



Representation of the Value of Friendship in the Novel *Sahabat Pena Istimewa* by Aisya Najwa Kirana Alenty

Ajeng Putri Cahyani Maulidiyah^{1*}, Suyatno²

^{1,2}Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia, Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Jawa Timur, Indonesia

*E-mail: ajeng.22031@mhs.unesa.a.id

ABSTRACT

The research aims to represent the value of friendship in the novel *Sahabat Pena Istimewa* by Aisya Najwa Kirana Alenty. The research method used is qualitative with library data collection techniques. The data source used in the research is the novel *Sahabat Pena Istimewa* by Aisya Najwa Kirana Alenty. The results of the analysis show that the novel *Sahabat Pena Istimewa* by Aisya Najwa Kirana Alenty represents the values of friendship through actions, dialogue and relationships between characters. The value of empathy is represented through a caring attitude, providing knowledge, helping others, sharing, providing opportunities, giving advice, feeling emotions and listening attentively. The value of trust is represented through the attitude of keeping secrets and keeping promises. The value of cooperation is represented through mutual cooperation, helping friends and helping each other. The value of loyalty is represented through the attitude of defending, not leaving and faithfully waiting. The value of honesty is represented through the attitude of not lying, admitting shortcomings and admitting mistakes. The conclusion of the research is that the values of friendship in the novel *Sahabat Pena Istimewa* include the value of empathy, the value of trust, the value of cooperation, the value of loyalty and the value of honesty.

Keywords: representation, value of friendship, novel

Representasi Nilai Persahabatan dalam Novel *Sahabat Pena Istimewa* Karya Aisya Najwa Kirana Alenty

ABSTRAK

Penelitian bertujuan untuk merepresentasikan nilai persahabatan dalam novel *Sahabat Pena Istimewa* karya Aisya Najwa Kirana Alenty. Metode penelitian yang digunakan yaitu kualitatif dengan teknik pengumpulan data kepustakaan. Sumber data yang digunakan penelitian yakni novel *Sahabat Pena Istimewa* karya Aisya Najwa Kirana Alenty. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa novel *Sahabat Pena Istimewa* karya Aisya Najwa Kirana Alenty merepresentasikan nilai-nilai persahabatan melalui tindakan, dialog dan hubungan antartokoh. Nilai empati direpresentasikan melalui sikap peduli, memberikan pengetahuan, membantu orang lain, berbagi, memberikan kesempatan, memberikan nasihat merasakan emosi dan mendengarkan penuh perhatian. Nilai kepercayaan direpresentasikan melalui sikap menjaga rahasia dan menepati janji. Nilai kerjasama direpresentasikan melalui sikap gotong royong, membantu teman dan saling menolong. Nilai loyalitas direpresentasikan melalui sikap membela, tidak meninggalkan dan setia menunggu. Nilai kejujuran direpresentasikan melalui sikap tidak berbohong, mengakui kekurangan dan mengakui kesalahan. Kesimpulan pada penelitian bahwa nilai-nilai persahabatan dalam novel *Sahabat Pena Istimewa* terdapat nilai empati, nilai kepercayaan, nilai kerjasama, nilai loyalitas dan nilai kejujuran.

Kata kunci: representasi, nilai persahabatan, novel

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INTRODUCTION

Childhood is a developmental period characterized by joy, intense social interactions, and the formation of fundamental emotional skills (Suyatno, 2009). Between the ages of 6 and 12, children begin to enter a phase where social relationships become essential, particularly through play, learning, and interactions with their surroundings. In this context, friendship plays a significant role as a means for children to learn to communicate, solve problems, and understand the feelings of others (Zaidatus and Suyatno, 2025).

As part of social and emotional development, friendship provides a space for children to practice empathy, trust, loyalty, and honesty. Zaidatus and Suyatno (2025) explain that friendship is an interpersonal relationship characterized by mutual respect, interdependence, and productivity. This demonstrates that friendship is not merely a recreational interaction, but also a reciprocal relationship that contributes to the development of a child's character. During childhood, these relationships are built on shared interests, comfort, and mutual understanding (Suyatno, 2009).

However, the value of friendship in children has begun to decline with the development of digital technology. The increasing use of gadgets has led children to prefer interacting through screens to socializing in person. Activities such as playing games, watching social media, or spending time alone with digital devices have reduced the intensity of peer relationships. This has resulted in a decline in the values of empathy, trust, cooperation, loyalty, and honesty in children's daily lives. For example, some children prioritize digital games over helping friends in need, or lie to avoid punishment. This fact confirms that the value of friendship in children is undergoing a significant shift. In the context of education and character development, children's literature is an effective alternative medium for developing an understanding of social values. Literature not only provides engaging stories but also provides moral and emotional experiences that guide readers in understanding appropriate behavior in social relationships

(Zaidatus & Suyatno, 2025). One relevant work of children's literature is the novel "Special Pen Friend" by Aisya Najwa Kirana Alenty. This novel depicts various values of friendship, such as empathy, trust, cooperation, loyalty, and honesty, through the conflicts and interactions of its characters.

Based on this phenomenon, it is important to analyze the representation of the value of friendship in the novel "Special Pen Friend" as an effort to understand the dynamics of children's social relationships in the digital age. This analysis is significant considering that children's literature can serve as an educational tool in shaping character and restoring fundamental values that have begun to be eroded by technological developments.

Based on the description above, several research questions are formulated. The following are the research questions:

- 1) How is the value of empathy represented in the novel "Special Pen Friend" by Aisya Najwa Kirana Alenty?
- 2) How is the value of trust represented in the novel "Special Pen Friend" by Aisya Najwa Kirana Alenty?
- 3) How is the value of cooperation represented in the novel "Special Pen Friend" by Aisya Najwa Kirana Alenty?
- 4) How is the value of loyalty represented in the novel "Special Pen Friend" by Aisya Najwa Kirana Alenty?
- 5) How is the value of honesty represented in the novel "Special Pen Friend" by Aisya Najwa Kirana Alenty?

The several objectives of this study are as follows:

- 1) To describe the representation of the value of empathy in the novel "Special Pen Friend" by Aisya Najwa Kirana Alenty.
- 2) To describe the representation of the value of trust in the novel "Special Pen Friend" by Aisya Najwa Kirana Alenty.
- 3) To describe the representation of the value of cooperation in the novel "Special Pen Friend" by Aisya Najwa Kirana Alenty.



4) To describe the representation of the value of loyalty in the novel "Special Pen Friend" by Aisya Najwa Kirana Alenty.

5) To describe the representation of the value of honesty in the novel "Special Pen Friend" by Aisya Najwa Kirana Alenty.

This study has both theoretical and practical benefits. Theoretically, this study can be useful in broadening research horizons and developing the science of children's literature. It can serve as a reference or broad illustration of the importance of friendship, not only in the world of fiction but also in everyday life. Practically, this research can be beneficial for other authors in analyzing the values of friendship based on Ahmadi's theory in children's novels, providing readers with insight and enjoyment into Aisya Najwa Kirana Alenty's novel *Sahabat Pena Istimewa* (Special Pen Friend) and enriching research on children's literature and fostering appreciation for literature enthusiasts.

Children's literature is a literary genre developed specifically to meet the needs of early childhood readers, both in terms of language, themes, and presentation. Toha-Sarumpaet (2016) emphasizes that children's literature has distinct characteristics from general literature because it is designed to address children's cognitive, emotional, and social development. Similarly, Didipu (2020) states that children's literature reflects children's emotional and imaginative worlds, while Ampera (2010) emphasizes that children's literature must be aligned with children's interests and developmental experiences. In this context, children's literature serves not only as a means of entertainment but also as a medium for moral, social, and cultural education. Suyatno (2024) even explains that children's literature is beneficial in fostering creativity, social awareness, language skills, and appreciation of life experiences.

Within the scope of children's literature, novels are one of the most widely used forms of literature as a medium for teaching values. According to Rismayanti et al. (2020), a novel is a work of fiction that represents an imaginary world through a combination of intrinsic elements that

depict human life. Utami (2022) defines a novel as a long narrative that presents a series of events resembling the reality of life, while Priyatni (2012) emphasizes that novels are generally longer than 50,000 words, allowing for in-depth character development. Children's novels, according to Suyatno (2009), function as "mirrors" and "windows" that showcase children's social experiences and strengthen language skills and character development. Thus, children's novels not only present entertaining stories but also convey moral values and educational messages.

Theme is a fundamental element that shapes the meaning of children's literature. Themes in children's works are generally close to their world, such as courage, family, honesty, and friendship. Rudman, in Suyatno (2024), states that themes in children's literature serve to guide children in understanding social and moral norms. The theme of friendship, in particular, is a key theme in children's literature because it plays a significant role in children's social development. Through this theme, children can learn about empathy, cooperation, communication, understanding, and conflict resolution. Therefore, children's novels that address the theme of friendship have great potential in shaping readers' socio-emotional attitudes.

Children's novels are an important medium for conveying social values, particularly the value of friendship. Through Ahmadi's perspective, this research can reveal how the values of empathy, trust, cooperation, loyalty, and honesty are represented through the actions, dialogue, and interactions between characters, thus contributing to the study of children's literature and character education.

Previous research relevant to this research includes Suyono's thesis entitled "The Values of Friendship in Pramoedya Ananta Toer's Novel "Anak Semua Bangsa" (Children of All Nations), Dewi Aningtyas' journal study entitled "The Values of Friendship in Donny Dhiringantoro's Novel 5Cm and Their Relevance to Literature Teaching Materials in High School," and Nugroho's thesis entitled "Analysis of the Values of Friendship in

the Novel *Shima Wa Bokurato*." These three studies provide a strong foundation for understanding how friendship values can be identified and analyzed in literary works, as well as their relevance to children's social development. Similarities between these previous studies include their study of friendship values. The novelty of this research compared to previous studies is that the object of study is the children's novel (KKPK) entitled "Special Pen Friend" by Aisya Najwa Kirana Alenty.

METHOD

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach. Razak (2017), Abubakar (2021), and Creswell (2008) describes that the qualitative approach is commonly used in various educational research including literature. This qualitative approach was chosen because the analysis of literary works requires the interpretation of meaning, the depiction of social phenomena, and the expression of values implied in the text. As stated by Abdussamad (2021), qualitative research emphasizes an interactive and continuous analysis process, allowing for an in-depth understanding of data in the form of words, sentences, and narratives.

The data source for this study is the 82-page novel "Special Pen Friend" published by DAR! Mizan (2022). The research data consists of text excerpts representing the values of empathy, trust, cooperation, loyalty, and honesty, in accordance with Ahmadi's (2009). The research data consists of text excerpts containing representations of the values of empathy, trust, cooperation, loyalty, and honesty according to the concept of friendship values according to Ahmadi (2009), Arikunto (2013), and Malik & Hamied (2014). The data were collected through a literature study technique with the steps of intensively reading the text, marking parts relevant to the problem formulation, noting excerpts that represent friendship values, and grouping the data based on friendship value categories.

Data were collected through a literature re-

view technique, which involved intensive reading of the text, highlighting sections relevant to the problem formulation, noting excerpts representing friendship values, and grouping the data based on friendship value categories.

Data analysis was conducted using the Miles & Huberman model, which includes three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification. In the reduction stage, the researcher selected and focused on quotes relevant to the five values of friendship. Next, the data was presented in descriptive form to facilitate the identification of patterns in the text. The final stage was drawing conclusions, which were continuously verified based on the data's compatibility with Ahmadi's theory to obtain valid and consistent analysis results.

In this study, friendship values were analyzed based on Ahmadi's theory. Ahmadi (2009), Balaka (2012), and Sanjaya (2016) explains that friendship is built on similarities in interests, ways of thinking, desires, and ideals, which then develop into close emotional bonds. According to Ahmadi, friendship values consist of five main aspects: empathy, trust, cooperation, loyalty, and honesty. Empathy is understood as the ability to understand another person's feelings and conditions without having to experience them directly. Trust is a belief that grows from openness and honesty between friends. Cooperation refers to a willingness to help each other achieve shared goals. Loyalty reflects consistent fidelity in both positive and difficult situations. Meanwhile, honesty is the foundation of healthy friendships because it creates a sense of security and acceptance. This structure of values is the basis for analyzing the representation of friendship in the novel *Sahabat Pena Istimewa*.

This method allows the research to comprehensively explore the meaning of friendship within the context of children's literature, while also providing an in-depth understanding of how moral messages are represented through the characters, plot, and dialogue in the novel "Special Pen Friend."



RESULTS

1. Representation of the Value of Empathy

Empathy is the ability to understand the feelings, thoughts, and situations experienced by a friend without having to experience them directly. This means that someone can put themselves in another person's shoes, thus understanding their friend's situation and understanding their perspective and emotions. Empathy is not merely sympathy or pity, but rather genuine and non-judgmental emotional understanding. Empathy empowers a person to respond appropriately to their friend's situation, whether in happy or sad situations. The representation of the value of empathy in the novel "Special Pen Friend" by Aisya Najwa Kirana Alenty is an attitude of caring for friends. The representation of the value of empathy can be demonstrated by the following quote:

"RISAAA!"

I woke up in a panic.

"Risa, the dinner bell rang ten minutes ago," Rena said loudly.

I rubbed my eyes. Rena and Luna were sitting on my bed. Ugh, just a dream, I thought.

"Are you tired, Risa? Are you okay? Your face is pale," Luna asked worriedly.

"I... I'm fine. Come on, let's go to the dining room!" I said, getting up from the bed. (Alenty, 2022:34)

From the quote above, it can be concluded that empathy is demonstrated through caring for friends. This is demonstrated by Rena's concern for her friend's physical and emotional well-being, such as asking how she is when she's feeling unwell. This behavior exemplifies empathy, as it involves the ability to understand a friend's situation and needs. The character in the data demonstrates awareness of the changes occurring in her friend, both physically and emotionally. Thus, empathy is demonstrated through genuine care and concern due to a balance of emotional awareness. The second value of empathy is sharing with friends, as evidenced by the following quote:

"There's a cafeteria here? Cool! But... I didn't bring any money. On the first day of school, I brought lunch from my mom. Maybe the money will be sent tomorrow," said Luna.

She took out a white and orange lunch box from her bag.

Rena and I looked at each other. "Then, I'll treat you, okay?" I offered.

"Oh, don't bother. I'll just eat my lunch," Luna declined, embarrassed. She opened her lunch box, which contained a slice of tart.

"It's okay. I have enough pocket money. Besides, the food and drinks there aren't too expensive," I added. (Alenty, 2022: 24)

From the quote above, it can be concluded that empathy is demonstrated through sharing with friends. This attitude is demonstrated by Luna and Risa's shop, which provides food to a friend who doesn't have pocket money. Sharing what they have with a friend in need can ease their burden. This sharing demonstrates sensitivity to the needs of others, prompting them to help without being asked. This action represents empathy, namely helping behavior based on concern for the well-being of others. Such empathy demonstrates emotional understanding accompanied by concrete actions as a form of caring in social relationships. Thus, empathy is evident in sensitivity or understanding of the needs of others, demonstrating caring in friendships.

2. Representation of the Value of Trust

Trust is the belief that arises from openness, honesty, and consistent behavior between individuals in friendship. The trust that is formed provides a sense of security and enables open communication, allowing for the sharing of experiences, problems, and feelings without fear of betrayal or negativity. In friendships founded on trust, communication is open and problems are quickly resolved. The value of trust in Aisya Najwa Kirana Alenty's novel "Special Pen Friend" is represented by the attitude of keeping secrets. This value of trust is demonstrated in the following quote:

Today, I will meet Maya for the second time. I was sitting in my room daydreaming when Luna approached me.

"What's wrong, Risa? Why are you daydreaming?" Luna asked.

"Uh, nothing," I replied. Luna shouldn't know I'm meeting Maya. Maya wants me to keep our meeting a secret. (Alenty, 2022: 53)

From the quote above, it can be concluded that the value of trust is reflected in the attitude of keeping secrets. This attitude is demonstrated by Risa, who must keep her friend's secrets and not answer other friends' questions. This attitude enables her to uphold her commitment not to share personal information with other friends. This attitude indicates an awareness of the responsibility of maintaining the trust given to her by her friend. Trust in such data can provide a sense of security. Thus, the value of trust is evident in the commitment and consistency within friendships by keeping information confidential.

The second value of trust, namely the attitude of keeping promises, can be demonstrated in the following quote:

"It was twelve noon. I was standing at the school gate. Not long after, I saw two people walking towards the school. They were carrying two large bags. Hmmm, maybe that's Maya and her mother, I thought. I waited until they walked closer and... I was right. It was Maya and her mother!

"Hi, Maya! Hello, Mom!" I greeted.

"Hi, Risa," Maya replied curtly. She adjusted her sunglasses.

"I found the place you asked for, but it's really dirty. I've tried cleaning it. I hope you don't mind," I said. (SPI, 2022: 54).

From the quote above, it can be concluded that the value of trust is reflected in the act of keeping promises. This attitude is demonstrated by Risa and Maya, who kept their promise to meet to discuss important matters. This attitude is exemplified by the ability to trust others to keep promises,

such as arriving on time without delay. A friend who keeps promises must also have friends who trust each other, because this trust fosters openness and consistency, which in turn fosters positive thinking in their friends. Thus, the value of trust is evident in mutual trust, fostering confidence, openness, and consistency in friendships.

3. Representation of the Value of Cooperation

Cooperation is a mutually beneficial relationship that strengthens social solidarity and fosters a sense of responsibility among friends. Therefore, friends are not only present in pleasant situations but are also willing to contribute time, energy, and even sacrifice to support their friends. To achieve good cooperation, individuals in a friendship must establish an agreed-upon basis to achieve goals effectively through open communication. The value of friendship creates positive interpersonal relationships, where each party feels they have contributed and are valued within the relationship. The value of cooperation in Aisya Najwa Kirana Alenty's novel "Special Pen Friend" is represented by the spirit of mutual cooperation. This representation of the value of cooperation can be demonstrated by the following quote:

"Yes. Hmmm, by the way, our schoolwork is piling up. There's so much," I complained.

"How about we work on it together next Saturday?" Zira suggested.

We agreed. (Alenty, 2022: 35-36)

From the quote above, it can be concluded that the value of cooperation is reflected in the spirit of mutual cooperation. This attitude is demonstrated by the characters Zira, Risa, Rena, and Luna, who work together to complete assignments quickly. Working together to complete tasks together aims to lighten their burdens and speed up the completion of work. This attitude is considered cooperation because it involves mutual cooperation to achieve something together. Working together on tasks together can create mutually beneficial relationships and strengthen solidarity. Friendships



require cooperation, through both good and bad, to achieve a common goal. This attitude is a form of cooperation based on a willingness to put aside personal interests for the benefit of the group. Thus, the value of cooperation is evident in the cooperation between friends to achieve something together, based on a willingness to put aside personal interests and without any jealousy.

The second value of cooperation is mutual assistance, as evidenced by the following quote:

We were all busy preparing for Maya's birthday. Beryl, Sekar, and Elysa wrapped presents and arranged the room. Zira took cupcakes. Luna waited for Maya's mother at the school gate. I accompanied Maya. We were in Beryl's secret place. (Alenty, 2022: 78).

From the quote above, it can be concluded that the value of cooperation is reflected in the attitude of helping each other. This attitude is demonstrated by Risa, Beryl, Sekar, Elysa, Zira, and Luna, who are all working together to celebrate their friend's birthday. All of the friends work together to celebrate their friend's birthday. They are willing to sacrifice time, energy, and thought to achieve a common goal. This attitude is considered cooperative because it involves helping each other and working together to realize their friend's wishes and celebrate their friend's birthday. This attitude can foster a sense of responsibility among friends. The cooperation reflected in the data confirms the existence of a self-sacrificing attitude. Each individual demonstrates a willingness to sacrifice time, energy, and thought to ensure the smooth running of the event preparations. Thus, the value of cooperation is evident in mutual assistance and cooperation to achieve a common goal, even though they sacrifice time, energy, and thought.

4. Representation of the Value of Loyalty

Loyalty in friendship is reflected in loyalty, steadfastness, and sincerity, as well as a sincere desire to continue supporting friends. Loyalty reflects a deep commitment to maintaining and sustaining friendships despite facing various conflicts

and problems. This value reflects personal integrity and sincerity in maintaining emotional bonds with friends, without being easily influenced by external circumstances that harm the relationship. The value of loyalty in the novel "Special Pen Friend" by Aisyah Najwa Kirana Alenty is represented by the attitude of not abandoning a friend. This representation of loyalty can be demonstrated in the following quote:

"I'm sorry, Risa. I never told you. I thought you would distance yourself from me, but it turned out the other way around. You're a good friend," said Maya, half-sobbing.

"No, Maya. I'm sorry too. I immediately concluded that you hated me. I was wrong," I said. I hugged Maya tightly, my tears pouring down like rain.

"Thank you, God. I have the best pen pal. Maya is my special pen pal." Alenty, 2022: 57).

From the quote above, it can be concluded that the value of loyalty is reflected in the attitude of not abandoning a friend. This attitude is demonstrated by Risa, who does not abandon her friend when she learns that she is blind. This attitude exemplifies loyalty because it demonstrates her fidelity in accepting her friend's condition without any rejection. This attitude demonstrates steadfastness and sincerity in the face of pressure, despite physical limitations. A willingness to remain by a friend's side during difficult times is a concrete manifestation of loyalty. Thus, the value of loyalty is evident in fidelity in times of sorrow, such as accepting the situation and remaining sincere in supporting a friend.

The second value of loyalty is the attitude of faithfully waiting, demonstrated by the following quote:

"Hi, Luna, just arrived?" I asked.

"Um... only waited an hour," Luna said, grinning. I was taken aback. An hour? Well, that's normal. Maybe Luna was just excited to see her old friend. (Alenty, 2022: 41).

From the quote above, it can be concluded that the value of loyalty is reflected in the attitude of faithfully waiting. This attitude is demonstrated by Luna, who faithfully waited for two hours to meet her old friend. Luna consistently waited for her old friend's arrival, even though she had to wait for hours. Luna demonstrated a change in attitude by remaining at the meeting place for a considerable amount of time for her friend. The loyalty reflected in her actions demonstrates that loyalty is not merely about being present together but also manifested through a readiness to wait without complaint. This attitude signifies the sincerity that underlies friendship. Thus, the value of loyalty is evident in the loyalty and sincerity in meeting with friends.

5. Representation of the Value of Honesty

Honesty is the foundation of friendship, encompassing openness in expressing thoughts, feelings, and truths without manipulation or misinformation. Honesty can be a solution, as it helps resolve problems. Honesty establishes relationship integrity and builds mutual respect between friends. Honesty builds trust and strengthens respect between friends. In honest friendships, there's no need to hide anything, allowing friends to feel fully accepted by their friends. With honesty, conflicts can be prevented and resolved early, and relationships become stronger and more meaningful. The value of honesty in Aisya Najwa Kirana Alenty's novel "Special Pen Friend" is represented by the attitude of not lying. The following quote demonstrates this:

"You spread rumors about Zira because you're jealous of her, right?" I guessed. "Zira used to be popular because she won various school competitions."

Beryl nodded slowly.

"What about Luna and Rena's letters?" asked Maya, who had been listening.

"Actually, I was just sitting on Rena's bed. I accidentally found your letter. For some reason, I

felt an urge to read it and write a reply. I also found a letter from you to Luna. Ah, I'm so sorry," Beryl replied. (Alenty, 2022: 65-66)

From the quote above, it can be concluded that the value of honesty is reflected in the attitude of not lying. This attitude is demonstrated by Beryl, who does not lie when asked about spreading gossip and forging letters. Beryl tells everything openly without any manipulation. This attitude indicates that Beryl does not try to cover up her lies, but rather tells them directly without manipulation. This honesty is reflected in not lying, thus emphasizing that honesty is an important aspect in building trust and can make a person better. The value of honesty is demonstrated by the attitude of recounting one's actions, not merely being honest but also being aware of the mistakes made. Thus, the value of honesty is evident in openness in telling the truth without manipulation.

The second value of honesty is the attitude of admitting mistakes, as evidenced by the following quote:

"Luna wasn't wrong. No one wants to be friends with me. It was my fault. I'm sorry, Maya," Beryl said wearily.

"It's okay, Beryl," Maya said with concern. (SPI, 2022: 65)

From the quote above, it can be concluded that the value of honesty is reflected in the attitude of admitting mistakes. This attitude is demonstrated by Beryl, who admits her mistake and utters inappropriate words. This attitude is considered honest because admitting her mistakes can foster good friendships. Admitting mistakes demonstrates self-awareness and responsibility for the words spoken. This admission not only demonstrates honesty but also demonstrates humility in maintaining friendships. Honesty manifested through admitting mistakes can open up space for healthy communication. Thus, the value of honesty is evident in open actions, such as admitting mistakes without manipulation or evasiveness.



DISCUSSION

The analysis of the novel *Sahabat Pena Istimewa* (Special Pen Friends) shows that this work consistently represents the values of friendship proposed by Ahmadi (2009): empathy, trust, cooperation, loyalty, and honesty. These values are evident through the actions, dialogue, and interactions between characters, particularly between the main character and her friends. The representation of these values strengthens the novel's position as a work of children's literature that not only entertains but also teaches moral messages and social character traits important for the development of school-age children. Similarly, according to (Lufita et al., 2025), the novel functions as an effective means of reflection and moral education, as well as a medium that reinforces constructive social values in real life.

The value of empathy is demonstrated through the characters' attention to their friends' well-being, for example when they show concern, offer assistance, or provide emotional support in difficult situations. This aligns with Ahmadi's concept, which places the ability to understand others' feelings as the foundation of harmonious social relationships. In the novel, empathy is visualized not only through direct actions but also through dialogue and narrative that demonstrate the characters' efforts to understand their friends' perspectives.

The value of trust is evident in the characters' openness in sharing personal stories, expressing their feelings, and trusting them to keep secrets. Trust is positioned as an element that strengthens the bonds of friendship in the story. According to Ahmadi, trust is key to the development of healthy friendships. This novel represents the aspect of trust through positive interdependence, for example, when the main character entrusts an important matter to his friend without hesitation.

The value of cooperation emerges through situations where the characters work together to solve problems or achieve certain goals. Cooperation is depicted through simple yet significant activities, such as helping each other with school

activities or supporting a friend struggling to complete a specific task. Cooperation is a form of social interaction that involves shared activities to achieve a collective goal through mutual support, openness, mutual understanding, and acknowledgment of each individual's role (Suyono, 2023). Ahmadi emphasizes that cooperation is the ability to work together for the common good.

The value of loyalty is reflected in the characters' willingness to remain by their friends' sides through both difficult and pleasant situations. The novel depicts loyalty as a stable emotional commitment, for example, through the characters' faithfulness in accompanying their friends when facing conflict or personal problems. The loyalty displayed in the story aligns with Ahmadi's view that friendship contains elements of attachment and loyalty that make relationships lasting.

The value of honesty is evident in the dialogue between the characters, which demonstrates openness, admitting mistakes, and honest communication. This novel demonstrates that honesty is an essential foundation for maintaining quality friendships. According to Ahmadi, honesty is a value that underpins trust and healthy social interaction. In the story, honesty is not only portrayed as the right attitude but also as a learning process for the child characters, who must have the courage to admit mistakes and improve themselves.

The impact of the representation of these values indicates that children's novels can serve as effective media for moral and social education. Furthermore, novels with moral messages can help children understand and internalize values such as honesty, responsibility, empathy, tolerance, and so on (Sumitro, 2024; Harahap, 2022; Achsani, 2018). The novel is not only enjoyable reading but also a means of moral transformation. The values of friendship presented in the story foster humanistic, moral, and communicative attitudes, and foster prosocial behavior that is not based on rewards but rather on an awareness of goodness. Thus, the novel "Special Pen Friend" indirectly strengthens children's emotional intelligence and demonstrates how children's literature has the power to instill

humanitarian values.

The results of this study have strong relevance to the world of education, particularly in the context of the Independent Curriculum, which emphasizes strengthening character education. This novel can be used as a teaching material for literary appreciation because it contains moral values that align with the needs of students' social-emotional development. Through reading and reflection, students can recognize and emulate the values of friendship represented in the story. Teachers can utilize this novel as a medium to improve student literacy while building character traits such as empathy, trust, cooperation, loyalty, and honesty. This demonstrates that children's literature serves as an important bridge between academic education and character education, as it harmoniously integrates cognitive, affective, and social aspects into the learning process.

However, this study is not without limitations. The analysis focuses solely on the novel's text without involving children as the primary readers. This means that the research has not empirically measured how children understand or internalize these values in real life. However, this study makes an important theoretical contribution in representing children's literature as a vehicle for character formation through the values of friendship.

Overall, this research confirms that the novel *Sahabat Pena Istimewa* has great potential as a means of character education. The representation of friendship values in this novel is not only relevant for child readers but also provides guidance for educators, parents, and observers of child education to revitalize a culture of empathy, mutual assistance, honesty, and solidarity amidst the tide of modern individualism. Through literature, human values can be instilled in a more natural, enjoyable, and meaningful way for the younger generation.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results and discussion, it can be concluded that this study represents

friendship values, including empathy, trust, cooperation, loyalty, and honesty.

Empathy is represented through caring, imparting knowledge, helping others, sharing, providing opportunities, giving advice, feeling emotions, and listening attentively. The characters demonstrate the ability to understand their friends' situations without having to experience them directly. Empathy is a strong foundation for building harmonious friendships because it fosters mutual understanding and respect.

Trust is represented through keeping secrets and keeping promises. The characters in the novel demonstrate confidence, enabling trust to maintain confidentiality of information and commitments. Trust serves as a foundation for fostering a sense of security and openness.

Cooperation is represented through mutual cooperation, helping friends, and assisting each other. The characters in the novel demonstrate that success and happiness arise from the ability to work together selflessly. Cooperation fosters mutual respect and strengthens solidarity among friends.

Loyalty is represented through defending, not abandoning, and faithfully waiting. The characters in the novel demonstrate consistent loyalty and commitment through both joy and sorrow. Loyalty reflects a form of affection manifested through commitment. Loyalty embodies a sense of responsibility toward true friendship.

The value of honesty is reflected in the attitude of not lying, admitting shortcomings, and acknowledging mistakes. The characters in the novel demonstrate openness in expressing thoughts, feelings, and truths without manipulation. Honesty can improve relationships and create harmony, strengthening emotional bonds between friends. Honesty serves as a moral foundation that maintains the purity of social relationships.

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