The Observation Checklist of Character Education Values in Unit 11

No	Character Value	Page	Title	Utterance
1	Religious		It's Snowy In December	
2	Honesty			
3	Tolerance			
4	Discipline			
5	Hard Work			
6	Creativity			
7	Independent			
8	Democracy			
9	Curious			
10	National Spirit			
11	Love of the Homeland			
12	Respect Of Achievement			
13	Friendly/Communicative			
14	Peaceful			
15	Fond of Reading			
16	Care Of Environment			
17	Social Care			
18	Responsible			


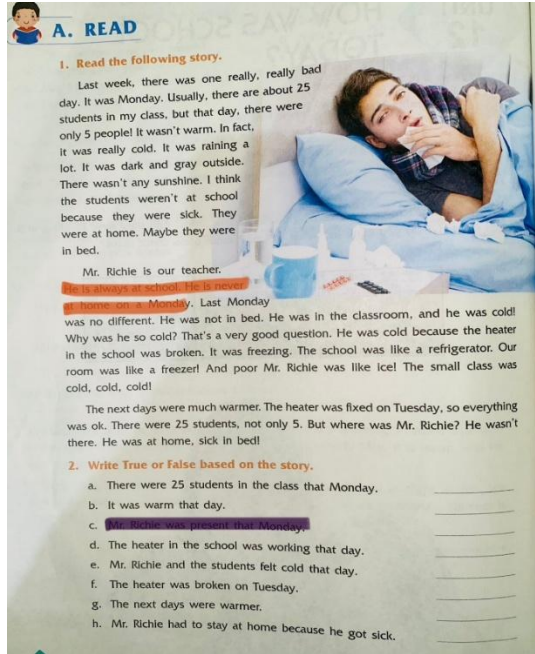
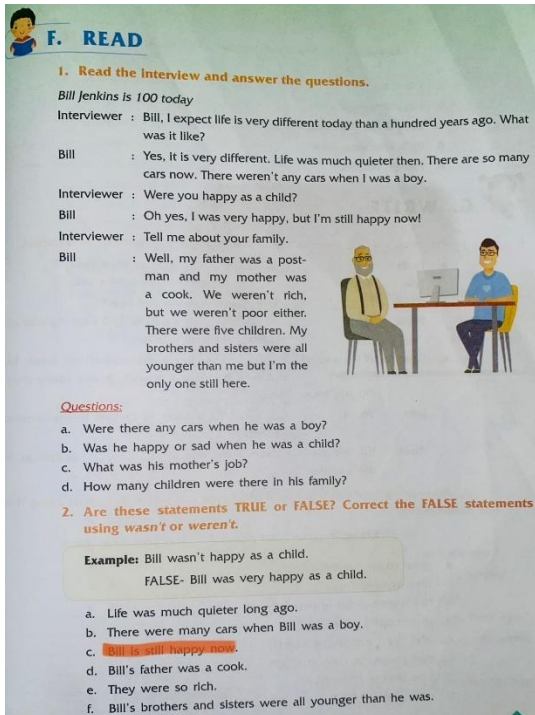



















"The eleventh unit highlights two character values identified from the speech data, namely Social Care, and Responsible. These values are shown visually through the use of color in the accompanying images."

Table 11. The Observation Checklist of Character Education Values in Unit 12









No	Character Value	Page	Title	Utterance
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An Analysis of Character Education Values in English Textbook Entitled "Interactive English"


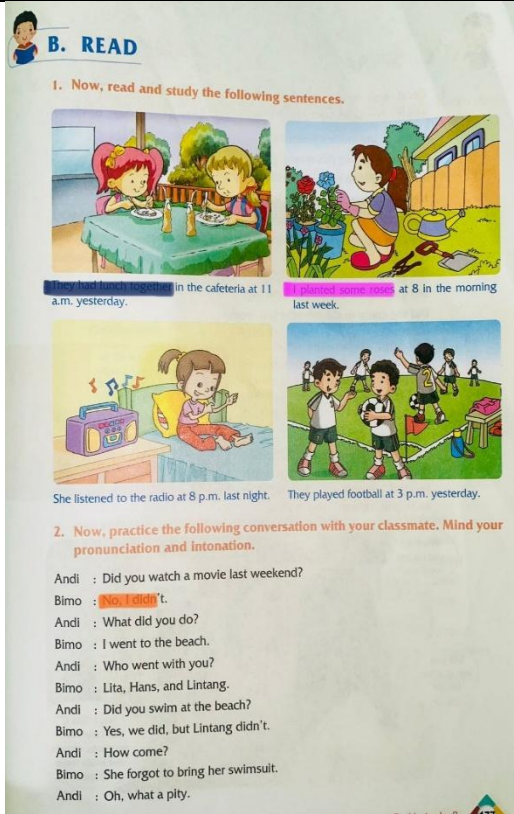









1	Religious		<div>How Was School Today?</div>  	
2	Honesty			1
3	Tolerance			1
4	Discipline			
5	Hard Work			
6	Creativity			
7	Independent			
8	Democracy			
9	Curious			
10	National Spirit			
11	Love of the Homeland			
12	Respect Of Achievement			
13	Friendly/Communicative			
14	Peaceful			
15	Fond of Reading			
16	Care Of Environment			
17	Social Care			
18	Responsible		164 & 169	

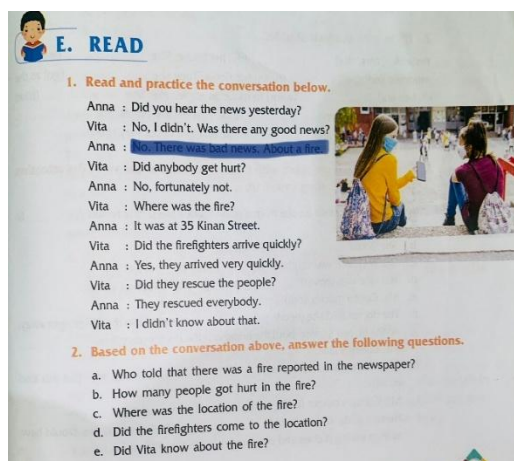
"Unit twelve highlights two character values identified from the speech data, namely Discipline, and Honesty. These values are shown visually through the use of color in the accompanying images."

Table 12. The Observation Checklist of Character Education Values in Unit 13

No	Character Value	Page	Title	Utterance
1	Religious		What Did You Do Yesterday	
2	Honesty			1
3	Tolerance			
4	Discipline			
5	Hard Work			
6	Creativity			
7	Independent			
8	Democracy			


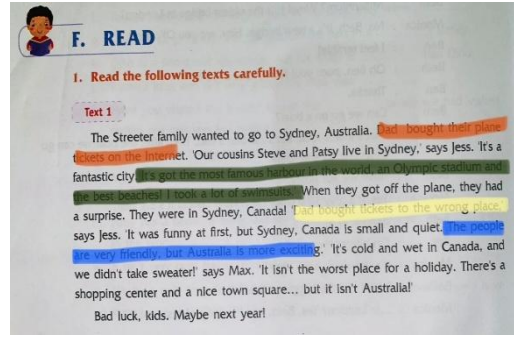










An Analysis of Character Education Values in English Textbook Entitled "Interactive English"

9	Curious			2 1
10	National Spirit			
11	Love of the Homeland			
12	Respect Of Achievement			
13	Friendly/Communicative			
14	Peaceful			
15	Fond of Reading			
16	Care Of Environment			
17	Social Care			
18	Responsible			



"The thirteenth unit highlights three character values identified from the speech data, namely Honesty, Friendly/Communicative, and Social Care. These values are shown visually through the use of color in the accompanying images."

Table 13. The Observation Checklist of Character Education Values in Unit 14

No	Character Value	Page	Title	Utterance
1	Religious			
2	Honesty			1
3	Tolerance			1
4	Discipline			
5	Hard Work			1
6	Creativity			
7	Independent			
8	Democracy			1
9	Curious			1
10	National Spirit			
11	Love of the Homeland			1

12	Respect Of Achievement	■
13	Friendly/Communicative	■
14	Peaceful	■
15	Fondof Reading	■
16	Care Of Environment	■
17	Social Care	■

18 Responsible ■

Text 2

Los Angeles, California is the most exciting city in the USA. It's got Hollywood, Disneyland, fantastic beaches and the LA Dodgers baseball team. But LA wasn't always exciting. In 1900 it was smaller and quieter, and Hollywood was a small village. Then film studios arrived, and the village of Hollywood changed. Today it is part of LA, and Hollywood's 'Walk of Fame' is the most famous place in the city. It's got more than 2,000 stars on it! It's always sunny in LA and there are lots of different attractions. You can go shopping on Sunset Boulevard (it's too expensive for me!), or you can surf on Venice Beach. There are theaters, museums, the biggest theme parks in the USA and the hottest sports stadiums. LA is the best city in the world!

Text 3

Tokyo has a population of 35 million people. It is the largest city in the world. It is also one of the most exciting. Everything moves fast here. It has one of the biggest and busiest railway systems in the world. Every day, 11 million commuters use it to get to and from work. People earn the highest salaries, and they spend the most money. They wear the latest fashions and have the most up-to-date phones. It is the world's most expensive city. Tokyo is on the east coast of Japan. The summers are hot and humid. The most beautiful time of year is spring, when the famous cherry blossom is on the trees. The city is huge, but it is one of the safest cities in the world. Japan is mysterious. It is difficult for foreigners to understand.

2. Study the short passages above. Compare and classify whether they indicate some equal degrees, greater degrees, or the greatest degrees of comparison.

Texts	Equal	Greater	Greatest
1	* ... * ...	* ... * ...	* Tokyo is the largest city in the world. * ... * ...
2	* ... * ...	* ... * ...	* ... * ...
3	* ... * ...	* ... * ...	* ... * ...

"The fourteenth unit highlights seven-character values identified from the speech data, namely Honesty, Tolerance, Hard Work, Democracy, Curious, Love of the Homeland, and Social Care. These values are shown visually through the use of color in the accompanying images."

Discussion

This study shares certain similarities with related research by Nursamsi (2023). However, it also reveals notable differences in the data findings. Nursamsi's study found that English textbooks for grade 1 senior high school incorporate all 18 character values established by the Ministry of National Education. In contrast, the textbooks for grade 2 include only 15 of these values, lacking Independence, Appreciation, and Nationalism. Similarly, the grade 3 textbooks also feature 15 character values, but exclude Tolerance, Democracy, and Patriotism.

The current study shows that the *Interactive English* textbook for junior high school students has been aligned with the 18 character values outlined by Ministry of National Education (2011). Nevertheless, the distribution and representation of these values across the textbook units are inconsistent and uneven. Although all values are theoretically covered, their actual presence within the reading skill sections varies significantly across different units. In this analysis, each paragraph related to reading skills and the character values identified has been marked with specific colors in the corresponding images, as detailed in the findings table.

While the textbook contains 14 units, only 13 were analyzed in this study Units 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14 because Unit 2 does not include a reading skill section, which is a core focus of this research.

The early units show a limited presence of character values. Unit 1 only features the value of Hard Work. Unit 2 was excluded due to the absence of a reading section. Unit 3 highlights Friendly/Communicative, Unit 4 features Social Care, and Unit 5 presents Curiosity. These findings suggest that the inclusion of character values in the early sections of the textbook is minimal and appears incidental rather than strategically planned.

As the textbook progresses, a wider variety of values becomes more evident. Unit 6 features three values: Honesty, Tolerance, and Friendliness/Communication. Unit 7 includes five values: Religiosity, Discipline, Independence, Patriotism, and Social Awareness. Unit 8 displays Environmental Awareness, and Unit 9 presents Independence.

The final units present a notable increase in both the quantity and diversity of character values. Unit 10 covers four values: Creativity, Independence, Friendliness/Communication, and Social Care. Unit 11 features Social Care and Responsibility, while Unit 12 includes Discipline and Honesty. Unit 13 reflects three values: Honesty, Friendliness/Communication, and Social Care. Unit 14 is the most comprehensive, incorporating seven values: Honesty, Tolerance, Hard Work, Democracy, Curiosity, Patriotism, and Social Care.

These findings partly align with previous studies. Nursamsi (2023), for instance, found that although high school textbooks incorporate many character values, some values are consistently missing. Likewise, this study confirms that while *Interactive English* claims to include all 18 values, some such as Democracy, Peace-loving, and Love of Reading are either underrepresented or entirely absent in certain units.

This inconsistency raises concerns about the actual implementation of character education through textbooks. It highlights the importance of not only including these values in national education frameworks but also ensuring their meaningful and consistent integration into teaching materials. Authors and educators must ensure that character values are not only included but also relevant to context and effectively embedded in pedagogy.

In conclusion, while the *Interactive English* textbook plays a role in fostering character education, further improvements are needed to ensure systematic and balanced integration of the character values. A more strategic alignment between the textbook content and the goals of national character education would enhance the book's effectiveness as both a language learning resource and a medium for character development.

CONCLUSIONS

This research aims to examine the integration of character education values within the reading texts of the *Interactive English* textbook for Grade VII junior high school students, which follows the Merdeka Curriculum. Content analysis results indicate that, in theory, the textbook includes all 18-character education values as outlined by the Ministry of National Education. However, their distribution and representation across the textbook units are inconsistent and uneven. Of the 14 available units, only 13 were analyzed, as Unit 2 does not contain a reading skills section.

The findings reveal that the earlier units tend to feature just one character value each, while the middle and later units show greater diversity, with Unit 14 being the most comprehensive, containing seven different values. Out of the 18 expected character values, only 14 were identified in this study, with the following frequency: democracy (1), hard work (4), friendliness/communicativeness (8), social care (8), curiosity (2), honesty (6), tolerance (3), religiosity (2), discipline (7), independence (14), patriotism (1), environmental awareness (3), creativity (1), and responsibility (1). Thus, the most frequently occurring value in this textbook is independence.

While the textbook does contribute to character education, several values such as democracy, love of peace, and love of reading are either underrepresented or completely absent from some units. This suggests that the integration of character education values into the textbook is not yet fully optimized.

Therefore, it is necessary to improve the planning and implementation of character values in a more systematic and balanced manner. A more strategic alignment between the textbook content and the goals of national character education would enhance the textbook's effectiveness not only as a language learning resource but also as a tool for fostering student character development.

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