

# CHARACTER BUILDING OF ALTRUISM IN ENGLISH TEXTBOOK OF SENIOR HIGH

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## Abstract

This study aimed at analyzing altruism character in the three English textbooks of senior high school grade X, XI, and XII. Using content analysis, words, phrases, and clauses presenting altruism in the reading text, dialogue, and tasks were examined. The study revealed that in the English textbook of grade X, the altruism aspect indicating 'pro-social behavior' and 'environmental care' could be frequently found in reading text, dialogue, and task. However, other altruism aspects such 'giving empathy' missed in the reading text and 'reducing inequality' does not appear in the reading text and dialogue. Meanwhile in the grade XI, 'giving empathy' and 'pro-social behavior' occur in dialogue and task yet cannot be identified in the reading text. Moreover, 'environmental care' only shows up in dialogue and task, while 'reducing inequality' is nowhere to be found. In the grade XII, 'giving empathy', 'pro-social behavior' and 'environmental care' could be identified in the reading text, dialogue, and task. Unfortunately, 'reducing inequality' aspects only occur in the task. The inconsistent altruism character maintained in the English textbooks used in grade X, XI, and XII of senior high school displayed the missing opportunity to shape students' altruistic behavior. Considering that senior high school is the stage where students start developing the ability to think logically about abstract ideas, altruism character should be inculcated in the development of English learning material in relevance to students' intellectual and emotional level.

**Keywords:** Character Building, Altruism, English Textbooks, Senior High School

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Albert Einstein is credited by saying that the most important component in Education is the development of character building. To add, Swartz (2007) pointed out that getting a good score is not the major purpose of education, yet promoting the character building of the students is the significant matter. In the same way, it lays on how one treats the other in their social interaction which concerns with attitudes, interest and value.

Character building has also become one of the national education purposes in Indonesia. In the regulation of SISDIKNAS (*Sistem Pendidikan Nasional*) no. 20 year 2003 states that

*“tujuan pendidikan nasional adalah mengembangkan kemampuan dan membentuk watak serta peradaban bangsa yang bermartabat dalam rangka mencerdaskan kehidupan bangsa, bertujuan untuk berkembangnya potensi peserta didik*

*agar menjadi manusia yang beriman dan bertakwa kepada Tuhan Yang Maha Esa, berakhlak mulia, sehat, berilmu, cakap, kreatif, dan menjadi warga Negara yang demokratis dan bertanggung jawab”.*

To emphasize, character building is important element of a nation. In addition, character building will be a fundamental foundation to shape the Indonesian character with social values such religiosity, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creativity, independence, democracy, curiosity, patriotism, nationalism, appreciation, friendship, love of peace, fondness of reading, environmental care, social care, and responsibility (Perpres no. 87 year 2017).

The focus of character building investigated in this study is altruism. As the attitude of caring about others, altruism can be developed through formal and informal way. In informal way, altruism's inculcation can be executed in the family and social environment. In informal way, the inculcation can be implanted by integrating the value in the learning material both explicitly and implicitly.

Learning instruction such as text book is important variable in the success of teaching and learning. By reading the text, for example, the students can be encouraged to think critically and act positively such as doing problem solving or observing the case/phenomenon instructed in the learning material. Through those persuasive encouragements, the negative influence or destructive effect will be decreased. For this reason, Musclih (2010) pointed out that there are two fundamental role of learning media to the pupils, which is (1) can encourage positive development of learning and (2) hindering the negative influence. In consequence, teaching and learning documents can be a media to

develop students' character building of altruism.

In connection with the character building of altruism in the English learning perspectives, the purpose of English teaching and learning stresses interaction, conversation and language use rather than about the language – grammar, vocabulary and phonetics. In other words, it develops the communicative competence that means the language is being learned for social interaction which certainly involves character. With this intention, the study would explore the inculcation of character building of altruism in teaching and learning documents of senior high school. Altruism which is emphasized here refers to social care and environmental care as stated in *sisdiknas* no 20 year 2003. Therefore, the research investigation would be laid on altruism implantation particularly on English textbooks in senior high school.

In line with the background of the study above, the research questions were formulated in; (1) how is altruism addressed in English textbook of X Grade?; (2) how is altruism addressed in English textbook of XI grade; (3) how is altruism addressed in English textbook of XII grade; and (4) how is consistency of altruism maintained across English textbook of X, XI, and XII grade?. It is important to see how teaching and learning media such textbook shapes the emotional and social development of young adolescent learners. Thus, in their age, these early adolescents need educational program that are designed specifically for their age group because of their uniqueness in terms of intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Altruism is generally understood as behavior that benefits others at a personal

cost to the behaving individual (Kerr et al., 2004). Identically, Eisenberg in Robinson (2005) describes altruism as behavior intended to benefit another. Such behavior may include comforting, working, playing cooperatively, sharing, or even displaying empathy for others. On the whole, Eisenberg defines altruism as behavior motivated by concern for others or by internalized values, goals, and self-rewards rather than by the expectation of concrete or social rewards, or the desire to avoid punishment or sanctions. For the most part, altruism is the tendency to defend others' interest, give unlimited attention to others, and do kindness towards others.

Myers (2012) points out that altruist would help others as a constant choice. In other words, altruistic behaviors are selfless acts that put the wellbeing of others before themselves and not expecting anything in return. This can be defined as social care; an attitude which help others and community in need. To add, social care makes human interact with respect, love, and care for various circumstances. Social care is signed by the act of 'giving empathy', 'having pro-social behavior', and 'reducing inequality and injustice' (Batson, 2011; James, 2008; and Mccarthy, 2015).

Another act of altruism is 'environmental care'. In relation to environment, as social beings, human cannot escape environment. The altruists basically demand for preservation of the environment based on concern for the welfare of other particularly for the future generations. To point out, as an act of altruism, environmental care is a practice of protecting the natural environment for the benefit of both environment and humans.

The studies concerned with altruism have been remarkable interest for some researcher. Previously, Andromeda (2014)

raised the issue to teach altruistic behavior among adolescents students. Their study was based on the interest to build altruism as the practice of unselfish concern to the welfare of others. By conducting the traits of altruism characteristic which is high in empathy, less egocentric, and socially responsible, they found out that altruism could be significantly be taught and learnt through exercise.

To add, Rahman (2014) figured out how the teachers inculcated the altruism behavior in primary school. The result pointed that the teacher implanted the altruism through motivation, story-telling, appraisal and punishment. In the same way, the altruism behavior was also integrated through learning process and out of the classroom. Furthermore, Handayani (2016) also analyzed the altruism values in the students of junior high school textbook. It was found that the nature and patterns of reasoning values of caring, creative, and manners was represented in student textbook.

Correspondingly, Breyer (2017) also explored how learning platform (specifically books, television, and computers) affects the development of social awareness particularly empathy and altruistic behavior. The study figure out that those platforms can be effective to implant social awareness. For example, by reading books the students and their parents are able to discuss empathy development and altruistic behavior in an easy and natural way. From this study, it is found out that learning material is an effective weapon to plant the ideology of altruism to the students.

In the field of education, learning materials refers to a spectrum of educational materials that teachers use in the classroom to support specific learning objectives, as set out in lesson plans. Learning materials are important because they can significantly increase students'

achievement by supporting student learning. Zuhdi (2011) pointed out that learning material are tools or devices that teachers use in the classroom to support the learning objectives as set out in the lesson plan.

The most common used learning materials in classroom are textbooks. Amerian (2014) pointed out that textbook : (1) must be interested to children who use it, (2) the textbook must be able to motivate the students who use it, (3) the textbook must contain illustration that appeal to students who use it, (4) the textbook should consider the aspects, so that it is in accordance with the ability of the students, (5) the textbook must be able to stimulate the personal activities of the students, (6) the textbook must be closely related to other lessons, integrated unity, (7) the textbook must consciously and firmly avoided vague and unusual concepts, so as not to confuse the students, (8) the textbook must have a clear and firm point of view , (9) the textbook must be able to provide stabilization, emphasis on the values of children and adult, and (10) the textbook must be able to appreciate the personal differences between the students.

Regarding to this study, the part of textbook investigated was reading text, dialogue, and task. Reading texts is anything that conveys a set of meaning to the person who examines it (Hansen, 2016). Reading text in this study refers to text in print. The textbook may also consists of a series of dialogues. According to Rockwell (2003), dialogue is an exchange of ideas or opinion on a particular issue between two people. Meanwhile task refers to an activity which involves a primary focus on using language as communication (Ellis, 2003). To add, Vitaresti (2015) also pointed out that the use of task in textbook can raise awareness of how to make students work

effectively in mainstream language teaching.

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To answer the research questions, this research employed content analysis to frame the character building of altruism in the English textbooks. To conduct a content analysis, the text was coded or broken down into manageable categories on a variety of levels, words, phrases, and sentences before being examined. The data and data source in this study was displayed in the table 1.

**Table 1** Data and Data Source

Data Source	Part of Data Source	Instru ment	Data	Amount
English Textbooks	Reading text, Dialogue , Task	Table Analys is	Words, Phrases, and Clauses presenting altruism	3 textbooks

In analyzing the data, several steps were conducted. First, identifying the words, phrases, and clauses represented altruism character in English textbooks. Altruism consists of two aspects; social care (code A1- A29) and environmental care (code B1-B18). After the identification, the words, phrases, and clauses were then categorized into indicators of altruism table analysis. Having categorized the words, phrases, clauses, presenting altruism character, the amount of indicator found in the table analysis was then discussed in reference to the theory of altruism, students' characteristic, and national education system. The last, the conclusion was drawn based on the data interpretation.

### 4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Altruism Character in English Textbook of Grade X

As displayed in the table 2, altruism character in the English textbook of X

grade covered giving empathy, having pro-social behaviour, reducing inequality and injustice, and environmental care. Totally, there were 17 out of 45 indicators representing altruism character. The indicators representing having pro-social behaviour made the occurrences in reading text, dialogue, and task. The indicators which frequently appeared were in the dialogue and were coded as A10, A11, A14, A20, and A21. Some data are provided as representatives.

Altruism Code A14 “helping others”. |Old woman : excuse me, young lady, but could you help me fill in this form, please? I forgot to bring my glasses. |Girl: of course, ma’am. **Let me fill it in for you. What’s your name, ma’am?**| As seen in the conversation, the act of helping was shown by the girl in which she assisted the old woman to fill in the form. Helping is an act of pro-social (Feigin, et all 2014). Feigin also argued that having the desire to help others with no expectation of reward is motivation to realize pro-social behavior. The example of ‘helping’ which was found in the dialogue of textbook proved that the textbook deliberately implanted the students’ altruistic behaviour particularly helping others.

Table 2 Altruism Character in English Textbook of X Grade

Altruism Aspects	Sub-aspects	Part of the Textbook Analysed		
		Reading Text	Dialogue	Tasks
Social Care	Giving Empathy		A8	A4, A8, A9
	Having Pro-social Behavior	A14	A10, A11, A14, A20, A21	A11, A14, A17
	Reducing Inequality and			A26

Injustice			
Environmental Care	B2	B4	B1
Total Indicators: 17 out of 47			

Giving empathy could also be identified in the X grade textbook. This aspect was coded in A4, A8, A9 and mostly occurred in task. The example was represented by A9. |Read the following extracts and guess where you might read them. Then, complete the table. |**“Michelle and I are deeply saddened by the loss of life, injuries, and damage that have occurred as a result of the recent earthquake and tsunami in West Sumatra”**]. The bold clause “Michelle and I are deeply saddened by the loss of life, injuries, and damage” was expressing of sympathy and condolences by president Obama to the victim of earthquake in West Sumatera. This expression was signed as empathy in which Myers (2012) stated that empathy is the action of understanding, being aware of, being sensitive to, and vicariously experiencing the feeling in an objectively explicit manner. In the data A9 provided above, the students are trained to put themselves into someone’s situation by doing the task; reading the statement and guessing where the situation could happen. Hence, they will sense themselves in altruistic behavior such adapting to situation and understanding one’s feeling.

The act of giving empathy found in the textbook supported the Setiawan and Lucia (2016) finding. This previous study explored relationship between empathy and altruism in the students of SMK. Further, their research revealed that there was positive relationship between altruism with empathy. Referring to the data found, textbook facilitated students’ altruistic behavior in showing their empathy.

Certainly, being aware of someone feeling and thought are abstract things.

Expressing sympathy and condolences means acknowledging a loss, showing sympathy, and empathizing with someone. Concerning that this altruistic behavior identified in the textbook, indicated that student should develop their cognitive ability of how they think, behave, imagine, learn, and solve the problem. This is line with Anisah (2011) who pointed out that students in SMA is the stage of intellectual in which adolescents begin to think logically about abstract ideas. It means, expressing sympathy/condolences which was the signed of empathy should be possessed by the

students in senior high school as they are already intellectually capable to do so.

#### 4.2 Altruism Character in English Textbook of Grade XI

Table 3 showed the coverage of altruism character found in the English textbook of XI grade. The table presented that giving empathy, having pro-social, and environmental care could be identified. Meanwhile, reducing inequality and injustice was not found. As seen in the table 3, environmental care made the most occurrences in task. They were coded in B3, B4, B5, B6, B7, B8, B9, B10, B11, B12, B15. B6 and B9 would be presented as representatives.

**Table 3.** Altruism Character in English Textbook of XI Grade

Altruism Aspects	Sub-Aspects	Part of the Textbook Analysed		
		Reading text	Dialogue	Task
Social Care	Giving Empathy		A1, A4, A8	A2
	Having Pro-social Behaviour		A10, A15, A18	A21
	Reducing Inequality and Injustice			
Environmental Care		B2, B3		B3, B4, B5, B6, B7, B8, B9, B10, B11, B12, B15

Total Indicators: 21 out of 47

B6 refers to writing environment-related text. The example was: [***Write an analytical exposition about other environment issues in your own words.***] In this example, the students were asked to write analytical text on topic environment. By doing this task, the students could be triggered to know and care of environment roles and problems. Another example was represented by B9 (Habituating to throw the garbage appropriately). The example was; *Use the present perfect tense to complete the following sentences. /local government (provide) trash bin to be put along city streets./* In this example, the students were asked to complete the sentences on the topic perfect tense. To point out, the

students did not just learn tenses, yet the sentence given trained the students to care of environment role by habituating to throw the garbage appropriately. These two examples were signed as altruism behavior in caring of environment. As stated by Quigley and Renee (2017), caring of the environment is being aware of environment and why environmental problems occur. The task showed that environmental care as the act of altruism behavior was already involved in students grade XI textbook.

Another aspect found in grade XI textbook was having prosocial behavior. The indicators could be identified as A10, A15, A18, and A21. The data was represented by A18. */Mrs. hasibuan : hi,*

how are you today? |Mrs. rosma : I am better now. |Mrs. hasibuan : that's great |Mrs. rosma : **thank you for coming. Who did you come here with?** |Mrs. hasibuan : Mr. hasibuan. There he is. |Mrs. rosma : hi, Mr. hasibuan. | Mr. hasibuan : **hi, I am happy you made a quick recovery.** |Mrs. rosma : **thanks a lot for coming. But could you give my regards to your friends. Tell them that I'll get better soon.** | Mr. hasibuan : it's relief to hear that. I'll do it. | A18 refers to visiting friends or family. In the example given, Mr. hasibuan visited his friend, Mrs. Rosma, who was in the hospital, to give

support and check her condition. This was signed as pro-social behavior.

According to Feigin (2014), pro-social behavior refers to voluntary behavior intended to benefit another. As altruistic behavior, pro-social behavior is triggered by a genuine desire to benefit another person, without any expectation of benefits to oneself. Visiting friends who was not in good condition to give support is the act of prosocial which were involved in the students' textbook. This might foster students to understand social situations and behave pro-socially.

### 4.3 Altruism Character in English Textbook of Grade XII

**Table 4.** Altruism Character in English textbook of XII Grade

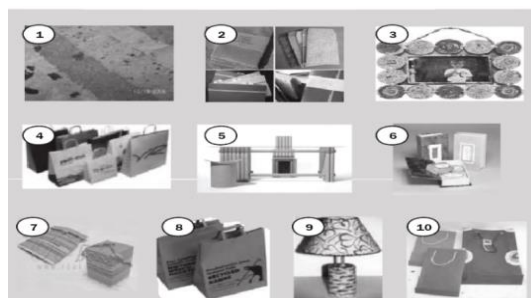
Altruism Aspects	Sub Aspects	Part of the Textbook Analysed		
		Reading Text	Dialogue	Task
Social Care	Giving Empathy	A2	A5	A5
	Having Pro-social Behaviour	A14, A16, A19	A16	A14, A18
	Reducing Inequality and Injustice			A27
Environmental Care		B1, B3, B14	B14, B15	B3, B4, B6, B8, B10, B11, B12

Total Indicators: 22 out of 47

In the grade XII textbook, giving empathy, having pro-social behavior, and environmental care could be identified. Meanwhile, reducing inequality and injustice was only represented by A27. The most occurrences were made by environmental aspects which appeared in the reading text, dialogue, and textbook. They were coded as B1, B3, B4, B6, B8, B10, B11, B12, B14, and B15.

The data was represented by B11. B11 refers to "habituating to use recycling material to reduce pollution". |*Look at things around you: **used papers, disposable cups, used packages, etc. think of what you can do with those things. Perhaps you can make a beautiful pen box out of the disposable cups, recycled paper from the used paper, or a pretty hand-made shopping bag from used***

*packages, etc. when you are done, write an explanation on how to make one of those things on a piece of paper and submit it to your teacher.*



**Figure.1** B11 data

The illustration given above was found in the task of textbook. Vitaresti (2015) pointed out that the use of task in textbook can raise awareness of how to make students work effectively in mainstream language teaching.

Concerning to the altruism character found in the textbook task, the students were asked to transform things from paper, cups, and used packages to something useful. This activity exercised the students to advantage waste to something reuse. As the act of caring of environment, the final purpose was, recycling would be students' habit and pollution could be reduced. Environmental care is caring about the environment by planning and implementing the activities to prevent the environment damage (kemendiknas, 2010). B11 as the representatives of environmental care showed that students' textbook contained concepts and method for solving problem related to environment damage. Consequently, students' altruistic behavior of environment would be enforced in their daily life as part of ecosystem that has responsibility to protect nature.

Pro-social behavior also could be identified in reading text, dialogue, and task. They were coded as A14, A16, A18, and A19. The data was represented by A18. *In pairs, study the pictures below and discuss what people have done wrong in each picture.*



**Figure 2.** A18 Data

A18 refers to “obeying rules”. The data of this indicator was illustrated in a picture when people flying, driving, and biking. In this illustration the students are required to study the pictures and discuss the wrong action done by the subject. Obeying rules means to act or behave according to a rule, law, or instruction. By

doing task in the picture presented above, the students were trained to be a responsible adult such not calling by phone while flying and driving, and wearing helmet as standard safety for riding motorcycle. Pavenkovet (2014) argued that obeying rules as pro-social behavior may be motivated by the concern of welfare and rights of others. To add, this altruistic behavior implanted in the students' textbook could foster positive traits that are beneficial to students and society.

Equally, this finding was supported by Andromeda (2014) who raised the issue to teach altruistic behavior among adolescents students. Their study was based on the interest to build altruism as the practice of unselfish concern to the welfare of others. By conducting the traits of altruism characteristic which is high in empathy, less egocentric, and socially responsible, they found out that altruism could be significantly be taught and learnt through exercise.

Regarding to this study that found the stipulation of altruism in the textbooks, it was revealed that English textbooks used in senior high school inculcated a few of expected students' behavior particularly altruism.

#### 4.4 The Consistency of Altruism Character Maintained across English Textbook of Senior High School

**Table 6.** Altruism Character Maintained across Textbooks

Theme	Aspects	Code	X			XI			XII		
			1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
Social Care	Giving Empathy	A1					√				
		A2						√	√		
		A3									
		A4			√		√				
		A5								√	√
		A6									
		A7									
		A8		√	√		√				
		A9			√						
Having Pro-social	A10		√			√					



Behavior	A1 1		√	√							
	A1 2										
	A1 3										
	A1 4	√	√	√				√		√	
	A1 5					√					
	A1 6							√	√		
	A1 7			√							
	A1 8					√				√	
	A1 9							√			
	A2 0		√								
	A2 1		√				√				
	Reducing Inequality and Injustice	A2 2									
		A2 3									
		A2 4									
A2 5											
A2 6				√							
A2 7										√	
A2 8											
A2 9											
Environmental Care		B1			√				√		
	B2	√			√						
	B3				√		√	√		√	
	B4		√				√			√	
	B5						√				
	B6						√			√	
	B7						√				
	B8						√			√	
	B9						√				
	B1 0						√			√	
	B1 1						√			√	
	B1 2						√			√	
	B1 3										
	B1 4							√	√		
	B1 5						√		√		
	B1 6										
	B1 7										
	B1 8										

1 = Reading Text; 2= Dialogue; 3=Task;

As seen in the table 5, in grade X, two aspects of altruism which belong to pro-social behavior and environmental care occurred in the reading text, dialogue, and textbook's task. Unfortunately, giving empathy could not be identified in the reading text. Moreover the indicators representing reducing inequality and injustice only represented one indicator (A26) in the task.

In grade XI, there were not consistent altruism aspects occurred in the reading text, dialogue, and task. Giving empathy and having pro-social behavior were ignored in the reading text. Furthermore, there were no indicators representing reducing inequality and injustice in the XI grade textbook. And, environmental care also did not occur in the dialogue provided in the textbook. Meanwhile, in grade XII, the indicators of reducing inequality and injustice could not be found in reading text and dialogue.

Based on the data finding presented above, it was then concluded that character building of altruism was not consistently maintained in the English textbooks used in grade X, XI, and XII of senior high school. The discussion of the character building of altruism across English teaching and learning documents in senior high school has come to the end. According to Lickona (2013), character is not inherited. It is built daily by the one thinks and acts, thought by thought, and action by action. In the teaching and learning activity, character building means a conscious effort and earnest of a teacher to teach values to their students. Correspondingly, character building through English language teaching and learning is necessary. The character building implantation through textbooks are a media to grow, shape, and develop students' character particularly altruism. Learning another language, particularly at

the stage of senior high school, is the opportunity for continuously effort to take preserving attitude, and commitment to achieve communicative goals. This means that all teaching and learning documents need to be realistic, relevant, interesting, encouraging, and compatible.

During the language learning process, a learner may have to face challenged or difficulty. This is where an emotional control, in how the students behave, act, and make decision, comes into play. In other words, it is at this stage that character building becomes relevant. Teachers, as the designer and decision making in using teaching and learning documents, should understand that all pupils in senior high school go through emotionally critical period. For this to happen, deliberate instructions and guidance, which in this case refers to textbooks, that shapes students' character should be provided.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Based on the data findings and discussion, there were four conclusions in accordance with the purposes of this study. First, in the grade X, there were two aspects of altruism consistently found in the reading text, dialogue, and task. They were pro-social behavior and environmental care. Unfortunately, the aspect of giving empathy could not be identified in the reading text and reducing inequality and injustice did not occur in reading text and dialogue. Second, in the grade XI, there were no altruism aspects consistently found in the reading text, dialogue, and task. Third, in the XII grade, giving empathy, having pro-social behavior, and environmental care made the occurrence in the reading text, dialogue, and task. However, the aspect of reducing inequality and injustice was hardly found. Fourth, the inconsistent altruism character implanted in the X, XI,

and XII grade show the missing opportunity to develop students' altruistic behavior.

Considering that students' of senior high school is the stage where the students start to develop their cognitive ability of how they think, behave, imagine, learn, and solve the problem, the implantation of altruism character should be relevant to their intellectual development level. To point out, English language learning is the platform where the students learn to communicate effectively with other like listening attentively, or expressing thought in appropriate verbal expression. As transition from childhood to youth, the opportunity to develop students' ability in thinking logically about abstract ideas should not be missed. It is then fully recommended to develop English language teaching of learning material senior high school by integrating character particularly altruism and involving all the sub aspects of altruist; giving empathy, having pro-social behavior, reducing inequality and injustice, and environmental care.

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