# Character Education in a Children's Short Story Book entitled "Linda Punya Kebun Papaya"

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# ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe structures and the values of character education in the children's story book "Linda Punya Kebun Pepaya" by Astry Lestari. This research uses qualitative research with a descriptive analysis method. The technique used in collecting data is through documentation and the technique used to analyze the data is through content analysis. The results showed that the children's story book " Linda Punya Kebun Pepaya " by Astry Lestari has a story structure consisting of themes, characters and characterizations, settings, plots and messages. Meanwhile, the educational values contained in the children's story book are religious, honest, disciplined, hardworking, creative, curious, appreciating achievement, caring or responsibility for the environment. The message of this story conveys the importance of preserving humility and toughness as the basic values to instill in children's development.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Today, many parties demand an increase in the intensity and quality of the implementation of character education in formal educational institutions. The demands are based on a growing social phenomenon, namely the increase in juvenile delinquency in society, such as mass fights and various other cases of moral decadence (Iriani & Paciana, 2021). Even in certain large cities, the phenomenon has reached a very disturbing level. Therefore, formal educational institutions as official forums for fostering the younger generation are expected to increase their role in shaping the personality of students through increasing the intensity and quality of character education (Putra, 2017a). There are so many phenomena that show the de-characterization of the nation. One example occurred on the national education day in the city that was awarded as a child-friendly city, Garut Regency. There was a

fight between elementary school students that led to murder (Sugiyarto, 2018). This incident is evidence of how depraved the morals of young people are today.

In addition, the case of bullying that occurred in Bukit Tinggi emerged because someone recorded it and then uploaded it to social media. Video of a girl wearing a headscarf in an elementary school uniform standing in the corner of the room then other students take turns beating and kicking until the girl who is the object of violence is helpless. The girl just gave in and cried to accept the harsh treatment of her friends. It is also reported that a student kicks a scene while jumping like an action actor. On the sidelines of the torture, there were also students laughing while facing the camera and there were also expressions in Minang language asking for the action to be stopped (Apriyanto, 2018). Deviations from elementary school children also occurred in Purwakarta that it was reported that 15 children were detained by the Purwakarta Police because they wanted to have a brawl complete with sharp weapons. They carried sharp weapons, including machetes, sickles, and machetes when they were about to brawl to attack other students at an elementary school there (Pasha, 2018). This sad incident is another proof of the destruction of the nation's morals.

There are ample factors contributing to the moral degradation in Indonesia. One of them is the technological advancement that has had a huge impact on the moral crisis in children. The development of technology today will result in the erosion of children's behavior (Budiarto, 2020). This is influenced by the circulation of information from social media which has a negative charge every time it is always consumed by children who are not in accordance with the spectacle at a basic age. In addition, the effects will affect the tendency of modern behavior (westernized culture) and the occurrence of local cultural droughts which have their own peculiarities (Putra, 2019). Negative impacts caused by technology will hinder the success of a nation because a great nation can be seen from the quality or character of the human nation itself. Thus, character education is necessary to instill in children.

Character education is a system that runs by inculcating values in accordance with the nation's culture with components of knowledge (cognitive), feelings (affection felling), and actions, towards God Almighty (YME), for oneself, the community, and nation (Muchtar, 2019). According to the Indonesian Ministry of National Education and Culture in Kurniawan (2017), the values developed in character education in Indonesia come from four sources, namely religion, Pancasila, culture and national education goals. Based on the four sources, it is broken down into 18 values of character education, namely: (1) religious, (2) honest, (3) tolerance, (4) discipline, (5) hard work, (6) creative, (7) independent. , (8) democratic, (9) curiosity, (10) national spirit, (11) love for the homeland, (12) appreciate achievements, (13) friendly/communicative, (14) love peace, (15) love to read , (16) care for the environment, (17) care for the social, and (18) care for the environment.

In overcoming the problem of character crisis, character education learning can be done with teaching children's stories to young students. The contents of the stories must consist of meaningful values of character education. Sarumpaet in Sari (2019) children's stories are stories written for children, which talk about children's lives. Children's stories depict the life events of the characters in living life as expressed in the storyline. According to Kurniawan (Devianty, 2017), children's literature refers to the life of stories that are correlated with the world of children (the world understood by children) and the language used in accordance with the intellectual and emotional development of children (language understood by children). There are many studies that presented stories as a means to develop character education in Indonesia. One of the studies is a study conducted by Rahmadani et al. (2019) who utilized the story from Sasak folklore to instill character education in children. They concluded that Character values that emerge include the character of responsibility, independence, honesty, religion, and cooperation.

In the current research context, the researchers will use a different story from the previous one as the gap of the research. The short story that becomes the focus of this study is written by Astry Lestari entitled "Linda Punya Kebun Pepaya". This short story was chosen because it is assumed to have a lot of meaningful values and considered to have potential in teaching character education to children. The fictional stories in the 2013 curriculum are in Class IV semester 2 on Theme 8 Sub-theme 1 with basic

competencies, namely 3.9 Observing the characters found in fictional texts, and 4.9 conveying the results of identifying the characters found in fictional texts orally, writing, and visuals. Children's fiction stories such as "Linda Punya Kebun Pepaya" by Astry Lestari are certainly stories that contain stories written for children. Based on this opinion, this study intends to investigate what values consist of the story. By interpreting the contained values through children's stories, we hope that this study can provide reflection, appreciation, and actions of the readers (children) about the values of the characters contained in the story.

# 2. METHODS

This research is a qualitative descriptive research method because the researchers describe the object under study using the researcher's perspective as a research instrument (Sugiyono, 2016). According to Afifuddin in Annisa (2019), qualitative research methods have criteria including definite data, the data that occurs as it is, not data that is just seen, spoken, but data that contains meaning behind what is seen and spoken. The data collection technique used in this study was documentation. The document taken as the research data was the story from Astry Lestary entitled "Linda Punya Kebun Pepaya". Here is the information about the data source.

Table 1. Data Source	
Title	: "Linda Punya Kebun Pepaya"
Author	: Astry Lestari
Publisher	: PT. Reflika Aditama
Published Year	: 2010
No of Pages	: 80 pages

Moreover, the short story was analyzed using content analysis by analyzing the structure of the story. The structure of the story to be analyzed is the theme, characters and characterizations, setting, plot, and mandate. The values of character education studied include 18 values of character education, namely: (1) religious, (2) honest, (3) tolerance, (4) discipline, (5) hard work, (6) creative, (7) independent, (8) democratic, (9) curiosity, (10) national spirit, (11) love for the homeland, (12) respecting achievements, (13) friendly/communicative, (14) peace-loving, (15) fond of reading, (16) environmental care, (17) social care, and (18) responsibility and its relevance to literature learning in elementary school.

### 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

After a careful analysis was done to examine the story, some mandates, messages or moral values contained in a literary work that is intentionally conveyed by the author to the reader, either directly or indirectly, were recognized. The broad message contained in the story book that Astry Lestari wants to convey through the story book "Linda punya Kebun Pepaya" to the readers is the fruit of perseverance, hard work and praying to God is success. This can be seen in the following quote.

Every day Linda takes care of the papaya plants with great care. For better results, Linda asked Mr. Asrip who worked in the Agriculture Bureau. "Now my papaya tree is about a month old. It produces a lot of fruit. What fertilizer should I give, sir?" Linda asked Mr. Asrip. (Page 20, translated by the Author)

The following week Linda received a summons from the district stating that she was entitled to receive a token of appreciation for her achievements in agriculture. (Page 80, translated by the Author)

Meanwhile, the more specific results of the analysis of this children's story book includes religious, honest, disciplined, hard work, creativity, curiosity, respect for achievement, and care for the environment. These values are discussed separately in the below explanation.

#### 3.1. Being Obedient to Grow Religiosity

Obedient attitudes and behavior in carrying out the teachings of the religion they adhere to, being tolerant of the implementation of worship of other religions, and living in harmony with followers of other religions. Some excerpts in the story are:

God willing! If you have good intentions, then God will always be with those who have good intentions. Noble deeds will be accompanied by the blessing of Almighty God," said Mrs. Nani. (Page 5, translated by the Author).

By loving nature and the environment means that we love Allah SWT. That is one of the signs of a believer," said Pak Hasbullah. (Page 7, translated by the Author)

"Well, it's over with this apple. It turns out that our life has been provided for everything by God. Only small people don't want to be grateful for this blessing that God has given," said Linda as she closed her biology book. (Page 15, translated by the Author)

Religious value is found in the character of Linda, her mother and father who always include God in every plan. The attitude of always being grateful, patient, and advising each other that remembering Him is proof that they are people who believe in the Almighty. According to (Purwandi et al., 2018) value means useful, able to apply and life values, norms that apply in society or the principles of life that become a person's grip in life, both as individuals and as citizens. Moreover, religiosity is also an important factor that can help people manage their actions. Regarding the factors that can influence the development of one's religiosity, four categories are suggested namely: (1) social factors, including all social influences such as: education and teaching from parents, traditions, and social pressures; (2) natural factors, including morals in the form of good experiences that are natural, such as the experience of moral conflict and emotional experiences; (3) the factor of the need to gain self-esteem and needs arising from death; and (4) intellectual factors related to verbal thought processes, especially in the formation of religious beliefs (Thouless, 1935; Azizah, 2006; Rositama & Furaida, 2022).

#### 3.2. Telling Truth to Build Honesty

Building honesty is an effort to make a person who can always be trusted in words, actions, and work. The story also teaches readers to be honest in every situation. It can be seen from the following excerpts.

"Thanks to the papaya latex from our father's garden, the quality is increasing, to the point that buyers express their satisfaction. I hope you can maintain the quality of this dry latex," said Haji Umar to Pak Hasbullah. (Page 58, translated by the Author)

"We really missed the news! It's useless for our office to subscribe to newspapers. Among you, sir, it's said that you like to follow the news in the newspaper. I myself rarely read newspapers

because I am too busy taking up time," said the sub-district head while looking at the sub-district employees one by one (Page 63). None of the district officials were able to answer or provide comments. "Wow, it was Linda who succeeded, we got sprayed! "One of the sub-district officials whispered to his friend. (Page 63, translated by the Author)

"We were indeed wrong! We are in a weak position! Why subscribe to newspapers if you never read them," whispered his friend. (Page 64, translated by the Author)

Honesty is expressed by Haji Umar when saying thanks to the papaya latex from Mr. Hasbullah's garden, the quality was increasing and the buyers were satisfied. What is the importance of honesty in human life? If we could ask, why do improper behavior often occur in various aspects of life, such as fraud, persecution, collusion, corruption, and nepotism? The short answer is because there is no honest living attitude in the individual. So, it is not surprising that people who are lying will find misery in their lives (Zulkhairi, 2017). In addition, Kesuma in Royani (2014) that honesty as a value is a person's decision to express (in the form of feelings, words and or actions) that the existing reality is not manipulated by lying or deceiving others for his own benefit. In the context of character building in schools, honesty is very important to become the fundamental character of Indonesian children today. The importance of developing the value of honesty is significant, because it is a logical consequence of the existence and nature of humans as social beings and cultural beings (Fadillah, 2020). Thus, presenting stories that include an honest message is helpful to grow children's positive moral values.

#### 3.3. Getting Used to Discipline

Actions that show orderly behavior and comply with various rules and regulations educate people to be disciplined. In the story, the value of discipline is also present in some excerpts found. Below are the examples of those values' representation.

"The doctor suggested that I should eat a lot of papaya fruit," answered Linda (p. 18). During the week Linda was in the Hospital. On the eighth day, Linda was allowed to go home with the message that eating lots of papaya would quickly treat Linda's weakness (p. 18, translated by the Author)

After returning from the hospital, Linda often eats papaya. Linda accidentally planted the seeds in her backyard which is located behind. Soon, the papaya seeds grew in size. Seeing this, Linda's curiosity arose. Then the papaya trees were moved to a wider area. Linda fenced off her papaya plants so they wouldn't be damaged by chickens or ducks. (p. 19, p. 18, translated by the Author)

Do sugar and his family always adhere to the principles of life based on the hadith of the Prophet sallallaahu 'alaihi wasallam, which reads like this. "Pay the workers before the sweat dries! This indicates that employees must really pay attention. We must respect the power of people because humans are different from animals." (p. 19, p. 18, translated by the Author)

Linda's discipline lies in always eating papaya fruit recommended by the doctor when she is sick. Because he was disciplined to eat papaya fruit and finally Linda recovered. But after returning from the hospital, Linda was still diligent in eating papaya fruit until Linda planted the seeds in her backyard by accident. Discipline also lies in his family always adhering to the principles of life based on the hadith of the Prophet *sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam*. It reads like "Pay the workers before the sweat dries! This means that employees must really pay attention to the point we have to respect people's work because humans are different from animals." The family's discipline to employees to provide

salaries and always appreciate the efforts of the employees. Discipline character education is an important thing to consider in order to build one's character. Armed with the character values discipline will encourage the growth of other good character values, such as responsibility, honesty, cooperation, etc. (Wuryandani et al., 2014). With this regard, Curvin & Mindler (1999) suggests that there are three dimensions of discipline, namely (1) discipline to prevent problems; (2) discipline to solve problems so they don't get worse; and (3) discipline to deal with students who behave out of control.

# 3.4. Hard Working

Children must be taught how to be consistent in achieving their learning and life goals. An effort that is carried out diligently or hard will be maximized if it is accompanied by perseverance, tenacity and thoroughness. This character is hardworking. The story provides evidence that gives lessons to students how they should behave in terms of working consistency. Some excerpts we can find in the story are:

"There is no need because it is planted directly in the garden, the results will be the same, what is important is how we take care of it. Most importantly, we must pay attention to how to plant properly and correctly. The distance between plants is about 2.5 meters. After the hole is dug, a sufficient mixture of manure and soil from the inside of the next point the soil is filled and leveled, "said Linda. (Page 27, translated by the Author)

Every day after school, Linda and Sumarni are helped by their father to take care of their papaya garden. Sometimes Mr. Asrip, his neighbor who works in the agricultural service is asked to inspect their crops. So, he gladly fulfills the request of Mr. Hasbullah's family. He also supports Linda's efforts in cultivating papaya. Apart from working in the extension department, he also considers Linda as his own child, this has been said to Linda herself. (p. 36, translated by the Author)

The attitude of hard work lies in Linda and her friend, Sumarni, who are painstaking in cultivating papaya. Mr. Asrip, his neighbor who works in the agricultural service was also asked to inspect their crops. Even their hard work is appreciated as the first pioneer in papaya cultivation in the area. Marzuki & Hakim (2019) argued that it is important to implement different strategies in teaching hard working character to children. Hard work is one character that must be instilled in students. Hard work is defined as behavior that shows earnest effort in overcoming all task barriers in learning, and completing the task as well as possible (Saleh, 2014). Implementation of the value of hard work can be poured in by studying hard or earnestly and finishing all tasks to completion (Fitriani et al., 2021). Similarly, Purwanti (2016) believed that hard work students are very important in improving the quality of learning that will have an impact on the quality of the students themselves, students who work hard in completing all tasks from the teacher will get good results satisfying and not easy to neglect the task given to him. Instilling hard work character can be done with getting used to since childhood through various examples of light work so that children can imitate and implement it, provide directives slowly and gradually about good and bad with getting used to giving assignments light to children, teach children to continue to repeat the work that has not been finished by giving encouragement and motivate him, encourage them with a prize if you succeed in achieving an achievement, and help lighten the work done by parents (Wardani, 2014). In conclusion, hard work is another fundamental character that a student should have.

## 3.5. Being Curious Person

Attitudes and actions can be broadened by trying to find out more deeply and comprehensively from something that is learned, seen, and heard. Some excerpts in the story show the curiosity lesson delivered to children, as follows.

If there is something that is not understood, always ask the parents. That's the nature of Linda since the first grade of elementary school. "Asking is the key to knowledge. Embarrassed to ask astray on the road, "Linda muttered. (Page 2, translated by the Author)

"Exactly, son! Asking is the key to knowledge. If we are embarrassed to ask even though we don't know something, then he is making a fool of himself," said Mrs. Nani while stroking her daughter's head lovingly. (Page 2, translated by the Author)

"If we find a problem, it should be solved first to the best of our ability. It means we have tried our best. However, if we try but it doesn't solve it, then it's better to ask someone else who can solve it. So, it's well established that it's time for us to ask questions, and when is the time for us to be silent," said Mr. Hashullah (Page 3) "Continue, okay!" Linda asked curiously. (Page 3, translated by the Author)

Linda listened attentively. At first glance he could already grasp the meaning of his mother's intentions. (Page 4) "I will obey all suggestions and advice from Mom and Dad with full sincerity. Hopefully I will be able to carry out the best I can," said Linda. (Pages 4-5, translated by the Author)

"How many kinds of pests are there on pineapple plants and how to deal with them? Linda asked. (Page 8, translated by the Author).

How many kinds of salt are in apples? asked Sumarni. (Page 10, translated by the Author)

The attitude of curiosity lies in Linda who is always asking questions, her curiosity about something new. When asking, always listen attentively. In addition to curiosity about papaya fruit. Linda also always wants to know the advice and suggestions from her parents. Apart from Linda, who has an attitude of curiosity, Sumarni's best friend is also diligent, wanting to always ask questions about the plants she asks Linda. Tough (2012) argued that one of the factors that influenced students' learning success is curiosity as a hidden power of character. Children tend to be easily interested in something new, even though they are also easily bored. This interest encourages them to keep questioning. There are many ways that can be done to increase students' interest. In this regard, Subangkit & Anggoro (2021) proposed one solution, which is using an interesting medium, such as a moveable book. Teachers can vary activities that are challenging and also exciting to arouse the children's interests.

### 3.6. Appreciating Achievements

Children must have appreciation towards everything they achieved. Besides that, they also must have attitudes and actions that encourage them to produce something useful for society, recognize, and respect the success of others. Some excerpts in the story provide the lessons containing those values, as follow:

"Oh, actually this papaya garden is not the result of Pak Hasbullah's cultivation but the result of his daughter named Linda," he said, pointing to Linden Sumarna who was eating papaya deliciously (page 44, translated by the Author).

"Hopefully, his positive actions will be followed by other students. Because good talent has been developed from a young age, then when they grow up, they will only have to reap the rewards," said Pak Supardi. (Page 44, translated by the Author)

"Sis is still very light purple in age but has succeeded in farming, the stages of which are usually done by people who are old enough to Titiek. Besides that, my sister has been able to take advantage of the workforce around here. Those who originally didn't have jobs are now working in sister's garden, Titik This is a step in an effort to succeed in the government's program in overcoming poverty. Apart from that, the contribution that you have given to the poor has really helped those in need. We are highlighting these positive steps to include in the Dimas media news, "said one of the two guests. (Page 52)

"Success is due to perseverance and patience in handling his papaya garden. Without tenacity and patience, it is impossible for him to become a farmer like that," interrupted Mr. Mardi, a fish processing entrepreneur. (Page 59)

"Then you are out of date! News about Putri Pak Hasbul's achievements have long been published in newspapers in our area. who are talented," said Mr. Didi, looking at his co-workers (Page 62, translated by the Author).

The attitude of appreciating achievements when her friends, Linda Si Sumarni, Mr. Asrip and the middlemen who praised and appreciated the achievements of Linda who were painstaking, intelligent, in cultivating her papaya. Linda was also given an award from the district leader as an outstanding small farmer. Annisa et al. (2020) mentioned that building appreciation on children's achievement is important in order to increase their self-confidence. By being confident, they will have high motivation to learn.

### 3.7. Environmental care

The last character inserted in the story is a responsibility towards the environment. This is an attitude and actions that always try to prevent damage to the surrounding natural environment, and develop efforts to repair the natural damage that has already occurred. Some excerpts that showcase the lesson in the story are:

Linda nodded her head assent to her parents' words. He promised to pay attention to nature and the environment as much as possible. Linda also promised to study seriously because the time of Moses was the right time to learn. (Page 7, translated by the Author)

"That's right! Apart from the health of our bodies, we also realize that we and the environment need each other. We need plants, animals and nature. Plants, animals and nature need us, that's the cycle of life in this world. So, thus the nature that is around us must be maintained as well as possible. One of them is water. Water needed by the mountain must be maintained properly. We should not cut down trees arbitrarily because it can cause erosion and water shortages. Tree roots can store as many roots as possible for the needs of human life. Therefore, the government always urges us to always take care of the environment as well as possible. Get to know the environment so that we love them more. By loving nature and the environment, it means that we also love the Almighty, namely Allah SWT. That's one of the signs people give," said Pak Hasbulah. Linda and Sumarni are classmates, their hobbies are almost the same, namely enjoying plants. All the plants they like, especially the types of fruit. (Page 8, translated by the Author)

"Love is not limited to living beings such as animals. Plants also have the right to be loved and cherished because they are both creatures of God, the point of preserving nature around the environment is clear evidence of religious human actions. Because, by studying religion, humans are asked to think in order to contemplate all of God's creations. It is impossible for us to contemplate and support this natural teacher if we do not have compassion for our fellow human beings," said Sumarni. (Page 46, translated by the Author)

The attitude of caring for the environment lies in Linda's affection for plants and animals. Appreciate the environment which is proof of his love for Allah swt. Sumarni's attitude also likes animals, which is like her dream to become a veterinarian in the future, even though animals do not have common sense like humans. However, as human being, we should have more affection than animals (Cheema & Javed, 2017). One form of love is to care for and pay attention to animal life. Life that describes and explains how the relationship with parents, friends, relatives, or the community functions. It is expected that students have sensitivity and concern for the surrounding environment.

The formation of character during learning is the full responsibility of the teacher. Teachers can insert character education through learning that will be delivered to students. Learning the content of Indonesian is one of the suitable subjects in providing character education to students. Teachers can package learning materials that contain character education such as in literary learning. Success in shaping the character of students is the main key that must be carried out by a teacher. Teachers need to prepare teaching materials that suit the needs of students. In implementing the learning, the teacher is not limited to analyzing the existing structure in a collection of children's stories, but in the end the teacher must also be able to guide students to apply the character values that exist in the collection of children's stories to the lives of students in real terms.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Learning Indonesian with character education certainly has a relationship. In the process of learning Indonesian itself, of course, some of the above contexts are used. Both during the learning process and outside the learning process. The use of several contexts in an utterance with regard to communication can be seen as a person's character or personality is. This personality can be seen from how a person speaks in communicating, the style of language used and the effectiveness of word for word when communicating with others so that it is easy to understand. Therefore, it is important to develop children's personality. One way is through stories. The moral messages contained in the children's story book "*Linda Punya Kebun Pepaya*" by Astry Lestari can contribute to the world today because the value of character education contained in the book is relatable to everyday life. Therefore, it is very suitable to be instilled in children. The values that existed in the story include religious, honest, disciplined, hard work, creative, sense of belonging. curious, appreciate achievements, care for the environment, and responsibility. This study has limitations in interpretation. Future researchers are suggested to use more comprehensive analysis on the content of the story using different analytical tools.

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