THE STORY OF “MALIN KUNDANG” AND ITS IMPLICATION TOWARD CHARACTER BUILDING OF YOUNG LEARNER.

Sahyoni
Jonvi_aok@yahoo.com
English Department, State Institute for Islamic Studies (IAIN) Batusangkar

ABSTRACT
Young learners are golden generation for future, those who will depart this nation into a good civilization and a well-educated era. To realize this hope, those young generations must have good character. Building good character ideally must be started in earlier age. One of the ways is by telling them folklore, or local story on this case is the story of MalinKundang. This kind of story tells more about value, norm, character and attitude later it gives moral value for young learner. As local people, it is a must for us to tell good story for young learner in order to build their good character. This paper discusses how to build good character for young learner through story of MalinKundang. The story of MalinKundang has been chosen as a medium to build young learner character since it is a local wisdom. In this complex era, the presence of character building for young learners is one of among major solution for this nation.

Key words: character building, story of MalinKundang, young learner.

INTRODUCTION
Nowadays, it is widely accepted that character building for students should be introduced since early age. It is critical point that must be considered by citizenship in order to prepare future education. Character building is one of ways for people to get a civilized nation. Young learners as valuable assets of Indonesian ideally should have proper education in term cognitive (intelligence), psychomotor (willingness) and affective (moral and character). They must get good guidance from teacher and their parents for the development of their character. It goes without saying, long time ago Indonesian fathers founding have declared the important of character building for students. They believed that education is a part of human life; it is a medium for society to get better civilization. They believed that good civilization can be reached by having characterized people.

The purpose of Indonesian education has clearly put foundation of character building which will drive our education to be a higher position. In term of Indonesian education, education is expected to produce well-educated people who can manage this country for better future. According to national education system No 20 year of 2003 education can be defined as a conscious and well-planned effort in creating a learning environment and learning process so that learners will be able to develop their full potential for acquiring spiritual and religious strengths, develop self-control, personality, intelligence, morals and noble character and skills that is needed for personal, for the community, for the nation. One of national education purpose is to develop students’ character. Students are demanded to have intelligence, skill, and noble character. Theoretically, most experts believed character building should be introduced since early age or young learner.

Nowadays, one of argumentative reason is several massive problems occur in society such as: brawl by students, drugs
abuse, sexual harassment, drink liquor, bullying and cheating. Ironically, this action is largely done by several students, people who are expected by society to be well educated people in future. The need for character building in education lies in the fact that a sustained process of teaching, being shown examples of good character, and constant by practicing what they learned is the things needed to invest good character traits for young learner. And since young learners spend most of their time at home, it is the perfect place to teach moral values or character in them. Parents as the closest people to the young learners might teach them how to act, speak, even the way they treat other people in good way. If it is done regularly then becomes habituation, unconsciously it fosters good character for them. The reason for introducing character building since early age is to prepare the students to face many opportunities and unknown dangers that are in today's society. In the early age period, they are in development phase. In this phase, they can obtain the meaning and value quickly; record the message in their mind permanently. Character building gives the students the knowledge that they need to know what something good and bad to do is.

There are several alternative ways of introducing character building for young learner. One of them is by telling them a local story which is familiar and full of moral value. As it is widely known, young learners love story or folklore. They have good imagination; it is much easier for them to get the moral value if the parents tell them in simple way. Why should tell them local story? Perhaps this question occurs in our mind, local story is familiar story and local story is local wisdom. In addition, local story is valuable assets for young generation. They can comprehend deeply the implication of local story for character building. Besides they can also preserve their culture from extinction.

LITERATURE REVIEW

a. Character building

The terms of character building is derived from two words namely character and building. Those terms have been echoed by Indonesian government several years ago. Character building becomes one of favorite tagline for national education. Indonesian government hopes the students to be a skillful, smart and civilized personal. Generally, character can be defined as moral values, attitude, and habitual deals with someone personal. Character always sticks to one person, in this case a student. Theoretically, there are several theories of character by the experts.

First of all, According to Oxford dictionary (2010:234) character is all qualities and features that make a person, group of people and place different from others. Dealing with this concept, character is whole features of one person that others do not have. Based on this theory, every human being has different typical of character. It means, character leads people have different attitude, point of view, and moral personally or collectively. Second, almost similar with previous theory Echols and Shadily (1993:107) highlight several terms that related to the character, like attitude, temperament and character itself. This concept is not much different with previous one, character consists of three basic elements namely attitude, temperament and character itself. Those elements are interconnected one to other that shape people’s personality. Attitude deals with how people act in their life and environment, temperament deals with how people view something and what is their reaction, and character tells how they different and unique to another.

In the second place, in more detail, Abidin (20120 assumes that character is psychological characters of someone’s identity that differentiates one person to another. He widely deals with character in term of psychology where it is unseen, not like abstract concepts that can be touched. Character is inner personality of someone as human being that marks them personally. No one has exact character even they are twins. Their character can be seen by viewing their attitude, the way how they speak, their action and how they treat people in their daily life. Commonly, someone who has good character
tend to have good attitude, behavior and moral. In contrary, someone who is misbehaving, speaking sarcasm, and treating people improperly tends to have bad characteristic.

In the third place, Naim (2012:55) alleges character is a set of attitude, behavior, motivation and skill that people have. Character relates to people act in their society. How people do action, play their role and speak one another commonly are reflection of their character. Based on this concept, people as a social citizenship must have good attitude in their life and environment. How they act in society is dominantly influenced by their character. Personal or individual as smallest part of society should play his/her own roles in the social life. Having good character in life is what makes people believe in another one and is essential both for individual success and for our society to function successfully. Each individual must do his or her part every day by living a life of integrity. They should integrate whole qualities of their features in order to keep their characteristic alive.

In short, character is a set of features that consist of behavior, attitude, moral, that make a person different one another in a society. Character takes important rules for a person in his/ her life. It is most valuable thing people have and nobody can ever take away. A person’s character is shown by how they act, think, and feel in life. Character isn’t one thing; it’s the pattern a person demonstrates by how they interact with others and how they treat themselves.

In the fourth place, Parvez in Yaumi (2014:7) states there are several definitions that related to character as follows: (1) Character is something inside of someone personality. Character is the power of soul. (2) Character is manifestation of the truth of people. (3) Character adopts kindness, where it against the violence. (4) Character has power toward our personality itself. (5) Character is a human attitude toward their environment that is expressed in an action. There are there major components of character such as moral knowing, moral feeling and moral action. Those components of good character can be seen completely in picture as follows:

There are three basic components of character namely moral knowing, moral feeling and moral action. Siswayanti (2013:227) explain thought, feeling and attitude is integrative components which shape students’ characteristics. Knowing the good (moral knowing), loving the good (moral feeling) and doing the good (moral action) are entities that interconnect one another. Missing one connection means someone cannot be labelled as good character. In more detail, three above components can be explained as below:

1) Moral knowing (Knowing the good) it means young learner know bad and right thing and know how to do good priority action. In this case, young learners are thought not only the good thing but also why should do good thing.

2) Moral feelings (feeling the good) means young learners should love something good and hate something bad. This concept evokes students’ feeling to feel the effect of good thing. They are trained to feel the effect of doing good action. Train them more and more till they feel doing something good is a must in their life.

3) Moral action (doing the good) means young learner able to do something good in every moments and every activity. This final step, after they know something good, feel something good, and last the must apply something good in their daily life.

b. Roles of character building for young learners

Character building is an effort to develop people’s character and internalize something good for their moral. According to
Harper Collin Dictionary, character building is improving certain good or useful traits in a person's character, especially self-reliance, endurance, and courage. Dealing with this definition, character building is conducted in order to develop or improve people's characteristics. But, in education area, especially for young learner, the concept of character building is introduced earlier in order to lead students to have good character since primary age. It means, not to develop but to introduce and guide them.

Character building is believed by many people as a bridge for students to be humanism, civilized, and well-educated learner. Since character building consists of complete elements such as behavior, attitude, motivation and moral. Need more process to build good character, it is not instant one. Building a good character means guiding someone to do something good which is accepted by the social norm and develop his/her attitude to be humanism and civilized society.

To emphasize, character building is a way of introducing good character for learners in their earlier age. Government, teacher and parents have their own responsibility for guiding the students. It needs more effort and patience in order to build students' character.

In line with character building for students, Reiner (2015) states several role of character building for learners as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Roles</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Character building is the basis for personal growth.</td>
<td>As children practice skills that promote character development, they build a reservoir of strength that they can draw on throughout their lives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Character building is the foundation for lifelong learning.</td>
<td>Schools that teach character education report increased academic performance and attendance. They also report decreases in disciplinary problems. Children appreciate the safe environment that occurs when their peers are also learning about respect, honesty, and compassion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Character is the bedrock that solid relationships are built on.</td>
<td>Our children will be happier, more caring, more forgiving, and more responsible as they are taught to think about the needs of others. Cooperation, tolerance, and teamwork are examples of social skills that can be experienced firsthand when children are given the tools and opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Character shapes us as neighbors and citizens.</td>
<td>Our character is a holistic language we daily communicate to others. We constantly affect one another. Beyond our homes and schools, our children’s character will also affect all of us in the workplace and in our communities as they grow to be our employees, neighbors, and leaders.</td>
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Character building is crucial point for young learner. If they have good character, automatically they may drive our nation into better a civilization. Character plays essential roles for human being started from small domain such personal up to broader domain like nation. As human being, character is basic foundation for people to face their own unique
world. It is a kind of alarm that controls their attitude in society. Since early age, parents have taught their children to act in good manner. Then, character building is the foundation for lifelong learning. It means, they will act and do something based on their own track. Character will stick as long as their live span. One of foundation to drive their life is by having good character. Then, character becomes concrete symbol that shapes our personality, society and citizen. It indicates good nation can be traced by viewing citizens’ character.

c. Young Learner

1. Nature of Young Learner

In general, young learner is students who are at childhood period. Young learners usually are fast learner. They can grasp the lesson quickly. There is a synonym for the term of young learner that is early childhood. According to Kalendova (2008:14) Young learners are supposed to be children from the first year of formal schooling (five or six years old) to eleven or twelve years of age. She divides young learner into two categories based on their ages namely one to six year old, six to twelve years old. Young learners are students who at first year school period up to 12 years old.

Then, Santrock (2007:41) defines young learner or early childhood as period after infant up to five or six years old. Usually, this period ends when they finish studying in kindergarten. Along this period the young learners become more independent, ready to go to school. This period is golden age for learners. It means, it is the exact time to shape their character and lead them to be good learner. Santrock limits the age for young learner in six years old. The young learner in this period can follow play group and even kindergarten. Early childhood is a time of tremendous growth across all areas of development. The dependent newborn grows into a young person who can take care of his or her own body and interact effectively with others. For these reasons, the primary developmental task of this stage is skill development.

Almost similar with Santrock’s opinion, UNESCO presumes early childhood as a period from birth to 8 years old. A times of remarkable brain development, these years lay the foundation for subsequent learning (Berdekamp,1992). From those theories, it could sum up, young learner is a student who at early childhood from birth until 8 years old. Young learner is asset of a nation due to they will drive this nation to be better in future.

2. Characteristics of Young Learner

It should be noted that, young learners have own special characteristics that differentiate from adult learners. This condition should be known and understood by the teacher in order to give contribution to improve their quality of teaching and learning process. In relation to this argument, Halliwel (1992: 3-5) clarifies the characteristics of children;

(1). Children are already very good in interpreting meaning without necessarily understanding the individual word. (2). Children already have great skill in using limited language creativity. (3). Children frequently learn indirectly rather than directly. (4). Children take good pleasure in finding and creating fun in what they do. (5). Children have a ready imagination, children words are full of imagination and fantasy, and it is more than simply matter of enjoyment.

Drawing on Halliwel’s arguments, young learners or sometime called early childhood, are learners who have their own imagination and perspective. They can interpret the meaning or the content without understanding word by word directly. They tend to grasp the meaning of something by questioning several questions. In this age they have good memory. One of crucial points is children have good imagination about something. It indicates that they grasp meaning of something if they get enjoyment and pleasure. Telling them a story is a suggested way to build their imagination.

Besides, it can teach them how to do good action and even teach them how to build
good character. Since they have limited language exposure, they can obtain the meaning well if teacher or parents expose more repetition on their language acquisition. In simple way, when teacher or parent telling them a story, it is widely suggested to use body language and gesture so they get meaning easily. Besides, intonation and mimic also should be delivered in simple way that is understood well by them. Important to be noted, tell the story in fun and enjoy way.

To support statement above, Piaget (1952) classifies four stages of cognitive development as in table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Age range</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sensorimotor</td>
<td>Birth-2 years old</td>
<td>Coordination of sense with motor response, sensory curiosity about the world. Language used for demands and cataloguing. Object permanence developed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Pre-operational</td>
<td>2-7 years old</td>
<td>Symbolic thinking where it uses of proper syntax and grammar to express full concepts. Imagination and intuition are strong but complex abstract thought still difficult. Conversation developed much by this period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Concrete operational</td>
<td>7-11 years old</td>
<td>Concepts attached to concrete situation. Time, space and quantity are understood that can be applied but not as independent concepts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Formal operational</td>
<td>Over 11 years old</td>
<td>Theoretical, hypothetical and counterfactual thinking. Abstract is logic and reasoning. Strategy and planning become possible. Concepts learned in one context can be applied to another.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Stages of Cognitive Development

It could be assumed that children at the sensorimotor stage are explorers. They want to see, hear, taste, and touch everything around them. They generally don’t appear to be thinking about what they do. They try to expose their curiosity during this period. They tend to move around, grasp everything around them. Around age two, children enter the preoperational stage where they learn how to think abstractly, understand symbolic concepts, and use language in more sophisticated ways. During this stage of cognitive development, children become curious and begin to ask questions about everything they see. They can imagine people or objects. This period is suitable way to teach them something good. Training their language skill such as asking them to communicate, doing repetition and telling them a story are good activity at this stage.

Then, by the time they are 7 years old, children can understand much more complex abstract concepts, such as time, space, and quantity. They can apply these concepts to concrete situations, but they have trouble thinking about them independently of those situations. Starting at around 11 years old, children become capable of more abstract, hypothetical, and theoretical reasoning. In this period, commonly they are in elementary school. Their language ability develops step by step. They start thinking more abstract when view something.
d. Local Story or Folklore and The Story of MalinKundang.

There are synonymous terms for story such as folklore or folktales. Those concepts generally have the same meaning. Story can be interpreted as a past event that is told by people, especially elderly, to the young generation. Some of the stories are factual and others are fiction. Essential point in a story is the moral value of the story itself. Story in this paper is a local story that has been told generation by generation. According to Mustakim (2005:53), a local story is a story which is told orally from generation to generation. The story is anonymous, means unknown writer. It happened as it is naturally; elder generations only knew the story from another teller without knowing who the first teller was. Long time ago, story is effective way to teach children moral and character. Usually, older people tell the story in their leisure time. The listeners are amused and later they get moral values.

It goes far deeper, Kiefer (2010:227) defines folktales as all forms of narrative, written or oral which have come to be handed down through the years. All types of story such as legend, myth, fable and epic are folktales. The keywords of story are narrative and it is handed down through the years. Commonly, a story narrates someone or thing in several events and plot. Sound similar with previous statement; Nhung (2016:1) devotes clearly the definition of folklore as follows:

A folktale is a story, myth or legend forming part of an oral tradition, does not have a single, identifiable author or writer and is or was passed down from one generation to the next. A folktale can change over time, be reshaped by modifications and was often changed with each retelling. As a result, there can be various versions of the same folktale.

Dealing with above theory, local story on this occasion is folktale, is anonymous oral tradition of one place. The story is told year by year through their generation. No exact writer of folklore, even unwritten. Folklore or local story, in some places, remains only artefacts as witnesses. Since it is no written record, folklore tends to change over the time. One major important thing is folklore can be a medium to build students’ character. Usually, there are some components in folklore; one of them is the actor-usually called character. Character, on this occasion is a person who does the action. The story teller inserts moral value in a story. The purpose is to lead the students to do something good.

By telling a story, parents can teach children character building and moral values. Suntana (2014:82) argues a story can teach children about humanity concepts in their soul such as fairness, love, faith, attitude, consistence, esthetic, and hate. Most of Indonesian folktales are taken from local story. Usually it tells two contrary points of view—bad and good, honest and lie. As it is known generally, telling bad and good thing is the most basic one character building. The good action will be done by people and bad one will be discarded out. Bad action/thing can be pictured out as someone who is dishonest, impolite, cruel, misbehave, lazy and others bad characteristics. In other hand, good character can be drawn as someone who is honest, polite, kind, hardworking, respect and others good characteristics.

Each province in Indonesia has its own local story or folklore. The existence of local story is considered as local wisdom and assets that must be preserved by indigenous people. For several region or place, folklore mostly is believed as source of philosophy, guidance even tradition. To preserve it from the distinction, folklore is told generation by generation, older people told to younger people, head of clan told to his community, the king told to his people. In the past decade, telling a good story to younger generation was traditional media for teaching and building moral value. It could be said it was an effective media on that period.

The story of MalinKundang come from West Sumatera, especially known as Minangkabau land. As Minangkabaunese who love local wisdom, the story of MalinKundang is told generation by generation to young people. Most of Minangkabaunese have
known the story of MalinKundang. This story provides much valuable lesson for character building. Writer believes this story is familiar local story for young learner. In specific, this story evokes character building for young learner. The plot is simple, and understandable.

DISCUSSION
As it is mentioned above, character building is important thing for young learners. Without a doubt, one of the essences of National Education purpose of Indonesia is to prepare students to be a good citizenship for future. Many theories related to character building for young learner by experts, most of them believed that character building should be started in the early age. As it is mentioned several times, young learners are golden generation for a nation. Much hopes are embedded on their hand, one of them is to build a civilized and well-educated nation. How the way? In general one is by introducing character building in early age to them. In more detail, character building can be invested by telling them local story in this case, the story of MalinKundang.

Our government has put the important of character building in educational curriculum, particularly in kindergarten curriculum. In Indonesian kindergarten curriculum as stated in Dirjen PAUD 2012, there are four aspects that relate to the character building such as: (a) spiritual aspect, (b) personality or personal aspect, (c) social aspect and (d) environmental aspect. In specific explanation, there are several moral values that should be introduced and internalized to the young learner for example: religious, honesty, discipline, tolerance, independent, helping each other, self-confidence, working together, politeness, and respect, responsible, hardworking, leadership, creative, humble and love for nation.

It implies that, our government has paid more attention on character building for young learner. Early age is believed the best way to internalize and shape of students’ character. Scott and Ytreber in Nhung (2016:2) explain that psychologist and educator have emphasized vital roles of story for children’s development. Story especially folklore or folktale provoke their imagination. Story can also stimulate their imagination about the world, allow them to visualize the world surrounding them, understand the right and wrong, what is accepted and rejected in their cultural norm or tradition. By telling story to the young learners, teacher or parents can internalize moral values, introduce local wisdom and keep tradition alive. Story has much moral values such as: honesty, responsibility, hardworking, responsibility, braveness, politeness. All of those normal values are important for them in future life.

First of all, story can internalize moral values. The story of MalinKundang internalizes several moral values that can shape students character building. There are several moral values of that related to character building as follows:

(1) Humble: humble is one of good characters for people in their life. As in Indonesian culture, specifically in Minangkabau means down to earth and enjoy life without having much complaint. It is good character for young learner since nowadays much citizenship over acting in their life style. Many people are consumerism. Sometimes they tend to force themselves on that condition; in fact they are unable to fulfill their life style. MalinKundang and his mother lived as humble people. After listening the story of MalinKundang, young learners are expected to life humbly as MalinKundang did.

(2) Hardworking. Hardworking is effort of someone to get something by working or trying more and more. Hard working also means work with commitment seriousness. Based on the story, MalinKundang is a hardworker. He worked seriously day by day in order to change his life to be better. He worked in a ship, he worked seriously and full of commitment. After several years he finally got what he have expected long time ago. This story motivates young learner to work harder in getting something better in school even in their family. Hard working leads young learner
to get best achievement, such as having good score, passing examination and having permanent commitment.

(3) Religious. Religious is an action, state and manner to faith and follow a religion order. Someone who is religious, she/he always follows religious order fully. Malin Kundang and his mother are religious people. They always conduct Islamic religious orders. As Muslim they conduct five daily prayers every day and follow other religious orders. This type of moral values is the most primary one for young learners to build students’ character. In Indonesian country, religious is the basic foundation for people. Dealing with this moral value, spiritual and religion should be internalized in early age. The earlier they get religious values the more effective for them.

(4) Loyal. Loyal means the condition or state where someone pays much faithfulness to another. Loyal also deals with trust to someone. In other words, loyal means giving or showing firm and constant support or allegiance to a person. In this story, Malin Kundang’s mother is loyal person who always cares and gives faithful to her son. Her loyalty had been tested year by year since her son went to another place till he visited the village. Loyalty is important character for students. Young learners are introduced loyalty through the story of Malin Kundang. Young learners should be a loyal person which can trust and keep relationship alive to others.

(5) Love and care. The story of Malin Kundang implies two elements relates to a mother. Loving and caring are two characters that stick tightly in the story. His mother always cares and loves him since in early age until he grew up. He always asked about Malin’s news to people she met. It indicates, his mother loves and cares him forever even Malin Kundang had not accepted her as mother. For young learners, love and care cannot be separated from their life. They need people who care to them, love them in whatever the conditions.

(6) Don’t be arrogant person. Arrogant is opposite of friendly. Arrogant is bad character that must be discarded in neighborhood or society. someone who is arrogant behaves in a proud, unpleasant way towards other people because they believe that they are more important than others. In the story of Malin Kundang, his wife is arrogant. She was proud to her husband and prosperity. She underestimates others people in Malin’s village especially to her mother-in-law. Arrogance should be avoided by young learners since character leads students’ behave proudly to themselves and treat other students unpleasantly. In most religions, so is in Islam, arrogance is considered a spiritual disease simply because thinking that you are superior means that you claim that you are the only one responsible for your success and so, implicitly denying the role of God. Young learners should know how to keep away from arrogance in their early age. Usually, arrogant students tend to have a few friends in their life and neighborhood.

(7) Obedience. Obedience is an effort or willingness to follow and do something. In family context, children should follow the rule or order that is asked by their parents. In the story of Malin Kundang, he ignores several roles how to obey his mother. In our culture, obedience is most valuable character. Respect for elders is one of the most important in our traditional virtues. Since young, children have been taught that they should respect those older for example our parents, grandparents, employers and teachers. We should give them due respect because of their seniority and years of experience. We can show our respect by greeting them, helping them around and buying them gifts as tokens of appreciation. By being polite and listening to their viewpoints, we are also displaying a form of respect.

To sum up, young learner is golden generation for a nation. Young learner should have proper education and character. To
realize this expectation, young learner must be prepared by their parents, teacher and educator as early as possible. Internalizing character to young learner is real action that should be taken government. One of the ways is by telling a local story for young learner. Local story has multiple functions for young learners. In the first place is a medium for introducing character building for young learners. Character building can be internalized by telling local story for young learners. After they listening the story, parents or teacher may ask them about who are the people on the story, how their attitude, what they do. The story of Malin Kundang teaches us several valuable moral for young learners. These valuable moral are important for them to face and drive our golden generation better.

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