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Integrating Character Education into Indonesian Language Learning: A Systematic Literature Review

Annisa Dwi Rezky Rantelino^{1*}, Resnita Dewi², Anastasia Ba'an³

^{1, 2, 3} Master's Program in Indonesian Language Education, Postgraduate School, Universitas Kristen Indonesia Toraja, Indonesia

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***Corresponding author:** Annisa Dwi Rezky Rantelino

Abstract

Character education is a fundamental pillar in education to navigate global challenges and moral degradation. Within this context, Indonesian language and literature education plays a strategic role beyond the mere transfer of linguistic skills. This systematic literature review aims to examine and synthesize the role of Indonesian language education in shaping student character. Following the PRISMA guidelines, a search of the Scopus database yielded 1,240 documents. After rigorous screening based on inclusion criteria, 31 peer-reviewed articles published between 2015 and 2026 were selected for qualitative thematic analysis. The synthesis reveals three primary domains of character integration: the embedment of moral values in curriculum designs, the application of contemporary pedagogical strategies and digital innovation, and the utilization of literary appreciation and local wisdom as moral anchors. Furthermore, the internationalization of national character is evident through the Indonesian for Speakers of Other Languages program. The findings confirm that Indonesian language learning serves as a critical catalyst for internalizing ethical values, social piety, and a resilient national identity aligned with the Pancasila Student Profile. This study highlights the necessity of synergizing cultural preservation.

Keywords: Character education, digital pedagogy, Indonesian language learning, local wisdom, systematic literature review.

INTRODUCTION

Character education constitutes a fundamental pillar within the Indonesian educational system, particularly in navigating the complex dynamics of the 21st century and anticipating the adverse impacts of globalization and moral degradation among the youth. The proliferation of materialistic attitudes and hedonism necessitates educational institutions to sustainably instill positive

attitudes, norms, and moral values (Prakoso et al., 2023). In this context, Indonesian language and literature education plays a highly strategic role. Language learning goes beyond the mere transfer of linguistic knowledge and skills; it serves as a medium for expressing ideas, recognizing cultural identity, and acting as a

primary pedagogical instrument in shaping students' ethical reasoning and national-religious identity (Widodo et al., 2025).

Within the Indonesian national curriculum, the integration of character education into language subjects has become a primary focus. Indonesian language textbooks and instructional materials are explicitly designed to represent core values such as religiosity, nationalism, independence, mutual cooperation, tolerance, and environmental awareness (N. I. Rahmawati et al., 2022; Santoso et al., 2020). Furthermore, with the implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile, character education through language literacy increasingly emphasizes global diversity, inclusivity, intercultural communication, and critical thinking (Sadiah et al., 2024). The provision of teaching materials that incorporate local wisdom themes has also proven crucial in fortifying national identity and fostering a spirit of national defense, particularly for students residing in border regions (Sadiah et al., 2024).

Literature is an inseparable component of Indonesian language education and serves as a highly effective vehicle for transmitting moral values. Pedagogical approaches involving the appreciation of literary works, such as poetry, short stories, novels, and folklore, facilitate students in comprehending life characters contextually (Sufanti et al., 2021; Youpika et al., 2025). For instance, the values of honesty and social piety can be internalized through Ahmad Tohari's novel *Orang-Orang Proyek* (Prakoso et al., 2023), while values of sacrifice, empathy, and social morality are profoundly cultivated through Emi Suy's poetry (Wati et al., 2025). Additionally, cultural wisdom is vividly represented through Minangkabau proverbs and various traditional folktales from the Central Malay and Javanese traditions (Widiyanto & Supana, 2022; Youpika et al., 2024; Zulfikarni et al., 2026). Through these literary works, students are naturally encouraged to explore values of patience, hard work, heroism, and social harmony.

Moreover, in the current era of digital communication, character education within Indonesian language learning continues to transform by adopting innovative digital pedagogy. The integration of digital literacy based on local wisdom, such as the Baduy cultural values embedded in digital textbooks, has been shown to improve academic writing skills while simultaneously deepening students' cultural identity (Maemunah et al., 2026). Innovations such as the genre-based Digital Reading Box, electronic assessments, and multiple intelligence-based reading learning have proven capable of enhancing reading interest, pragmatic competence, and facilitating the habituation of moral values in digital learning environments (Rochmiyati & Tiasari, 2024; Sholeh et al., 2025). This character reinforcement even extends to the teaching of Indonesian to Speakers of Other Languages or BIPA. The amalgamation of language learning and local culture, such as environmental conservation narratives that promote inner and social peace (Andajani et al., 2024) and traditional culinary philosophies like *Rendang* (Ermanto et al., 2025), actively educates foreign learners on the values of peace, consensus, and the national character of Indonesia.

Although numerous independent studies have investigated Indonesian language learning and character education, comprehensive literature reviews that systematically consolidate these two elements remain scarce. Therefore, this Systematic Literature Review aims to comprehensively examine and synthesize the role of Indonesian language education in shaping student character. By conducting an in-depth analysis of current literary trends, pedagogical strategies, and curriculum designs, this

study is expected to provide a robust conceptual framework for educators and policymakers to optimize Indonesian language learning as a cornerstone for adaptive character education in the face of contemporary challenges.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Conceptualization of Character Education and the Pancasila Student Profile

Character education is not merely the transfer of knowledge, but rather a sustainable process of cultivating attitudes, norms, and ethics to counteract moral degradation caused by globalization. Within the Indonesian curriculum context, character education is actualized through the Pancasila Student Profile. This profile emphasizes dimensions of character formation such as global diversity, mutual cooperation, tolerance, independence, critical thinking, and creativity, which are manifested through language learning experiences (Fauziah et al., 2023; Sadiah et al., 2024). Language learning serves as a key element because it trains students in social care, inclusivity, and responsibility.

Indonesian Language Learning as a Medium for Integrative Value Transmission

Indonesian language learning operates beyond the mastery of fundamental linguistic skills, such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Language is positioned as a pragmatic social project that promotes linguistic politeness to achieve national harmony (Jumanto et al., 2024). More specifically, learning media and instruments play a crucial role in transmitting character values. For example, Indonesian language textbooks systematically contain representations of global diversity, environmental awareness through observation and exposition texts, cross-cultural literacy narratives in border regions, and Islamic moral values taught through biographical texts and literary discourse (L. E. Rahmawati et al., 2020; Widodo et al., 2025; Yanti et al., 2025).

Literature as a Sociological and Anthropological Instrument for Moral Education

Literary works serve as a primary vehicle to reflect and internalize ethical characters from the perspectives of the sociology and anthropology of literature. The comprehension of life ethics is facilitated by various literary genres. Prose fiction, such as novels and short stories, transmits character both rationally and emotionally. For instance, short story appreciation has proven effective in accommodating tolerance education (Sufanti et al., 2021), while contemporary novels like *Orang-Orang Proyek* by Ahmad Tohari specifically represent social piety and critical honesty (Prakoso et al., 2023). In poetry, the use of sociological approaches, such as in the works of Emi Suy, evokes empathy, compassion, and sacrifice (Wati et al., 2025), whereas religious values and spiritual responsibility are integrated through poetry like *Hijaz Yamani* (Putra et al., 2025). Furthermore, folklore and ancient manuscripts represent moral formation derived from ancestral heritage, such as religious and heroic values in Central Malay literature and Javanese cultural tales (Widiyanto & Supana, 2022; Youpika et al., 2024). Cultural wisdom and ethics are also instilled through Minangkabau proverbs, modern Javanese literature, and the religious axiology found in ancient manuscripts like *Serat Mbonang* (Andriyanto et al., 2022).

Language Pedagogy Based on Local Wisdom and Digital Technology

Modern pedagogical frameworks combine local cultural wisdom with digital innovation. The integration of local wisdom, such as Bugis literature and Baduy cultural values, into digital language teaching materials not only strengthens academic abilities like writing skills but also fosters a cultural preservation identity (Manggau et al., 2025). In the digital ecosystem, character is reinforced through innovations such as the use of the Digital Reading Box, which directs genre-based literacy to embody character values (Rochmiyati & Tiasari, 2024). Additionally, digital assessment methods demand critical literacy skills (Ningsih et al., 2021), and reading learning models based on multiple intelligences equitably facilitate the cognitive needs of students while shaping their character (Sholeh et al., 2025).

Internationalization of National Character Through BIPA

Character formation is not limited to domestic students but extends to the realm of cultural diplomacy through Indonesian for Speakers of Other Languages, or BIPA. The construction of national character is mainstreamed through cultural immersion. This includes promoting the character of Indonesian society, which emphasizes consensus, togetherness, and patience, through philosophical narratives of traditional culinary dishes like *Rendang* (Ermanto et al., 2025). Furthermore, it utilizes green discourse or environmental texts to disseminate the values of inner peace and social peace to foreign students, thereby training cross-cultural character resilience (Andajani et al., 2024)

METHODE

Methodology

This study employed a systematic literature review approach, following the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines as the main framework for systematically identifying, selecting, and analyzing relevant articles. A systematic literature review was chosen as the most appropriate method for this study because it enables a comprehensive and unbiased synthesis of existing empirical evidence regarding the influence of Indonesian language learning on students' character education. This approach ensures methodological transparency, replicability, and relevance to the research questions.

Search strategy

The article search was conducted exclusively using the Scopus database. The keywords used included a combination of terms such as "Indonesian language" OR "Bahasa Indonesia" OR "Indonesian literature" AND "character education" OR "character building" OR "character development" OR "moral education" OR "values education" OR "moral development" OR "character formation". These keywords were combined using the appropriate Boolean operators to ensure a comprehensive search. The publication year range was strictly limited to the period between 2015 and 2026 to guarantee the relevance and currency of the selected studies.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Specific inclusion criteria were established to select the most relevant articles for this review. The selected articles had to be written in English and published in peer-reviewed scientific journals between 2015 and 2026. Furthermore, they were required to be categorized under the Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities, or Psychology subject areas. The content of the articles had to focus specifically on Indonesian language or literature education

while providing an explicit discussion on character education or moral values. Conversely, the exclusion criteria eliminated opinion pieces, short reports, and editorials. Studies focusing on other academic disciplines such as English, Science, or Islamic Education were excluded. Additionally, studies discussing general character education without a specific connection to language learning and pure linguistic studies without moral value integration were strictly removed from the selection.

Data sources and analysis transparency

The data sources for this review were clearly established through a systematic search of the Scopus database using defined keywords and Boolean operators. The inclusion and exclusion criteria, selection stages, and data analysis techniques were explicitly outlined in alignment with the PRISMA framework. A qualitative thematic analysis approach was employed to identify recurring themes, patterns, and research gaps across the selected literature. Each step of the literature review process was explained in clear and accessible language to ensure full transparency and replicability for future researchers.

Selection procedure

The article selection process was carried out sequentially in three main stages. During the initial identification stage, a total of 1,240 potential articles were identified based on the predefined keywords and database searches. Following the application of automated limitation tools within the database, 1,070 records were removed before the manual screening process began. In the subsequent screening stage, the remaining 170 articles were carefully evaluated for relevance based on their titles, keywords, and abstracts. Finally, a full text eligibility review of these 170 articles resulted in the exclusion of 139 articles. Specifically, 51 articles were excluded for focusing on other disciplines, 62 articles were removed for discussing general character education, and 26 articles were discarded because they focused purely on linguistic skills. Ultimately, 31 articles successfully met all the rigorous inclusion criteria and were included in the final systematic review.

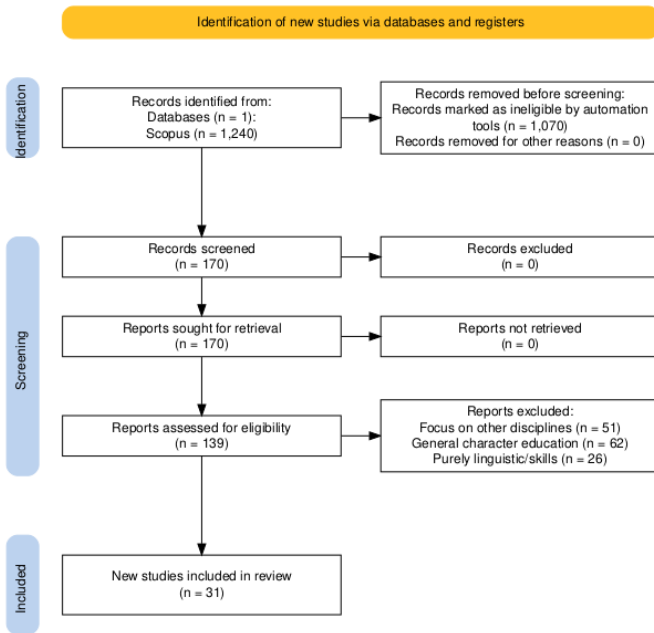


Figure 1. Flowchart of the study selection procedure, based on the PRISMA guidelines

Data analysis technique

Each article that successfully passed the selection stage was systematically analyzed using a qualitative thematic analysis approach. The analysis process involved a thorough examination of several key aspects within each study. These aspects included the target educational level and research context, as well as the specific language learning medium or pedagogical strategy utilized by the researchers. Furthermore, the analysis identified the core character values investigated, the key findings and conclusions, and the specific recommendations proposed for educational practice and curriculum design. The results of this comprehensive analysis were then used to develop a narrative synthesis that reflects the current research patterns, trends, and gaps. This synthesis also offers clear directions for further studies regarding reading literacy and character education among Indonesian language learners.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Although numerous independent studies have investigated Indonesian language learning and character education, comprehensive literature reviews that systematically consolidate these two elements remain scarce. Therefore, the results of this systematic review aim to comprehensively examine and synthesize the role of Indonesian language education in shaping student character. By conducting an in-depth analysis of current literary trends, pedagogical strategies, and curriculum designs, the extracted data from 31 selected articles provide a robust conceptual framework for educators and policymakers to optimize Indonesian language learning as a cornerstone for adaptive character education in the face of contemporary challenges.

Current literary and publication trends

The extant research on Indonesian language education over the past decade has proved that character education is actively nurtured among learners and has been gaining significant attention nationwide and globally. This is substantiated by the continuous scholarly output of articles projecting the advancement of moral values within the purview of Indonesian language and literature teaching, ranging from 2015 to 2026. The publication metrics underscore the central role that language literacy holds in the domain of character formation and national identity development.

The perpetual nature of article production shows a clear increase in research output. Research on the integration of character education in Indonesian language learning fluctuated slightly in the earlier years, with a steady and sharp increase starting in 2020. Research on this specific integration was in the budding stage prior to 2018, whereas substantial development of articles became highly apparent up to the present. The upsurge in articles in this field was explicit from 2020 onwards, and the proliferation of articles from 2023 to 2026 demonstrates the growing importance of character education. This significant spike aligns closely with the massive implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile curriculum in Indonesia. Fostering character through language has drawn the interest of researchers worldwide, resulting in a pivotal period of advancement in educational research.

Table 1. Inclusion and exclusion criteria applied during the screening process

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Language	English	Languages other than

		English
Timeline	2015 to 2026	Published earlier than 2015
Literature	Peer-reviewed journal articles	Other than research articles (e.g., conference proceedings, book chapters, editorials)
Subject area	Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities, Psychology	Other disciplines (e.g., Mathematics, Hard Sciences, Medicine)
Context focus	Indonesian language and literature education integrating character and moral values	Focus on other language subjects, general character education without language context, or purely linguistic studies

Table 2. Annual scientific production of the included articles (2015 to 2026)

Publication Year	Number of Articles	Percentage (%)
2017	1	3.2
2018	1	3.2
2019	2	6.5
2020	3	9.7
2021	3	9.7
2022	2	6.5
2023	4	12.9
2024	6	19.3
2025	8	25.8
2026	1	3.2
Total	31	100.0

Table 3. Most relevant journals publishing research on character education in Indonesian language learning.

Source Title	Number of Articles	Key Thematic Focus in the Reviewed Articles
Theory and Practice in Language Studies	3	Literary appreciation, digital literacy, and moral value transmission
International Journal of Society, Culture and Language	3	Pragmatics, cultural philosophies, and pedagogical values in literature
International Journal of Language Education	2	Folklore studies, local wisdom, and intercultural communication
Journal of Language Teaching and Research	2	Ancient manuscripts, teaching material development, and politeness
International Journal of Instruction	2	Textbook development, curriculum design, and

		tolerance education
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The local impact of prominent journals on Character Education in Indonesian Language Learning

The local impact of influential journals in this field sheds light on the specific publication outlets that drive the research agenda and discourse germane to the development of character skills in language education. To gain a deeper understanding of the literary trends in this area, it is crucial to examine the significance of the leading journals that publish research work on character education in Indonesian language teaching.

The most relevant journals in this field, based on their local impact and the number of published documents in the final screening, include Theory and Practice in Language Studies, International Journal of Society, Culture and Language, and International Journal of Language Education. For instance, Theory and Practice in Language Studies is a highly influential source that significantly contributes to the development of moral values through literary appreciation and digital pedagogy. One of the prominent documents from this journal published in 2023 highlighted how the sociology of literature approach effectively transmits the value of social piety and honesty through novel appreciation (Prakoso et al., 2023). Another globally cited document from the International Journal of Instruction published in 2020 demonstrated the practical application of integrating tolerance and global diversity values into language teaching materials (Abdulkarim et al., 2020). These publication outlets consistently confirm that character education is an indispensable component of Indonesian language curriculum design.

Thematic synthesis of pedagogical strategies and curriculum designs

To provide a robust conceptual framework for educators and policymakers, a thematic synthesis was conducted on the 31 included articles. This synthesis systematically consolidates the

literature into three primary domains that optimize Indonesian language learning for adaptive character education: the integration of moral values in curriculum designs and textbooks, the application of contemporary pedagogical strategies and digital innovation, and the utilization of literary appreciation and local wisdom. Table 4 provides a comprehensive overview of the investigated studies based on these core themes.

The data detailed in Table 4 firmly establishes that modern curriculum designs in Indonesian language education purposefully incorporate moral dimensions to align with national education goals. Furthermore, the systematic implementation of innovative pedagogical strategies, such as digital reading boxes, multiple intelligence-based reading, and project-based academic writing, provides educators with practical solutions to face contemporary challenges. Ultimately, literary appreciation and local wisdom remain the most effective cultural anchors, comprehensively equipping students with empathy, social piety, and a resilient national identity.

The role of digital literacy in character formation

In the contemporary digital era, character education within language learning is no longer limited to printed texts. The reviewed studies emphasize the profound impact of integrating digital technology with local wisdom to create interactive and ethically grounded learning environments. Tools such as the genre-based Digital Reading Box (Rochmiyati et al., 2024), digital comics illustrating the Tantri Kamandaka folklore (Swandi et al., 2020), and digital textbooks featuring Baduy cultural narratives (Maemunah et al., 2026) have been proven to significantly enhance student engagement. These digital platforms not only improve multiliteracy skills but also provide a critical space for students to practice digital ethics, national harmony, and linguistic politeness against the proliferation of negative social media content (Jumanto et al., 2024).

Table 4. Summary of the 31 included studies categorized by core thematic pillars.

Authors (Year)	Target Level	Language Learning Medium	Core Character Values Investigated
Santoso et al. (2020)	Senior High School	National Curriculum Textbooks	Religiousness, nationalism, independence, integrity
Winarni et al. (2021)	Elementary School	Textbooks and Traditional Poetry	Multiculturalism, tolerance, poetry writing skills
Rahmawati et al. (2020)	Senior High School	Textbooks (Observation & Exposition)	Environmental awareness, ecological care
Widodo et al. (2025)	Junior & Senior High	Textbooks and Classical Literature	Honesty, piety, justice, Islamic values
Sadiah et al. (2024)	Elementary School	Language Textbooks	Global diversity, intercultural communication
Yanti et al. (2025)	Border Region Schools	Local Wisdom Teaching Materials	National defense spirit, cultural resilience
Andajani et al. (2024)	BIPA (Foreign Learners)	Environmental Conservation Texts	Inner peace, social peace, environmental peace
Fauziah et al. (2023)	Vocational High School	Local Wisdom Learning Process	Pancasila student profile, national identity
Rochmiyati et al. (2024)	General Education	Digital Reading Box (Genre-based)	Pancasila student profile, digital literacy
Ningsih et al. (2021)	Senior High School	E-assessment in Fiction Literacy	Critical thinking, practical moral application
Kusmanto et al. (2024)	Higher Education	Academic Writing Courses	Indigenous wisdom, student character development

Authors (Year)	Target Level	Language Learning Medium	Core Character Values Investigated
Dewantara et al. (2019)	Higher Education	Phenomenon-Text Information Literacy	Positive attitudes, reading interest
Saputra et al. (2023)	Nature School	Ecological Intelligence Assessment	Love for nature, moral leadership
Sholeh et al. (2025)	General Education	Multiple Intelligence-Based Reading	Holistic character values, reading literacy
Jumanto et al. (2024)	General Society	Pragmatic Language Project	National harmony, linguistic politeness
Ermanto et al. (2025)	BIPA (Foreign Learners)	Culinary Narratives (Rendang)	Consensus, deliberation, patience, diligence
Manggau et al. (2025)	Higher Education	Basic Language Course Materials	Bugis cultural values, cultural preservation
Sufanti et al. (2021)	Senior High School	Short Story Learning	Tolerance, social care, open-mindedness
Youpika et al. (2025)	General Education	Novelization of Traditional Tales	Religiousness, cooperation, integrity
Wati et al. (2025)	General Education	Poetry Collection (Emi Suy)	Sacrifice, empathy, social morality
Prakoso et al. (2023)	General Education	Contemporary Novel	Honesty, social piety
Youpika et al. (2024)	General Education	Central Malay Folklore	Aesthetic, humanist, ethical values
Putra et al. (2025)	General Education	Hijaz Yamani Poetry	Spiritual responsibility, religious values
Widiyanto & Supana (2022)	General Education	Jaka Tingkir Folklore	Heroism, discipline, loyalty, bravery
Andriyanto et al. (2022)	General Education	Modern Javanese Literature	Humility, respect, social harmony
Rasna & Binawati, (2018)	General Education	Wratiasana Palm Manuscripts	Compassion, pedagogical value, discipline
Swandi et al. (2020)	Informal Education	Tantri Kamandaka Digital Comic	National character discovery
Nursalam et al. (2024)	Makassar Community	Kelong Oral Performance	Courage, persistence, cultural identity
Triwibowo et al., (2025)	General Education	Serat Mbonang Manuscript	Tawhid, spiritual discipline, ethical conduct
Pamungkas et al. (2023)	General Education	Magical Realism Novel	Educational values of freedom, universal ethics
Zulfikarni et al. (2026)	General Education	Minangkabau Proverbs	Tolerance, fairness, prudence, humility

Distribution of educational levels and geographical contexts

The analysis of the 31 included studies demonstrates a wide distribution across various educational levels and geographical settings, reflecting the universal applicability of character education in Indonesian language learning. The majority of the studies focused on general education encompassing elementary, junior, and senior high schools, indicating a strong foundational effort to instill character values at an early age (Sadiyah et al., 2024). Furthermore, higher education and vocational schools also represent a significant portion of the literature, focusing on advanced academic writing and indigenous wisdom (Fauziah et al., 2023; Kusmanto et al., 2024). Geographically, the studies highlight a rich cultural diversity. Character education strategies are uniquely tailored to local contexts, such as the Minangkabau proverbs in Sumatra (Zulfikarni et al., 2026), Javanese folklore (Widiyanto & Supana, 2022), and cultural resilience in the border regions of North Kalimantan (Yanti et al., 2025). Interestingly, the geographical scope extends internationally through the Indonesian for Speakers of Other Languages programs, where Indonesian cultural values are taught to foreign students in the United States and other countries (Andajani et al., 2024; Ermanto et al., 2025).

Research gaps and methodological challenges

Despite the robust evidence supporting the integration of Indonesian language learning and character education, this systematic review identifies several methodological gaps in the extant literature. A significant portion of the reviewed studies relies heavily on qualitative approaches, such as ethnographic case studies and qualitative document analyses of literary texts (Pamungkas et al., 2023; Youpika et al., 2024). While these methods provide profound cultural insights, there is a noticeable scarcity of rigorous quantitative or longitudinal experimental designs that measure the long-term retention of moral values in students' actual behavior. Furthermore, many studies utilize researcher-made or unvalidated instruments to assess character development, which poses challenges in generalizing the findings across different educational contexts (Mistiani et al., 2022). Addressing these methodological limitations requires future researchers to develop highly standardized assessment tools and conduct longitudinal studies to empirically track how character values instilled through language education evolve over time.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this systematic review unequivocally affirm that Indonesian language education transcends its traditional role of teaching basic linguistic mechanics. Instead, it serves as an indispensable sociological and pedagogical vehicle for embedding

character education, ethical values, and a resilient national identity among students across various educational levels. This premise aligns with the overarching goals of the Pancasila Student Profile, emphasizing the cultivation of socially adept, highly tolerant, and critical thinkers.

Reading Literacy as a Foundation for Ethical Reasoning

The results demonstrate that reading literacy acts as the foundational asset for developing analytical and reflective thinking, which is essential for moral decision-making. Integrating moral values within national curriculum textbooks creates structured opportunities for students to engage with texts that portray global diversity, environmental conservation, and social piety (Rahmawati et al., 2020; Sadiyah et al., 2024; Widodo et al., 2025). Furthermore, employing Indonesian language pragmatically fosters a culture of linguistic politeness, transforming everyday communication into a pragmatic social project aimed at achieving national harmony (Jumanto et al., 2024). These findings corroborate previous assertions that critical reading directly catalyzes a student's capacity to recognize bias, practice empathy, and adopt an inclusive worldview.

The Efficacy of Integrating Local Wisdom and Literature

A prominent theme emerging from the literature is the heavy reliance on local wisdom and literary appreciation as moral anchors. Pedagogical approaches that utilize folklore, ancient manuscripts, and contemporary novels provide contextually rich narratives that naturally transmit ethical lessons without appearing overly didactic. For instance, stories utilizing magical realism or the appreciation of poetry emphasizing maternal sacrifice engage students' emotional intelligence, compelling them to internalize values such as honesty, courage, and spiritual responsibility (Pamungkas et al., 2023; Prakoso et al., 2023; Wati et al., 2025). The adaptation of indigenous knowledge, ranging from Minangkabau proverbs to Bugis literature, proves that localized cultural pedagogy is a highly effective strategy for shielding students from the adverse effects of materialistic globalization while reinforcing their cultural roots (Zulfikarni et al., 2026).

Digital Pedagogy: Opportunities in the Modern Era

In response to the rapid digitalization of education, the synthesis reveals that technological integration has revolutionized how character values are taught. Digital reading boxes, electronic assessments, and multiliteracy-based digital textbooks successfully merge the appeal of modern technology with the depth of traditional character education (Maemunah et al., 2026; Ningsih et al., 2021; Rochmiyati et al., 2024). However, while digital platforms significantly enhance student engagement, they also demand a heightened level of digital ethics and critical literacy from both students and educators. Therefore, the role of the teacher remains paramount in facilitating reflective digital pedagogy that guides students to navigate the digital world responsibly.

CONCLUSION

This systematic literature review solidifies the premise that Indonesian language and literature education functions as a critical catalyst for student character development, extending far beyond the mere acquisition of linguistic skills. The synthesis of the 31 reviewed articles comprehensively demonstrates that language learning serves as a highly strategic medium for internalizing ethical values, social piety, and a resilient national identity. Through the systematic integration of moral dimensions in

curriculum textbooks, the profound appreciation of local wisdom and traditional literature, and the innovative application of digital pedagogical strategies, educators can effectively cultivate the core competencies outlined in the Pancasila Student Profile. Furthermore, the internationalization of these values through the BIPA program highlights the global relevance of Indonesian cultural ethics, such as tolerance, consensus, and social harmony.

To achieve a sense of completeness in navigating the complexities of modern education, it is evident that character formation requires a continuous synergy between cultural preservation and technological adaptation. The digital era presents both opportunities and challenges, making reflective digital pedagogy and critical literacy essential components of the contemporary language curriculum. However, despite the promising evidence, this review highlights the absolute necessity of addressing existing methodological gaps in the literature. Future research must prioritize longitudinal experimental designs and the development of standardized assessment tools to measure the long-term behavioral impacts of character education accurately.

Ultimately, optimizing Indonesian language learning requires a collaborative effort among teachers, policymakers, and curriculum developers. By continuously adapting to digital advancements while remaining deeply rooted in indigenous wisdom, Indonesian language education will serve as an indispensable foundation for preparing a morally grounded, critical, and culturally aware golden generation to navigate the challenges of the 21st century.

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