

INTEGRATING THOMAS LICKONA'S IDEAS IN ARABIC LANGUAGE TEACHING AND MODERATE CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT AMONG STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Moderasi beragama penting dimiliki oleh masyarakat Indonesia yang heterogen sebagaimana tujuan pendidikan nasional. Moderasi beragama adalah inti dari ajaran Islam. sebab, moderasi beragama sangat merepresentasikan kedudukan agama Islam sebagai rahmat bagi seluruh alam, paham ini sangatlah relevan dengan segala konteks keberagaman masa kini. Namun ada beragam pertanyaan tentang penanaman moderasi beragama. Mayoritas pertanyaan itu tentang efektivitas penerapannya di dalam kelas karena kurangnya bukti praktis yang bisa menghubungkan antara praktek nilai-nilai moderasi beragama dengan pengembangan di bidang akademik, interaksi sosial, dan perbaikan kognitif. Sedangkan penanamannya mesti dilakukan melalui pendidikan di lingkungan sekolah. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memberikan gambaran terkait bagaimana nilai-nilai moderasi beragama diajarkan pada pelajaran bahasa Arab. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode library research dengan analisis deskriptif menggunakan komponen karakter baik dari Lickona. Integrasi nilai-nilai moderasi beragama pada pengajaran Bahasa Arab difokuskan kepada pembangunan pemahaman siswa pada karakter Pemahaman Moral (Moral Knowing) dengan menggunakan contoh atau diskusi yang mencakup dua komponen berikutnya yaitu Moral Feeling dan Moral Action. Praktik dari Moral Knowing dalam pembelajaran bahasa Arab bisa dilakukan dengan: 1) Menggunakan kearifan lokal dalam proses belajar mengajar; 2) Membuat proyek berbasis budaya dalam Bahasa Arab; 3) Menyelipkan peribahasa atau mahfuzhat dalam pembelajaran; 4) Memanfaatkan lagu atau musik tradisional dalam pembelajaran bahasa Arab; 5) Diskusi Perbandingan Nilai Sosial dan Agama antara Budaya Lokal dan Arab.

Keywords: Konsep Thomas Lickona, Nilai Moderasi Beragama, Pengajaran Bahasa Arab

INTRODUCTION

To create a stronger generation for Indonesia, everyone must focus on three essential character components: moral knowing (understanding moral principles), moral feeling (having a sense of morality), and moral action (engaging in moral behavior). These components are interconnected, as building good character involves understanding what is right, having the desire to do what is right, and acting upon it. (Lickona, 1992) Character is expected to manifest in habits of thinking, patterns of behavior, and actions. This means that character is not just a theoretical understanding but should be something ingrained in an individual, influencing how they process information, respond to situations, and make decisions. When a person has a strong character, their way of thinking will always be based on the values they uphold, such as honesty, fairness, and respect. These

habits then evolve into real actions that reflect those values, whether in everyday interactions or when facing greater challenges. Therefore, character should be embedded not only in the mind but also in the heart and actions, creating harmony between what a person believes and how they act in life.

The problem of religious moderation in schools is an important issue that needs attention, considering the role of schools as places of education and character shaping for students. Many students show an intolerant attitude towards classmates of different religions. Cases of intolerance, such as banning the use of the hijab or discrimination against students from religious minorities, have been reported in various schools in Indonesia. Data from the Federation of Indonesian Teachers' Unions (FSGI) records a number of incidents of intolerance in educational units between 2014 and 2022, including the imposition of certain religious symbols and discrimination in leadership opportunities.(Astungkoro, 2023)

Meanwhile, in the madrasah environment there are still many problems related to religious moderation. Many students and even teachers at madrasas do not fully understand the concept of religious moderation. A narrow understanding of religious teachings often leads to extreme and intolerant attitudes. Research shows that religious moderation education needs to be further improved to provide better understanding to students.(Alim & Munib, 2021; Chusniyatin et al., 2024)

Curricula in madrasas often do not cover in depth the values of religious moderation. Despite efforts by the Ministry of Religion to include religious moderation in the curriculum, implementation is still not optimal. The development of a more comprehensive and integrated curriculum with moderate values is very necessary.(Alim & Munib, 2021; AM, 2021)

Teachers at madrasas have a key role in instilling the values of religious moderation. However, not all teachers have sufficient understanding and skills to teach this concept effectively. Training and professional development for teachers is essential to improve their ability to teach religious moderation.(Alim & Munib, 2021; Chusniyatin et al., 2024)

Lickona argues that character education is vital for developing competent citizens who can navigate ethical dilemmas and contribute positively to society. He believes that effective character education not only enhances individual behavior but also strengthens the overall community within schools.(Lickona, 1992)

One of the efforts that must be made to answer this problem is that students must often be exposed to the values of religious moderation in lessons and activities at school. So teachers need to develop skills in incorporating religious moderation into lessons, including Arabic language lessons.

Several studies have shown the good impact of integrating the value of religious moderation and foreign language teaching. The students have received training to better understand cultural values and norms. They are able to generate ideas and apply them in their daily lives. The training materials have helped them develop character-building values while also

improving their English-speaking skills.(Elbes & Oktaviani, 2022) Implementing the values of religious moderation increases student motivation and participation, and creates a more inclusive learning environment. This research also emphasizes the important role of teachers in instilling these values.(Umaemah, 2022) There is also research exploring the ways English teachers promote the five values of Islamic moderation: tolerance, openness, balance, reason that leaves room for differences of opinion, and moderate reason.(Sofi & Hikmah, 2022) Another results of the research show that applying the principles of religious moderation in learning can encourage students to respect each other's differences of opinion and think critically, thereby reducing the potential for radicalization.(Pelu & Nur, 2022)

Teaching character education to students involves more than just incorporating character development into lesson plans; it also requires providing positive examples both in the classroom and in everyday life.(Hidayati et al., 2020) Religious moderation values are imparted not solely through formal teaching and learning activities in the classroom but are also reinforced through examples demonstrated in everyday life. This means that lessons on tolerance, respect, and balanced views are made more impactful when they are consistently modeled by teachers, parents, and community members. By witnessing these values in practice, students can better understand and internalize the principles of moderation, making them part of their daily behaviors and interactions with others.

Addressing the existing challenges and the urgent need to effectively communicate the values of religious moderation to students, this article seeks to provide alternative resources for educators. It emphasizes the importance of integrating these values into the Arabic language curriculum, allowing teachers to foster a deeper understanding of moderation among their students. By offering practical strategies and examples, the article aims to assist teachers in not only enhancing language skills but also promoting a culture of tolerance and respect within the classroom. Ultimately, the goal is to equip educators with the tools they need to nurture students who embody the principles of religious moderation in their everyday lives.

METHOD

This research uses a library research approach, in other words, research that attempts to describe and interpret phenomena theoretically based on literature studies. The aim is to study various references and research results that are related to teaching Arabic and the components of religious moderation for students. Access to data and references used come from journal articles on a national and international scale. Then the data or references are analyzed using content analysis which aims to obtain sources or references that are valid and can be researched based on their context.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Components of Building Good Character

Thomas Lickona is a prominent figure in the field of character education, advocating for a comprehensive approach that integrates moral development into the educational system. His ideas emphasize the importance of not only knowing what is right but also feeling a commitment to those values and acting upon them. (Arif et al., 2023; Dalmeri, 2014) Core concepts of Lickona's character education is built around three fundamental components:

1. Moral Knowing

Lickona defines moral knowing as the capacity to understand, consider, and decide what to do and what must be abandoned. When facing moral difficulties in life, we can use variety of moral knowing. The purposes of moral knowing are moral awareness, knowing moral values, taking perspective, moral reasoning, making decisions, and self understanding. (Suroso & Husin, 2024)

Moral awareness is the capacity to use intelligence and reason to recognize when a phenomenon occurs, which requires weighing the pros and cons of morality and applying reason to take appropriate action. Moral blindness, a condition in which individuals fail to see that their circumstances are morally problematic and undoubtedly require further analysis, is a common cause of moral failure in people of all ages. Children and adolescents are particularly susceptible to this type of failure in these situations; they act without first considering "Is this justified and permissible?" (Lickona, 1992). Lickona's insights into moral blindness reveal its far-reaching negative effects on individuals and society as a whole. By failing to recognize and engage with moral issues, individuals risk perpetuating unethical behavior, diminishing empathy, and contributing to social injustices. Lickona advocates for robust character education as a means to combat these issues by fostering moral awareness and ethical engagement among students and communities.

Knowing moral values also includes things like respect for life, responsibility, honesty, fairness, tolerance, courtesy, self-discipline, integrity, compassion, generosity, and courage are important factors in forming a good character. (Dalmeri, 2014) Knowing moral values means knowing how to apply them in various situations. What does it mean to be 'responsible' when you see someone damaging school property?

Perspective-taking is the ability to take the viewpoint of others, see the situation as it is, imagine how they think, react, and feel about the problem. It is a prerequisite for moral judgment and character.

Moral reasoning involves understanding what is meant by morals and why it has to be a moral aspect. Why is it important for us to keep our promises? To share what I have with others?

Making decisions is being able to think about how one acts through moral issues in this way is a reflective decision-making skill. The capacity to consider potential actions to be taken by a person facing a moral problem or moral puzzle is known as the quality of "decisiveness."

Self understanding is the most challenging moral knowing to practice, self-awareness is essential to character development. To develop into a moral person, one must have the capacity to reflect on and critically evaluate one's own behavior. Among the common weaknesses that people often have is the tendency to do what they want and then seek justification based on the available facts.

Of the six areas of moral knowledge mentioned above, all are qualities of mind that shape moral knowing and contribute equally to the cognitive aspect of character.

2. Moral Feelings

The degree to which we prioritize honesty, fairness, and propriety in our interactions with others significantly affects the extent to which our moral understanding translates into moral actions. This consideration underscores the importance of emotional dimensions in moral education, as fostering a strong sense of ethical responsibility is crucial for developing good character. The components of moral feelings are : conscience, self-esteem, empathy, loving goodness, self-control, and humility.

The cognitive aspect helps individuals discern what is morally correct, while the emotional aspect instills a sense of duty to act accordingly. Although many people understand what is right, they may lack the emotional drive to act on this understanding.

Some individuals have poorly developed consciences, leading them to feel little responsibility to avoid actions they believe are wrong. For those who maintain a strong sense of conscience, however, morality is essential. They are committed to living by their moral principles, which are an integral part of their identity. Such individuals refrain from lying or engaging in unethical behavior, as acting against their values would make them feel disconnected from their true character.

When a person has healthy self-esteem, they tend to appreciate their own worth. This appreciation leads to self-respect, making them less likely to harm themselves physically or mentally or allow others to do so. However, it's important to recognize that high self-esteem alone doesn't ensure good character. Often, high self-esteem stems from unrelated factors like wealth, physical appearance, popularity, or power. Values tied to self-esteem, such as responsibility, honesty, and moral integrity, can be instilled in children both at home and at school.(Susanti, 2022)

Empathy is the capacity to understand and share in the experiences of others. This trait begins to appear early in life, even in toddlers as young as one or two years old. The rising instances of juvenile delinquency suggest a deficiency of empathy in today's youth. Therefore, it is essential for parents and educators to actively nurture and develop empathy in young children.

A key trait of the highest level of character is a genuine commitment to goodness. When a person truly values goodness, they find joy in doing good deeds. This love for goodness creates a natural motivation, going beyond mere obligation.

Self-control is the capacity to manage, direct, and shape one's actions to achieve beneficial results. Put simply, it is a form of emotional regulation within the human mind.

When encountering different situations and conflicts, people may struggle to maintain self-control. Individuals vary in their approaches to these challenges: some respond calmly and with patience, keeping a clear mind, while others react emotionally, expressing all their feelings, which can escalate conflicts and create additional complications. This is why self-control is essential in one's life. Meanwhile, humility, often an overlooked moral virtue, plays a vital role in good character, as it is a key element of self-awareness. (Kurniawan & Fitriyani, 2023)

3. Moral Actions

The result of the other two components of character is moral action. People who have the intellectual and emotional moral traits we have just described have a tendency to act in accordance with what they know is considered right. So it is necessary to look at several aspects that represent moral action: competence, desire, and habit.

Moral competence is the capacity to apply moral principles and ethical standards through constructive, effective actions. For instance, addressing a problem fairly requires practical skills such as active listening, respectful discussion of differing viewpoints, and finding mutually agreeable solutions. Competence is also essential in other moral scenarios; for example, to support someone dealing with a challenging issue, we need the ability to strategize thoughtfully and carry out those strategies effectively. Previous experience in assisting others can make handling similar situations more manageable. (Nur et al., 2023)

Humans possess the abilities to will, feel, and think. Will represents the responsibility to act independently, to strive and organize both for oneself and in relation to others. (Susanti, 2022) In essence, human will can be understood as an intentional effort—whether through thoughts, emotions, or actions.

Individuals with strong character consistently act with integrity, courage, respect, and fairness, avoiding contrary temptations. They often make positive choices effortlessly, as these actions have become second nature to them. (Arif et al., 2023)

Thomas Lickona's ideas on character education advocate for a holistic approach that encompasses knowledge, emotion, and action. His emphasis on core ethical principles and structured implementation strategies highlights the essential role of educators in shaping the moral character of students.

Thus, moral education should provide children with ample opportunities to cultivate good habits and practice virtuous behavior. Children should frequently engage in acts of kindness, honesty, politeness, and fairness. As a result, these positive habits will be ingrained and readily guide them, even in challenging situations.

Teaching Foreign Language with Religious Moderation Values

The goal of using an intercultural approach in foreign language learning is to help learners understand "unknown" aspects, such as foreign cultures and values. This understanding can only be achieved if learners also recognize and comprehend their own culture. Thus, having a solid grasp of one's own culture serves as a foundation for understanding foreign cultures through the language being studied. This process indirectly contributes to the formation of national identity. This aligns with the nine pillars of character, particularly the first pillar, which emphasizes love for God and all His creations, as the diverse cultures and natural richness that shape Indonesia's identity are also a reflection of God's influence. Additionally, in today's globalized world, Indonesian learners are likely to encounter new cultural environments, especially when studying or working abroad. It is essential that they maintain their identity as Indonesians and their love for their country. (Albantani & Madkur, 2016)

Secondly, learning a foreign language through an insightful intercultural approach aims to enhance the affective domain of learners by fostering empathy and tolerance toward the "unknown" or elements that originate outside their cultural circle. When empathy and tolerance are properly developed, they can significantly help learners become more accepting within society. Sociological evidence in Indonesia highlights the nation's rich multiculturalism, making the cultivation of empathy and tolerance essential for learners. This aligns with the ninth pillar of character, which emphasizes tolerance, peace, and unity, as well as the pillar of respect that encompasses values of tolerance and acceptance.

Thirdly, the goal of an insightful intercultural approach in foreign language learning is to dispel negative stereotypes about foreign cultures among learners. Unwarranted stereotypes can often lead to misunderstandings between individuals from different cultural backgrounds. Developing the ability to eliminate these negative stereotypes can be beneficial in daily life. As mentioned earlier, Indonesia is a highly multicultural society, so it is essential for everyone to be careful in their thoughts and actions when interacting with people from different cultural or religious backgrounds. We can recall that some of the riots in Indonesia were connected to the failure of certain groups to overcome negative perceptions of others outside their cultural circles. Such excessive prejudice is a contributing factor, as some individuals hold onto negative stereotypes about different religious or ethnic groups. One effective method to integrate character education into foreign language learning is through discussion techniques.

Challenges integrating Religious Moderation Values into Foreign Language

Religious Moderation Values can be integrated into foreign language instruction by: (1) aligning character values with lesson content, (2) incorporating character values into each learning activity, (3) conveying

these values through the chosen teaching methods, and (4) embedding and practicing character values in daily life.(Albantani & Madkur, 2016)

Teacher participants noted that the government doesn't pay enough attention to moral and character education. They highlighted several challenges: issues like racism and ethnocentrism, negative media influence, poor cooperation among teachers, parents, and community members, and the failure of teachers and students to take responsibility. They also pointed out that parents often don't supervise their children well after school, lack awareness and responsibility for their children's behavior, and sometimes blame teachers unfairly for kids' misbehavior. Additionally, there are conflicts, not enough good role models among teachers, carelessness from teachers, and weak relationships between teachers, children, and families, all of which make it difficult to develop good morals and character in children.(Birhan et al., 2021)

There are several challenges encountered in the integration of character education. First, it can be difficult to align character education values with the available materials, as not all resources incorporate these values. Consequently, teachers need to be creative in connecting character values to the materials they have. Second, learners often exhibit diverse characteristics, meaning that individuals within a group may have different personalities and competence levels. In such cases, teachers must effectively manage the classroom while ensuring that all students are attended to. This highlights the importance of teachers having a solid understanding of their competencies, particularly in pedagogical skills, and being able to apply them in practice.

The Nature of Arabic Language Teaching in Madrasas

Although in the KBK, KTSP, K-13, and Kumer it has been explicitly formulated that PBA intended to master Arabic language in all its aspects, but there are still many who assume that Arabic language is only for religious purposes. Even though Arabic language mastery not only to understand religion or to be considered an expert in the field of Islam, but also for broader aspects, such as political, economic and cultural interests. Every Arabic language teacher should be able to show students concrete examples that by mastering Arabic language, Indonesia and its citizens can play an active and contributive role in world political and economic events, as well as this nation's culture can be introduced to various other countries. In developing teaching system design, Khasairi (2013:60) states that teachers must pay attention to the characteristics of Arabic language as a communication tool as well as to study Islamic texts (including character education) taught in an integrated manner.(Nasution, 2016)

The formulation of the objectives of PBA in Madrasahs has been regulated in the Minister of Religion Regulation covering 3 competencies that must be mastered by students, namely Language Competence (al-kifāyah al-lugawīyyah), Communication Competence (al-kifāyah al-itṭiṣālīyyah) and Cultural Competence (al-kifāyah al-thaqāfiyyah).(Dirjen Pendidikan Islam, 2022)

1. Language Competence (al-kifāyah al-lugawīyah)
A basic competency in language which includes four language skills, namely listening skills, speaking skills, reading-viewing skills, and writing-presenting skills. These language skills must be implemented based on good and correct language elements including: sounds, vocabulary and language rules.
2. Communication Competence (al-kifāyah al-ittiṣāliyah)
Competence to perform speech acts with the target language in various social contexts orally and in writing. Arabic should be seen from the perspective of its functionality, namely as a means of communication. So this communication competence is an important thing that must be taught.
3. Cultural Competence (al-kifāyah al-thaqāfiyah)
Learning Arabic besides learning the language, it contains cultural messages from the language itself, the culture contained in this case is Arabic Islamic culture, general global culture, and specific local culture. This cultural content is reflected in the themes or topics raised in learning.

Language competence, communication competence, and cultural competence are three important achievements in language learning that can be the foundation for developing students' character. In the context of Arabic language learning, these competences do not only focus on linguistic abilities, but also on aspects of effective communication and understanding of relevant Arabic culture. These competences provide opportunities for students to understand and appreciate other cultures, so that they can encourage an open attitude, respect differences, and increase tolerance.

The integration of character education into Arabic language education allows students to not only be proficient in the language, but also develop morally and ethically. By studying Arabic, students are expected to be able to emulate the positive values contained in Islamic texts and cultures that prioritize respect, discipline, and responsibility. Through this approach, Arabic language learning can be a medium for forming the character of students who are not only academically competent, but also have integrity and strong social attitudes.

Integrating Religious Moderation values into Arabic Lesson

Based on Lickona's theory, the values of religious moderation can be integrated into learning, especially in the aspect called Moral Knowing. Moral Knowing refers to knowledge and understanding of the moral principles that are essential in social life, including mutual respect, tolerance and understanding of differences, which are at the core of religious moderation. By instilling these values, learning can be directed at providing students with insight into the values of religious moderation that they have implemented as a form of tradition that applies in the community where they live. This approach aims to enrich students' insight so that they also understand their own culture which is close to daily activities so that

students not only understand their own religion but also have openness and acceptance of the diversity of beliefs around them.

Teachers can implement the value of religious moderation in the midst of Arabic language lessons in the following ways:

1. Using local wisdom in the teaching and learning process

Teachers can relate the Arabic language material being studied to local wisdom such as customs, traditions, or cultural values that already exist in the local community. This can help students more easily relate what they are learning to their daily lives. For example, the value of mutual cooperation or congregation can be explained in Arabic with similar meanings such as *ta'awun* (cooperation) or *ukhuwah* (brotherhood), so that students can see the similarities in existing social values. By relating Arabic language learning to local wisdom, students will find it easier to understand abstract concepts in Arabic because they can compare them to cultural concepts that they are already familiar with..

2. Create a culture-based project in Arabic

Teachers can encourage students to create projects that link local traditions or customs to Arabic. These can be group projects or individual assignments that require exploring local culture and then writing or presenting them in Arabic. For example, students can create an Arabic presentation about traditional ceremonies such as *slametan* or the Prophet's birthday celebrations. Students can explain the activities they do to commemorate these events or describe what these activities are like in the community where they live. This activity allows students to better understand their own culture while improving their Arabic language skills. It also fosters a sense of pride in the local culture while strengthening Arabic language skills.

3. Insert proverbs or *mahfuzhat* into learning.

The teacher gives examples of *mahfudzat* and then relates them to Indonesian proverbs that have similar meanings. Then discusses concrete practices in society. The activity of translating local texts into Arabic helps students understand language concepts in a more structured way, and makes Arabic more relevant and close to their lives.

4. Using Traditional Songs or Music in Learning Arabic.

Teachers can use local traditional songs or music translated into Arabic as part of the lesson. Music and songs are an effective way to facilitate the understanding of vocabulary and grammar. Traditional songs such as *Gundul-Gundul Pacul* or *Ampar-Ampar Pisang* can be translated into Arabic and used as learning materials for new vocabulary so that teachers can teach Arabic vocabulary or idioms through traditional songs that have been adapted or combined with local songs. This approach creates a more enjoyable learning atmosphere and helps students remember vocabulary or

grammar more easily through association with familiar music or songs.

5. Comparative Discussion of Social and Religious Values between Local and Arab Cultures.

Teachers can encourage classroom discussions that compare local cultural values with those in Arabic culture. In this way, students can better understand the context of Arabic culture and how these values are applied in language. For example, teachers can compare the concept of zakat in Islam with the tradition of sedekah or gotong royong in Indonesian culture, and then discuss how these concepts are expressed in Arabic. Teachers can also engage students in discussions about religious activities such as fasting during Ramadan or celebrating major holidays, such as Eid al-Fitr in Indonesia and in Arab countries, and discuss the similarities and cultural differences that emerge in these celebrations. Discussions such as these can broaden students' perspectives on how cultural and religious values are applied in different communities, both in local and Arab cultures.

CONCLUSION

The integration of religious moderation values in Arabic language teaching is focused on building students' understanding of the character of Moral Knowing by using examples or discussions that include the following two components, namely Moral Feeling and Moral Action. The practice of Moral Knowing in Arabic language learning can be done by: 1) Using local wisdom in the teaching and learning process; 2) Creating cultural-based projects in Arabic; 3) Inserting proverbs or mahfuzhat in learning; 4) Utilizing Traditional Songs or Music in Arabic Language Learning; 5) Comparative Discussion of Social and Religious Values between Local and Arabic Cultures. Further research is recommended to be implemented into teaching materials at every level of Arabic language teaching, both in elementary schools, secondary schools, and higher education.

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