

## Semiotic Studies: Cultivating Religious Characters in SDI (Case Study in SDI KHA. Wahid Hasyim)

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**Abstract:** *Implementation of character education must be familiar from an early age, especially religious character. A religious character is a human character based on religious aspects. One example of religious character planting activities is the dhuha and istighosah prayers. Semiotics is interpreted as a description of ideas, objects, and situations related to media, messages, culture, and society. The purpose of this research is to find out the message of cultivating religious character in SDI KHA. Wahid Hasyim is based on signs (icons, indexes, and symbols). This study uses a qualitative research approach presented in a descriptive form and analyzed by studying Charles Sanders Pierce's semiotic theory with the triangle theory of meaning, namely Icons, Indexes, and Symbols. The results of this study are 1) SDI KHA. Wahid Hasyim, as one of the Nahdlatul Ulama-based schools, implemented a religious character outside of the learning process by habituating the Dhuha prayer in congregation and regular istighosah every Thursday. 2) Dhuha and istighosah prayer activities have messages and culture that want to be instilled and conveyed to students from an early age. 3) signs such as body posture, setting of the place, and time have their meaning related to the cultivation of religious character.*

**Keywords:** *Religious Character, Semiotic, Charles Sanders Pierce.*

**Abstrak:** *Penanaman pendidikan karakter harus dibiasakan sejak dini, terutama karakter religius. Karakter religius adalah karakter manusia yang berlandaskan pada aspek agama dalam kehidupannya. Salah satu contoh kegiatan penanaman karakter religius adalah dengan solat dhuha dan istighosah. Semiotika dimaknai sebagai gambaran ide, objek dan situasi yang berkaitan dengan media, pesan, budaya dan masyarakat. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah mengetahui pesan dari penanaman karakter religius di SDI KHA. Wahid Hasyim berdasarkan tanda (ikon, indeks, dan symbol). Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan penelitian kualitatif yang disajikan bentuk deskriptif dan dianalisis dengan kajian teori semiotika Charles Sanders Pierce dengan teori segitoga makna yaitu Ikon, Indeks, dan Simbol. Hasil pada penelitian ini adalah 1) SDI KHA. Wahid Hasyim sebagai*

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*salah satu sekolah berbasis Nahdlatul Ulama menanamkan karakter religius diluar proses pembelajaran dengan pembiasaan solat dhuha berjamaah dan istighosah rutin pada hari kamis. 2) Kegiatan sholat dhuha dan istighosaj memiliki pesan dan budaya yang ingin ditanamkan dan disampaikan kepada siswa sejak dini. 3) tanda-tanda seperti postur tubuh, latar tempat dan waktu memiliki makna tersendiri yang berhubungan dengan penanaman karakter religius.*

**Kata Kunci:** *Karakter Religius, Semiotika, Charles Sanders Pierce*

## **Introduction**

Education cannot be separated from human life. God gave humans a mind to process, analyze and apply the mind to distinguish good from bad. So, education is an effort to form and prepare students and improve their quality of life to contribute to society and the country (Hariyani & Rafik, 2021). Education is not only developing the knowledge and potential of students, but education can also form a character. This character is what distinguishes humans from other creatures. Someone with morals, morals, and character is a person with noble character, individually or in groups.

Indonesia has experienced various kinds of cases related to moral degradation and the impact on the destruction of the character of the Indonesian nation. This starts with small things that are usually done and are considered normal for society, especially for students, including cheating during exams and insulting friends. (bullying), being disrespectful to elders, and lying to teachers. These cases are now considered very commonplace and often occur in schools both urban and rural schools environments. Schools have a big role in forming student character, especially religion, the main foundation in character education (Luthfiyah & Zafi, 2021).

Planting character education not only teaches right and wrong but how to habituate (habit) good character in student life (Siswanto et al., 2021). Character education will only develop if it is used to it. Schools or educational institutions must create a habituation program to achieve student character education (Ahsanul Khaq, 2019). Each school institution certainly has a different strategy regarding how schools instill religious character in students whose students come from various regions with different characters, especially their religious character, this is the task of school institutions to be able to instill religious character in their students with all differences in characteristics that exist in students (Dwi et al., 2020). Having strong religious

provisions from an early age will strengthen the moral foundation of students in the future.

The school's role in supporting the implementation of religious character values in character education is by providing the necessary facilities, giving permission to teachers to organize an activity program, supporting activities outside of school, and setting a good example for students. (Mahmudiyah, Awaliyani, 2021). The Islamic character to be instilled in it is commendable character or morals, which include good behavior, honesty, compassion, guarding one's eyes and private parts, acting fairly, and so on. This character was written in the Al-Quran. This character follows the exemplary behavior of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. The instilled behavior is all forms of commendable morals for students. A religious generation can be formed early on. Elementary school is ideal for instilling religious character, especially in the lower grades (Jannah, 2019). Semiotics is a branch of science that displays what is physically absorbed, felt and imagined. This semiotic theory was coined by Charles Sanders Peirce and is known as the sign triangle, namely representation, object, and interpretation (Putra et al., 2020).

Semiotics gives the meaning that a sign is a picture of an idea, situation, or object (Siregar & Wulandari, 2020). Semiotics can relate to messages, media, culture, and society. Charles S. Peirce said that human life could not be separated from signs because signs give meaning attached to individuals (Hatami, 2021). The signs and markers described by Charles S. Peirce, which focus on interpreting visual objects through semiosis, are icons, indexes, and symbols.

This dhuha prayer activity in congregation and istighosah is a form of cultivating religious character carried out by schools outside of learning (Hariyani & Rafik, 2021). This activity is a habit for SDI KHA students. Wahid Hasyim has several benefits, namely practicing the habit of Duha prayer for children from an early age and practicing the teachings of the Sunnah of Rasulullah SAW in everyday life. Before the implementation, the students do the preparation. They are starting from doing ablution, styling the shaf, wearing caps, and wearing mukenah for female students. Dhuha prayers in congregation and istighosah are held at 07.00. The number of Duha prayers performed is two cycles. After the dhuha prayer, students attend istighosah led by the prayer priest and read Surah Al-Fatihah, Surah Yasiin, and Istighosah reading.

However, the implementation of istigoshah and dhuha prayers at SDI KHA. Wahid Hasyim Bangil, viewed from the semiotics of Charles Sanders Pierce, could be more optimal in instilling the religious character of students at SDI KHA. Wahid Hasyim Bangil because several students needed more enthusiasm in participating in activities, lacked concentration, and arrived late. The supervising teacher will warn students who experience late arrival and lack concentration. This is supported by previous research, namely on research results (Nurrahman & Irawan, 2020), which state that several risk factors cause children to fail at school, which are not in intelligence but in character, one of which is the ability to concentrate.

The results of this research are supported by Erfantinni's research, which explains that in elementary school education, those who become students need to be accustomed to and form attitudes and behavior that reflect commendable morals and character (Laela & Arimbi, 2021). Sometimes they still have to be reminded frequently to focus on the things being studied. Further research results (Luthfiyah & Zafi, 2021) states that the goal in instilling character is that it is hoped that one day it can provide direction to become a human being or ulul albab person where the student is not only aware of developing himself, improving his life, but also practicing these values on a daily basis.

Thus, the difference between this research and previous studies, which became novelty research in this study, is the cultivation of religious characters in SDI KHA. Wahid Hasyim studied based on semiotics, namely based on signs. The sign that will be studied is the meaning of dhuha prayer and istighosah as a form of cultivating religious character.

### **Research method**

The research approach used is qualitative research with descriptive analysis. Qualitative researchers describe the condition of the object under study and retrieve information and data using data triangulation so that the results of the data obtained provide meaning. The objects in this study are related to (1) The cultivation of religious character in SDI KHA. Wahid Hasyim, (2) Charles Sanders Pierce's semiotic study, and (3) The cultivation of religious characters based on Charles Sander Pierce's semiotics. This research focuses on cultivating religious character through the habit of istighosah on Thursdays at SDI KHA. Wahid Hasyim Bangil is based on Charles S. Pierce's

semiotic study—a source of data obtained from primary data and secondary data. Primary data is data collected from actual situations when an event occurs directly. Primary data is an object in the form of an original document from the actor called first-hand information. Primary data is a data source that directly provides data to data collectors. Data collection can be obtained from the results:

#### Observation.

It is an intentional and systematic observation of the activities of individuals or other objects under investigation. Observations were made using passive participatory observation techniques. This participant observation is used so that the data obtained is more complete, sharp, and up to the level of meaning of each behavior that appears. In passive participatory observation, the researcher arrives at the activity of the person being observed but is not involved in the activity (Sukardi, 2013). This observation was carried out by observing and directly recording the object of research, namely by observing activities related to the cultivation of religious character in SDI KHA. Wahid Hasyim in terms of Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic study.

#### Interview.

It is a meeting of two people to exchange information and ideas through question and answer, so that meaning can be constructed on a particular topic. In this study, collecting data through interviews is a structured interview technique, meaning that the researcher previously determined and prepared questions according to the problems to be uncovered. When conducting interviews, researchers bring interview guidelines and can be assisted with interview tools such as notebooks, voice recorders, and cameras to help document the interview results. Thus the data obtained and not previously revealed during observation will be more complete and in-depth. The author uses in-depth interviews to collect complex information that mostly contains opinions, attitudes, and personal experiences (Sugiyono, 2017). The author uses the method to avoid loss of information by asking permission from the informant, namely PAI, the teacher and Coordinator of Istighosah, and Dhuha Prayer SDI KHA. Wahid Hasyim class Vto use the recorder.

#### Documentation.

It is a record of past events. Documents can be books, mass media articles, diaries, manifestos, laws, minutes, blogs, web pages, photos, and more. In qualitative

research, the instrument or research tool is the researcher himself. Qualitative researchers as human instruments function to determine research focus, select information as data sources, collect data, assess data quality, analyze data, interpret data, and draw conclusions based on their findings. A documentation study is a data collection technique that complements the findings from observations and interviews conducted in qualitative research so that data obtained from documents can provide a complete picture.

## Results and Discussion

### Cultivating Religious Characters based on Charles Sander Pierce's Semiotics

The research results were obtained from SDI KHA. Wahid Hasyim is all students participating in istighosah activities and *dhuha* prayers. The first step is to make observations, collect data by interviewing and observing *duha* and *istighosah* prayer activities, reduce data, and analyze data obtained based on Charles Sanders Pierce's semiotic study. The results of observation and data analysis are as follows:

Table 1. Table of Meaningful Triangles in Congregational and *Istighosah Dhuha* Prayers

Congregational Dhuha Prayer	
sign	
object	The students solemnly participated in the congregational <i>dhuha</i> prayer
Interpretant	The photo above interprets the habit of cultivating religious character through congregational <i>dhuha</i> prayers. This activity is carried out every Thursday at 7 am. The hope is that KHA SDI students. Wahid Hasyim was used for the <i>dhuha</i> prayer activities and became a provision for students after graduating.
sign	

	
object	Students solemnly participate in congregational <i>dhuha</i> prayers
Interpretant	KHA Elementary School Students. Wahid Hasyim, listening to a lecture given by the teacher after the <i>Dhuha</i> prayer in congregation. This is done so that the students' religious character gets deeper.
Istighosah	
sign	
object	The students brought papers containing a series of <i>istighisah</i> prayers. The face is full of solemnity when reciting the prayer, and some students do not bring paper and smile during <i>istighosah</i> activities.
Interpretant	The picture above interprets that students take part in the program of cultivating religious characters. It can be seen that students take part in these activities.

sign	
object	<p>The students brought papers containing a series of <i>istighisah</i> prayers. The face is full of solemnity when reciting the prayer, and there are some students who do not bring paper and smile during <i>istighosah</i> activities.</p>
Interpretant	<p>The picture above interprets that students take part in the program of cultivating religious characters. It can be seen that students take part in these activities.</p>

**Figures 1 and 2,**

In pictures 1 and 2, the icons are depicted as students standing facing the Qibla and solemnly participating in the *Duha* prayer in congregation. Students are depicted wearing *mukenah* and bringing their prayer rugs. Teachers and educators participate in the *Dhuha* prayer activities in the congregation by mingling with students in 1 row. The results of this study are in accordance with the typology of signs by Charles S. Pierce, which is more in-depth explained by Amin that icons are signs that show the similarity of objects so that they are easy to recognize. Besides, icons are signs related to signifiers and signifieds with the same nature and natural shape (Sanah, Elly Zati Nur Alfi; Oemar, 2021). It can be concluded that the icon is a sign with the same characteristics or even similar to the original object.

The index, which is shown in Figure 1, is the expression on the faces of SDI KHA Wahid Hasyim students who are solemn, serious, focused, and confident in this activity. The *mukenah* used by female students gives a fresh and cheerful impression supported by a background of trees, as shown in picture 1. We zoom in on the camera to look at the expressions and objects. In this case, focusing straight heads down adds to the impression that students are solemn in congregational prayer activities. The

effect of the camera, when zoomed in, it can be seen that the front itself looks blurry because it is indoors and dark, and there is no lighting. The back is clearly visible because there is natural lighting from the sun. The results of this study are in accordance with the typology of signs by Charles S. Pierce goes deeper that the index is a sign that has a phenomenal or existential connection. The index can also be interpreted as a relationship between natural signs and markers that have a causal relationship that is in accordance with reality (Saputri et al., 2021).

The symbol shown during the prayer and *istighosah* implementation is the same student uniform, the batik uniform from SDI KHA – Wahid Hasyim, wearing a cap and trousers. At the same time, the students wear colorful mukenah. Students also use prayer mats as mats for them to prostrate. The results of this study are by the typology of signs by Charles S. Pierce, which is more in-depth explained by Amin that symbols are arbitrary and conventional signs according to mutual agreement. The symbol exists outside objects or objects (Amin, 2019). This is done so that the object can be analyzed in depth and has uniqueness.

#### **Figures 3 and 4**

Pictures 3 and 4 are pictures of *istighosah* implementation activities. *Istighosah* activities are carried out after the *Duha* prayer in the congregation. The icon shows that students sit cross-legged facing the Qibla and read a piece of paper containing a series of *Istighosah* prayers given by the school. Some students seriously participated in the activity by reading papers and talking with colleagues. The results of this study are by the typology of signs by Charles S. Pierce, which is more in-depth explained by Amin that icons are signs that show the similarity of objects so that they are easy to recognize. besides that, icons are signs related to signifiers and signifieds that have the same nature and natural shape (Amin, 2019).

The index that appears is the expression on the faces of students who are serious and focused on the activities being carried out. The clothes worn by the students looked bright and cheerful. Moreover, the atmosphere of the environment looks beautiful, with lots of plants around. Moreover, the school wall paint is also green. The results of this study are by the typology of signs by Charles S. Pierce, which is more in-depth explained by Amin that an index is a sign with a phenomenal or existential link.

The index can also be interpreted as a relationship between natural signs and markers that have a causal relationship that is in accordance with reality.

The symbols shown are students wearing batik uniforms and black pants, while female students wear mukenah. Teachers and education staff wear green school uniforms. The results of this study are in accordance with the typology of signs by Charles S. Peirce which is explained in more detail by Amin, symbols are signs that are arbitrary and conventional according to mutual agreement. The symbol itself is outside the object or thing. This is done so that the object can be analyzed in depth and has uniqueness.

This research implies that the results of this study can be used as input for teachers and the Coordinator of *Istighosah* and Dhuha Prayer SDI KHA. Wahid Hasyim class V to further optimize the cultivation of religious character has been carried out by paying attention to appropriate learning methods to improve the religious character of students at SDI KHA. Wahid Hasyim.

This study has limitations in terms of research locations. Namely, it is limited to one Islamic Elementary School, so future research is suggested to be able to use a larger and wider sample in order to obtain research results that are more generalizable and more able to provide a more realistic picture of the cultivation of religious character in Elementary Schools. Islam.

## Conclusion

Based on the research results and discussion related to the semiotic analysis of cultivating religious character, 1) SDI KHA Wahid Hasyim, as a Nahdlatul Ulama-based school, implements character education outside of learning hours with regular congregational and *istighosah* prayers which are held every Thursday. This activity has become a culture and a hallmark of the school because other schools based on Nahdlatul Ulama only hold *istighosah* every Legi Friday. 2) This activity provides messages and culture to students to always draw closer to Allah SWT and be grateful for the blessings from an early age. This is done as a provision for students at the next level, who are accustomed to *sunnah* prayers, as exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad SAW. 3) the signs in each activity are a) Students, teachers, and educators solemnly participate in these activities. They have prepared the necessary equipment such as *mukenah*, prayer sheets, and prayer rugs; b) the location of the activity also

supports the atmosphere, which has a green nuance, and lots of trees so that peace is created for the activities to take place. This activity was carried out at 7.00 am so that students still felt fresh and the situation was manageable.

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