



ENGLISH LINGUISTICS, LITERATURE, AND LANGUAGE TEACHING IN A CHANGING ERA

Edited by

Suwarsih Madya, Willy A. Renandya, Masaki Oda,
Didi Sukiyadi, Anita Triastuti, Ashadi, Erna Andriyanti
and Nur Hidayanto P.S.P



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English Linguistics, Literature, and Language Teaching in a Changing Era

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Table of contents

| | |
|--|------|
| Preface | ix |
| Acknowledgement | xi |
| Organizing Committee | xiii |
| <i>Plenary Presentation Papers</i> | |
| Exploring language teacher identity through short story analysis in a disruptive era <i>Gary Barkhuizen</i> | 3 |
| Literature and literacy in the changing era: Will disruptive bring an end to literature? <i>Manneke Budiman</i> | 9 |
| Groundless beliefs: Language learners and media discourse <i>Masaki Oda</i> | 14 |
| Going beyond communicative competence to become literate national and global citizens <i>Suwarsih Madya</i> | 20 |
| <i>Part I: English Linguistics</i> | |
| Materializing colonial heritage in <i>Goa Belanda</i> <i>Agung Farid & R. Vindy M. Puspa</i> | 37 |
| English and Javanese greeting expressions: A descriptive qualitative study on pragmatics <i>Ayu T. Andayani & Basikin</i> | 44 |
| <i>Part II: Literature</i> | |
| Ryunosuke Akagatawa's <i>Kappa</i> : Warning against the dangers and pitfalls of modernization <i>Orestis Soidi, Emzir & J. H. Tamboto</i> | 57 |
| Disruptive creativity as represented by Jane Austen & Seth Grahame-Smith's <i>Pride and Prejudice and Zombies</i> <i>Ratna Asmarani</i> | 63 |
| Cultural term translation in <i>Der Prozess</i> Novel by Frans Kafka: Analysis of translation methods and ideology <i>Sulfah Risna & Pratomo Widodo</i> | 69 |
| Digital literacy practices of English language learners: Indonesian context <i>Westi. H. Utami, Didi Suherdi & Pupung Purnawarman</i> | 76 |
| <i>Part III: English Language Teaching in Changing Era</i> | |
| Teaching critical thinking through reading to Senior High School students <i>Adnan Zaid & Sri Sarjiyati</i> | 89 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Effects of Think Pair Share strategy on Indonesian vocational higher institution students' speaking skills <i>Alfi H. Miqawati & Fitri Wijayanti</i> | 94 |
| Predict, Locate, Add, and Note (PLAN) strategy: An effective way to assist EFL students' reading comprehension in task-based learning <i>Annisa Rizqiana & Anita Triastuti</i> | 100 |
| Professional development challenges for Indonesian English teachers <i>Astri O. Kumcahya & Basikin</i> | 108 |
| Automatic speech recognition to enhance EFL students' pronunciation through Google's Voice Search application <i>Cherlie E. Rayshata & Dyah S. Ciptaningrum</i> | 115 |
| Factors influencing anxiety of non-native ESL teachers in compulsory schooling <i>Cindyra Galuhwardani & Bambang W. Pratolo</i> | 123 |
| A descriptive case study on accommodating Turnitin to optimize the role of portfolio assessment and self-assessment for students' writing process <i>Dewi Cahyaningrum, Hasan Zainnuri & Ngadiso</i> | 130 |
| Foreign language anxiety in relation with students' motivation: What's the matter? <i>Dyta Maykasari & Widyastuti Purbani</i> | 137 |
| The influence of Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) to improve English speaking skills <i>Dyah Ratnaningsih, Damoyanto Purba, Daviq Wiratno & Faris Nofandi</i> | 144 |
| Enhancing Indonesian elementary students' engagement in learning English through cooperative learning strategies <i>Emeral, Dyah S. Ciptaningrum, Elsa M. Marahati & Thuthut Kartikarini</i> | 150 |
| The implementation of intercultural language learning in teaching Indonesian as a foreign language to international students <i>Godlove Kiswaga & Anita Triastuti</i> | 158 |
| The implementation of MOOC using Schoology towards students' learning outcomes <i>Hasan Zainnuri, Ngadiso & Dewi Cahyaningrum</i> | 165 |
| The effect of online extensive reading in building the reading fluency of EFL university students <i>Hendriwanto & Utut Kurniati</i> | 172 |
| English Teachers' perception on the implementation of character education in Curriculum 2013 <i>Heni P. Lestari & Bambang W. Pratolo</i> | 178 |
| Raising English students' intercultural awareness through cultural texts <i>Indah Permatasari & Erna Andriyanti</i> | 187 |
| Tertiary students' anxiety in speaking English <i>Muamaroh, Nur Hidayat & Sri Lestari</i> | 193 |
| Developing integrated English learning materials of Islamic contents based on instructional analysis: A design-based research <i>Muhammad Saifuddin & Dwi Nurcahyani</i> | 199 |
| An investigation into the English language writing strategies used by Indonesian EFL graduate students <i>Nanik Rahmawati, Endang Fauziati & Sri Marmanto</i> | 209 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Let's speak: Encouraging students to speak up in the classroom through project-based learning <i>Nur I. Muslim, Yulia N. Hidayah, Iffah Mayasari & Ashadi</i> | 214 |
| Investigating self-correction strategies for oral grammatical errors and their merit in language acquisition among EFL learners <i>Nurul Marlisa & Ashadi</i> | 220 |
| Proposing literature circle strategy to enhance students' reading comprehension in EFL classroom <i>Nurus Sa'adah & Erna Andriyanti</i> | 227 |
| The representation of cultural elements in the promotion of intercultural communicative competence in senior high school EFL textbooks in Indonesia <i>Oktavia Herawati</i> | 235 |
| The significance of teacher's talent in improving students' engagement in EFL classroom <i>Puspita Wijayati & Erna Andriyanti</i> | 243 |
| English language learning needs of culinary students in vocational school <i>Richa A. Shara & Erna Andriyanti</i> | 251 |
| Narrative story cards for ELT: A report on their development and effectiveness <i>Richard J. Stockton</i> | 257 |
| EFL adult learners' perceptions on language anxiety toward the speaking performance <i>Rini Ardiani & Bambang W. Pratolo</i> | 264 |
| The differentiated types of role play to enhance speaking in contextual learning <i>Sarah M. Azizah & Dyah S. Ciptaningrum</i> | 271 |
| Looking at learner engagement in a digital multimodal-based instruction <i>Siti Kustini</i> | 276 |
| Developing the model of teaching materials for ESP (English for Specific Purposes) <i>Stefhani R. Rahmawati, Emzir & Aceng</i> | 283 |
| The integration of character education in reading classes at the English Education Department <i>Sugirin, Siti Sudartini & Ani Setyaningsih</i> | 289 |
| The implementation of Moodle platform to help teachers develop blended learning in the field of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) <i>Tchello Kasse & Anita Triastuti</i> | 300 |
| Administering a need analysis survey to young EFL learners in Yogyakarta <i>Thuthut Kartikarini, Dyah S. Ciptaningrum, Emeral, Elsa M. Marahati & Septiana W. Setyaningrum</i> | 308 |
| Improving speaking skills through role plays for nursing students in Indonesian context <i>Tri W. Floriasti & Indah Permatasari</i> | 315 |
| Developing the students' reflective skills in teaching and learning of reading in disruptive era <i>Umi Rachmawati</i> | 320 |
| Out-of-class language learning activities: A case study of good language learners <i>Wawan Cahyadin & Halijah Koso</i> | 328 |
| Investigating individual's clarity of enunciation with Orai application: implications for L2 assessment <i>Widya R. Kusumaningrum & Rangga Asmara</i> | 335 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| A need analysis of hearing-impaired students writing materials <i>Wikandari M. Puspasari & Ashadi</i> | 341 |
| L1 and L2 Classroom: Does it truly assist learning? <i>Zefki O. Feri & Ashadi</i> | 349 |
| Author Index | 355 |

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There are differences between the SBC and Curriculum 2013. Among others included in Curriculum 2013, teachers must consolidate character education in the learning activities in the classroom. In SBC, character education was incorporated into one or two subjects such as civic education and religion but in Curriculum 2013 all subjects have to include character education in the learning process. In this case, the teacher has a role to integrate good values that are suitable with their subject of teaching. In fact, Curriculum 2013 is an extension of the SBC in several components. The main purpose of this curriculum is to improve the potential of learners to be someone who has faith, good character, confidence, learning success, who is responsible, democratic and contributes to society [4].

Character education is needed to solve the problem of students' morality and character that always decreases over time. Character education in Curriculum 2013 is emphasized for the purpose of balancing hard skills (cognitive and psychomotor) and soft skills (affective) of students. The inclusion of character building in Curriculum 2013 is important due to some negative phenomena emerging recently, such as fights among students, use of drugs, corruption, plagiarism, cheating and social unrest [4]. Because of these problems, the government puts character education as a core competence of Curriculum 2013. The government named character education in core competence two (KI 2) in all subjects because it is important aspects for moral education. Therefore, Curriculum 2013 has a big role in implementing character education to improve the good character of students in Indonesia.

Lickona says that character is 'a reliable inner disposition to respond to situations in a morally good way', adding that 'so conceived character has three interrelated parts: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral behavior' [5]. According to Lickona, good character includes knowledge of goodness, and cause intention of goodness, and lastly actually doing good. In other words, character refers to a set of knowledge, attitudes, motivations, habits and competences.

Ki Hajar Dewantara (the Indonesian education father) defines education as 'an effort to advance the character, mind, and body of children, in order to advance the perfection of life that is alive and bring the child in harmony with nature and society' (as cited in Yulia and Helena, 2015, p.3) [6]. Therefore, education is very important in building and developing students' knowledge, skill and character.

English is the most-learned foreign language in Indonesia. It is a compulsory subject that is taught from the lower education level to the higher education level. Language is beneficial to teach good character by using good words and expressing the words in a good way. Therefore, character values can be developed through the English subject. Character value development through the English subject is expected to have a positive impact on the children and the nation's development [1]. However, in terms of the implementation of Curriculum 2013 in the English subject, not all English teachers can integrate it in a learning process. There are differences between the ideal of the implementation of Curriculum 2013 with what really happens on site. Therefore, the study to investigate English teachers' perceptions of the implementation of character education in Curriculum 2013 is worth undertaking.

2 RESEARCH METHOD

A descriptive qualitative approach is used in this research. According to Creswell [7], qualitative research is:

an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individual groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant's setting, data analysis inductively building from particular to general categories and the researcher making interpretation of the meaning of the data. (p. 295)

It is grounded ethnographic design since it aims to improve knowledge about the implementation of character education in English Curriculum 2013. Ethnography is 'a strategy of inquiry

in which the researcher studies an intact cultural group in a natural setting over a prolonged period of time by collecting, primarily, observational and interview data' [8].

In this study, the researcher interviewed six teachers who had one to five years' experience in teaching English at different levels of school in Yogyakarta. All the participants have similar educational and economic backgrounds. Six teachers volunteered to participate in this study based on their experience as English teachers. For ethical reasons, the teacher participants were given pseudonyms; teacher A (female and had more than five years' experience), teacher B (female and five years' experience), teacher C (female and four years' experience), teacher D (male and three years' experience), teacher E (female and two years' experience) and teacher F (female and six months' experience).

The purpose of this study was to explore the language teachers' perceptions of implementing character education in English Curriculum 2013. A semi-structured interview technique was employed to gather information from all the participants. A semi-structured interview was chosen because the researchers had the opportunity to further elaborate the information from the participants based on their responses on the previous questions. While conducting the interviews, the researchers took note of the participants' opinions and recorded the sessions using a tape recorder and also the voice note facility in the WhatsApp application.

The data collection through interviews was conducted in 2017/2018 academic years. Face to face interviews occurred in the places that teachers suggested. The interviews ranged from 30–60 minutes. The researchers conducted the interviews and asked for more information in detail to determine how they implemented character education in Curriculum 2013, which was developed by the Ministry of Education (Kemendikbud) of The Republic of Indonesia for the English subject in secondary schools.

In analyzing the data, the researchers employed a descriptive analysis method. In other words, the data were collected from the participant teachers through in-depth interviews. First, the data were coded, then these codes were classified and evaluated according to several categories. Considering the research questions, these categories were pre-determined by the researchers, using 20 questions in the interviews with some further questions to unearth more detailed information based on the answers. The interpretations of the data of teachers' opinions on the implementation of character education in Curriculum 2013 are explored in the following findings.

3 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this part, the results of the study are presented for each research question. The perceptions of the interviewed teachers on the implementation of character education in Curriculum 2013 are presented according to the categories based on their responses to the questions given in the interviews. This part is divided into four main sub-sections based on the research questions, namely: English teachers' thoughts about character education in Curriculum 2013, the implementation of character education in Curriculum 2013, advantages and challenges of character education in Curriculum 2013.

3.1 *English teachers' thoughts about character education in Curriculum 2013*

The results of the data analysis reveal some English teachers' perspectives on character education in Curriculum 2013. They shared their experiences and understanding about the issue. Table 1 summarizes the teachers' perceptions regarding character education in Curriculum 2013. Within the categories, teachers' experience of teaching English can support the data to know their knowledge about character education.

Most of the teachers know that Curriculum 2013 is different, as it provides character building and moral values for the student. Below are some teachers' perceptions about character education in Curriculum 2013:

A curriculum emphasizes student character. In order that learners are not only experts in subject material, but also that their character is well developed (Teacher C)

Another noted that character education can build the attitude and skills of the student:

The 2013 curriculum focuses on life skill and character education, where students are required to understand the material, be active in the process of discussion or presentation, have good manners and discipline (Teacher E)

One teacher also wrote that character education can provide some good attitudes for students, such as:

Character education is inserted during the learning process in the classroom. Such as being courageous, responsible, polite, courteous, showing respect, appreciation etc. (Teacher B)

Another teacher expressed about social and environment can build the student's character:

Character education begins when the process of learning further extends in their daily life at school even at home (Teacher C)

Table 1 explains what the teachers think about character education. They pointed out that character education focuses on character building, moral values, attitudes and skills of the students. Character education is aimed to make students not only smart in their cognitive domain (thinking) but also affective one (emotion/feeling) such as their attitude. They believe that character education is the teaching of core values for students to develop good characters. Several teachers also said that character education should improve students' individual leadership and communicative competence. They also said that character education needs to be contextual and consider social and environmental aspects. It is also found that the implementation of Curriculum 2013 has as its purpose to build students' good character in the aspects of knowledge, skills and attitude. This is in line with the findings of a similar study by Darsih [9], who states that 'the previous curriculum only focuses on improvement of knowledge and skill or cognitive aspect and did not pay attention to attitude and students' creative thinking' (p. 195). Therefore, teachers not only teach knowledge but also life skills, what students need to know to live in the world. Implementing character education for students can also build students' life skills and good character, such as being independent, brave, responsible, polite, confident, respectful and appreciative of others. However, it is not sufficient that implementing character education in Curriculum 2013 is just conducted in classrooms, it should be supported by social and environmental aspects to build and practice their good habits and behaviors. Because students spend much time in school, school should offer the opportunity to support and help them to reach the full potential of their good character. It is also developing a positive school climate or culture and bringing out the best attitude for students at the school. Character education in this curriculum is important and beneficial for everyone, so it has to involve school staff, parents, students and community members to support this curriculum for making an effective academic process.

Table 1. English teachers' thoughts about character education in Curriculum 2013.

| Teachers' perceptions | Participants (N = 6) |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Character building | 6 |
| Moral values | 4 |
| Attitudes and skills | 2 |
| Contextual and communicative | 1 |
| Independent learner | 1 |
| Social and environmental aspects | 1 |

3.2 The implementation of character education in Curriculum 2013

This part describes the implementation of character education in Curriculum 2013 by English teachers in the classroom. From the categories, the teachers implemented character education in materials and activities.

First, most of the teachers used some activities for implementing character education in their teaching English:

Presenting the results of the discussion in front of the class. It builds the student's confidence and they are not shy (Teacher B)

Then, other teachers integrate learning materials with character values in the English class:

Using appropriate techniques suggested by the Ministry of Education, that is through learning materials that contain moral values, through texts used, e.g. discussion of inspiring characters (Teacher F)

Several teachers use a scientific approach to generate student-centered learning in the class for supporting character education implementation:

The emphasis of character building in each learning and also the transformation from EEK (Ekploration, Collaboration and Confirmation) to a scientific approach here by observing, questioning, processing, presenting, concluding, creating (Teacher D)

Other teachers said that the school environment also supports building character education for students:

A conducive learning environment plays an important role in the process of character building students (Teacher E)

The last teacher also wrote that using our own culture can implement character education in the English language:

By integrating their own cultural values with the cultures and foreign languages they learn (Teacher E)

Table 2 confirms that teachers have implemented the character education of Curriculum 2013 in their teaching and learning processes. First, some of the teachers use some activities to implement character education such as brainstorming, warming up, discussion and presentation to build character value for students. For example, the students have to discuss in their group and also present their ideas. This activity can build their confidence to speak in front of others. Since learning English is a matter of habit, students must practice it in their daily activities. Second, some teachers say that they integrate their learning material with character education, for example studying English through narrative texts. From the narrative text a student can get moral value from the story of the text. Integrating materials with character education was similar to a previous study by Ratih [10], who argued that 'in the materials, the teacher inserted the character values directly and indirectly. It means the character values can be seen from the words used and the content of the materials' (p. 101). Next, the teachers suggest that students also have to know the differences between their local culture and a foreign culture. Teachers can

Table 2. The implementation of character education in Curriculum 2013.

| Teachers' perceptions | Participants (N = 6) |
|--|----------------------|
| Using some activities to support character education | 6 |
| Integrate learning material with character value | 4 |
| Scientific approach | 4 |
| School environment supports character education | 2 |
| Integrate original culture with foreign culture | 1 |

share good values of both cultures with the students. Because Curriculum 2013 uses the scientific approach, students can observe, question, process, present, conclude and create to improve their knowledge and skills. One of the teachers said that language and art are appropriate lessons to build character education for the students because English language has text, dialog, an expression that supports the students to implement their speaking and communication. For example, students study a narrative text to know the moral value of the text. Teachers also said that the environment can influence students' character. It comes not only from the school environment but also from their family and neighborhood lives. The last finding is to integrate local culture with a foreign culture. This is very important to improve cultural awareness among students. Teachers can take the same positive values which exist in both cultures and integrate them into the teaching and learning process.

3.3 Advantages of character education in Curriculum 2013

As shown in Table 3, it was found that character education provides positive effects for students from internal and external factors. Table 3 presents the advantages of implementing character education in Curriculum 2013 according to English teacher participants.

Here are the advantages of implementing character education in Curriculum 2013 according to English teachers' perceptions.

First, character education can encourage students to be more independent and communicative:

By practicing speaking English, students' confidence will grow so that they are more independent and confident to convey their ideas. (Teacher B)

Second, character education can help students to be more active, creative and innovative:

Students are required to be more active, creative and innovative in every problem that they have to solve in the school (Teacher E)

Third, character education can improve good knowledge and moral attitude for a student:

Assessment of all aspects; attitudes, skills and knowledge will better represent the students themselves (Teacher D)

Fourth, character education can increase the level of confidence and religion of the students:

In Curriculum 2013, there is a spiritual assessment that makes students have faith and caution to their respective God (Teacher D)

The last, teachers can motivate the student that the assessment is not only from their knowledge but also from their attitudes and morals:

By telling them that their score are not only from their lessons but also their daily behavior. It will make students more trying to form a better person and character (Teacher C)

In this study, the researchers found some advantages identified the six English teacher participants including: first, encouraging students to be more independent and

Table 3. Advantages of implementing character education in Curriculum 2013 (n = 6).

| Teachers' perceptions | Participants (N = 6) |
|---|----------------------|
| Improve students to be more independent and communicative | 4 |
| Help students to be more active, creative and innovative | 3 |
| Improve knowledge and moral behaviors of students | 2 |
| Increase students' spiritual and religious life | 2 |
| Assessment can be from exam score and moral aspects | 1 |

communicative in that they can do their activity in the classroom through discussion and presentation with their group confidently. Another example is that students can work together in groups to complete their assignments, which helps them learn and practice the skills to work together so every student can contribute their ability to participate in this activity. As they work together in their groups, students have a chance to improve their skills to speak with other people confidently. Second, implementing character education can help students to be more active, creative and innovative. These skills improve their study skills in all subjects, making them responsible for their learning activities. Third, teachers confess that implementing character education at school could improve students' knowledge and moral behaviors. Character education also explores feelings and the ability of students to improve their behavior inside and outside the school environment. Fourth, character education in the school can support students to increase their spirit of religious life. It is very important to build and improve their faith. Assessment in Curriculum 2013 is not only from subject exams but also from their moral life such as behavior, including how they interact with other students and their teachers. Therefore, implementing character education in the English language classroom can have positive impacts for the students. The students are not only smart in their cognitive domain but also in their affective domain, which is proven by having good character or in the Indonesian language '*cerdas berkarakter*' (smart and acquiring prominent characters).

3.4 Challenges of implementing character education in Curriculum 2013

On the other hand, some challenges were also recorded. This section provides data on the aspects the teachers perceived as being challenging in implementing character education in Curriculum 2013.

The following is an example of what the teachers said regarding the assessment of character education as being very complicated:

The teachers' assessment system is too complex, there are so many teachers who are not mentally ready for the 2013 curriculum (Teacher D)

Other aspects that impact the implementation of this curriculum are a lack of teacher experience and creativity and also a lack of appropriate materials:

This curriculum demands teachers to be more creative, lack of understanding of teachers with the concept of scientific approach, lack of teachers skills in designing lesson plans, mastering authentic judgment (Teacher D)

Several teachers also argue that this curriculum is not well developed, government hope can student-learning center, but in the reality, it is still teacher-learning center:

Curriculum 2013 is expected already centered students, but teacher-centered learning is still much going on many subjects especially English Subject (Teacher D)

Table 4 provides information on aspects of the teaching and learning process that the English teachers consider as challenging in implementing character education. All teacher participants said that implementing character education in the classroom is not easy. The teachers complain about the assessment of character values, which is very detailed and complex, making them find it difficult to do it. The scoring criteria not only focuses on competence aspects but also on character aspects. In Curriculum 2013, teachers assess students not only from knowledge but also their competence and attitudes inside and outside of the classroom. This kind of assessment is very complicated as the teachers must know every individual student very well. The next is the lack of teacher experience and creativity, which causes difficulties implementing character education. In addition, lack of appropriate extra resources and materials are possibly negatively affected by the curriculum. This is in line with the result of previous research by Iyitoğlu and Alci [11], which described that 'teachers listed the weaknesses of the curriculum as

Table 4. Challenges of implementing character education in Curriculum 2013.

| Teachers' perceptions | Participants (N = 6) |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|
| More detailed and complex assessment | 6 |
| Lack of teacher experience | 2 |
| Lack of teacher creativity | 2 |
| Lack of training from government | 1 |
| Lack of guidance | 1 |
| Time consuming | |
| Dominant teacher-centered | 1 |
| Poor student confidence | 1 |
| Lack of appropriate materials | 1 |

a lack of motivation for the students to speak, lack of materials to help them learn English effectively, lack of communicative activities' (p. 10). The teachers did not have enough information on how to implement the curriculum. All of the problems came from many aspects such as lack of teacher experience, lack of teacher creativity, lack of training from government, lack of appropriate materials and lack of guidance. Therefore, these problems become the weakness of implementing Curriculum 2013. Since the assessment of this curriculum is more complicated and difficult, it needs a lot of time to implement it. Another challenge is that many students do not feel confident and are passive in the learning activities so the class becomes dominated with teacher-centered learning even though the purpose of Curriculum 2013 is student-centered learning.

Furthermore, to solve these problems, some of the teachers hope that the government would give training about character education in Curriculum 2013 and also how to implement it. It is also appropriate if the government provides a guidance book for teachers to help them implement this curriculum. The teachers also have to be active in searching for information about the implementation of moral education in Curriculum 2013 through books or the Internet, asking other teachers or attending workshops or seminars about the issue.

4 CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings and discussion presented, some conclusions can be drawn. First, teachers were aware and positively received the change of curriculum, from the SBC to Curriculum 2013. Second, teachers have included character values in the lesson plans, teaching materials, learning activities and assessments. Third, implementing character education can provide some positive impacts on students' lives. Fourth, several challenges were still encountered while implementing character education in Curriculum 2013. As a result, teachers, as the main actors in education, have a significant role in implementing character education in their teaching and learning processes. Therefore, teachers have to be open-minded, creative and innovative to provide and improve their teaching performance. It would be beneficial for teachers and students if the government would listen and consider their opinions. The governments need to involve teachers from urban and rural schools in the improvement process of Curriculum 2013 to make sure that the implementation would be smooth and not find any significant barriers in the field. The assessment process in Curriculum 2013 needs to made simple and easy so that teachers do not spend too much time on administrative tasks. The government should improve the training and guidance for teachers, for example, though more workshops or teacher training about Curriculum 2013. The government should also supply more resources and guidance for implementing character education in Curriculum 2013.

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