



## TEACHING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BY WHOLE BRAIN TEACHING; BETWEEN STRATEGY AND CHARACTER EDUCATION

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### ABSTRACT

*Teaching nowadays as mandated by 2013 national curriculum is brought among pedagogical and affective dimension. Teacher should be aware to both strategy and character education for students. Teaching English for elementary school needs strategies to adopt, in other hand, character education cannot be taught through as one single unit. Whole Brain Teaching (WBT) treats every child to have four brain areas that require close attention. The procedures of WBT cover Class-Yes, Five classroom rules, Teach-Oke, The Scoreboard, Switch, Mirror, Hand and eyes. The study aims to find the character education gained through WBT. To achieve the purpose, descriptive qualitative research method was used in the study with observation and interview to teacher. The data was gained through questionnaire, to measure students' perception for self-assessment toward character education. Study was conducted at SD 02 Wates, Undaan, Kudus for two meetings of vocabulary class. This study involved 16 students as observed participants. Result of investigation reveals character virtues educated through WBT as politeness, creativity, responsibility, respect and cooperative. Implication of this study is bringing strategy enriched with character education to teach English.*

**Keywords:** *Whole Brain Teaching, Strategy, Character Education*

### INTRODUCTION

Nowadays teaching strategy should involve both internal and external aspect of teaching, the nature of students' capability and strategy applied by teacher and curriculum should be balanced. The view in maximizing human brain as a crucial aspect to boost learning achievement has always been a simulation field of human scientific exploration. Ghosh provided this idea of combining brain cognitive science with teaching field, especially the teaching mode which is involving brain cognitive method and second language learning in young

learners has received extensive attention (Ghosh et al., 2010). Recent studies investigated whole brain teaching (WBT) as set of strategies which strengthen brain cognition to improve learning efficiency and foreign language proficiency for both auditory or visual students (Lahita et al., 2018).

The various English teaching strategies, approaches and techniques have improved the effect of English learning to a certain extent. In present fact, researches tend to not touch and involve the characteristics of human brain, the result of research about brain

cognition and English teaching which is maximized by the learning principle of brain are extremely rare (Van Overwalle in Wu, 2018).

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In other hand, education in school has two great goals; to help young people become smart academically and good with noble characters (Lickona et al, 2007; Kamaruddin, 2012), school should integrate politeness in teaching process (Azahary et al, 2018). Therefore, education in school culture should form character as mandated by Indonesian policy (Kemendiknas, 2010). Character Education is old term but has crucial role in present time since globalization brings both positive and negative influences towards students' attitude. Indonesia has manifested issue of character education since independence through Pancasila and 1945 National Constitution of Indonesian Republic (UUD 1945) in order to be country with noble character. Indonesia has implemented character education as hidden curriculum since 1976 till 2006 curriculum, (Anwar,

2010) then character was integrated into lessons since elementary till high grade, not as independent lesson. Contemporary curriculum places character as "core" in practical education since 2013 curriculum. These considerations inspire author to investigate character education in a strategy which involves human cognition called "Whole Brain Teaching" at English language teaching of SD 02 Wates, Undaan, Kudus.

### Whole Brain Teaching

Chris Biffle created WBT at 1999 after his 25 years experience and competence in the classroom. He asserted that WBT combines direct instruction and cooperative learning because WBT composed seven teaching core referred as "Big Seven" teaching technique in order to improve academic achievement and self-efficacy. (Biffle, 2013). The some procedures of WBT which called "Big Seven" can be seen in table 1

**Table 1.** Syntax of Whole Brain Teaching (Wolken, 2017)

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Learning Syntax	Teacher's Activity
<b>Class-Yes</b>	The teacher asks students to focus with by saying " <i>class-class</i> " with a particular intonation. Students should respond " <i>Yes-yes</i> " with the same intonation with the teacher, so the teacher can start to deliver the material or instruction
<b>Five Classroom Rulers</b>	The teacher organizes them to mention five WBT class rules. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Follow directions quickly.</li> <li>2. Raise your hand for permission to speak.</li> <li>3. Raise your hand for permission to leave your seat.</li> <li>4. Make smart choices.</li> <li>5. Make your dear teacher happy.</li> </ol>
<b>Teach – Oke</b>	The teacher explains outline of material, just each of the important concepts by using movement, and then the teacher pronounce the word " <i>Teach</i> " by clapping, and the student explain it to their friends with movement.

Learning Syntax	Teacher's Activity
<b>The Scoreboard</b>	Rewards is given to motivate students in the form of scoreboard, the teacher gives a picture of a smile for each completed task and a picture sad sign for each incomplete task
<b>Switch</b>	The teacher gives a chance to students to give explanation about certain tricky materials to other students by saying "switch" first.
<b>Mirror</b>	The teacher gives the cue by saying "mirror," and the students answer "mirror" Then, while the teacher explains the material with movement as body language, they follow teacher's movement
<b>Hands and eyes</b>	The teacher says "hands and eyes". Students will respond similarly then they fold their hands on the table and listen carefully to the teacher's explanation and instruction.

Some characteristics of WBT are the way of learning which allows students to recall information is by activating every parts of the brain through coding and repetition and learning process where the learning is fulfilled by movement which matches utterance while clarifying them (Handayani, 2017). Mimic and gesture belong to movement which is set, repeated, and followed by every single student.

## METHODOLOGY

This study followed a qualitative approach by using the descriptive. This model was selected because it was in line with the purpose of this study, which investigated character education found in WBT. The study was conducted at SD 02 Wates, located on Undaan, Kudus city. The participants of this study were a teacher and fourth grade students.

Based on the setting, this research use natural setting as the location is at school. The author observed the participants inside the class naturally and interview to teacher to get the data about how WBT as a strategy contained character education and what characters extracted during WBT. Questionnaire used to get self-assessment

towards character gained through WBT then categorized the virtues with average more than 0.5 to be analyzed.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Through investigation of field observation and analysis of questionnaire, it's founded that there are some virtues which is educated while implementing brain cognition through WBT in the classroom. The self-assessment to gain data of character which participants got during process of teaching and learning is summed in table 2 from the averages that were more than 0.5

**Table 2.** Characters taught in WBT

Character	Students' Average
<b>Politeness</b>	0.59
<b>Creativity</b>	0.67
<b>Responsibility</b>	0.85
<b>Respect</b>	0.63
<b>Cooperative</b>	0.96

Based on questionnaire, five major virtues are built through WBT, one of them is politeness. Growing awareness of students' politeness is urgent, especially in context of communication. As humans, Students should have ability to communicate and transfer their

ideas clearly and in comfortable ways (Mahmud, 2018). In recent studies, communication problems can be solved by applying politeness strategies which is applied and exemplified by teacher (Mariani, 2016; Manik & Hutaganol 2015). In addition, school should integrate politeness in teaching process as suggested by Azhari et. al (2018). Therefore, WBT grew politeness of the students because teacher had applied Five Classroom Rulers as "Raise your hand for permission to speak" and "Raise your hand for permission to leave your seat". Observed case showed when the teacher says "Please," teacher extended his arms to the class. The participants responded, "Ok!" and mimics his gesture. The more pleasantly, warmly, teacher said "Please!" the more pleasantly, warmly, participants responded "Ok!" The brain automatically mirrors the behavior it receives.

67% participants felt aware to be creative which is influenced in WBT learning model. Students need to have creativity especially in language context. Creative involves the way to utilize thinking, action, knowledge and attitude. When facing problem, they should have the ability to assess how well they can cope then create condition based on what already exists.

WBT develops the innovative creativity of students and make the learning activities that can form the intelligence that refers to the brain development of students and develop a sense of safety, comfort, affection, acceptance, and enthusiasm in receiving the material and can improve students' attention and concentration. (Winarso and Karimah, 2017)

Meanwhile respect was modeled well through WBT. This strategy is in line with two Ho`āla philosophies about how ideally build students' respect (Inlay, 2016)

*The process is about nurturing the internal capacity to be and feel respectful of oneself,*

*which is more likely to result in respect of others. Ho`āla nurtures this culture of respect for all in two arenas: (1) Building the internal capacity of students through fulfilling their social and emotional needs for a sense of belonging and connection and the need for a sense of self or identity. (2) Modeling the respect that we want in our students*

Both arenas in building students' respect was showed when the teacher said, "Thank you!" in particular condition, teacher took his hands over his heart. The participants replied, "You're welcome!" and imitated his gesture. During teacher fulfilled emotional needs of participants, he contributed as a role model whose movement should be imitated.

Other example is utilization of scoreboard and simple utterance that teacher used to respect answer or response of participant, "You are still cool". When a participant made a mistake, teacher did not want to incite the other participants to gain attention by showing or proving the mistake. Instead, teacher said "Tell Zaki, you're still cool!" the other participants call out "You are still cool" and then teacher corrected his error. Peck in Inlay (2016) stated that students' feeling of being "valuable" is essential for students' mental. Through WBT, teacher got opportunity to teach students that it's okay to make mistakes.

WBT has made conducive condition to plant "responsibility" in the form of class management and class discipline. System in WBT gave simple and brief task as imitating teacher in "Mirror", repeating few material with movement in "Teach-OK" and being quite when teacher call out "Class" in "Class-Yes". These tasks are easy to be followed and useful for students' awareness about responsibility, but they could directly practice those task not in the form of homework as the usual learning task.

Most of students agreed to obtain cooperative virtue during WBT class. Active learning, cooperative and collaborative "rituals" in the classroom is the core. "Teach-OK" where the participants became the teachers, and teacher became the facilitator of learning. Learning in WBT was broken down into brief segments of direct interactive instruction before the teacher turned the lesson over to students, who re-taught to each other in pairs. The gestures and brief explanation were imitated and used to educate each other, while the teacher observed how far and well participants comprehend material then determined whether to review or advance to the next segments.

## CONCLUSION

WBT has implemented character education as politeness, creativity, responsibility, respect and cooperative. These virtues are not absolute and final, in fact

because of research limitation, there are still other characters contained in WBT. It was evidenced from the "ritual" in WBT in line with the values of character education. Teacher has developed WBT as strategy in line with the characters as mandated by 2013 curriculum in accordance to the challenges of the 21st century. The implementation of WBT in the practical teaching language is expected in an effort to build students' character education. All were carried out in order to prepare the next generation for upcoming the period of globalization that is underway in the community.

The next research about building character through other brain cognition is needed for recent era, the researches should touch the broad field of brain development optimization to get better teaching and effective learning. This effort should be in line with the spirit of building and revitalizing students' character in the millennial era

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