



## Thematic Learning Based on Local Culture in Implementing National Character Values in Inclusive Referral Elementary School

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**Abstract:** This research aims to develop thematic learning based on local culture as an effort to instill the values of national and state character in inclusive reference primary schools. The novelty of this research lies in the basis of local culture in instilling character values that are implemented in inclusive reference schools. The research method is research and development. The products produced through this research are thematic learning tools based on local wisdom consisting of syllabus, lesson plans, teaching materials, media and evaluation tools. Data collection techniques in this study used observation sheets, questionnaires and test questions. The data analysis technique used descriptive percentage, difference test (t-test) and improvement test (N-gain). The results of this study indicate the acquisition of a score of more than 4.3 with a maximum score of 5.0 which is in the high validity category. The average frequency of achieving character values in thematic learning based on local culture is in the high category. Where all aspects of character values appear and are carried out by more than 80% of students in the class. Meanwhile, in the t-test of post-test results, the value of  $t_{count} = 5.782 > t_{table} = 1.998$  and  $(p)_{count} = 0 < 0.05$ , which means that there is a significant difference in the value of learning achievement between the experimental group using the product developed and the control group. The results of the N gain test showed that the control group had an increase in the medium criteria and the experimental group had an increase in the high criteria so that it was concluded that the thematic learning tools based on local culture had a good level of effectiveness.

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## Introduction

Advances and developments in technology have brought various impacts on the joints of Indonesian people's lives. The ease of carrying out various activities today makes people increasingly dependent on technology. Various activities that can be carried out without having to meet directly with others have resulted in the lack of direct contact between community members which resulted in the loss of a sense of solidarity, brotherhood and a sense of belonging and respect as members of the community who are part of the nation and state (Mahmud et al., 2021). One of the characteristics of the Indonesian nation is to have a National Identity which etymologically comes from the words identity and national. The word identity comes from the English identity which has a literal sense; characteristic, sign or identity attached to a person, group or thing that distinguishes it from others (N. Hidayah, 2015). (Afifah et al., 2020) (Pambudi et al., 2020). The word national refers to the concept of



nationality. So, national identity is a characteristic, sign or identity attached to a country so that it distinguishes it from other countries. However, national identity as the values of the character of the Indonesian nation has begun eroded by technological advances and globalization (Fatmawati, 2021). The influence of globalization has faded the values of the nation's character among children and the nation's next generation (Lebo, et al., 2021). Technological advances and globalization have brought various kinds of behavioral changes in society which have resulted in the waning of the values of the nation's character that have existed so far (Madrohim, et al., 2021). The younger generation is the successor this nation should have good national character values and keep abreast of technological developments and globalization. This is needed so that the younger generation of the Indonesian nation has global knowledge and still has the values of the Indonesian nation's personality (Banias et al., 2020).

The values of this nation's character must be instilled from an early age, namely the school level, especially elementary schools so that these character values can be absorbed and interpreted more deeply and embedded until they are adults. The inculcation of character values is of course not only important for students in normal schools but also important for students with special needs in inclusive reference schools. Inclusive education is seen as a process in responding to the diverse learning needs of all children through increasing participation in learning, culture in society, and reducing exclusivity in and from education (Qomarudin & Safrudin, 2021). Inclusive education is very concerned in providing the right response to a wide spectrum of learning needs, both in formal education settings as well as non-formal education. In inclusive schools, the diversity of students is not only limited to differences in customs, culture, ethnicity and language but also differences in abilities and learning needs, namely students with special needs.

Character education is very necessary, especially for students who attend inclusive schools to educate their characters to become students who are ready for the heterogeneity of the school environment. The function of character education is (1) to strengthen and build the behavior of a multicultural nation; (2) realizing a civilization that is intelligent, virtuous, and has a contribution in developing human life, developing character values in order to have a good heart, mind, and behavior and have an exemplary attitude; (3) realizing the attitude of citizens who love peace, are creative, independent, and live side by side with other nations in harmony (Puri, 2021), this is in accordance with the concept of inclusion. In character education there are character values that can be instilled through thematic learning. The character values consist of the value of tolerance, the spirit of nationalism, friendship, love of peace, care for the environment and social care which are the capital in the implementation of inclusive education. With the implementation of character education in inclusive schools, besides students will have good character and add positive values to themselves, character education will also help students with special needs in getting acceptance and attention from their study friends so that educational services can be carried out optimally.

This is necessary because students with special needs are also part of the Indonesian nation which must also have the values of the nation's character. To make it easier to relate and instill these character values, a learning approach that is close to the student environment is needed (Hardiyani et al., 2019); (Ni'mah et al., 2020); (Assidiq & Atmaja, 2019); (Sofiyatunningtiyas et al., 2020). One of the lessons that can be used is thematic learning based on local culture. integrate local local values that they have encountered so that through this learning they can directly link these local values with the values of the nation's character. Learning with a design like this will make it easier for students to accept and absorb the values of the nation's character being taught.



Local culture is human knowledge as social beings whose contents are tools or models of knowledge that are collectively used by their supporters to interpret and understand the environment they face and are used as references and guidelines for action (Baka et al., 2019); (Wahab, 2019). Thematic learning based on local culture is a systematic learning and facilitates the learning process. The learning is developed from basic competencies that are shaded by a theme, connected to the real life context of students and the environment, as well as implemented in the classroom to make learning more meaningful. Local cultural values are integrated into learning, so that students are able to learn according to the previous experiences from students' daily lives. Through this research, a thematic learning based on culture will be developed local to instilling the values of the nation's character in inclusive reference primary schools. The difference between this research product and existing products is that this product reaches the needs of planting character values for students with special needs. This developed product will complement the existing similar products with additions or advantages in the implementation of inclusive reference schools with students with special needs.

### Research Method

This research as research and development (R&D). Explained by (Sugiyono, 2013) that research development (Research and development) will be carried out for six months, from December 2020 to June 2021. The implementation of the steps in the development process is modified into three stages as follows. The implementation of the steps in the development process is modified into three stages consisting of define, design, and develop. The design stage has two activity steps, namely literature study and Field Survey on developing culture. The second stage is the design which consists of a description of the findings, approach selection and product development planning. The third stage is develop which consists of product design development, preparation of product validation instruments, design validation, design analysis and revision, limited field testing, analysis and revision, main field testing, so as to produce a final product that is tested for effectiveness.

This research was conducted at SDN Tamansari Yogyakarta which is located on Jl. Captain P. Tendean No.43 Yogyakarta. With the research subject amounted to 22 students. This school was chosen as the research subject because it is one of the inclusive reference schools in the city of Yogyakarta. Data collection technique consisted of Validation Questionnaire, Learning accuracy questionnaire for students. Researchers (see the number of the authors under your article title!) conducted an interview with teacher, Questionnaire, Observation and test. Data collection instrument consisted of Validation sheet, Learning accuracy questionnaire, interview guidelines, Questionnaire sheet, Observation sheet, Pre-Test and Post-Test and Question Sheets.

Data analysis techniques in this study used descriptive percentage, *t- test* and *N-gain*.. In this study the types of data, data collection techniques and data analysis techniques can be seen in Table 1.

**Table 1. Types, Techniques, and Data Collection Instruments**

No	Data Type	Data Collection Technique	Data Collection Instrument	Data Analysis Technique
1	Product Validity	Validation Questionnaire	Validation sheet	Descriptive percentage
2	Learning accuracy	Learning accuracy questionnaire for students.	Learning accuracy questionnaire interview guidelines	Descriptive percentage



		Researcher interview with teacher		Descriptive
3	Student Character Values	Questionnaire Observation	Questionnaire sheet Observation sheet	Descriptive percentage
4	Learning achievement	Test	Pre-Test and Post-Test Question Sheets	<i>t- test</i> <i>N-gain</i>

## Results and Discussion

This study aims to develop thematic learning tools based on local culture to instill the values of the nation's character in inclusive reference primary schools. Based on initial observations that have been made in elementary schools, it is known that there is a need for learning tools that integrate local culture in learning in schools. Culture as a nation's heritage should and must be preserved as a fundamental part of student life that will compete in the global era. Culture functions as a marker and character of the young generation of the nation's successor needs to be taught from the basic education level. Character values are not only taught but also must be accustomed in everyday life in the school environment so that they become part of students. Character must be built and owned by all students, including students with special needs. These students with special needs become an integral part of the inclusive referral school class. One of the inclusive reference schools in the city of Yogyakarta is SD N Tamansari Yogyakarta.

One of the efforts to instill character values in inclusive referral students is through thematic learning based on local culture. So far, the local culture-based learning model at SD Tamansari has not been developed and utilized optimally to instill character values in students. Based on the various needs and importance of local culture-based learning in this inclusive reference school, this research developed a local culture-based learning tool to instill character values in students. This learning tool developed consists of several features including syllabus, lesson plans, teaching materials and learning evaluation tools. To support and complete this research data, supporting features were developed consisting of validation sheets and data collection instruments in the form of questionnaires, observation sheets and test questions.

The stages of developing culture-based learning to instill student character values begin with planning, product design and product development process followed by product validation. This validation process involves two experts in lesson planning. The results of the validation of Thematic Learning based on Local Culture tools to instill character values in students can be seen in Table 2.

**Table 2. Validation Results of Development Learning Tools**

Device Type	Validator 1	Validator 2	Average	Criteria
Syllabus	4,2	4,1	4,15	High
RPP	4,4	4,3	4,35	High
Teaching materials	4,3	4,4	4,35	High
Evaluation Tool	4,1	4,3	4,20	High

Based on the results of the validation of the product development learning has a high validity. This can be seen in the average assessment from experts who show a score of more than 4.3 with a maximum score of 5.0 which is in the high validity category. After the learning product developed is assessed as valid by the validator, then a trial is carried out at school. The school trial was carried out with health protocols and limited time as an adjustment to the Covid 19 pandemic conditions. This school trial was carried out from April

2021 to May 2021 at Tamansari Elementary School Yogyakarta. In this trial, measurements were made of the student's character values. Data from the observation of student character values can be seen in Table 3.

**Table 3. Percentage of Achievement of Student Character Values in Learning**

Aspect	Frequency				Average	Average Percentage
	Part 1	Part 2	Part3	Part4		
God's love and truth	21	22	22	22	21,75	98,86364
Responsibility, discipline, and independence	16	16	22	22	19	86,36364
Respect and courtesy	16	18	18	19	17,75	80,68182
Love, care, and cooperation	17	17	17	21	18	81,81818
Confident, creative, and never give up	16	17	19	21	18,25	82,95455
Justice and leadership	15	18	18	20	17,75	80,68182
Tolerance and love peace	16	17	17	22	18	81,81818

Based on Table 2, it is known that the average frequency of achieving character values in thematic learning based on local culture is in the high category. Where all aspects of character values appear and are carried out by more than 80% of the students in the class. With the high frequency of achieving this character value, the learning device developed as a result can be said to be successful in instilling character values in students.

In addition to the value of the student's character in this study, it also measures student activity in the learning process using the product developed. The results of calculations from student activity observation sheets can be seen in Table 4.

**Table 4. Results of Analysis of Student Activities During Learning**

Criteria	Skor	Average Percentage
Very active	$80,01 \leq X \leq 100$	81,81818
Active	$60,01 \leq X \leq 80$	13,63636
Enough	$40,01 \leq X \leq 60$	4,545455
Less Active	$0 \leq X \leq 40$	0

Based on Table 3, it is known that > 80% of students fall into the very active category so that it can be stated that the developed learning tools designed by integrating local culture in learning activities can encourage students to be active during the learning process.

Furthermore, in the product trial of the development results, measurements and comparisons of student achievement were also carried out between classes using developed learning tools and classes using conventional learning. Based on the results of the calculation of the pre test value, it is known that the value of t count = 1.476 < t table = 1.998 which indicates there is no difference in student achievement between the control group and the experimental group. Meanwhile, in the post-test t-test, the value of t-count = 5.782 > t-table = 1.998 and (p) count = 0 < 0.05, which means that the H<sub>0</sub> is rejected, so the conclusion obtained is that there is a significant difference in the value of learning achievement between the experimental group. which uses the product development results with the learning achievement value of the control group using conventional learning. After knowing the difference in the value of learning achievement between the experimental group and the control group, then the N-gain test was carried out to determine which group had a higher achievement score. The results of the N-gain test can be seen in Table 5.



**Table 5. Test of Increasing Student Achievement Scores**

Group/Class	Pre Test	Post Test	Gain	N gain	Criteria
Experiment / VA	52,75	86,95	34,20	0,72	High
Control / VB	52,85	77,50	18,765	0,45	Medium

Based on Table 5, it is known that there is a difference in the increase in learning achievement scores between the control group and the experimental group. The control group has an increase in the medium criteria and the experimental group has an increase in the high criteria. Based on these results, it is stated that learning in the experimental group using learning tools developed better in increasing student achievement scores in elementary schools.

This learning development is carried out in accordance with the analysis of the need for learning that incorporates local culture in learning in order to increase the character values and achievements of inclusive reference primary school students. In addition to general students, inclusive reference school students also need to instill character values and achievement values. This student character value is an important part needed to color and characterize a person in life in the global era. In this study, the character values developed in the life of the nation and state are good and smart (smart and good citizen) through several character values as follows: (1) Love of God and truth (love of God, trust, reverence, loyalty); (2) responsibility, discipline, and independence (responsibility, excellence, self reliance, discipline, orderliness); (3) Respect and courtesy (respect, courtesy, obedience); (4) Affection, concern, and cooperation (love, compassion, caring, empathy, generosity, moderation, cooperation); (5) Confidence, creative, and never give up (confidence, assertiveness, creativity, resourcefulness, courage, determination and enthusiasm); (6) Justice and leadership (justice, fairness, mercy, leadership); (7) Tolerance and love of peace (tolerance, flexibility, peacefulness, unity) (Komalasari & Saripudin, 2018).

The alternative that is often put forward to overcome, at least reduce, the problem of national character is education. Education is considered as a preventive alternative because education builds a new generation of a better nation. As a preventive alternative, education is expected to develop the quality of the nation's young generation in various aspects that can minimize and reduce the causes of various problems with the nation's character. Character evaluation techniques are needed to get the results of the internalization that has been done by someone. In general, the character evaluation technique is dominant in measuring the affective and psychomotor domains, so the evaluation techniques used are questionnaire, inventory, portfolio, observation or direct observation (Jaelani et al., 2020); (Basyaruddin & Rifma, 2020): (Hulukati & Rahmi, 2020).

This character value is included in thematic learning in elementary school. This thematic learning is used because thematic learning has various advantages. Thematic learning is a form of integrated learning model that combines a concept in several materials, lessons or fields of study into a particular theme or topic of discussion so that there is an integration of knowledge, skills and values that enable students to actively discover scientific concepts and principles holistically, meaningfully and authentically. .

In learning, various problems are often experienced by teachers. To overcome various problems in learning, it is necessary to have a learning model that is considered to be able to help teachers in the teaching and learning process. The model is designed to represent the real reality, even though the model itself is not the reality of the real world. The learning model is a pattern that is used as a guide in planning learning in groups and tutorials (Kadir & Asrohah, 2015).



In line with the opinion above, the learning model is a plan or a pattern that is used as a guide in planning learning in class or learning in tutorials. The function of the learning model is as a guide for teacher designers and teachers in implementing learning (N. Hidayah, 2015). In contrast to the above opinion, it was argued that the teaching model is a conceptual framework that contains systematic procedures and organizes student learning experiences to achieve certain learning objectives that serve as guidelines for teachers in the teaching and learning process (Saputro & Soeharto, 2015). Based on some of the opinions above, it can be concluded that the learning model is a framework used in learning to achieve certain goals. The learning model is used by the teacher as a guide in carrying out learning in the classroom. Learning that integrates material in certain themes is thematic learning.

Thematic learning based on local culture is a strategy for creating a learning environment and designing learning experiences that integrate the culture that contains concepts and themes as part of the learning process. Local culture-based learning is based on the recognition of culture as a fundamental (fundamental and important) part of education as an expression and communication of an idea and the development of knowledge (Widyaningrum & Prihastari, 2021); (Ahmadi et al., 2019). In Thematic Learning based on Local Culture, the culture in which there are scientific concepts becomes a medium for students to transform their observations into creative forms and principles.

Thus, the learning process with a local culture approach is not just transferring or conveying culture or cultural embodiments but using culture to make students able to create meaning, penetrate the limits of imagination, and creativity to achieve a deep understanding of the concepts they are learning. Local culture-based learning can be divided into three types, namely learning about culture, learning with culture, and learning through culture (Roziqin et al., 2016).

The process of learning about culture is familiar to most people, such as arts and crafts, arts and literature, painting and drawing. Culture is explored in one specific topic, which relates to cultural culture. These objects are not merged with other objects and are not related to each other. In some schools that are able to provide learning resources, such as musical instruments and drama equipment in the teaching culture, the subject of school culture will be relatively more developed. However, many schools do not have sufficient teaching resources to make these subjects memorable from teachers' books or stories (which is not necessarily true). Finally, under such conditions, cultural objects become meaningless to students, teachers, schools, and community developers where the school is located. This is a picture of the failure of cultural objects today. In addition, (Ardianti et al., 2019) Subjects of knowledge and cultural knowledge have not been proportional in the curriculum or in the development of knowledge in general. While other subjects such as mathematics, science and social sciences, Indonesian language and others are considered important as evidence of the country's progress.

Occurs when culture is introduced to students as a way or method to learn a particular subject. Learning with culture includes the use of various forms of cultural embodiment. In learning with culture, culture and its manifestations become learning media in the learning process, become the context of examples of concepts or principles in a subject, become the context of applying principles or procedures in a subject (Irawan & Muhartati, 2019). For example, in learning mathematics, to represent the shape of numbers (positive numbers, negative numbers) in a number line, use a number line that uses cepot (Sundanese puppet characters). Cepot will quickly direct students to interact with number lines and numbers.

Learning through this culture is a method that allows students to demonstrate understanding of a subject or understanding it through various cultural manifestations.



Learning through culture is one way of presenting multiple assessments of learning or understanding different ways (Triyono, 2019). For example, students do not need to take tests to explain the process of photosynthesis, but students can prepare posters, draw pictures, songs, or poems that describe the process of photosynthesis. By examining student cultural outcomes, teachers can assess how students understand the topic of photosynthesis and how students perceive it. in subject matter, as well as in understanding creative imagination (Pertiwi & Rusyda Firdausi, 2019); (Utami & Murti, 2019). Learning through culture can be done in elementary school, high school, or college in any subject. In this study, local culture-based learning that is implemented is learning through culture, namely incorporating culture into thematic learning.

The value of this national character is not only important for general students but also important for students with special needs in inclusive referral schools. Inclusive reference schools appear to fulfill the right to proper education and teaching guaranteed by the Indonesian government in the 1945 Constitution. As a logical consequence of the elaboration of this 1945 Constitution, everyone regardless of physical, religious, ethnic, etc. has the right to receive education and teaching for development. himself. One of the parties who are entitled to receive teaching and education are children with special needs (ABK). The equal distribution of learning opportunities launched by the Ministry of Education and Culture does not only apply to normal children, but also includes children with special privileges, including children with special needs.

Education services for children with special needs do not only meet the target of education for all or just fulfill human rights and children's rights, but more importantly for the welfare of children and their lives in the future. So far, education for children with special needs is mostly organized in segregation in Extraordinary Schools (SLB) and Special Kindergartens (TK-LB). Meanwhile, the number and location of SLB and TKLB are still limited, even though children with special needs are widely scattered in almost all regions. This encourages the emergence of the phenomenon of inclusive education.

Inclusive Education refers to the educational needs for all children (Education for All) with a specific focus on those who are vulnerable to marginalization and separation. Inclusive education means that schools must accommodate all children regardless of physical, intellectual, socio-emotional, linguistic or other conditions (Tarmansyah, 2009). The purpose of inclusive education refers to Law (UU) no. 20, 2003, National Education System Article 1, paragraph 1: Education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students actively develop their potential to have religious spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and skills needed by himself, society, nation and state. Based on this, this research is expected to be able to contribute to the formation of character values for students with special needs in inclusive reference schools.

One of the characteristics of the Indonesian nation is to have a National Identity which etymologically comes from the words identity and national. The word identity comes from the English identity which has a literal sense; characteristic, sign or identity attached to a person, group or thing that distinguishes it from others (Y. Hidayah & Retnasari, 2019). (Afifah et al., 2020); (Pambudi et al., 2020). The word national refers to the concept of nationality. So, national identity is a characteristic, sign or identity attached to a country so that it distinguishes it from other countries. However, national identity as the values of the character of the Indonesian nation has begun eroded by technological advances and globalization. The influence of globalization has faded the values of the nation's character among children and the nation's next generation. Technological advances and globalization





have brought various kinds of behavioral changes in society which have resulted in the waning of the values of the nation's character that have existed so far. The younger generation is the successor This nation should have good national character values and keep abreast of technological developments and globalization This is needed so that the younger generation of the Indonesian nation has global knowledge and still has the values of the Indonesian nation's personality.

The values of this nation's character must be instilled from an early age, namely the school level, especially elementary schools so that these character values can be absorbed and interpreted more deeply and embedded until they are adults. The inculcation of character values is of course not only important for students in normal schools but also important for students with special needs in inclusive reference schools. This is necessary because students with special needs are also part of the Indonesian nation which must also have the values of the nation's character. To make it easier to relate and instill these character values, a learning approach that is close to the student environment is needed (Hardiyan et al., 2019) (Ni'mah et al., 2020); (Assidiq & Atmaja, 2019); (Sofiyatunningtiyas et al., 2020). One of the lessons that can be used is thematic learning based on local culture. integrate local local values that they have encountered so that through this learning they can directly relate these local values to the values of the nation's character. Learning with a design like this will make it easier for students to accept and absorb the values of the nation's character being taught.

Local culture is human knowledge as social beings whose contents are tools or models of knowledge that are collectively used by their supporters to interpret and understand the environment they face and are used as references and guidelines for action (Baka et al., 2019); (Wahab, 2019). Thematic learning based on local culture is a systematic learning and facilitates the learning process. The learning is developed from basic competencies that are shaded by a theme, connected to the real life context of students and the environment, as well as implemented in the classroom to make learning more meaningful. Local cultural values are integrated into learning, so that students are able to learn according to the experiences gained previously from students' daily lives.

Many alternative efforts have been put forward to overcome this character problem, the results of this study can be part of overcoming the problem of the nation's character through education. Education is considered as a preventive alternative because education builds a new generation of a better nation. As a preventive alternative, education is expected to develop the quality of the nation's young generation in various aspects that can minimize and reduce the causes of various problems with the nation's character. Character evaluation techniques are needed to get the results of the internalization that has been done by someone. In general, the character evaluation technique is dominant in measuring the affective and psychomotor domains, so the evaluation techniques used are questionnaire, inventory, portfolio, observation or direct observation (Jaelani et al., 2020); (Basyaruddin & Rifma, 2020); (Hulukati & Rahmi, 2020).

## **Conclusion**

The development of thematic learning based on local culture in instilling the value of national character in inclusive reference elementary schools has been successfully developed as evidenced by the results of obtaining a validation score of more than 4.3 with a maximum score of 5.0 which is in the high validity category. Learning tools developed are effective in instilling national character values as evidenced by the average frequency of achieving national character values in thematic learning based on local culture which is in the high category. Where all aspects of national character values appear and are carried out by more



than 80% of students in the class. Meanwhile, in the post-test t-test, the value of t-count = 5.782 > t-table = 1.998 and (p) count = 0 < 0.05, which means that the HO is rejected, so the conclusion obtained is that there is a significant difference in the value of learning achievement between the experimental group which uses the product development results with the learning achievement value of the control group using conventional learning. The results of the N gain test showed that the control group had an increase in the medium criteria and the experimental group had an increase in the high criteria.

### Recommendation

For further researchers the development of thematic learning based on local culture can be further developed to reach a wider community. Schools can develop a wider range of materials and local cultural diversity so that students can have a more immersive experience.

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