

## ENHANCING LEARNERS' CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT: INSIGHTS FROM UTILIZING LEARNING MATERIALS AND TEACHING-LEARNING ACTIVITIES IN TEFLIN

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### Abstract

*The pedagogy of Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Indonesia (TEFLIN) underscores the significance of substantive content in language instruction. This paper elucidates the pivotal role of integrating culturally relevant materials into English teaching-learning curricula to effectively develop students' linguistic competence and linguistic performance. Drawing upon the symbiotic relationship between language and culture, the discourse explores how native speakers' cultural nuances in instructional materials catalyze students' linguistic competence and character development. Central to this approach is the recognition that language acquisition encompasses understanding the cultural underpinnings inherent in communication. This study delves into the pedagogical framework wherein the exploration and elucidation of linguistic features within input texts serve as conduits for delving into students' indigenous wisdom, thereby fostering character-building opportunities. However, successfully integrating these materials for character development hinges upon educators' adeptness in devising contextually relevant teaching-learning activities. Emphasizing the intrinsic moral values interwoven within instructional materials, this paper delineates a structured approach to character development through TEFLIN. Based on experiential insights, this article delineates a procedural framework for leveraging learning materials and teaching-learning activities within TEFLIN to nurture character traits. The outlined phases encompass pre-teaching rituals to set a conducive learning environment, interactive pedagogical approaches during instruction, and reflective post-teaching assessments. Educators are empowered to cultivate a culture of ethical consciousness and character refinement among students by accentuating the integration of moral values throughout the instructional process.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Character building within English language teaching (ELT) is a multifaceted endeavour with profound implications for linguistic competence and moral development. This literature review explores the intersection of language instruction and character development, specifically focusing on the context of TEFLIN. As English continues to be a global lingua franca (Kumaravadivelu, 2001, 2012), the importance of imparting language skills and fostering positive character traits among learners becomes increasingly apparent (Avalokitesvari, 2019; Qoyyimah, 2015). Within the TEFLIN context, where students navigate the complexities of acquiring a second language amidst cultural diversity, the integration of character-building components into language instruction assumes particular significance (Latifah et al., 2020; Septy, 2016; Setyowati, 2013).

Integrating cultural content into language instruction is a cornerstone for nurturing character development among language learners (Cahya & Syafrizal, 2022; Potcharapanpong & Thongthew, 2010). Cultural immersion enhances linguistic competence by providing authentic contexts for language use and fosters empathy, respect for diversity, and intercultural understanding. By incorporating cultural elements into language teaching materials and activities, educators can instil moral values and cultivate a sense of global citizenship among students (Amrina & Anom, 2019; Hasanah, 2016; Pratiwi & Latief, 2015; Siswa et al., 2014). Within the TEFLIN framework, where learners grapple with the nuances of English as a foreign language within their local context, integrating cultural content assumes heightened importance in shaping learners' character development.

The field of ELT is rooted in integrating culturally relevant materials to effectively develop students' linguistic competence and character development. Previous studies have highlighted the symbiotic relationship between language and culture, emphasizing the role of native speakers' cultural nuances in instructional materials catalyzing students' linguistic competence and character development (Oktari & Warlim, 2019; Septy, 2016; Simarmata, 2023). Furthermore, it has been established that successfully integrating these materials for character development depends on educators' ability to devise contextually relevant teaching-learning activities.

Many studies have explored using learning materials and teaching activities to enhance character development in the context of TEFLIN. Hendrizal and Candra (2018) and Zainuddin (2020) developed and tested character-based teaching materials, with Hendrizal focusing on children aged 6-9 and Zainuddin on natural science for middle school students (Hendrizal & Chandra, 2018; Zainuddin et al., 2020). Both studies found positive outcomes in terms of materials feasibility and character achievement. Chotimah (2022) further emphasized the role of technology, pedagogy, and content knowledge in strengthening students' character, particularly in Pancasila and Civics Education (Chotimah et al., 2022). Lastly, some researchers highlighted the effectiveness of student textbooks in teaching English to young learners, suggesting that these materials can also play a role in character development (Mu'alimah et al., 2020; Suryantari, 2022). These studies underscore the potential of learning materials and teaching activities in promoting character development in TEFLIN.

However, there are significant gaps in understanding the pedagogical framework necessary for effectively utilizing learning materials and teaching-learning activities to foster character development within the Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Indonesia (TEFLIN) context. Although some studies have highlighted the importance of incorporating native cultural nuances into language instruction, these efforts have not sufficiently addressed the broader pedagogical strategies required for character development. The existing research touches upon the relevance of cultural elements in language teaching, suggesting that an awareness of students' native culture can enhance engagement and comprehension. Despite these insights, there remains a scarcity of research that provides a structured approach to integrating character development into TEFLIN programs. A comprehensive framework that outlines specific teaching-learning activities and materials designed to promote character development is notably absent from the current body of literature. This lack of structured guidance means that educators are often left without clear strategies for embedding character-building objectives into their language instruction. Thus, there is a pressing need for further research to bridge this gap. Investigating and developing a pedagogical framework that systematically incorporates character development into TEFLIN could significantly enhance the educational experience and outcomes for students. Such research would contribute to a more holistic approach to language teaching, one that not only improves linguistic proficiency but also fosters essential personal and social values.

In this literature review, we aim to address two key research questions: firstly, how character-building components can be effectively integrated into English language teaching, particularly within the TEFLIN context; and secondly, what gaps exist in the current literature, along with recommendations for future research and pedagogical practice. This review offers a novel exploration of practical strategies for embedding cultural content into language instruction to facilitate character development among learners in the TEFLIN context. Importantly, it underscores the necessity of adopting a holistic approach to language teaching that emphasizes linguistic competence, while highlighting how educators can utilize cultural nuances within instructional materials to promote character development and ethical consciousness among students within TEFLIN.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

### **Research Design**

This study aims to investigate the integration of learning materials and teaching-learning activities for character development within the context of Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Indonesia (TEFLIN). Recognizing the importance of character development in education, this research seeks to explore how it can be effectively embedded into TEFLIN curricula through carefully designed learning materials and instructional strategies. To achieve this objective, the study adopts a systematic literature review approach. This method involves a thorough examination of existing research to identify patterns, gaps, and insights related to the integration of character development in TEFLIN. By systematically reviewing the literature, the study aims to build a comprehensive understanding of the current state of research and highlight areas that require further investigation.

The review process involves comprehensive searches of several electronic databases, including ERIC, JSTOR, and Google Scholar. These databases are well-regarded for their extensive collections of academic articles, research papers, and other scholarly resources. By searching these databases, the study ensures that it captures a wide range of relevant literature, providing a robust foundation for analysis. Through this systematic literature review, the study seeks to uncover effective strategies and practices for integrating character development into TEFLIN. It will analyze various teaching-learning activities and learning materials that have been utilized in different educational contexts, assessing their applicability and effectiveness within the Indonesian setting. The ultimate goal is to provide educators and policymakers with evidence-based recommendations for enhancing character development in TEFLIN, thereby contributing to the overall quality and impact of English language education in Indonesia.

### **Research Objects**

The research objects in this study are scholarly articles identified through an extensive literature search. To ensure the relevance and quality of the selected articles, specific criteria were established, focusing on various aspects integral to character development within the Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Indonesia (TEFLIN) context. These criteria were meticulously designed to include articles that emphasize character development, the integration of indigenous wisdom, moral values, and the incorporation of local cultural nuances in language instruction. The literature search involved a systematic and comprehensive review of electronic databases such as ERIC, JSTOR, and Google Scholar. Each article was carefully evaluated to determine its alignment with the research objectives. This process included assessing the methodological rigor, relevance to TEFLIN, and the extent to which the study addressed character development and cultural integration. Only articles that met these stringent criteria were selected for inclusion in the review, ensuring that the study is grounded in high-quality, pertinent research.

In selecting these articles, ethical considerations were diligently observed. This involved respecting intellectual property rights by appropriately citing all sources and ensuring the transparency and integrity of the review process. The ethical review also included ensuring that the selected studies were conducted ethically, with proper consent and consideration for the participants involved in the original research. By adhering to these ethical standards, the study aims to maintain the highest level of academic integrity and contribute responsibly to the field of educational research. Overall, the selected scholarly articles form a robust foundation for investigating the integration of character development into TEFLIN. By focusing on articles that explore character development, indigenous wisdom, moral values, and cultural nuances, the study aims to provide comprehensive insights and evidence-based recommendations. This approach not only enhances the academic rigor of the research but also ensures its relevance and applicability in improving English language education in Indonesia.

### **Research Instruments**

The primary instrument utilized in this study is a meticulously crafted search query. This query is composed of key terms such as "character development," "learning materials," "teaching-learning activities," "local wisdom," and "TEFLIN." These terms are strategically chosen to capture the core aspects of the research focus, ensuring that the literature search is both comprehensive and relevant to the study's objectives. Using this predefined search query, the data collection process involves conducting thorough searches across multiple electronic databases. These databases include ERIC, JSTOR, and Google Scholar, which are known for their extensive collections of scholarly articles and research papers. By applying the search query to these databases, the study aims to retrieve a wide range of relevant articles that address the integration of character development, local wisdom, and effective teaching-learning activities within the context of TEFLIN.

Once the search results are generated, the next step is to apply specific selection criteria to filter the articles. These criteria ensure that only articles meeting the standards of methodological rigor and relevance to the study's focus are included. The selected articles are then subjected to further analysis, where their content is reviewed in detail to extract valuable insights and data related to the research questions. The use of a well-defined search query and a systematic approach to data collection ensures that the study is grounded in robust and relevant literature. This methodological rigor enhances the reliability and validity of the research findings, providing a solid foundation for the investigation into the integration of character development within TEFLIN. Through this systematic and comprehensive approach, the study aims to contribute meaningful and evidence-based recommendations for enhancing English language education in Indonesia.

### **Data Analysis**

Selected articles undergo a thorough assessment process to identify their focal points, methodologies, and key findings related to character development, learning materials, and teaching-learning activities within the TEFLIN context. This meticulous examination ensures that the selected literature is relevant and contributes valuable insights to the research objectives. The assessment involves evaluating each article's research questions, the methods employed, and the results obtained. This step is crucial in determining how each study contributes to the understanding of character development in TEFLIN. A critical analysis of the literature follows the initial assessment. This analysis aims to consolidate and synthesize the insights gained from the selected articles, forming a coherent framework that educators can use. By examining the methodologies and findings across different studies, the review identifies common themes, strengths, and gaps in the current research. This process not only highlights effective strategies and practices but also points out areas where further investigation is needed. The critical analysis thus serves as a bridge between existing knowledge and practical

application, facilitating a deeper understanding of how character development can be integrated into TEFLIN.

This review endeavors to address the gap in understanding the pedagogical approach necessary to effectively leverage learning materials and teaching-learning activities in TEFLIN to nurture character traits. By critically analyzing the current body of literature, the study seeks to provide a clear and structured approach to integrating character development into English language teaching. The findings from the literature are synthesized to create a practical framework that educators can apply in their classrooms. This framework includes recommendations on selecting and using learning materials, designing teaching-learning activities, and incorporating local wisdom and cultural values. The synthesized findings and proposed framework aim to provide educators with practical insights and recommendations to enhance learners' character development in the TEFLIN context. By offering a comprehensive and evidence-based approach, the study helps educators understand how to effectively integrate character-building elements into their teaching practices. This not only enhances the overall educational experience for learners but also contributes to their personal and social development. The study thus serves as a valuable resource for educators seeking to foster a holistic learning environment that promotes both language proficiency and character growth.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *Character Building in Language Education*

Character building, as a foundational concept, encompasses the deliberate cultivation of positive traits, attitudes, and behaviors that contribute to personal development and ethical decision-making (Chowdhury, 2016; Sharma et al., 2019). In the context of language education, character building extends beyond linguistic competence to encompass the development of moral values and social skills essential for effective communication and intercultural understanding. Moral values, often rooted in cultural norms and ethical principles, guide individuals' actions and interactions within society, shaping their character and worldview (Mu'man et al., 2018; Thomas, 2023). Local wisdom refers to indigenous knowledge, traditions, and cultural practices that are passed down through generations within a specific community or culture (Anau et al., 2019; Darmadi, 2018; Effendi et al., 2020; Parameswara & Wulandari, 2020). Integrating local wisdom into language instruction provides learners with insights into cultural perspectives and values, fostering a deeper appreciation for cultural diversity and promoting character development (Cahya & Syafrizal, 2022; Hollins, 2015; Yetti, 2024).

Theoretical perspectives relevant to language acquisition, cultural pedagogy, and character education offer valuable insights into the interconnected nature of language, culture, and character development. Social cognitive theory posits that learning occurs through observation, imitation, and modeling of behaviors, emphasizing the role of social interactions and cultural contexts in shaping individuals' beliefs and behaviors (Bandura, 2023; Rosenthal & Zimmerman, 2014). Within the realm of cultural pedagogy, constructivist theories highlight the importance of learner-centered approaches that scaffold students' understanding of cultural concepts and encourage critical reflection on cultural norms and values (Masouleh & Jooneghani, 2012; Shah & Campus, 2021). Similarly, transformative learning theory emphasizes the role of critical reflection and dialogue in challenging learners' assumptions and fostering personal growth and social change (Cranton, 2016; Kreber, 2012). These theoretical frameworks underscore the importance of integrating cultural content and character-building components into language instruction to promote holistic development and intercultural competence among learners.

A historical examination of language teaching methodologies reveals a progression from grammar-translation methods to communicative approaches, with an increasing emphasis

on integrating culture and character development into language instruction. Traditional grammar-translation methods, prevalent in the 19th and early 20th centuries, prioritized rote memorization of grammar rules and translation of texts, often neglecting cultural and communicative aspects of language learning (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). However, with the emergence of the communicative approach in the mid-20th century, language teaching paradigms began to shift towards more interactive and contextually meaningful instruction, laying the groundwork for integrating culture and character development into language education (Campbell & Schwier, 2014; Mitchell et al., 2019).

Seminal works and theoretical frameworks have played a pivotal role in shaping the integration of cultural content into language instruction. In the field of language education, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) stands as a seminal document that advocates for the integration of cultural competence into language learning objectives (Garrett-Rucks, 2016). The CEFR framework emphasizes the importance of understanding cultural contexts and norms in language use, thereby fostering intercultural communicative competence among learners (Cores-Bilbao, 2020).

Furthermore, the emergence of theories such as cultural competence theory and intercultural communicative competence theory has provided theoretical foundations for integrating cultural content into language instruction (Adamson et al., 2016; Borghetti, 2012). These theories underscore the interconnected nature of language, culture, and identity, emphasizing the need for language learners to develop cultural awareness and sensitivity to effectively communicate across cultural boundaries (Setyowati, 2013). Drawing on these theoretical frameworks, language educators have increasingly recognized the importance of integrating cultural content and character development into language instruction to foster learners' holistic development and intercultural competence (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013).

A growing body of research has examined the role of language instruction in character development, particularly within the context of TEFLIN. Studies have underscored the potential of language education not only to foster linguistic competence but also to promote the cultivation of positive character traits and moral values among learners (Derakhshan et al., 2023; Kohonen, 2014). Within the TEFLIN framework, where students navigate the complexities of acquiring English as a foreign language within their cultural context, language instruction caters a unique platform for nurturing character development. Research has shown that language learning activities, such as collaborative tasks, role-plays, and discussions, can serve as vehicles for promoting empathy, cooperation, and ethical awareness among learners (Buu & Thi, 2017; Mercer, 2016; Tipmontree & Tasanameelarp, 2018).

Theoretical models and frameworks offer valuable insights into the integration of moral values and character education into language teaching practices. Social cognitive theory, for instance, emphasizes the role of observational learning and social modeling in shaping individuals' behaviors and attitudes (Bandura, 2009). Within the context of language education, this theory suggests that educators can model positive character traits and moral values through their teaching practices, thereby influencing learners' behavior and attitudes towards others (Dewaele & Li, 2021; Rissanen et al., 2018). Additionally, theories such as moral development theory and moral reasoning theory provide conceptual frameworks for understanding the process of moral development and the factors that contribute to individuals' ethical decision-making (Garrigan et al., 2018). By integrating moral values and ethical considerations into language teaching materials and activities, educators can create opportunities for learners to reflect on ethical dilemmas, engage in moral reasoning, and develop a sense of social responsibility (Cook-Sather & Baker-Doyle, 2017).

Furthermore, the integration of character education into language teaching practices aligns with broader educational paradigms that emphasize the holistic development of learners. Constructivist approaches to education, for example, highlight the importance of creating

learner-centered environments that foster critical thinking, problem-solving, and social-emotional learning (Jacobs & Renandya, 2019; Vanada et al., 2016). By incorporating character-building components into language instruction, educators can address learners' cognitive, affective, and social needs, thereby promoting their overall well-being and development.

The findings from various studies on character building in language education cater valuable insights into integrating moral values, character education, and language instruction. These findings underscore the significance of character development in the educational context and highlight the multifaceted approaches employed by educators to instil positive values in learners. Several studies emphasize the role of literature, storytelling, and multimedia resources in facilitating character development and promoting moral values among learners (Avalokitesvari, 2019; Hutapea & Suwastini, 2019; Mu'in, n.d.; Simarmata, 2023; Wahyuni & Wahyuni, 2023). Literature is a powerful tool for engaging students and fostering personal involvement in learning, while storytelling and short films effectively convey ethical lessons and promote emotional intelligence (Isro'iyah & Herminingsih, 2023; Simarmata, 2023). These findings suggest that integrating moral values into language instruction enhances students' understanding of social and ethical issues, contributing to their character development (Mu'man et al., 2018).

Innovative pedagogical approaches, such as the 3P method, jigsaw activities, and academic literacy, have been identified as effective strategies for instilling moral values and character education in language classrooms (Baidawi et al., 2021; Ismail et al., 2023; Mas'ud, 2021; Simarmata, 2023). These approaches provide opportunities for collaborative learning, critical thinking, and reflection, enabling students to internalize positive values and apply them in real-life situations. Furthermore, integrating character education into the curriculum and teaching practices demonstrates a commitment to nurturing ethical and responsible individuals who contribute positively to society.

The role of teacher leadership and curriculum integration emerges as significant factors in shaping students' character development (Eliawati & Harahap, 2018). Teachers play a pivotal role in modelling positive behaviour, creating a supportive learning environment, and integrating character-building activities into their lessons (Eliawati & Harahap, 2018; Rahmi & Erlinda, 2014). Additionally, curriculum documents and school policies prioritizing character education underscore the importance of instilling moral values across all aspects of the education process. These findings highlight the need for teacher training and curriculum development initiatives that promote character education and ethical leadership in educational settings.

In conclusion, character building in language education represents a promising avenue for promoting holistic development and ethical citizenship among learners. By integrating moral values and character education into language teaching practices, educators can create meaningful learning experiences that not only enhance linguistic competence but also cultivate positive character traits and ethical awareness among learners.

### ***Integration of Local Wisdom and Linguistic Features in ELT***

The relationship between language and culture in language acquisition has been a focal point of scholarly inquiry in the field of language education. Numerous studies have highlighted the symbiotic nature of language and culture, emphasizing the integral role of cultural context in shaping language learning processes (Garrett-Rucks, 2016; Hossain, 2024; Isro'iyah & Herminingsih, 2023; Kecskes, 2015). Language is not merely a system of grammatical rules and vocabulary but is deeply intertwined with cultural meanings, norms, and practices (Bonvillain, 2019). As such, understanding and integrating cultural content into language

instruction is essential for facilitating meaningful language acquisition and promoting intercultural competence among learners.

Cultural factors exert a significant influence on language learning outcomes and student engagement in language classrooms. Research has demonstrated that learners' cultural backgrounds, identities, and experiences play a crucial role in shaping their language learning experiences (Gao, 2021; Norton & Toohey, 2011). Learners' attitudes towards the target language and culture, as well as their perceptions of cultural relevance in language instruction, can profoundly impact their motivation and engagement in learning (Kormos et al., 2014; Lamb, 2017). Furthermore, cultural differences in communication styles, social norms, and pragmatic conventions can pose challenges for learners navigating cross-cultural interactions in language learning contexts (Ishihara, 2019; Liu & Kinginger, 2021; Taguchi, 2015).

Moreover, the incorporation of culturally authentic materials and tasks into language instruction has been shown to enhance learners' motivation, engagement, and language skills (Ahmed, 2017; Darwish, 2014; Kukulska-Hulme & Viberg, 2018). Providing opportunities for learners to interact with authentic cultural texts, engage in real-world communicative tasks, and explore cultural perspectives fosters a deeper understanding of the target language and promotes cultural competence (Garrett-Rucks, 2016; Tafazoli et al., 2018). Additionally, creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment that validates learners' cultural identities and perspectives is crucial for promoting positive language learning outcomes and fostering intercultural understanding.

In conclusion, cultural considerations play a vital role in language teaching and learning, influencing learners' experiences, attitudes, and outcomes. By recognizing the interplay between language and culture and incorporating cultural content into language instruction, educators can create more meaningful and engaging learning experiences that promote linguistic competence, cultural competence, and intercultural communication skills among learners.

Integrating local wisdom and linguistic features in English Language Teaching (ELT) represents a complex endeavour encompassing cultural awareness, character development, and effective communication. Several key findings emerge through an analysis of pertinent studies, elucidating current practices, challenges, and opportunities in this field. A significant finding underscores the predominant focus in English language teaching on preparing students for effective communication, often overlooking the critical analysis of cultural biases within source materials (Jaya & Mortini, 2018). This emphasis may lead students to understand foreign cultures better than their own, potentially internalizing foreign cultural values.

In contrast, some researchers emphasize integrating local culture into English language teaching to achieve national education goals promoting character building (Cahya & Syafrizal, 2022; Mulyah, 2020; Septy, 2016). Institutional and governmental efforts to support this integration through specific curriculums signify a growing acknowledgment of the significance of cultural relevance and character development in education. Some study demonstrates the positive impact of integrating local cultural materials into English language teaching, indicating enhancements in writing skills, motivation, and positive changes in student behaviour and character (Cahya & Syafrizal, 2022; Effendi et al., 2020; Jaya & Mortini, 2018). This underscores the potential of culturally relevant materials to engage and empower learners in the ELT context.

Moreover, some research underscores the educational value of folklore in character building (Hermaniar, 2014; Tampubolon et al., 2021). For instance, the Batu Gantung folklore is a rich source of moral lessons and character education, imparting valuable insights into kindness, compassion, courage, and other positive values. Furthermore, some research emphasizes the importance of integrating character education into conventional education at various levels, including school, family, and social life (Jannah et al., 2021). This holistic

approach underscores the necessity for collaborative efforts to reinforce student character development across different environments.

Some study discusses the significance of developing communicative competence in sociocultural awareness and character development in ELT (Septy, 2016). This aligns with the National Curriculum 2013, which emphasizes the integration of character development into English language teaching to nurture well-rounded individuals capable of navigating diverse sociocultural contexts. Finally, Zagoto's study (2021) introduces the concept of "Amaedola" as a pedagogical tool for integrating responsibility, fairness, and caring into EFL classroom activities (Zagoto et al., 2021). This innovative approach offers practical strategies for educators to foster student character development through language learning.

In summary, the findings from these studies underscore the importance of integrating local wisdom and linguistic features into ELT to promote character development and cultural understanding among learners. Moving forward, future research should continue to explore innovative pedagogical approaches, address challenges in implementation, and strive to create inclusive and culturally responsive learning environments in the ELT context.

### ***Pedagogical Strategies for Character Building***

A review of the literature reveals various effective pedagogical strategies for integrating character-building activities into language teaching, emphasizing the role of educators in fostering moral values and character traits among learners. One such strategy is the use of experiential learning approaches, such as role-plays, simulations, and real-life scenarios, which provide learners with opportunities to apply moral values and ethical principles in authentic contexts (Buu & Thi, 2017; Latifah et al., 2020; Siswa et al., 2014; Tipmontree & Tasaameelarp, 2018). By engaging in experiential learning activities, learners not only develop language skills but also gain insights into moral dilemmas and ethical decision-making, thereby fostering the development of character traits such as empathy, integrity, and social responsibility (Elias et al., 2014; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016).

Furthermore, collaborative learning methodologies, such as cooperative group work, peer tutoring, and collaborative projects, offer opportunities for learners to engage in meaningful interactions and collaborative problem-solving, thereby promoting the development of interpersonal skills and positive social behaviors (DiDonato, 2013; Jacobs & Renandya, 2019). Through collaborative learning activities, educators can create a supportive and inclusive learning environment where learners can practice cooperation, communication, and conflict resolution skills, fostering the development of character traits such as teamwork, respect, and tolerance (Ilyas, 2020; M et al., 2012; Qureshi et al., 2023). Additionally, the integration of reflective practices, such as journal writing, self-assessment, and group discussions, can enhance learners' metacognitive awareness and critical thinking skills, facilitating the development of moral reasoning and ethical reflection (Mambu, 2015; Qoyyimah, 2015; Tania et al., 2018). By encouraging learners to reflect on their values, beliefs, and experiences, educators can promote introspection and self-awareness, fostering the development of character traits such as self-discipline, resilience, and ethical integrity.

Moreover, the role of educators in fostering moral values and character traits through teaching-learning activities extends beyond instructional delivery to encompass modeling positive behaviors, providing feedback, and creating a supportive and respectful learning environment (Eliawati & Harahap, 2018; Rahmi & Erlinda, 2014). Educators serve as moral exemplars and role models for learners, demonstrating ethical conduct, empathy, and integrity in their interactions with students and colleagues (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2018; Brown & Lee, 2015). By modeling positive character traits and providing explicit instruction on moral values, educators can cultivate a culture of ethical awareness and responsibility in the classroom, thereby promoting the holistic development of learners (Soleimani, 2020).

Pedagogical strategies for character building in English language teaching (ELT) are pivotal in fostering holistic development and ethical citizenship among learners. Through examining pertinent studies, several key findings emerge, shedding light on the efficacy of diverse instructional approaches and materials in promoting character education. Some study emphasizes identifying learning needs and appropriate character-building strategies among senior high school students (Astrid, 2012; Avalokitesvari, 2019). The development of character-based English materials, spanning speaking, reading, listening, and writing skills, epitomizes a student-centred approach that caters to the varied needs of learners (Cocchetta, 2018; Hasanah, 2016; Pratiwi & Latief, 2015; Septy, 2019).

Transitioning to instructional methodologies, some researcher advocates for debate as a potent method to enhance speaking skills among English language learners, particularly at intermediate and advanced levels (Septy, 2016, 2019). This interactive approach bolsters language skills and nurtures critical thinking and communication skills vital for character development. Incorporating multimedia resources, such as short films, some researchers demonstrate the potential of using media to impart character education values (Hutapea & Suwastini, 2019). The film "Piper" is a compelling tool to convey essential life lessons, including parenting, self-support, and friendship, underlining the importance of character education from parental and child perspectives.

Hasanah's study (2016) underscores the importance of needs analysis in developing English instructional materials aligned with character-building objectives (Hasanah, 2016). By engaging students in the research process and employing the Scientific Approach, the study yielded practical and relevant textbooks that complement existing government curricula, showcasing the applicability of research findings in educational contexts. Suryantari (2022) scrutinizes the implementation of character dimensions in English textbooks, revealing variances in integrating Pancasila Student Characteristics (Suryantari, 2022). While existing materials partially address character-building aspects, there remains scope for further enhancement to fully incorporate character education into ELT materials.

Several studies underscore the integration of character education into teaching practices in Indonesian educational settings, each highlighting its significance in fostering students' environmental awareness, moral values, and academic performance. Setyowati (2013) emphasizes the importance of integrating character-building into teaching to enhance students' environmental awareness, asserting that character education positively influences academic success (Setyowati, 2013). Mu'alimah et al. (2020) delve into implementing character education in an Indonesian EFL classroom, showcasing the incorporation of self-potential and religious value-based character education methods (Mu'alimah et al., 2020). Furthermore, Martina et al. (2021) focus on implementing character education in senior high school setting, illustrating the school's efforts to overcome obstacles and integrate character education into the hidden curriculum (Martina et al., 2021). Additionally, Retnowati (2020) discusses the significant improvement in students' attitudes, knowledge, and skills resulting from integrating character building into the teaching and learning process, highlighting the success of habit formation, character-material connections, and reflection on character performance (Retnowati, 2020). These studies underscore the crucial role of character education in enhancing students' holistic development and academic success within the Indonesian educational context.

Addressing specific instructional requisites, some researchers identify a gap in speaking materials that overlooks character-building components stipulated in the curriculum (Mu'man et al., 2018). Through a systematic development process, the study introduces "Let's Speak Out Loud," a tailored speaking module designed to foster student interaction and cultivate positive character traits (Pratiwi & Latief, 2015). Finally, Amrina and Anom (2019) underscores the role of cultural integration in shaping students' character development in ELT. The favourable reception of English materials developed for management classes underlines the potential for

culturally relevant content to engage learners and foster character development (Amrina & Anom, 2019).

In conclusion, effective pedagogical strategies for integrating character-building activities into language teaching involve experiential learning approaches, collaborative methodologies, reflective practices, and the positive role modeling of educators. By fostering moral values and character traits through teaching-learning activities, educators can create enriching learning experiences that promote both linguistic competence and the development of ethical citizenship among learners (Ilyas, 2020). Educators should continue exploring innovative approaches, conducting needs analyses, and developing culturally relevant materials to nurture character development among English language learners effectively.

### ***Challenges and Considerations***

Despite the progress made in character education within language education, several challenges and areas for future research are identified. These include addressing curriculum gaps, overcoming resource constraints, and fostering collaboration between parents, educators, and policymakers (Ilyas, 2020; Rahmi & Erlinda, 2014). Future research should focus on identifying effective assessment strategies, exploring the role of parents and society in character development, and evaluating the long-term impact of character education initiatives (Retnowati, 2020). By addressing these challenges and building on existing knowledge, educators can create inclusive and culturally responsive learning environments that promote holistic development and ethical citizenship among learners.

Integrating character-building components into language instruction poses several challenges and considerations for educators and policymakers alike (Arthur et al., 2016; Gustian et al., 2024; Mambu, 2015). One significant challenge is the need to address diverse cultural perspectives and values within multicultural and multilingual learning environments (Krajewski, 2011; Lie, 2017). Cultural diversity can present complexities in determining which character traits and moral values to prioritize in language instruction, as well as how to navigate potential conflicts between different cultural norms and ethical frameworks (Christmas et al., 2020; Wallach et al., 2020). Moreover, the integration of character-building activities requires careful consideration of age-appropriate pedagogical approaches and developmental stages, as learners' cognitive and socio-emotional needs may vary across different age groups.

Furthermore, the assessment and evaluation of character development in language instruction present methodological challenges, as character traits such as empathy, integrity, and resilience are inherently complex and difficult to measure quantitatively (Arthur et al., 2016; Lovat & Dally, 2018; Qoyyimah, 2015). Traditional assessment methods, such as standardized tests and written exams, may not capture the full range of character-building outcomes and may overlook learners' socio-emotional growth and ethical reasoning skills (Tania et al., 2018). Therefore, educators and policymakers need to explore alternative assessment strategies, such as portfolio assessments, performance-based tasks, and self-reflection activities, that allow for a more holistic and authentic assessment of character development in language instruction (Kiray & Tomevska-Ilievska, 2021; Nkalane, 2018; Yong, 2018).

In addressing these challenges, teacher training programs play a crucial role in preparing educators to effectively integrate character-building components into language instruction. Teacher training programs need to cater educators with the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to design and implement character-building activities that align with educational objectives and promote learners' holistic development. Professional development opportunities, such as workshops, seminars, and peer collaboration networks, can support educators in enhancing their pedagogical practices and fostering a culture of ethical awareness and responsibility in the classroom (Mu'man et al., 2018).

Moreover, curriculum development efforts need to prioritize the integration of character education across all levels of language instruction, from early childhood education to adult learning programs (Mu'man et al., 2018). Curriculum developers need to collaborate with educators, policymakers, and community stakeholders to identify culturally relevant themes and topics that resonate with learners' lived experiences and promote character development. Additionally, educational policymakers play a critical role in advocating for the inclusion of character-building components in language education policies and standards, as well as allocating resources and support for implementation efforts.

In conclusion, integrating character-building components into language instruction presents challenges and considerations related to cultural diversity, assessment, teacher training, curriculum development, and educational policy. By addressing these challenges and collaborating with stakeholders, educators and policymakers can create inclusive and culturally responsive learning environments that foster the holistic development of learners' character traits and moral values.

## CONCLUSION

This literature review paper has revealed significant insights into integrating character-building components into English language teaching within the TEFLIN context. Firstly, it underscores the inherent link between character development and language acquisition, with language instruction as a conduit for instilling moral values, social skills, and ethical awareness among learners. Secondly, it highlights promising pedagogical strategies such as experiential learning, collaborative methodologies, and reflective practices to effectively incorporate character-building activities into language instruction, fostering holistic learner development. Moreover, the review underscores the imperative of cultural considerations in language teaching, emphasizing the integration of 'local wisdom'-the traditional knowledge and values of a community-and cultural content to facilitate character development and promote intercultural understanding among learners.

Despite the significant strides made, notable gaps in research persist, demanding immediate attention and further investigation. The urgency of this need cannot be overstated. Future research should concentrate on developing comprehensive assessment tools and methodologies for evaluating character development outcomes in language instruction. Longitudinal studies are crucial to examine the enduring effects of character-building interventions on learners' attitudes, behaviours, and language proficiency. Additionally, research should delve into the intersectionality of language, culture, and character development across diverse linguistic and cultural contexts within the TEFLIN framework, underscoring the urgency and necessity of their involvement.

In response to these findings, practical recommendations can be proposed for educators and policymakers. Educators should prioritize integrating character-building components into language instruction through experiential learning, collaborative methodologies, and reflective practices. Teacher training programs must equip educators with the necessary knowledge, skills, and resources, such as teaching materials and professional development opportunities, to integrate character education effectively. Curriculum developers should collaborate with stakeholders to develop culturally responsive curricula incorporating local wisdom and cultural content. Policymakers should advocate for including character-building components in language education policies and standards, allocating resources such as funding for curriculum development and teacher training, and support for implementation efforts. In conclusion, the journey to enhance character building in English language teaching within the TEFLIN context is a collaborative one. By collectively addressing identified research gaps and implementing practical recommendations, educators and policymakers can create inclusive and transformative learning environments. This collaborative and holistic approach empowers

learners to cultivate positive character traits, ethical values, and intercultural competence. It is a journey we are all part of, and your contributions are invaluable in shaping the future of language education.

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