

The role of akidah akhlak teacher in embedding character of polite and decent language for elementary students

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Abstrak

Indonesia well known as a nation that Cary on the head of polite and decent caharcter, especially in the use of language. Recently many cases were found that students are impolitely speaking, even bullying teachers. For this reason that embedding character of polite and decent language for early childhood is necessary. This study aims to identify the role of Akidah Akhlak teacher in embedding the character of polite and decent language for students' year 1 at MIN 1 Bantul. The subject of this study is Akidah Akhlak, teacher of year 1 in MIN 1 Bantul. This study used a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. Data gathered through interviews and analyzed using qualitative analysis. Triangulate technic is used to validate the data and to recheck the result of the interview. This study showed that the role of Akidah Akhlak teacher is to give comprehension, become an example, and a role-model, doing observation and evaluation with the support from school stakeholders in embeeding polite and decent language through daily activities.

Keywords: Role, Teacher, Akidah Akhlak, Polite Language

INTRODUCTION

The term *akhlak* is a plural form of the Arabic word *khuluq*. Some origin meanings of the word are mind, behavior, action, and character. From the perspective of Islamic studies, the term is defined as knowledge that explains good or bad, right or wrong; governs human interaction; decide the purpose of human effort and work. Akhlak is integrated within one's personal state,

emerged with one's act and behavior. When a behavior that emerged is bad, it is called *akhlak mazmumah*; on the contrary, it is called *akhlak mahmudah*.

Akhlak is visible through one's acts or words that are motivated by obeying Allah SWT. Although there are so many aspects related to one's mind and soul state, akhlak dinniyah is how one acts to Allah, humans, and nature (Habibah 2015).

Akhlak is one of substantial value in life, indeed in the Islamic way. Rasulullah SAW described that someone who has the highest rank of iman is someone whose akhlak is best. The statement shows that akhlak and character are worth fighting for in the life of everyone (Rosihun Anwar 2017). Akhlak has two primary purposes: first is akhlak to Allah, and second is akhlak to all creatures. One of akhlak that is necessarily embedded during early childhood is the use of language politely to parent, older people, teachers, and even children at the same age.

In human development theory, primary school age is the fourth stage after infancy, preschool, and early childhood. Primary school age is outspread between 6-12 years old. Children learn to make decisions, seize skills in educational fields, and develop basic potencies (Thalib 2010). Almost all children's basic potencies develop rapidly at this stage. Neurologists found that 50% human intelligence capacity has happened at age 4 years and 80 % at age 8 years. The growth of neuron cells required supportive educational environment, not only school but also family and community educational environment (Noorlaila 2010).

According to UU No 23 Tahun 2003 about the national system of education, the goal of national education is to develop "students' potential to

become human that believe and obey The One God, to have good character, health, and well-comprehension, competent, creative, and self-regulated and to become a responsible democratic citizen". Believe and obey The One God and have good character are two crucial foundation components in character education in madrasah.

Modeling from an adult has a vital role in all environments for character education, such as home, school, and community. For example, at home parent is the leading model for children character education. Parents' roles determine students' achievements in acquiring knowledge about the character, feeling about character, and actions that represent a character (Munawwaroh 2019). Mimicry processes in exemplary methods occur consciously and unconsciously. The modeling point is mimicry: students replicate the behavior of teachers at school, children replicate the behavior of parents at home, community members replicate the behavior of community leaders in the community setting. All those examples show that modeling occurs when one mimics others' behavior (Suhono, & Utama 2017).

We found that there are many students who need guidance for using polite and decent language in daily life. Some examples are students who speak loud and scream, students who speak rudely, students who like to interrupt people's conversation, students who speak using inappropriate language (Lilliek Suryani 2017). In the context of school life, we found that many students bring their habit of using inappropriate language they usually used. One example is that students use language for children at the same age when speaking to the teacher (Guru MIN 1 Bantul). Educators need to pay attention to this kind of character.

According to the article that was written by Edi Kuswanto, teacher of Akidah Akhlak in school has many roles, such as: a) teacher as plan maker, that is, teacher who prepare to learn content, learning media, and learning evaluation that will be used, b) teacher as system conservator, or in other words as an example for his/her students, c) teacher as surrogate parents in the school context, which mean teacher to be able to more familiar with students and more unimpeded in helping students in school. (Kuswanto 2015 : 217)

In the context of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) as a formal institution of Islamic education in Indonesia, character education has long been rooted in the concept of *akhlakul karimah* (Sumarsih Anwar 2014). The concept of *akhlakul karimah* is delivered by the teacher in a well-structured curriculum through the subject of *akidah akhlak*. Not to mention that the concept *akhlakul karimah* is also applicable through an example of teachers and staff in the school environment. Since *akhlakul karimah* has an important impact on student development, the subject of *akidah akhlak* has been delivered in MI from year 1.

Based on *KMA No 183 Tahun 2019* about Islamic studies and Arabic language in *madrasah*, there are basic competencies (KD) that have to be accomplished by student for *akidah akhlak* subject in year of of MI. Among those KD's are the act of friendly, compassion and polite to parent and teacher (KD 1.10, 2.10, 3.10, dan 4.10) and saying right and honest (KD 1.11, 2.11, 3.11 dan 4.11). Both KD's are interconnected because language used by students is one indicator of students' behavior. Therefore, language

becomes important thing that must be learned for students' akhlak development.

Language is a social process (Chapman, 2000). Therefore, social interaction between teacher and students is necessarily happened to ensure students expressing appropriate language. A guidance book published by Canadian ministry of child and adolescence service (2017) stated that students' ability to use language at age 6-7 will grow well when the teacher involves his/herself in conversation. Thus, the role of the teacher for students' development of good language in year 1 MI is very vital. The more good conversation occurs between teacher and students, the more likely embedding of good language to students will happen.

Arguments from Dickinson & Porche stated that students who feel safe with teachers tend to have more personal conversations (Dickinson, D.K., & Proche, 2011). Personal conversation makes students feel more involved in the learning process (Hughes et al. 2008), which is, in this context, is learning to act compassionate and polite and say right and honest. In addition, teachers who have a close relation to students are more ready to provide emotional support for them (Ladd et al. 1999). This readiness aligns with the teacher's professional role as adviser and model for his/her students (Muhammad Anwar 2018).

This study aimed to identify the role of *akidah akhlak teacher* in embedding the character of polite and decent language used by students' year 1 of MIN 1 Bantul. This identification will help the teacher of *akidah akhlak* to improve his/her practice in embedding students' character of the polite and decent language.

METHODS

This research uses the qualitative method. The qualitative method is a process of data gathering from natural settings to interpret phenomena where the researcher is the key instrument (Anggito 2018). The qualitative study aims to gain comprehension about reality and to analyze it. The result of the analysis is general comprehension of reality (Anggito 2018).

We choose a qualitative study because we want to dig more profound information about the role of *akidah akhlak* teacher in embedding the character of polite and decent language to students' year 1 of MIN 1 Bantul. To do this study, we 1) search literature of embedding character of polite and decent language, and 2) decide the study location. We choose MIN 1 Bantul as the location of study because its mission to encourage students as a polite generation aligns with the object of this study (minsaba.wordpress.com/visi-misi).

The object of this study is embedding the character of polite and decent language, while the subject of this study is the teacher of *akidah akhlak* year 1 at MIN 1 Bantul. Data is gathered through interviews. We analyze the data using triangulation as a validation technique to recheck the result of an interview.

DISCUSSION

Polite and decent language is an indicator of respect from speaker to listener. This character appears from an act of respect to other people (Tugas Utami Handayani n.d.). Some examples of polite and decent language are

saying right, greeting, asking something, calling, thanking, asking for sorry, criticizing, etc.

One of the most popular theories of children's development in the educational field is Ecological Systems Theory proposed by Bronfenbrenner (Santrock 2007). This theory proposed that 5 ecological systems influence children development:

- a. Microsystem: environments where children live such as parent, family, peers, teachers, school.
- b. Mesosystem: The system that connects microsystems such as parent and teacher interact within the school setting, parent and peers interact within neighborhood settings, or school interacts with religious institutions.
- c. Ecosystem: conditions that indirectly influence children's development. For example experience of a working mother affects her relationship with her children that change the pattern of communication and interaction.
- d. Macrosystem: a culture where one lives, such as Indonesian culture, is different from European culture.
- e. Chronosystem: important live events occur to individual and sociocultural.

According to these five environment systems, we can conclude that children development is influenced by a series of interactions in family, school, community, and school with parent, school with community, and community. Every layer of the environment dynamically affects individual development. Therefore, polite and decent language cannot be separated from children's interaction with teachers and school and parents at home as a

mesosystem. Interaction between those two parties will enhance students' learning achievements.

Mimicry is one way to foster the character of politeness and decent in using language. Formally at school, the knowledge of the character is acquired by students through learning, explicitly learning of subject that related to the character of polite and decent, such as the subject of *akidah akhlak*. When studying this subject, students will know the benefit and importance of polite and decent character, especially in using language. Having known this knowledge, students are expected to internalize it as a part of identity.

Informally at family and community, students acquire the knowledge about the character from mimicry older people behavior and older people's advices. Advice is a verbal learning method where educators give students instruction for having a necessary good character. Through advices students know and feel how important good character is.

Akidah akhlak education is a conscious and well-planned effort for preparing students to know, understand, internalize, and believe Allah SWT. Following those processes of knowing to believe, students are expected to implement it by doing well in daily life. Some other ways that teachers can support students in implementation are guidance, instruction, exercise, experience, and habit.

The purposes of *akidah akhlak* education are to foster and enhance students' belief that is manifest in good character through giving and nurturing students' knowledge, internalization, implementation, and experience about Islamic *aqidah* and *akhlak*. All those purposes are students becoming a Muslim whose belief and God-fearing continuously grow and

elevate, followed by good character in personal life, community, state, and nation. Teacher of subject *akidah akhlak* serves not only students' character education but also attitude, behavior and ethic as a foundation of development toward attitude, knowledge, and character, so students more adapt to the environment (Khadijah and Gusman 2020).

The character of polite and decent is included in educational competencies at year 1 of MIN 1 Bantul for subject *akidah akhlak*. Therefore, *akidah akhlak* has an important role in the formation of polite and decent character, which is language usage. The roles of *akidah akhlak* teacher in embedding polite and decent language are:

1. Giving Advice

Data shows that *akidah akhlak* at MIN 1 Bantul has a role in forming polite and decent language. This claim is based on the subject content of *akidah akhlak* Year 1 semester 2. KD 2.4 stated that "to regulate act of compassionate and polite to parent and teacher in daily life" (Silabus Akidah Akhlak Kls1 MI rev semester 2 n.d.). According to that KD learning activities from *akidah akhlak* teacher is giving advice related to how to behave compassionate and polite to parent and teacher in daily life. Some advice from the teacher is using Bahasa for general or Java for *karma* when speaking to parents, teachers, or older people. Greeting teacher and parent with polite and decent language when first time meeting. Asking question correctly, by raising hands and lowering the tone of voice. Those examples are beginning to be taught and regulated to students' year 1 of MIN 1 Bantul.

2. Giving Example

As admitted by *akidah akhlak* teacher of MIN 1 Bantul, it is essential to teach students how to speak politeness and decent. Because people will judge the value of students from how they communicate, in daily activities, students alternately use Bahasa and Java, but the use of polite and decent language must be exemplified continuously. Teaching polite and decent language through example is very important for early childhood because students are standing on concrete operational stage according to Piaget's theory. The earlier good examples are given, the more likely they are absorbed by students.

Another way to give examples of polite and decent language to students is to invite students to communicate with polite and decent language, not only during the learning process but also during break time outside the class. The teacher should mind the way his/her speaking when communicating with other teachers and staff because it will affect students to do what their teacher does.

We found that sometimes teachers need media to give examples, like using videos or movies that contain value and character of the polite and decent language. One of the video that the teacher frequently uses is Upin and Ipin videos. Upin and Ipin well-known as animation characters that behave politely to their grandmother. When presented with concrete examples, students at early childhood age are more likely to cope and understand the concept of polite and decent language.

3. Giving Evaluation

According to the teacher of *akidah akhlak* at MIN 1 Bantul, giving examples and evaluation has a vital role in embedding polite and decent language. Teacher need evaluation to monitor the improvement of students' behaviour. Students at lower ages are not regulated enough to maintain good habits. Sometimes, they bring old habits from homes, such as habits with friends or habits they receive from TV shows or gadgets.

Many TV or gadget shows use daily language that not all appropriate to use in the school context. The language is containing expressions that disobey grammatical rules of politeness and decent. Using *Java ngoko* is fine when speaking to children of the same age but inappropriate when communicating with the teacher. Students ideally use *Java krama* when communicating with older people, including the teacher.

The teacher should remind students, indeed warning, when students bring their habit from home that not suit with school context—reminding students both by giving examples of how to speak right and explaining why they need to use polite and decent language. When students using foul and rude language, the teacher will give a unique and more personal approach.

To deal with obstacles in embedding the character of students' polite and decent language, the teacher of *akidah akhlak* at MIN 1 Bantul, with pleasure, invites her students to speak and discuss anything, anytime, and anywhere they like. This creates a closer relationship between teacher and students, making it easier for her to deliver the value and understanding about polite and decent language to students.

4. Cooperating with Parents and Stakeholders

The teacher of *akidah akhlak* has one more critical role. It is collaborating with parents and school stakeholders. Parents and school stakeholders are part of the character embedding program. In collaboration with school stakeholders, teachers regulate his/her habit to communicate with each other using polite and decent language.

Collaboration with parents is delivered in the regular meeting of room teachers with parents. The teacher of *akidah akhlak* involves in suggesting parents use polite and decent language when speaking with their child. When appropriately implemented in the home, this suggestion will become a mutual benefit both for school and parents.

The teacher of *akidah akhlak* also suggests to school stakeholders to be actively involved in embedding the character of the polite and decent language in daily activities. In the classroom context, the teacher cooperates with a class member to remind each other when some students use impolite language. When students find a friend who crosses the line and cannot remind him/her, they can report that behavior to a teacher of *akidah akhlak* so he/she receives intensive guidance.

These circumstances mean that the evolution of character refers to classroom cognitive and theoretical evaluation and refers to daily observation. Therefore, the character of polite and decent language is about classroom learning and daily life as social behavior.

5. Giving Daily Journal

Other media that can be used for reporting the development of students' character is writing in a daily journal that students bring home.

The teacher of *akidah akhlak* invites parents to report students' character development by giving daily journals that parents write at home. This daily journal bi-directional; the teacher writes his/her report so that parents can read it, and vice versa. This allows dynamics cooperation between teacher and parents.

Teachers of *akidah akhlak* must pay much attention to this embedding character of the polite and decent language in collaboration with parents and school stakeholders to instill firmly in students self. In turn, it will show the true self of *madrrasah* and family.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that based on actual condition and process of embedding character at MIN 1 Bantul, the roles of teacher *akidah akhlak* in embedding character of polite and decent language are a) advising about how to behave polite and pleasant to parents and teachers in daily life, b) giving examples how to speak polite and decent by inviting students to communicate with good language and polite behavior, not only in classroom learning but also in daily life, c) Evaluating and reminding students by directly giving the example of sound words, or by giving comprehension about why students need to speak polite and decent, d) working together with parents and school stakeholders in embedding character of polite and decent language by communicating with each other using polite and decent language, and e) inviting parents to report their children development through the daily journal that can be written at home.

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