

# **Revitalizing the Meaning of Nias Language Proverbs as Character Building for EFL Learners in Nias**

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## **Abstract**

*This study aims to uncover what extent of the Revitalizing the Meaning of Nias Language Proverbs as Character Building for EFL Learners in Nias. In conducting this research, the research design is Ethnography is a type of qualitative research design. To collect the data, the study employs the interviews with 5 questions and observation given to 30 students from grade XI MIA 1. The research conducted in SMA Negeri 1 Luahagundre. This study investigates of Nias language proverbs as character building with four types of character according by (Khan, 2010), there are; Moral conservation, Social conservation, Environmental conservation, and Human conservation. As a result of the study, the student experiences a change in character after learning Amaedola in the classroom for example there are previous students whose words are offensive and researchers provide Amaedola as the learning process goes on about amuata nifaigi ba bua-bua nitöngöni which means a person is evaluated by his behavior and the manner of his work. The researchers have found that taught Amaedola can motivate the students to achieve knowledge and good character. Researchers found benefits for teachers in the application of amaedola or proverbs to establish character and motivate students to attain their goals.*

**Keywords:** *character building, proverbs Nias, value, EFL*

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Language is a tool of communication to express our thoughts, feelings, and opinions to others. According to (Wibowo, 2001) Language is an arbitrary articulation and system of sound that produced by the speaker, which is used as a means of communicating by a group of humans to express their feelings and thoughts. Language is a tool to communicate. Described by (Kramsch, 2003) language is a platform for human actions to perform social life. Each tribes in Indonesia has their own tribal language include Nias tribe. Inside the Nias society, *Li Niha* Nias language is an indigenous language spoken by the Nias as a communication tool and their mother language. The Nias people called themselves as "*Ono Niha* (Ono = children; Niha = human).

Proverb is one of the part of linguistic that covered by semantics, phrase or a short sentence or a figure of speech in concise, simple sentence or group of words that refer to norms, values, counsel, illustration, principles, and rules conduct. (Mieder, 2014) has defined Proverbs as "a short, common phrase of a society with wisdom, morals, truth and traditional metaphorical view, remains and is remembered and has been passed down from generation to generation". Everyone knows that the wisdom of the people is manifested in proverbs and can change someone's character. Proverb is an illustration, where the comparisons are composed of the purpose of something unexpressed and the comparison of something expressed.

In Nias, proverb is called *Amaedola* and has been used by people from generation to generation for character building. They also teach this *Amaedola* to their children when they give advice. *Amaedola* is a part of the Nias cultures and taught from generation to generation. Nowadays, *Amaedola* or Nias proverbs is almost forgotten and not only among the young people but also among the children. Researchers decided to build this up again by taught *Amaedola* at school in the teaching-learning process.

Character building is essential for all students. Character building is an effort to build character and self-worth. According to (Megawangi, 2004) Character building is a process or effort made to direct, fix, or build human behavior, habits, qualities, morals, good behavior according to norms and rules. The researcher also, improving certain good or valuable traits in a person's character, especially self-reliance, endurance, and courage. Teacher have responsible for building the students' character because character building is an essential element of a nation and the fundamental foundation to shape the Indonesian character.

According to *Kemendiknas*, the aim of charm character-building aims quality of implementation and outcomes of education in forming students' character or moral as a whole, integrated, and balanced.

The researchers found that teacher can build excellent character by teaching Amaedola at school in the learning process, and it will be instrumental. Character-building consisting of responsibility, fairness, and caring could be integrated into EFL classroom activities. Character building is a positive thing that teachers do and affect the character of the students they teach. According to (Pearson & Nicholson, 2000) developing good character requires students who want to recognize the good, crave the good, and put forth the good. School is also have responsible to building charater of the students and parents must help their children to identify core values, adapt and commit to those values, and practice it in their own lives.

Value is one of the most highly valued in life. According to Steeman (Adisusilo, 2013) in value is something that gives meaning to life, which references, point of view and purpose in life. Value is something that is highly esteemed, that can color and tingle one's actions. They are more than faith, values always involve thought and action, so there is a very close relationship between values and ethics. According to Drs. OP Simorangkir cited by (Ferdinand et al., n.d.) Ethics as a human view of good and bad behavior. It means ethics relating to values, good ordinances of living, good rules of living, and all habits that are held and passed down from one person to another or from one generation to another. Schools must therefore help students discover and strengthen significant worth to students in obtaining personal happiness and contribute positively to society.

English is used for specific purposes only by those who have learned it. Even though English is a general foreign language taught in every school, most Indonesian students are still anxious to communicate using English. Based on that, the researchers have found a way to build students' character and improve EFL learners' English at Senior High School 1 Luahagundre in Nias by taught Amaedola at school. The researchers have found that taught Amaedola can motivate the students to achieve knowledge and good character.

Amaedola is a legacy of a culture that is handed down through generations and contains values in life that make wiser and better behavior. The people of Nias use Amaedola to advise and reprimand their children, but there are many young people who don't know or have never even heard of Amaedola before. Researchers would like to resume introducing and teaching Amaedola to youths especially at school while learning a foreign or English

language. Researchers teach English to students at school as well as they do character building to students by teaching Amaedola to students.

This study has some research problem is how the meaning of the relationship of the proverb in Nias with the English language, what are the values of the proverb Nias as character-building in the school and how the students respond to using Nias proverb as a character-building in English learning. Meanwhile, the objectives of the study is to describe the meaning of Nias language proverbs, to identify the values in Nias language proverb for character building and to find out the students responses of using proverb at school and daily communication.

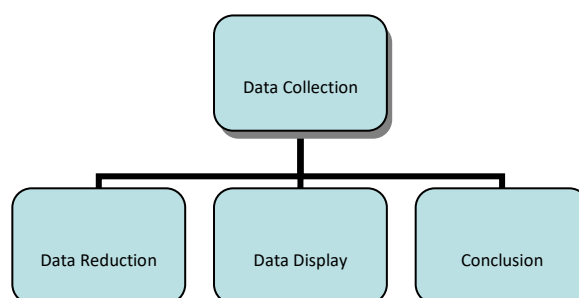
From the explanations above, this study investigates revitalizing the meaning of Nias language proverbs as character building for EFL learners in Nias. (Khan, 2010) says there are four types of character education that have been done in the school education process is Moral conservation (characture-based religious value education) which is the truth of the Lord's revelation, social conservation (culturally based character education, including character education, pancasila, literary appreciation, examples of historical figures and national leaders), environmental conservation (Environment-based character education), human conservation (the result-based character education, which is personal attitude, results from the process of awareness of self-directed potential empowerment to enhance human quality).

## CHAPTER II

### RESEARCH METHOD

This research approach applies Ethnography which is a type of qualitative study design. The data in this study is secure in conducting interviews with participants supported by all the students and English teacher. The researcher also used observation and interviews as to find a result. The source of the data is from tribal figure and locals. The researcher observation why Nias proverbs related as character building and interview the students and teacher. Those instruments are used to collect the data about character building in EFL learners. First, before learning begins the researchers gives Amaedola to motivate students to make them more enthusiastic about learning. Learners were allowed to give feedback after listening Amaedola. After the students give their opinion, the researchers observed change of the students and to know is amaedola bring the impact to the students character or not. On another class session, researchers asked the teachers to allow students to be interview. the interview was about finding out their responce after learning Amaedola through teaching learning process. The research use (Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, 2014) interactive models to analyze the data. The activities in qualitative data analysis are interactive and continue through to unfurl the data. the interactive model is called data reduction, data display, and conclusion dwawing / verification.

In data reduction the researcher reduces the data by classifying field notes, interviews and documents, organizing and extracting abstracts. Data obtained by researchers of fifty Amaedola were taken from native speakers and books. Then, in data display the data that has been reduce is the result of analyzing the data obtained from observation, interviews and documentary recordings, then presenting it in analyzed through reduction data the researcher obtained as many as 13 Nias roverbs from 50 of which were drawn for re-examination using data display. Thirty seven proverbs are selected because they do not relate to the categorized into types of values. At the final step, the conclusions were drawn to verify the finding and the discussion of the research. (see Figure 1).



**Figure 1.** Technique of Analyzing Data

**CHAPTER III**

**DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS, AND DISCUSSIONS**

**3.1 The Relationship of the Proverb in Nias with the English Language**

The data below is about Amaedola which goes into the 4 kinds of values according to the (Khan, 2010). After the data analysis process can conclude that there are 13 Amaedola that go into group 4 kinds of values. The data can show in table 3.1

Table 3.1 The Relationship of The Proverb in Nias With the English Language.

NO	NIAS PROVERBS	INDONESIA PROVERBS	ENGLISH PROVERBS	MEANING
1.	Hulö harita, olifua guli nia	Kacang lupa kulit	Like the Peanut who forgets its shell	This proverb relate to Moral conservation, Social conservation, Environmental conservation and Human conservation because Someone who forgets or doesn't want to acknowledge his family/friends once he becomes successful
2.	Wura-wura si lö motutu bu'u, mangawuli khögu hanu-hanugu	Setiap perbuatan akan kembali ke diri sendiri	What goes around, comes around	This proverb relate to Moral conservation, Social conservation, Environmental conservation and Human conservation because if someone treats other people badly he or she will eventually be treated badly by someone else
3.	Nifo'awi-awilahagu, no i'orodugö hogu fabaya mbörö ba ifabaya-baya'ö khögu dalu	Bersilat lidah	Beat around the bush	This proverb relate to Moral conservation, Social conservation, Environmental conservation and Human conservation because Those who are hypocritical, always saying nice, trying to be decent and being honest but it's all nonsense
4.	Sökhi tö wanou'ö, sökhi tö wame, awai si mörö zi no mate, lö sökhi tö	Ada ubu ada talas, ada budi ada balas	Eat to live, not live to eat	This proverb relate to Moral conservation, Social conservation, Environmental

	wa me, solau tawuyu tou zi ino mate			conservation and Human conservation because to teach students that the good others give us must be reciprocated
5.	Fesu mbawi ono goholu, fesu niha taromali	Kerbau di pegang talinya, manusia dipegang katanya	Action speak lauder than words	This proverb relate to Moral conservation, Social conservation, Environmental conservation and Human conservation because to teach students to reject his promise rather than marely giving discourse because the quality of the student is perceived by his or her treatment rather than his or her voice
6.	Ha fa'afusi ngai ba gelefu, ba ha fa'aitö hulu ba mbakhu, ba no fagölö hua na mutunu	Di mana bumi dipijak, di situ langit dijunjung	When in Rome, do what Romans do	This proverb relate to Moral conservation, Social conservation, Environmental conservation and Human conservation because to teach students to always appreciate the traditions that are in effect in particular area
7.	Aoha noro nilului wahea, aoha noro nilului waoso, alisi khöda ta fadaya-daya, hulu khöda ta faewolo- wolo Ufaolo göi ndra'o, öfaolo göi ndra'ugö, ena'ö a'ozu ita fao-fao	Berat sama dipikul ringan sama dijinjing	Many hands make light work	This proverb relate to Moral conservation, Social conservation, Environmental conservation and Human conservation because to teach students if having friends or family to be together both hard and happy, and always help each other no metter what.
8.	Ami li moroi ba gö	Laut madu berpantaikan sakar (gula)	A good example is the best sermon	This proverb relate to Moral conservation, Social conservation, Environmental conservation and Human conservation because teaches to all the students to speak politely to everyone because polite words have great value
9.	Mae ono asu	Keras bagai batu,	A rich life is lived from	This proverb relate to

	sifatahö susu	tinggi bagai bukit	a giving heart not a selfish mind	Moral conservation, Social conservation, Environmental conservation and Human conservation because teaches to all the students to have a good heart not a selfish mind
10.	Mae molohi boroe, he ni'ohi ba he solohi faoma fatumbu tambu	Berkelahi dalam mimpi	Wasting time is robbing oneself	This proverb relate to Moral conservation, Social conservation, Environmental conservation and Human conservation because teaches to all the students to not waste their time in things that don't matter because time is so precious
11.	Mae laböji nasu nawu ba ifuli-fuli ya bawu	Seperti lalat mencari puru	Don't bite the hand that feeds you	This proverb relate to Moral conservation, Social conservation, Environmental conservation and Human conservation because teaches to all the students to have embarrassment to doing the wrong things
12.	Lau ndraugö tobali i'a ba nasi, ba böi lau ndraugö tobali idanö nasi	Hidup dikandung adat, mati dikandung tanah	When in Rome, do as the Romans do	This proverb relate to Moral conservation, Social conservation, Environmental conservation and Human conservation because teaches to all the students that they must abide by the rules. For example the students must abide by the rules at school or in other place that have rules
13.	Ma tokia tohare lawa	Langit tak perlu menjelaskan kenapa dia tinggi	Pride is the mother of arrogance	This proverb relate to Moral conservation, Social conservation, Environmental conservation and Human conservation because teaches the students to always humble to everyone not arrogant

So in the study researcher explain some of Amaedola's interrelated meanings from table:

1. *Hulö harita, olifu ia guli nia* (Like the Peanut who forgets its shell)



Has the meaning of someone who has succeeded but forgets the merits of those who have helped him. The significance of this proverb is profound because the purpose of Amaedola is what makes every human aware of the importance of appreciating the services of those who have helped us. Furthermore, the more an individual learns, the more one should become familiar with his surroundings, and the more one knows who he is. We should be reviewing ourselves. We had forgotten our origins, who we are, where we come from.

This Amaedola teaches students that when they are successful, never forget teachers who help and help you achieve what you want for the future. Like a student who is still poorly informed about a lesson, it is a teacher who teaches him and provides motivation and support for his or her students who dream of studying at the University of his or her dreams. No matter how great we are right now, how successful we are right now, and how rich we are right now, none of that would be possible without the person who helped and supported us before. Our parents are teachers who never tire of teaching us without us realizing they have made us what we are today. So we can always be grateful for what we've gained.

2. *Ami li moroi ba gö* (A good example is the best sermon)

This proverb refers to good words that are remembered better than when we feed them. The meaning of this Amaedola is profound because any man who is judged by his excellent word is not by how much you provide others. As a student growing into maturity, maturity should prepare for healthy behavior and behavior toward others. The positive remarks uttered by each student like this are like giving a bright hope for the future because words are prayer. Without realizing it, words that come out of your mouth have power. It's not impossible for such speech to come true. Thus, a good mouth is a mouth that says optimistic, informative, and sure things. As we know, the food has an expiration date, but the words that build are remembered forever. When a friend speaks well and builds up to a desperate friend, he would have used our words as motivation or good advice for himself. Good speech is priceless, therefore, eloquent and well-mannered.

3. *Ma tokia tohare lawa* (Pride is the mother of arrogance)

This proverb had a meaning that when a person is at the point of his greatness, he will be proud or arrogant and look down on those around him. This Amaedola aims to build a consciousness of everyone to have a humble and respectful attitude toward

others. When one is at the top of his character and his character is tested, whether he remains humble or is proud in the highest position. This Amaedola teaches students to be modest in whatever condition and function because a humble person is loved and loved by everyone.

For example, a student who has striking achievements in class, such as the familiar champion, the Olympic champion, must have a humble attitude willing to help his students who are struggling to learn and always maintain communication with others.

### **3.2 The Values Of The Proverb Nias As Character-Building**

A value is a shared idea about how something is ranked in terms of desirability, worth or goodness. Values are linked to beliefs and attitudes and guide human behavior (Rennie, 2007) According to KBBI cited by (Hasanah et al., 2016) the character is psychological traits, morals or manners that distinguish one person from another. The data described and desktop is perception space on values as character-building. Described by (Khan, 2010) says there are four types of character education that have been done in the school education process as follows: 1. Moral conservation (characture-based religious value education) which is the truth of the Lord's revelation. 2. Social conservation (culturally based character education, including character education, pancasila, literary appreciation, examples of historical figures and national leaders). 3. Environmental conservation (Environment-based character education). 4. Human conservation (the result-based character education, which is personal attitude, results from the process of awareness of self-directed potential empowerment to enhance human quality).

#### **3.2.1 Moral Conservation**

The moral word comes from the Latin word the *mos*, and the plurals are the *mores* word in Latin, which means ordinance or mores. Lillie in (Budiningsih, 2004) said that "moral" comes from Latin "mores", meaning life ordinances or customs.

Moral value is the virtue that stems from a person's inherent divinity. Moral is something that develops. Moral value is a conscious effort made by deliberate human beings (adults) to give learners a chance (children, successive generations) to instill divinity, aesthetic and ethical values, good and bad values, right and wrong, concerning actions, attitudes and obligations;

morality, respect is noble in order to reach his manhood and take responsibility (Nawawi, 2011). Thus, Moral behavior is necessary for a peaceful life of order, order, and harmony.

### **3.2.2 Social Conservation**

Social value is a standard that sets behavior and serves as individual guidelines in social life. Human is a social creature who will continue to build relationships with others as long as he lives. Social conservation is the fabric of social networks in people's lives every day. According to the (Salim, 2002) reinforcing social understanding on its structure, a set of social connections in society, some say that it is something to be achieved, produced and established in the everyday interactions of people.

### **3.2.3 Environmental Conservation**

The value of the environment is a particular cultural value that belongs to each individual. Conservation environmental is a learning process by which a person builds a spirit of environmental concern and trains in his or her attitudes and habits. The purpose of conservation education is to change the behavior and attitudes of students or children aimed at improving community knowledge, skills and awareness of values - the environment's value to enlarge through teaching and training. The value of the environment as a belief in the environment is closely related to creating an attitude to preserve the environment. According to (Mohamad, 2014) the environment are all things that stimulate the individual, so individuals are involved and influence its development.

Described by (Noviani, 2015) defines the environment is all objects, situations, conditions, influences and impacts exist in the area where living things live and give impact on living things including humans. The value of the environment as a belief in the environment is closely related to creating an attitude to preserve the environment.

### **3.2.4 Human Conservation**

Human are relative values that protect life and are respectful of self and others' dual life value. The great human values, such as truth, freedom, charity, etc., have one thing in common. When they are functioning correctly, they are life protecting or life-enhancing for all. But they are still relative

values. We must constantly examine our relative moral values to ensure that they are always performing their life-protecting mission.

Human values at the school impact the students' achievement and behavior. We have to teach values at school because school is an appropriate place to teach moral values besides home. Based on (Hamre & Pianta, 2005) "the quality of early teacher-student relationships can have a strong influence on academic and social outcomes that persist through eighth grade." That is why human values or character building can be taught at school, at home, and in our environment. And the teacher also has a critical part in teaching human values or character-building to their students.

### 3.3 Interview

The interview is one activity is done to get information directly by revealing questions to respondents. The interview was a face - to - face interview with the respondents, and the activity was carried out orally according to (Subagyo, 2011).

In this part, the researchers collecting the data by interview the teacher and students. The researchers interview the teacher and students about *why should proverbs in Nias language be used while learning English in the class? And what is the benefit of the use Nias proverbs or Amaedola in learning English?*

The benefit of the use Amaedola or Nias proverbs in learning English?

Teacher: - adding the student knowledge of Amaedola or Nias proverbs because Amaedola is legacy.

- Student gained acknowledge of the meaning Amaedola or Nias proverbs
- Amaedola or Nias proverbs contain the meaning that has a purpose of motivating and building up all the students' character in learning English.

Researcher : *What Is The Benefit Of The Use Nias Proverbs Or Amaedola In Learning English?*

Student A : *As a guideline in our daily life.*

Student B : *As a motivation to be a better person.*

Student C : *As a encouragement .*

Student D : *To change one's character for better one.*

Student E : *To enhance our insight in speaking nias language and to enhance our vocabulary in nias language.*

Most students had never heard of amaedola or nias proverbs before.

Researcher : *Have you ever heard about Amaedola or Nias proverbs before?*

Student A : *No miss.*

Student B : *Ever miss, my parents once told me.*

Student C : *No miss, never.*

## **CHAPTER IV CONCLUSION**

### **4.1 Conclusion**

Amaedola at an English learning process aimed at shaping the character of the students, before learning begins, the teacher gives Amaedola to motivate students to be more enthusiastic about learning. While the study was under way the teacher gave Amaedola and dividend of the student's life and character while teaching English lessons. During the study, researchers observed changes and developments in the character of students after studying Amaedola at school. Based on the researchers' observations, the student experiences a change in character after learning Amaedola in the classroom for example there are previous students whose words are offensive and researchers provide Amaedola as the learning process goes on about amuata nifaigi ba bua-bua nitöngöni which means a person is judged by his behavior and the manner of his work. Students who had never before heard or learned about Amaedola became tau and understand after being taught about Amaedola because Amaedola or nias proverb is a cultural heritage handed down by tradition and must be preserved as the traditional saying in favor of Indonesian language preserve the native language.

### **4.2 Suggestion**

We suggest to the institution of education whose school is on Nias Island to use Amaedola or the Nias proverb as a school-building character.

#### **4.2.1 For Student**

Always preserve and patronize the proverb "Amaedola" in daily life because amaedola isa cultural heritage.

#### **4.2.2 For Teacher**

Let each teacher pick up a student about Amaedola as a cultural heritage.

#### **4.2.3 For Parents**

Let each parent build a child's character using Amaedola as a character-building factor.

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