

**AN ANALYSIS OF CHARACTER EDUCATIONAL VALUES IN  
*OEDIPUS REX*; A PLAY BY SOPHOCLES**



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**ABSTRACT**

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This journal entitled “An Analysis of Character Educational Values in *Oedipus Rex*; A Play by Sophocles”. This study was aimed to analyze character educational values raised in this drama and those similarities between character educational values as seen in play *Oedipus Rex* and those as seen in Indonesian education. The method used in this research is qualitative and descriptive method. The data were collected in the form of drama by taking some references related to the story as the analyzed data. The data were grouped and sorted based on the research question. Moreover the researcher found nine character educational values in *Oedipus Rex* namely: religiosity, honesty hard working curiosity, patriotism, nationalism, friendship, love of piece and responsibility. These values have the similarities in Indonesian education that can be seen in core competencies and standard competencies in 2013 curriculum as nowadays curriculum in Indonesia. Teacher has the important role to strenghten students character by classroom management and choose the proper teaching method for students.

Key words: Character Educational Values, 2013 Curriculum

## **INTRODUCTION**

Literature is always related to human life, it could be one of ways to show up human experience and emotion. There are three genres of literature, namely poetry, prose and drama. In drama, we can see the story of human life and nature of human by acting that would be performed. Then, we will learn more about how people act in story to tell other people about the meaning and sense of story. Iwukchukwu in Gibran (2016:2) indicates that “drama is an imitation of life. Drama is different from other forms of literature because of its unique characteristics”.

*Oedipus Rex* is one of classical drama which start with the oracles that Oedipus will kill his father and marry his mother. In this research the writer intended to analyze these values in *Oedipus Rex*. The main reason of this thesis is the writer found character educational values that people can apply in nowadays life situation. The writer tries to gain readers view about character educational values in *Oedipus Rex*, then make the similarities between its character educational values with Indonesian education in order to make sure that this drama has important rule to promote character values and build personality in nowadays education.

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **1. Concept of Drama**

Abrams (1999:69) states that drama is the form of composition designed of performance in the theater, in which actor takes the rules of the characters, perform the indicated action, and utter the written dialogue. Drama is divided into two category. The first category is based on its presentation of the text, i.e. poetic drama, closet drama, and pantomime. Then the second category is based on the features of the content namely: tragedy, comedy, tragicomedy, melodrama and absurd. One of the most famous and complex drama is *Oedipus Rex* which is kinds of tragedy.

## **2. Drama in Relation to Education**

In education there are so many fields of knowledge and one of them is literature. Literature is the reflection of the sense of the humanity itself. Rahmanto in Sofian (2017:20), states that studying literature is basically learning practice. Learn literature should always stem from the realization that each work on a substantially a set of words for students to be investigated, searched, analyzed, and integrated. As literary work, drama consist of two elements which are intrinsic and extrinsic. The intrinsic elements are: theme, plot, character, setting and point of view that participate in forming a story in drama. The extrinsic are the outside elements that influence that drama, including biography of the author, the state of society when the drama was created, as well as the historical development of drama. In *Oedipus Rex* the writer try to gain some idea of the biography of the author and picturing character educational values.

## **3. Character Educational Value**

Education is a human right for every human being, because education becomes an integral part of life for everybody that grows and develops incessantly (Isjoni, 2009: 15). Education is a process to improve, repair, change the knowledge, skills and attitude through guidance, teaching and training activities. Education is a continuous process in order to manifest mature, independent and responsible human and believe to God Almighty (Zainuddin, 2008: 1). Education is the process of giving people a variety of situations that aim to empower themselves (Soyomukti, 2010: 27). Suyanto states that character is the way of thinking and behaving that characterizes each individual to live and cooperate, both in the family environment, society, nation and state (Muslich, 2010: 70).

Munir (2010: 1), declared that intelligent people often serve only those who have a great idea serving those who have a very strong character, while people who have a strong character serve those who gather in themselves a very strong character, great vision, ideas the brilliant, and firm ideological footing. Kurniawan (2013:41) in his book *Character Value* state that character educational

values consist of 18 point, namely: religiosity, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creativity, independence, democracy, curiosity, patriotics, nationalism, achievement appreciation, friendship, love of piece, fondness of reading, environmental awareness, social care, and responsibility.

#### **4. Character Educational Value in 2013 Curriculum**

Dardjowidodo in Sahirudin (2013:572) states that Indonesian students are not ready with the huge changes in education due to the strong influences of paternalistic paradigm in their life many years ago. For that reason, in order to support and increase the quality of education in Indonesia gradually, the government must regulate the system by doing a research in this part. The 2013 Curriculum is the latest curriculum in Indonesia which is defined by the educational government to support the quality of education system since July 15<sup>th</sup> 2013. Within the 2013 Curriculum, the Minister of Education focuses in enhancing the quality of education through Character Education (Kopertis, 2010). The character education firstly appeared by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, was coined by a German pedagogue, F.W Foester (Usaid, 2013). It is considered very important in maintaining the quality of education nowadays. Licona in Banninga and Berkowitz (2004:154) defines character education as a concept to develop a moral consciousness which emerges from psychological, social learning and cognitive consciousness which emerges from psychological, social learning and cognitive development frameworks to develop a students character.

#### **5. Theoretical Framework: Pragmatic Theory**

Pragmatic theories view the arts as a means of achieving an end and judges the value of art based on readers view, because this theory deals with the relationship between text and audience. As one of literary work *Oedipus Rex* is one of classical drama created from Sophocles' three Theban Plays. *Oedipus Rex* tells the story of Oedipus, a man who become king of Thebes who was destined from birth to kill his father Laius and married his mother Jocasta. In this study, pragmatic approach is suitable to use because writer want to use this drama as one

of tools to deliver character educational values for readers, and also to compare the successful of this drama to achieving the goals of character educational values as seen in *Oedipus Rex* with nowadays education in Indonesia.

## **RESEARCH DESIGN**

This research is descriptive qualitative research. The main or primary data in this study is taken from *Oedipus Rex Script*. Meanwhile, the secondary data is taken from books, journals, and other resources which are related to the topic. This study uses library research with documentation. It is the method that would collect the data from primary and secondary data. In collecting the data, the researcher utilizes following steps; (1) Browsing and download *Oedipus Rex* script from internet. (2) Reading some informations from internet about *Oedipus Rex*, and also tries to understand the content of the story by take notes. (3) Quoting and marking the dialogue which is related to the research. (4) Verifying the data that have been chosen. (5) Identify the character educational values which appear in *Oedipus Rex* script. (6) Identifying the similarities of character educational values as seen in *Oedipus Rex* script and those as seen in Indonesian education. (7) Classifying the data of *Oedipus Rex* script based on research question and purpose of study.

Meanwhile, in Analyzing data, the researcher uses qualitative descriptive method with the following steps; namely, (1) After the data have been collected, the researcher tries to review the data that have been collected. (2) Describing the character educational values which appear in *Oedipus Rex* script. (3) Explaining the similarities of character educational values as seen in *Oedipus Rex* script and those as seen in Indonesian education. (4) Elaborating the data of *Oedipus Rex* script based on research question and purpose of study. (5) Explain and elaborate the character educational values which appear in *Oedipus Rex* script and similarities with those in Indonesian Education. (6) Drawing conclusion based on the result of analysis.

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

### **Findings**

There are nine character educational values that can be found in *Oedipus Rex*. Firstly is religiosity, people in Thebes come to the temple of Athena to pray to God Apollo to clean the plague disaster. They always remember their God including Oedipus who has a bad fate. Although he should receive a bad fate, he never blames it to the God and he receives it with full of heart. Second is honesty, which is shown by Tiresias, Jocasta, Oedipus, Messenger and the servant. These figures show that honesty is the precious thing in the world to reveal the truth, for example Tiresias who said that Oedipus is the previous King's slayer who married his mother. He knows that Oedipus can punish him with his death because he says the truth, but he still chooses honesty more than his life. Third is hard working values from Oedipus who wants to overcome his people's problems. He will do anything to clean the city, even at the end he must blind himself and exile himself. Fourth is curiosity values, Oedipus wants to look for the cause of the plague in Thebes until it brings him to reveal his own birth. Fifth is patriotism which brings Oedipus to blind himself and exile himself as punishment to save his people. Then Nationalism from the priest who beseeches his King to find some defense for the city from groans and wails because of the plague disaster. Friendship and communication are also shown in this drama, Oedipus as the King of Thebes wants to hear his people's lamentation and work together with Creon and Chorus to overcome the plague. After that, love is shown by Jocasta as the Queen who mediated the feud between Creon and Oedipus. The last one is Responsibility by Oedipus as the King, husband and father.

There are some characteristics or values in the 2013 Curriculum which are related to Character Educational Values in which can build learners' personality. Curriculum Center Ministry of Education (Minister of National Education, 2010) also states that in order to take further and strengthen the implementation of Character Education in Indonesian education, then it comprises 18 values of character education which nine of them appear in *Oedipus Rex*. As one of learning



media, *Oedipus Rex* contains character educational values which has the similarities with nowadays education in Indonesia (2013 Curriculum). It seems in core competency and standard competency in 2013 curriculum which aim to make learner be able to have a good attitude in their personal faith, morality, self-confident, and responsibility in interacting effectively with the social environment, the natural surrounding, as well as the world and its civilization. Then, the skill competency helps students to have effective and creative ways of thinking in the abstract and concrete realm. Afterward, the knowledge guides students to produce the individual mastering the subject, science technology, arts, and culture that are based on humanity, national, state and civilization. These three domain can be found in *Oedipus Rex* which promote the character and personality building.

## **Discussion**

### **Character Educational Values in *Oedipus Rex***

In this play the writer found nine character educational values. They are religious, honesty, hard work, curiosity, patriotism, nationalism, friendship, love of piece, and responsibility that will be explained as follows:

#### **1. Religiosity**

In *Oedipus Rex* people already have a religion, in that time Greek religion was polytheistic; the Greeks worshipped many gods. Several names are mentioned such as Zeus, Apollo and Helios. In *Oedipus Rex* oracle from Apollo at Delphi gives the important prophecies to Oedipus and Creon (Laius was traveling to this oracle when he was killed). Ellyazar (2013:41) declare that the worship discipline can be determined by religious orientation and social support factors. Setiyartomo in Hermapramni (2012) explain that religious orientation is the way of person to practice their beliefs and religious values. Although Oedipus had bad fate, he never blame on God and still praying to Apollo in his suffer.

## **2. Honesty**

Vadi and Jaakson (2006:12) state that honesty value is a part of the whole value system, while sometimes it is underlined that it has a special position among the other values. In *Oedipus Rex* honesty shown by Tiresias, Jocasta, Oedipus, Messenger, Shepherd and the Servant. Tiresias is a blind prophet in Thebes said that Oedipus is King Laius slayer who marry his birth mother and having children as brother and father both, which made Chorus in anger because he slandered Oedipus as a murderer. In that era, honesty is the most important thing. Someone who lie to the King will be die. Then as the loyalty for the kingdom, everybody have to show the honesty.

## **3. Hard Work**

Hard working in this drama shown by Oedipus efforts who want to overcome his people problems. In that time people of Thebes getting suffer by plague, as a King of Thebes he hear every wisdom suppliant and try to solve it, not only that Oedipus also takes one step ahead by sending Creon to Apollo to get information how to solve the problem that they are facing.

## **4. Curiosity**

Borowsky (2005:347) declare that diversive curiosity is a general tendency for a person to seek novelty, take risks, and search for adventure. Oedipus curiosity appear when Tiresias a blind prophet said that Oedipus is Laius slayer, live with his childrend as brother and father both. It is make Oedipus raise his temper and the quarrel began among Chorus, Creon, and Oedipus because of Tiresias's clue. Then his curiosity brings him to explore everyone, first Oedipus asks Jocasta to tell about the oracle, after she explain it Oedipus really wanders. Nobody can prevent King Oedipus to reveal his own birth, even when his wife resisting his decision. Then Oedipus call the Shepherd and asks some questions, he do not want to stop until he get the truth of his birth even he must kill the Shepherd when he do not want to speak the truth. The writer see that Oedipus has a purpose in life, it is to discover his birth and save his people. In order to do that,

he shows the high curiosity value and he do not want to stop until he get the result.

## **5. Patriotism**

Patriotism is the way of thinking, acting, and insightful that put the interests of the nation and state over the interests of self and his group. Brave behavior, never give up, and want to sacrifice him self for the nation and country shown by Oedipus. Although he was describes as an arrogant and bossy figure but on the other hand he has a high patriotic. He always keep his word and gracefull while serving his sentence. He still runs the punishment was saying even though in the end the punishment falls on him. He blinding and exile himself as the punishment. He does anything that can safe his people and his land although he have to leaves his kingdom.

## **6. Nationalism**

The loyalty and awareness are two important thing to forming a strong nation. Not only government members who have position has the responsibility to make a better nation but everybody in that group have to show loyalty and awareness. In *Oedipus Rex*, the Pries and other suppliant come to temple of Athena to beseech the King to find some defense the city from groans and wails in plague disaster.

## **7. Friendship**

Garza (2015) believes that each partner should speak honestly and openly to avoid miscommunication. If a partner needs to sort out his or her feelings first, their partner should respect those wishes and wait until they are ready to talk.” Then Oedipus show this value, as a King he will hear his people lamentation one by one. The writer see that Oedipus want to make a good communication with his people, because the city will be peace if the kingdom and his people has a good communication. Not only with his people, but King Oedipus also shown the communicative value with Creon his brother-in-law. When he want to clean the

disaster in Thebes, as a King he asks Creon's opinion about the punishment and he do not want to speak inside in order Creon speak to everyone.

### **8. Love of Piece**

Love of piece is attitude, words, and actions that cause others feel happy and secure for their presence that shown by Jocasta. In that time Jocasta try to mediated the feud between Creon and Oedipus. As a Queen Jocasta avoid the conflict between Creon and Oedipus because the land is so sick and it will be better if they find a way out from the problem rather than blame each other.

### **9. Responsibility**

Oedipus is a good and wise king but he is deceived by fate. He is a responsible man, he never runs away from the problem and also did not blame on God about his suffer. Nobody knows that the Queen who become his wife is his mother too, everything happen normally when he won the riddle and become king of Thebes until plague attack his people then reveal the truth. He punished himself for what he had done by blinding and exile to clean the city. Everybody knows that Oedipus is King of Thebes, he can do anything that he want even lead the city without worry about his origin, but as a responsible king, he choose another way. Not only become a responsible King, but Oedipus also shown a responsible husband and father. Before he leave the city, Oedipus asked Creon to bury his wife and take care of his children. He asks his son to become a man, and hug his little girls before leaving the city.

## **The Similarities between Character Educational Values as Seen in *Oedipus Rex* and Indonesian Education**

In *Oedipus Rex*, the writer found nine character educational values namely religiosity, honesty, hard work, curiosity, patriotics, nationalism, friendship, love of piece, and responsibility. The 2013 Curriculum is the lates curriculum in Indonesia which is defined by the educational government to support the quality

of education system since July 15<sup>th</sup> 2013. Learning process in 2013 curriculum should develop attitude, knowledge, and skills realm with a gradual gaining path. Astuti (in Ariesinta, 2016:10) explained that the 2013 curriculum has four points, namely core competency 1 which contains religious values, core competency 2 has social values of humanity, core competency 3 contains knowledge, and core competency 4 contains learning process.

In core competency 1 students are able to live and practice the religious teachings that they embraces. Just like Oedipus and his people who always involve their God in every situation, even in Oedipus suffer he still pray to Apollo. Based on religion teaching, then in core competency 2 students are expecting to be honest just like Tiresias who brave to said the truth in front of Oedipus although the consequence is his death. Honesty is the most expensive thing in the word, honesty also one of factors why Indonesia become one of corruption countries. Transparency International released an index corruption perception of countries in the world for the year 2017, Indonesia is ranked 96<sup>th</sup> (Detik:2018). It means that in 2013 curriculum try to fix Indonesian problem about honesty. If writer see in Oedipus era, everybody has to show loyalty and nationality for the kingdom by honesty and never being a betrayer because the price is the death. Then responsibility also one of important thing that students should learn from Oedipus who never runs away from the problem and also did not blame on God about his suffer. Learners have to be a responsible, responsive and pro-active to make a good social and natural environment. The 2013 curriculum aims to change learners attitude to be polite through the values of character education contained in it. Means that if learners have the commendable attitude and mentality the learner will be able to absorb science and certainly be a better generation.

The point in core competency 3 is to understanding and applying knowledge based on learners curiosity. In *Oedipus Rex*, his curiosity about his birth brings him to reveal the truth and clean the city. Also his curiosity followed by hard working, he never stop to find the truth. His mission to overcome the

plague brings him to face the truth, even his wife can not stop him. Then for nowadays education in Indonesia, curiosity and hard working values in *Oedipus Rex* can be one of example for learners to learn about science, technology, art, culture, and humanities with the insights of humanity, nationality, state and civilization. On the other word, learners asked to never give up in their learning process.

Then based on the knowledge in core competency 3, learners asked to applicate that knowledge in core competency 4. Learners asked to processing, presenting, and reasoning in the knowledge in a concrete realm (using, parsing, composing, modifying, and making) and abstract realm (writing, reading, computing, drawing and composing) as learned in school and other sources in the same viewpoint /theory.

Then based on *Oedipus Rex*, character educational values in 2013 curriculum can be applied in Indonesian education, especially at school and classroom with simple practice for example in Religiosity value teacher and students can pray before and after the lesson. In order to applicate these values teacher has the important rule to help his/her students build character and personality. It can be done by classroom management and choosing proper method especially in teaching and learning process.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

### **Conclusion**

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that the first discussion is the character educational values in *Oedipus Rex*. The writer found nine character educational values in that drama namely: religiosity, honesty, hard working, curiosity, patriotism, nationalism, friendship, love of piece, and responsibility.

Then, character educational values in *Oedipus Rex* has the similarities with 2013 curriculum, that use in nowadays indonesian education by its core competencies and standard competencies. The Core Competencies are designed in

four interrelated groups with respect to religious attitudes (Core Competence 1), social attitudes (Core Competence 2), knowledge (Core Competence 3), and application of knowledge (Core Competence 4). These values can be applied in school and class for example religiosity value which can be show with pray before and after lesson. In this part, classroom management has important rule to stenghten students character. Furthermore teacher can choose some learning method such as scientific learning, inquiry/discovery learning, problem-based learning, and so on.

### **Suggestion**

Based on the results and discussion of this research, there are some suggestions that the writer intends to convey:

1. This drama could be one of source for students who interest to learn about literature. By reading this drama students can develop their quality of English. They also can learn about how to be a good leader from Oedipus King of Thebes, not only that they also can applicate the character educational values in *Oedipus Rex* in nowadays education.
2. The writer expects that the result of this study can be beneficial for further study which is concerned with character educational values especially in literature. Hopefully, this study can be used as the references for English literary especially for English Department.

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