

Exploring Moral Value in *Brianna and Bottomwise* for Indonesian High School Teaching Material

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Abstract: The spread of issues regarding the morality of the younger generation, such as lack of manners, bullying, brawl, and other juvenile delinquency, is still a problem today, and a solution needs to be found immediately. An awareness of moral values can be done through literature, and novels are one of the solutions. One novel that embodies good moral values is "Brianna and Bottomwise" by Andrea Hirata. In this novel, there are moral values that can be used as an example for the younger generation in their attitude, behavior, and actions in everyday life. This study aims to describe the moral values aspect in terms of structural and extrinsic aspects in novels and their suitability as teaching material for Indonesian language subjects in high schools. This research used a descriptive qualitative design with a structural approach to analyze intrinsic elements such as themes and characters, and a moral approach by analyzing extrinsic values. Data were collected through close reading and note-taking techniques, then analyzed using triangulation. The results of the study reveal structural aspects of the novels Brianna and Bottomwise by Andrea Hirata, as seen from the themes and characters. The manifestation of moral values in this novel; (1) the moral value of human relations with God, by praying to God and doing good deeds; (2) the moral value of the relationship between humans and the social environment, including helping each other, having good relationships with everyone, whether family or other people; (3) the moral values of human relations with themselves include never giving up, working hard and keeping promises. The findings of this study suggest that Brianna and Bottomwise can be adapted into concrete learning materials, such as modules, student worksheets, and class discussions, to enhance character education. Wider implementation at various levels of education is also recommended so that literature-based learning can support national efforts to build students' moral character.

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INTRODUCTION

The progressively advanced civilization brings about various problems that are increasingly numerous and diverse. Starting from the degradation of manners that occurs every year (Kurniawan et al., 2019), bullying, street fights, to criminality. Awareness of the importance of moral values needs to be revived, especially among the current younger generation. One of them is through novels, as novels have become one of the most popular types of literature among young people. Teaching language and literature can build humanity and a culture so that it can produce a society that is capable of thinking critically independently, and able to express and appreciate well (Djojoseuroto & Surastina, 2009). The main problem is not only that bullying, fights, and poor manners are on the rise, but also that character education, which should be the primary focus of schools, is losing its influence. Numerous research studies and news articles show that juvenile delinquency is still on the rise and that students are more likely to be affected by bad outside factors like social media, peer pressure, and a consumerist lifestyle. This condition leads many teenagers to value immediate satisfaction over cultivating discipline, perseverance, and empathy. The inadequate incorporation of moral values in educational resources exacerbates the issue, as instruction frequently prioritizes cognitive development while neglecting emotional growth and character formation. One of the

most important things that needs to be done immediately is to determine how to create and select teaching materials that not only provide students with information but also help them become more aware of their morals in everyday life.

The phenomenon of declining morals among adolescents, marked by increasing cases of bullying, brawls, and consumerist behavior, indicates that character education in schools remains ineffective. Education has historically emphasized cognitive aspects, while the affective dimension and character development have received less attention. In this context, literature, particularly novels, is a powerful tool to utilize because of its ability to convey life values emotionally, aesthetically, and reflectively. Unlike conventional learning approaches that tend to be abstract, novels are able to present life experiences through characters, plots, and conflicts that are close to students' realities. Therefore, research examining moral values in novels is not only important for literary studies but also has practical urgency in enriching teaching materials that can foster students' moral awareness in accordance with the demands of the Independent Curriculum.

Literature etymologically originates from the Latin word *literatura*, which means writing, literacy, or the use of writing, from *litera* meaning letter or written work. According to Teeuw (2014), the word "sastra" in Indonesia originates from the root word "sas," which, in derived verbs, means directing, working, giving guidance, or instructions, while "tra" indicates tools or means. Literature can also be interpreted as a teaching tool in written form.

Literature has two main functions. Horace, as mentioned by (Teeuw, 1984), refers to them as *dulce et utile*, which means sweet and useful in Latin. *Dulce* conveys the idea of extreme pleasantness or enjoyment, while *utile* refers to everything that is beneficial and useful. Literature also serves a function that involves human experiences on an aesthetic, intellectual, and emotional level.

A good literary work never makes its readers feel bored, forced, or burdened while reading it (Handayani & Sudiatmi, 2022). A novel is one form of long fiction prose with a scope that is neither too long nor too short (Nurgiyantoro, 2007). In a novel, the author portrays the reality of human life using language that can make readers feel and experience it themselves, as described by the author (Hendrika, 2016). A novel has two elements, intrinsic and extrinsic elements. Intrinsic elements are those found within a novel, such as themes, characters, plot, setting, writing style, perspective, and message. Extrinsic elements are those that form from outside the literature itself, such as the author's biography, social background, and underlying values (Amna & Rasymah, 2022).

In various literary works, especially novels, there are various life values that can be found within them, one of which is moral values. According to Sjarkawi (2005), moral values are defined as the content regarding the overall order that regulates human actions, behavior, attitudes, and habits in society based on teachings of values, principles, and norms. Nurgiyantoro (2007) stated that the manifestation of moral values is divided into three forms: the manifestation of moral values in the relationship between humans and themselves, the relationship between humans and other humans within the social sphere, including their relationship with the natural environment, and the relationship between humans and God.

Several studies have shown that literature, especially novels, is crucial for teaching morals. Astuti et al. (2025) found that character development in novels helps students learn about character through language and literature classes. Budiawan et al. (2022) also stated that Tere Liye's book "*Si Anak Kuat*" contains morals that can be used as an alternative lesson in high schools. These findings support the idea that Andrea Hirata's novel *Brianna and Bottomwise* should be studied more closely due to its literary quality and its potential to help students strengthen their moral values. Previous studies on moral values in literature have largely focused on popular novels such as Andrea Hirata's *Laskar Pelangi* or Tere Liye's novels, which are often used to teach character in schools. Because they explicitly address themes of friendship, struggle, and family values relevant to students' lives, Andrea Hirata's works are frequently studied. However, focusing too heavily on these works makes it difficult to see Andrea Hirata's other works, especially *Brianna and Bottomwise*. *Brianna and Bottomwise* present moral values through a unique blend of detective stories, musical journeys, and a distinctive comedic narrative. This differs from *Laskar Pelangi*, which depicts the struggle for education, or Tere Liye's novels, which address family and social issues. The

characters illustrate principles such as honesty, hard work, empathy, and togetherness in an imaginative context that remains relevant to the lives of teenagers.

To support the improvement of moral values through literature, novels can be implemented in the teaching and learning process in schools as one of the supporting materials. Teaching materials refer to all forms of materials used in teaching and learning activities that are systematically arranged to enable students to learn independently and are designed in accordance with the applicable curriculum (Majid, 2008; Anggraini et al., 2023). The Department of Education (Depdiknas) (Kosasih, 2021) defined teaching materials as materials that students must learn as a means of learning.

The effective selection of teaching materials requires several important criteria that can be used as references for selecting good teaching materials. Prastowo (2012) stated that teaching materials should contain criteria including: (1) Knowledge, which includes (a) facts, (b) concepts, (c) principles, and (d) procedures. (2) Skills, which consist of learning materials related to the ability to develop ideas, choose, use materials, use equipment, and work techniques. (3) Attitudes or values, which include (a) values of togetherness, (b) honesty, (c) compassion, (d) helping values, (e) values of enthusiasm and interest in learning, (f) values of work ethic, (g) willingness to accept others' opinions with an open-minded attitude, not being allergic to criticism, and being aware of one's mistakes so that advice from others can be accepted with an open heart and without feeling offended.

Reinforcing moral values in today's younger generation is highly necessary because the moral standards among adolescents are still declining. Adolescence is considered a period filled with shocks and sudden changes, both physically and psychologically (Setyoningsih, 2018). Thus, the reinforcement of moral values among adolescents is necessary. Therefore, with its various characteristics, novels are chosen as a means of conveying moral values to the younger generation. It is hoped that novels can be more effective and easily understood in conveying moral values, so that a morally upright younger generation can be realized.

Brianna and Bottomwise by Andrea Hirata tells the story of the adventures of two famous private detectives, Brianna and Bottomwise, in their quest to find the guitar of the legendary musician John Musiciante, which keeps changing hands and locations, the story of Sadman and his Malay Orchestra, as well as the story of Alma and Ameru, the music prodigy. Based on this background, the researcher is interested in analyzing Andrea Hirata's novel, *Brianna and Bottomwise* in terms of its moral values. The chosen moral values are the research object because the novels *Brianna and Bottomwise* by Andrea Hirata contain numerous examples of moral values that people can emulate. Therefore, it is hoped that after reading the novel, the moral values of the readers will increase and not undergo further decline, especially for the younger generation.

Moral values serve as a benchmark to differentiate between good and evil, right and wrong behavior of an individual. In this regard, moral values will be analyzed based on structural and extrinsic aspects. The structural aspect includes themes and characters/characterization, while the extrinsic aspect includes the manifestation of moral values, the moral values of the main characters, and the form of conveying moral values (Ervina, 2019).

Many previous studies have investigated moral values in Indonesian novels, but most have focused on classic literary works or popular fiction widely used in educational institutions. There has been little research on Andrea Hirata's *Brianna and Bottomwise*, but the novel contains moral values important to young people, such as honesty, hard work, and togetherness. Most previous studies have only examined moral values superficially, failing to directly connect them to their recent adaptation as a structured educational resource within the Merdeka Curriculum. Consequently, *Brianna and Bottomwise* do not explore moral values structurally or extrinsically, and research has only addressed how these values can be interpreted. For literature learning to be enjoyable and help students become good people, these needs must be met.

The problem to be investigated in this research is the aspects of moral values in terms of the structural and extrinsic elements of the novels *Brianna and Bottomwise* by Andrea Hirata, as well as their suitability as teaching materials in high school. This study aims to describe the aspects of moral values, such as themes and characterization (structural aspects), and the manifestation of moral values of the main

characters and the form of conveying moral values itself (extrinsic aspects), as an effort to raise awareness among adolescents to improve moral values in their daily lives and also evaluate the suitability of novels as one of the teaching materials in schools.

METHOD

This research falls into the category of qualitative descriptive research. It is stated by Faozi & Qomariyah (2020), this research aims to understand phenomena related to the experiences of subjects, including their behavior, perception, motivation, and actions. A structural approach, consisting of intrinsic elements present in the novels *Brianna and Bottomwise* by Andrea Hirata, and a moral approach, consisting of an analysis of the moral value content, were used in this research.

The research instrument used was a document/text analysis sheet organized according to moral value categories, based on the theories of Lawrence Kohlberg and Aristotle. This analysis sheet helped the researcher keep track of the data by allowing them to identify text excerpts related to specific moral values. The instrument was validated through expert assessment, which solicited feedback from the supervising lecturer on the appropriateness of the moral value indicators and the precision of the classifications.

The data collection technique employed in this research involves reading and taking notes. This technique involves data sources being carefully read and primary data being diligently noted (Lubis, 2021). A qualitative descriptive data analysis technique was employed. The novels *"Brianna" and "Bottomwise"* by Andrea Hirata were the primary data in this research, while secondary data were obtained from the internet.

Data analysis was conducted using a qualitative descriptive method. The data collected through the analysis sheet was interpreted using theoretical triangulation. First, moral values were categorized based on Kohlberg's stages of moral development to examine the characters' moral reasoning. Second, the results were enhanced by Aristotle's Virtue Ethics to discern the exhibited virtues. This method provided a more comprehensive and detailed analysis, which reduced the bias that arises from using a single theoretical framework.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Fictional works have several intrinsic elements. According to Kosasih (2012), intrinsic elements, also called the story structure, are elements that can be found within literary works, such as themes, characterization, plot, setting, point of view, and message. However, this research would only focus on the themes and characterization, as well as extrinsic elements in the form of manifestations of moral values and their suitability as teaching materials.

Moral Values from a Structural Aspect

The theme in Andrea Hirata's novels, *Brianna and Bottomwise*, revolves around adventure and a struggle. The novel narrates the journey of Brianna and private detective Bottomwise in their quest to find the stolen guitar of John Musiciante. It depicts the adventure of the Vintage Sunburst 1960 guitar, which must overcome numerous situations and obstacles from Fresno, California to Ketumbi Village, Senyap Island in Sumatra before returning to its owner. The theme of the struggle is also evident in the efforts of both detectives to return the guitar to its musician. The novel also portrays Sadman's struggle to establish and convince the community around him that he is capable of forming a Malay Orchestra with his friends, despite being tone-deaf and considered incapable by those around him. Additionally, it tells the story of a young girl named Alma who struggles to develop her talent in playing guitar.

The analysis of the theme of struggle in this novel serves not only as a narrative element but also as a representation of exemplary moral values. Sadman's struggle exemplifies the importance of perseverance and integrity, aligning with Aristotle's virtue ethics on the importance of living a good life. Alma's struggles reflect Kohlberg's conventional stages of moral development, in which an adolescent strives to meet social expectations through hard work and dedication. With their courage and responsibility, *Brianna and Bottomwise* demonstrate that facing challenges is evidence of mature moral reasoning.

In this novel, the point of view used was the third-person omniscient perspective, where the author narrates the story by presenting characters with their names and third-person pronouns. The author has the freedom to describe the characters and know everything about them, including events, actions, feelings, and thoughts (Ardiana, 2014). The characters in the novels *Brianna and Bottomwise* by Andrea Hirata consist of the main characters and supporting characters. The main characters in this novel include John Musiciante, a talented musician with a tall, slender stature, long unkempt hair, an eccentric artistic appearance, and a highly sensitive and possessive nature, yet a deep love for his mother. Private detective Bottomwise (Angela Bottomwise) is 29 years old, determined a woman who never gives up, works hard, enjoys challenges, visionary, has bright blue eyes, and blonde hair. Brianna Leigh Stanford (Brianna), a 22-year-old African American woman born in Philadelphia, is a brave woman and skilled in using firearms, has shoulder-length thick hair, smooth skin, and clear brown eyes. Arsyad Amrullah bin Ahmadin Soelaiman (Sadman), a *tauco* seller and a humble *Gambus* player who is resilient and patient. Then there is Putri Almadiani (Alma), a quiet and shy little girl who is humble. Despite her tall, slim body, she is beautiful and talented at playing the guitar, even though she is still young.

It is clear that Andrea Hirata displays moral values in the behavior and attitudes of his characters beyond highlighting their physical characteristics. For example, John Musiciante is depicted as strange and sensitive, but he still shows love and respect for his mother, which demonstrates the value of family affection. As a female detective, Angela Bottomwise shows determination, hard work, and courage, which represent the moral values of responsibility and never giving up. Brianna is depicted as a brave and confident person who teaches many people about the importance of having courage when facing life's difficulties. With a humble background, Sadman shows the value of humility and persistence to keep trying even though others consider it insignificant. As a young character, Alma shows tenacity and enthusiasm to develop talents despite having limitations from an early age.

There are several supporting characters in the novels, such as Ameru, a young guitarist with small stature, quiet, and shy, yet very talented at playing the guitar, despite still being a junior high school student in Jakarta. Amaya, Ameru's sister, a chef who wears a hijab, is beautiful and caring towards her brother. Marjoli, the owner of a second-hand store named Marjoli, a kind-hearted man who often helps Alma. Sadman's friends like Nasa, a drummer who did not finish junior high school and works as a tin miner. Jamindin, a tambourine player who used to work as an office boy in the District Revenue Office. The Tarobi twins: Tarobi 1 plays the *bass cekik* (a traditional Indonesian musical instrument), and Tarobi 2 plays the accordion; both are itinerant toy sellers. Sekonder, a smart bookworm and guitar picker in the Malay Orchestra who used to work odd jobs in Sumatran cities, but switched professions to become his father's bone masseur's assistant.

Then there are Young Musician and Corrupt 1 and 2, the young musicians who are corrupt, evil, cunning, and greedy. The Duo Terong, among them Hamzah as the talented accordion player and Baharudin as an expert in all styles of *Gambus* music. Pak Mu, an elderly man whose mind is unstable but was once a great musician, is suffering from dementia, muteness, and confusion, but is always smiling and enjoys listening to music. Laila, Alma's mother, who struggles hard to fulfill her child's dream of buying a guitar. Alma's father, a gambler and drunkard who heartlessly sell his child's guitar. Tilap, a habitual thief who remains loyal to his boss. And Pak Boss, a receiver of stolen goods in the thief market.

From the supporting and antagonistic characters in *Brianna and Bottomwise*, it is clear that Andrea Hirata does not simply complement the story but also inserts important moral values that are worth analyzing. Characters such as Ameru and Amaya exemplify family affection and support between siblings, which is relevant to teaching the importance of solidarity in the lives of teenagers. Marjoli shows social concern by helping Alma, even at the cost of her own belongings. This act highlights sacrifice and empathy. Nasa, Jamindin, and Sekonder represent young people facing challenges from modest backgrounds, showing the importance of hard work and adapting to the future. In contrast, characters like Tilap, Alma's father, and the young corruptor clearly break moral rules. Their roles help highlight honesty, responsibility, and integrity, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Relationship between Intrinsic Elements and Moral Values in Andrea Hirata's *Brianna and Bottomwise*

Intrinsic Element	Key Behavior/Event	Moral Value (Kohlberg)	Moral Value (Aristotle)
Sadman	Struggles to form a Malay Orchestra despite being underestimated	Fulfilling social expectations	Perseverance, integrity
Alma	Persistently develops her guitar talent despite poverty	Hard work to gain recognition	Courage, eagerness to learn
Brianna	Bravely faces challenges together with Bottomwise	Personal responsibility	Courage, self-confidence
Bottomwise	Works tirelessly and responsibly to recover the guitar	Principle-based morality	Responsibility, diligence
Marjoli	Helps Alma even at his own material loss	Social concern	Empathy, sacrifice
Alma's Father	Sells his daughter's guitar to gamble	Self-interest	Greed, irresponsibility
Young Corruptors	Abuse talent for personal gain	opportunistic	Dishonesty

By examining the themes and characters, this structural analysis reveals that strengthening moral values requires Brianna and Bottomwise's intrinsic qualities, rather than story elements. The characters in this novel face hardships and embark on a journey in their quest to find the legendary guitar. The novel also demonstrates the characters' courage, tenacity, and unyielding spirit, which can serve as role models for readers, especially students. The characterizations also show how the characters' behavior reflects moral principles. Sadman demonstrates the importance of hard work and perseverance by supporting a humble but determined Malay orchestra. Brianna and Bottomwise demonstrate courage, honesty, and a strong sense of commitment to their work. Alma demonstrates how a young woman perseveres in pursuing her dreams despite having limited financial resources. Supporting characters such as Marjoli demonstrate care and kindness by helping Alma buy a guitar. Villains, such as Alma's gambling father or a young corruptor, demonstrate how bad behavior can damage a person's morals. Personal conflicts, social cohesion, and ethical dilemmas are examples of complex moral dynamics depicted by new structural elements. This connection strengthens the argument that *Brianna and Bottomwise* is not only a fine work of literature but also a highly useful teaching tool for high school students. Text-based learning allows educators to motivate students to understand the narrative and its characters, while simultaneously interpreting the moral values contained within and connecting them to real-life situations.

Moral Values from Extrinsic Aspects

Values encompass various aspects, including moral values, social values, cultural values, religious values, and economic values. Moral values refer to actions or behaviors that align with commonly accepted norms within specific social environments (Triana, 2020). Aisah (2015) stated that social values are standards used to assess the appropriateness of attitudes directed towards social life. These values reflect the extent to which an individual's relationships with others are shaped as they become members of society. Cultural values are the fundamental rules for human behavior. Verulitas & Cahyono (2016) stated that cultural values are concepts about what lives in the minds of most members of a society. Religious values are sourced from beliefs in the Divine and are inherent in individuals. Religious values relate to the principles and teachings of a religion, guiding the behavior and thoughts of its followers. Mangunwijaya (1994) asserted that religious values are the values present in fictional literary works, determining individuals who are conscientious, morally upright or devout towards all that is good. Educational values involve teaching the values of truth, goodness, and beauty through the process of changing attitudes and behaviors, aiming to mature individuals through educational efforts (Zakiyah & Rusdiana, 2014).

A novel is not devoid of extrinsic aspects such as the manifestation of moral values, the moral dilemmas faced by the main characters and the form of conveying moral values used by the author. Similarly, in the novels *Brianna and Bottomwise*, these aspects are also present. The manifestation of moral values was divided into three categories: the relationship between humans and their God, the relationship between humans and their social environment, and the relationship between humans and themselves.

Human beings have a relationship with God even before they are born into this world. Meriyanti et al (2018) asserted that the relationship between humans and God is a special one. Humans as creatures of God, cannot be separated from their Creator. In Andrea Hirata's novel, the manifestation of moral values between humans and their God is evident when Sadman is saddened because he lacks the funds to purchase a new guitar for Sekonder. He prays to God about his desire to play music and nothing else.

"Oh, Tuhan, aku hanya ingin main musik, itu saja permintaanku. Aku tak pernah meminta rumah bagus, televisi, atau sepeda motor. Aku tak pernah meminta agar dapat istri apoteker, bidan, atau guru TK. Aku hanya ingin main musik Melayu Semenanjung, apakah itu terlalu banyak untuk ku minta?" (pg. 210)

In the novel quote above, it can be concluded that humans should only pray to God even in the most difficult circumstances.

Then there are moral values between humans and their social environment, which refer to the relationship between humans and other people or their social environment, as well as moral values related to the natural environment of flora and fauna. Here are the manifestations of moral values between humans and their social environment in Andrea Hirata's novel *Brianna and Bottomwise*.

The relationship between siblings should be harmonious and full of love, as seen in the following excerpt,

"Setiap kakaknya berlayar, selalu bertanya padanya, mau dibawakan oleh-oleh apa kalau nanti kembali." (pg. 62)

In human life, one will never be separated from others, as fundamentally, humans are social beings who cannot live alone. Therefore, humans need friends in their lives. For example, when Alma was trying to play the guitar, her friend Nurul is by her side to help her.

Mulailah Alma mencoba-coba gitar elektrik. Nurul membantunya mengambil dan mengembalikan gitar. (pg. 125)

This novel also exemplified the importance of helping each other selflessly. As exemplified by Sadman when he returns John Musiciante's guitar.

"Please no say to people in the world that I send this guitar to you and please say to Mister John Musiciante, don't worry, his guitar no canibal." (pg. 30)

In the excerpt, Sadman pleads for the recipient of the guitar not to disclose to the world that he was the one who returned the legendary rock musician's guitar. He also assures John Musiciante not to worry in case his guitar has been cannibalized with another guitar.

Supporting others in doing good deeds feels like a mandatory duty. Especially when it can help others develop themselves, as seen when Marjoli gives a discount to Alma when she buys a guitar but doesn't have enough money. Marjoli does this because he sees Alma's potential in playing guitar.

"Marjoli telah menjual rugi banyak gitar itu dari harga dia membelinya 850 ribu di Padang. Dirasanya itu sebagai bentuk dukungan pada bakat hebat Alma." (pg. 156)

The third manifestation of moral values is the relationship between humans and themselves. Zulfardi (2020) stated that the behavior of the relationship between humans and themselves is classified into all forms of moral values related to the individual as a person, indicating the existence of the individual with various attitudes inherent in themselves.

In the novels *Brianna and Bottomwise*, we are taught not to be discouraged even though we have deficiencies. Because nothing can defeat good intentions and kindness.

"Tak ayal, atas nama kecintaan tak bersyarat pada musik, atas nama passion terbesar dalam hidup mereka, para personil tak berkecil hati. Mereka tetap rajin berlatih, kaset-kaset yang ditiru kusut, tombol rew dol, dan tak ada yang mengalahkan niat baik." (pg. 149)

In this quote, Sadman and his friends are described as figures who are not discouraged, even though they have been ridiculed by the people around them. This teaches us that we should not give up fighting for what we believe in, as long as it is good and does not harm others.

In this novel, we are also taught to keep promises even if those promises are made to ourselves. We still have to try our best to fulfill those promises.

"Seperti janjinya pada diri sendiri, dia juga mengganti duit ibunya." (hlm. 156)

In the quote above, it is illustrated that Alma is trying to fulfill something she has promised, even if it is a promise to herself.

In the novels *Brianna and Bottomwise* by Andrea Hirata, everyone is taught to keep trying as hard as possible to make their dreams come true.

"Menjelang kompetisi, Alma berlatih habis-habisan selama berjam-jam" (pg. 140)

In the quote above, it can be seen that Alma tries her best to win the competition by practicing diligently. As humans, we should endeavor with all our might to achieve our dreams.

Brianna and Bottomwise novels teach readers to act honestly, because honesty is highly esteemed by society. The value of honesty can be seen when Sadman immediately returns the lost guitar of John Musiciante and does not sell it even though he knows how valuable the guitar is. On the other hand, it is also shown how detectives Brianna and Bottomwise have good integrity and their courage in overcoming various obstacles deserves an appreciation. Meanwhile, from the relationship between Alma and her mother, an example can be taken how the bond of affection within a family is genuine. Laila, Alma's mother, who is willing to do anything to support her daughter's talent. It shows that parents will always do their best for their children. Furthermore, the optimism shown by Sadman when forming the Malay Orchestra can serve as an example that everything we do should be based on faith as well.

Alma demonstrates the value of hard work and perseverance through hours of music practice. These values can inspire students to be more disciplined and committed to achieving academic and non-academic success. Meanwhile, Laila demonstrates the value of family affection, emphasizing the importance of parental support and healthy emotional relationships. Both of these factors are relevant to fostering social awareness and empathy in students.

Brianna and Bottomwise possess moral values that can be used to teach character in schools, extending beyond just the story's message. Through literature learning activities, teachers can encourage students to discuss novel excerpts, identify moral values, and then connect them to real-life situations. This aligns with the research objective to assess the suitability of this novel as high school teaching material within the Merdeka Curriculum framework, which emphasizes character development, social empathy, and critical thinking skills.

The Suitability As Teaching Material

Reinforcement for moral education campaigns is one of the previous Indonesian government's tasks, as outlined in the Nawacita plan. In the Nawacita plan, the government will carry out a revolution in the

nation's character (Pradana et al., 2021). Andrea Hirata conveys moral values explicitly in the novels *Brianna and Bottomwise*. The author clearly conveys the moral values he wants to convey through the characters' behaviors and the narratives he writes, allowing readers to easily understand these messages.

Teaching materials are a crucial component of effective learning activities. Teaching materials can facilitate learning for both students and teachers. According to Sungkono (2003), teaching materials are a set of materials that contain the learning material or content that is "designed" to achieve learning objectives. Teaching materials are divided into several types, including printed teaching materials, non-printed teaching materials, audio-visual learning media, and interactive multimedia learning media.

Printed teaching materials are learning materials in printed form, used as guides and sources of information in the learning process. Kemp and Dayton (cited in Atikah et al (2021) and Yanti et al (2019)) stated that printed teaching materials are a set of materials prepared on paper, which can serve for learning purposes or information delivery. Examples of printed teaching materials include modules, worksheets, textbooks, leaflets, and graphical images. Non-printed teaching materials are all learning materials whose delivery does not use printed or paper forms. Prastowo, (2015) consider non-print teaching materials are defined as materials that contain learning material or content to achieve learning objectives outlined using non-print technology. Examples of non-printed teaching materials include e-books, multimedia presentations, educational software, and audio materials.

Novels as printed materials can be used as one of the printed teaching resources. In this case, novels *Brianna and Bottomwise* can be utilized as a teaching resource because they meet the criteria of printed teaching materials in the form of a printed book. Andrea Hirata's novel values are considered worthy of use as teaching materials in schools, as they reinforce students' character education. In the Merdeka Curriculum, literary works are utilized as teaching materials for high school students in grade XII, phase F. Phase F includes Learning Outcomes, focusing on students' language skills for effective communication and reasoning in social, academic, and work contexts. Learning Outcomes per element involve reading and viewing, enabling participants to evaluate ideas and views logically from various texts (non-fiction and fiction) in print and electronic media. The moral values in the novel *Brianna and Bottomwise* by Andrea Hirata are used as one of the teaching materials for grade XII Phase F high school students, so that the intrinsic and extrinsic elements of prose, in this case, the novel, can be better understood.

The suitability of the novel *Brianna and Bottomwise* as a teaching material can be seen from its relevance to the learning outcomes of the Merdeka Curriculum. The moral values analyzed through structural and extrinsic aspects can be applied in teaching and learning activities through various strategies. Teachers can create learning programs that involve analyzing novel excerpts to identify specific moral values, or they can *lembar kerja siswa* (LKS) that help students discuss the characters' attitudes and behaviors. The novel can also be used as a classroom discussion tool to compare the moral values contained in the story with those found in students' everyday lives. In this way, literary learning goes beyond aesthetic appreciation but also contributes to character education, a priority in national education.

Placing this novel as teaching material in grade 12 is also strategic, as at this developmental stage, students are in the process of discovering their identity. The moral principles of integrity, tenacity, familial love, and bravery in the face of adversity can be used as tangible examples to support children in cultivating positive outlooks. This reinforces the research finding that *Brianna and Bottomwise* is not simply a popular work of literature, but also an educational tool that supports the development of language skills and character building.

The novel *Brianna and Bottomwise* presents challenges that require attention as a teaching resource. The story's setting, which ranges from America to Sumatra, with its diverse local cultures, can be a valuable resource for students, but it also requires teacher guidance to ensure students understand the story beyond simply understanding it and interpreting its underlying moral values. Furthermore, some of the novel's moral conflicts, such as corruption, gambling, or theft, need to be addressed as critical reflection, rather than simply as story consumption. With appropriate pedagogical strategies, teachers can utilize the novel as a vehicle for honing students' critical literacy skills, moral analysis, and social sensitivity.

Research Advantages and Limitations

This research has high practical relevance for education, particularly at the high school level. By linking the research findings to the learning outcomes of the Independent Curriculum, this study goes beyond the theoretical realm and also demonstrates how novels can be implemented as teaching materials. This enhances literature's standing as a powerful tool for fostering character education and fostering students' capacity for critical thought.

According to the Nawacita (Nine Priorities), the government is working to improve character education, and this study supports those efforts. The moral values identified, such as honesty, hard work, family love, and perseverance, were not only mapped descriptively but also analyzed for their implications for students. Thus, this study successfully demonstrated that literary works can be used as strategic learning media for developing a young generation with character.

The limitation lies in the scope of the research object, which focused only on one novel, *Brianna and Bottomwise* by Andrea Hirata. However, Andrea Hirata's other works also contain many moral values worthy of analysis, so the findings of this study cannot fully represent the richness of moral values in the author's entire body of work.

The research subjects were only grade XII high school students in phase F. This makes the results unable to be generalized to other levels of education, such as junior high school, college, or non-formal education. Moral values in literary works are relevant across ages and educational levels.

In terms of methodology, this study was descriptive qualitative, with a greater emphasis on text analysis. Thus, this study did not yet provide empirical evidence regarding the direct impact of novel use on students' internalization of moral values. Measurement through other methods, such as experiments or quasi-experiments, would further strengthen the claim that novels truly influence student character formation.

The research discussion was still limited to the context of the Merdeka Curriculum without comparing it with previous curricula, such as the 2013 Curriculum. Cross-curriculum comparisons have the potential to provide a broader picture of the dynamics of integrating literary works into Indonesian language and literature learning.

Based on the existing limitations, further research is highly recommended. First, an analysis of Andrea Hirata's other novels is needed to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the moral values in his entire work. Second, the research can be expanded to other educational levels, both junior high and university, to examine differences in the acceptance and interpretation of moral values by students with different developmental characteristics.

Future research could also compare the use of the new curriculum, as outlined in the Merdeka Curriculum, with existing curricula. This would provide information on the strengths and weaknesses of this new literature teaching method, as well as suggestions for national curriculum development.

CONCLUSION

The structural aspects of novel *Brianna and Bottomwise* by Andrea Hirata encompass themes and characteristics, as well as the forms and delivery methods that convey the moral values within the novel. These moral values include: (1) the moral values regarding the relationship between humans and God, manifested through prayer and acts of kindness; (2) The moral value of the relationship between humans and their social environment includes mutual assistance among fellow humans, establishing good relations with anyone, whether family or other people; (3) the moral values related to the relationship between humans and themselves includes perseverance, hard work, and keeping promises.

Andrea Hirata's novel, *Brianna and Bottomwise*, is an excellent resource for character education in Grade XII (Phase F) under the Merdeka Curriculum. The novel's values align perfectly with the curriculum's learning outcomes, particularly in fostering student's communication and reasoning skills across social, academic, and professional contexts. Furthermore, it supports the "reading and viewing" element, helping students critically evaluate ideas from various texts. By using this novel, students can gain a deeper

understanding of both the intrinsic and extrinsic elements of prose, making it a valuable tool for literary analysis and personal development.

This research can be continued with a focus on the development of concrete learning media, such as teaching modules, worksheets, or lesson plans, in which the novel *Brianna and Bottomwise* is utilized as the primary resource. These media can be designed to facilitate class discussions about the moral values that have been identified. Comparative studies can also be conducted by other researchers using other novels with similar themes. The objective is to identify the similarities and differences in the moral values presented, as well as to compare their effectiveness as teaching materials.

Additionally, this research can be continued by involving students and teachers as research subjects. The objective is to measure how students receive and interpret the moral values from this novel. Data can be collected through surveys, interviews, or focus group discussions to determine the actual impact of this novel in the educational environment.

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