

OVERCOMING EARLY CHILDHOOD PERFORMANCE ANXIETY IN THE CHILDREN'S STORYBOOK "HORE, DALO BISA!" ERMINAWATI'S WORK

Mila Syahlaena
{ msyhlna19@gmail.com }

UIN Prof K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto, Banyumas, Jawa Tengah

Abstract. The issue of *performance anxiety* is a significant challenge in building early childhood confidence. This anxiety is represented by the character Dalo who feels insecure and very nervous when he takes turns showing his abilities. This study aims to analyze the role of storybooks "Hore, Dalo Bisa!" as a narrative medium to overcome performance anxiety. The second goal is to identify the values of courage and confidence that are instilled in the narrative. The method used is a qualitative narrative analysis of the storyline, characters, and moral message. The analysis focuses on how stories facilitate the discovery of self-potential and the management of children's emotions. The main source of data is the storybook "Hore, Dalo Bisa!" by Erminawati. It was found that this story was very effective in overcoming Dalo's *anxiety* by turning fear into courage. The story teaches children that courage is the key to unlocking hidden potential, as evidenced when Dalo manages to discover his talent in urgent situations. This narrative reinforces intrinsic confidence and instills the important message that every child has his or her own best time to develop. This story is an important tool for early childhood teachers to overcome feelings of insecurity and encourage children to try. This message is critical for addressing performance anxiety in early childhood.

Keywords: Performance Anxiety, Early Childhood, Confidence, Courage

INTRODUCTION

Performance anxiety is a serious problem in early childhood because it can affect emotional stability and long-term development. Anxiety in early childhood is a state of excessive worry that can affect a child's emotions to become unstable, especially in children who have just entered the school environment. (Oktamarina et al., 2022: 121) Anxiety in early childhood is an excessive worry that can affect a child's emotional stability, with family factors as the main cause especially when the child enters a new school environment. The formation of confidence in early childhood is highly dependent on the role of parents as the main figure who can shape a child's personality to be confident or insecure through the attitude of listening, appreciating, and giving opportunities. (Rahman, 2013: 94) Praise has been proven to have a significant influence on the formation of children's confidence, where praise from parents and the environment is a motivator to present themselves and avoid the fear of failure. (Rohmah, 2018: 129)

To overcome *Performance Anxiety*, children need to be encouraged to dare to take risks. Courage allows the child to overcome cognitive and somatic fears that hinder performance. This concept asserts that true success often begins not with talent, but rather with bold actions in the face of failure. The PAUD environment often inadvertently creates a trigger for *Performance Anxiety*. The implementation of a results-oriented curriculum, presentations in front of the class, or competitions can create high group pressure. Many children show symptoms such as refusing to perform, being overly nervous, and withdrawing, especially when they feel that their abilities are different from their peers. Although the problem of performance anxiety is universal, the most effective solutions are those that use cultural and media contexts that are close to the child. There is an urgent need for teaching materials that explicitly discuss and resolve *Performance Anxiety* in a fun way, such as through high-quality Indonesian children's storybooks that are easily accessible to teachers. The storybook "Hore, Dalo Bisa!" by Erminawati specifically presents relevant *cases of Performance Anxiety*. The character Dalo is said to feel insecure because he has not found talent like his friends. The peak of the conflict occurs when Dalo is very nervous when taking turns showing his abilities and is unable to act in front of his friends. This underscores Dalo's failure in dealing with social

pressure. Dalo's potential emerged not through formal training, but through courage triggered by an urgent situation. This story conveys the message that fear is a natural emotion that must be faced with courage, which then becomes the key to unlocking hidden talents.

Confidence in early childhood can be interpreted as a child's strong belief in his own ability to do something or achieve a certain goal without excessive fear. This confidence is not innate by birth, but is actively shaped by the social environment around it. This means that how much children dare to try and be confident in their abilities is greatly influenced by how parents, teachers, and friends treat them in the daily environment. (Rohmah, 2018: 128) When a child does not have a strong foundation of confidence, he will be prone to experiencing emotional problems, one of which is the emergence of anxiety. Lack of self-confidence makes children tend to focus on potential failures and fear of bad judgments from others, which then manifest into nervousness or anxiety when they have to display their abilities in front of the public or group. (Aprilian, 2024: 117) This anxiety is what in the academic context is called *performance anxiety*, where children are physically and mentally "locked in" and fail to show their true potential. One of the most effective ways to build and maintain confidence in children is through positive support from the immediate environment. Giving sincere praise from parents, teachers, and people around them has proven to be very significant in forming a child's positive view of themselves. Rohmah, "Building Children's Confidence Through Praise." This compliment validates that children's efforts and abilities are valued, thus encouraging them to dare to show themselves and try new things without being haunted by the fear of failure, which is ultimately the key to overcoming performance anxiety.

According to Lidia Oktamarin et al, providing intervention carried out early can treat anxiety disorders or prevent anxiety symptoms from becoming more serious disorders. Involving parents in the intervention of children with anxiety disorders is felt to be more helpful for children towards more positive development and helps parents in changing behavior when facing their children's problems and their own problems. (Oktamarina et al., 2022: 131) According to Lilis Madyawati, anxiety is spurred by academic difficulties, parental demands, and poor health history. The school can provide intervention in the form

of communicating to parents, mentoring, repetition, and habituation, but this has not shown maximum results. (Madyawati & Nurjannah, 2020: 14) According to M. Habibi, play therapy is one of the techniques that can be used by therapists, counselors, or psychologists to overcome anxiety in early childhood. (Habibi, 2022: 158)

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with the type of Narrative Analysis (Content Analysis). This method was chosen to understand in depth and systematically the messages, meanings, and values contained in narrative texts, especially those related to psychosocial issues. The object of the research is a children's story book entitled "Hore, Dalo Bisa!" by Erminawati. Analysis does not involve human subjects, but focuses on the analysis of the text and visuals of the storybook. The data analysis technique is carried out through three main stages: (1) Critical Reading of the Text, where the narrative is read carefully to identify conflict scenes and resolutions related to *Dalo's performance anxiety* (feelings of insecurity and nervousness). (2) Unit Analysis Identification, which is extracting dialogues, emotion descriptions, and storylines that specifically contain the value of confidence, fear, and potential discovery. (3) Categorization of Findings, which is grouping data based on a theoretical theme (e.g., courage as a potential catalyst) to build an argument that the story is effective as a model of *performance anxiety intervention*.

RESULTS AND ANALYSISa

1.1 Performance Anxiety Representation

Dalo character in the story "*Hooray, Dalo Bisa!*" Clearly represents the root of *performance anxiety* in early childhood, namely feelings of inferiority and fear compared to others. Dalo feels anxious

because he compares himself to his friends who have found their own talents. This feeling creates a fear of negative judgment from his social environment. This phenomenon is very relevant to the real conditions in the PAUD environment, where children often feel pressured by the expectations of teachers or parents in order to perform perfectly or match the abilities of their peers. In line with the opinion (Rohmah, 2018: 126), *self-esteem* that is vulnerable due to social comparison can make children choose not to display their actual abilities. As a result, there is an attitude of doubt, fear of trying, and a loss of initiative to explore.

The initial conflict that Dalo experienced when he was nervous and failed to show his abilities in front of his friends became a real picture of the symptoms of *performance anxiety*. This form of anxiety can be seen through two aspects:

- 1.1.1 Physical symptoms, such as body shaking, sweating, or difficulty moving due to excessive nervousness.
- 1.1.2 Cognitive symptoms, such as chaotic thoughts, blank thoughts, or excessive focus on fear of poor judgment.

This condition is also widely found in early childhood education practices. For example, a child who is actually able to read well, suddenly forgets or refuses to appear when asked to read in front of the class. This shows that performance anxiety can block a child's actual abilities, making existing potential not appear optimally. This condition then becomes the basis for the importance of the role of courage as the main strategy to overcome performance anxiety in children.

1.2 Courage as a Trigger for Potential Development

The end of the story shows an important turning point in Dalo's character development: fear that turns into courage. When faced with an urgent situation, the threat from the big tuna fish, Dalo was forced to act boldly without thinking. In that critical moment, his hidden potential actually appeared naturally. This illustrates that fear does not have to be avoided, but rather faced with courage. Courage here does not mean not being afraid, but daring to act even though you still feel afraid. This principle is in line with the concept of *courage-building* in child psychology, which is to provide children with safe and targeted opportunities to face challenges that are scary for them.

In the context of learning, courage serves as a trigger that unlocks the child's potential which has been closed by anxiety and innocence. The brave actions taken by children give rise to positive experiences, which ultimately increase *self-efficacy* (the belief that they are capable). In line with the theory of *self-efficacy* (Bandura, 1997: 12), the experience of success after bold actions will strengthen the child's confidence and gradually reduce performance anxiety. For example, a child who was initially afraid of swimming, when encouraged by courage in certain situations, eventually succeeds in doing so and feels proud of his efforts.

Thus, courage becomes an important bridge between performance anxiety and children's confidence. Through courage, children learn that fear is not an obstacle to growth, but part of the process of finding the best potential in themselves.

1.3 Implications of Education for Overcoming Performance Anxiety

The moral message of the story "*Hooray, Dalo Bisa!*" provides an important guide for the world of education, especially at the PAUD level. Children need to be given the opportunity to try and dare to take action, because through that opportunity they learn to trust their own abilities. Dalo's story shows that courage comes not because of a lot of advice, but because of the opportunity to act. (Erminawati, 2023: 20) In schools, teachers can foster children's courage by creating a learning atmosphere full of appreciation and minimal criticism. Teachers and parents should appreciate the business process, not just assess the results. For example, praising your child for wanting to try to draw on their own, not just because the drawing is good. Through this approach, children learn that confidence grows from the courage to try, not from perfect results. This attitude gradually helps them overcome the fear of failure and lowers performance anxiety levels.

In addition, this story also emphasizes the importance of understanding the best time of each child's development. Each child has a learning pace and unique abilities that will appear in their own time. (Syafri et al., 2024: 217) This message is particularly relevant to reduce the pressure of social

comparison, which is often a trigger for performance anxiety in the PAUD environment. By instilling an understanding that every child has the "right time" to be able to, teachers and parents can help children feel calmer, more confident, and more patient in the learning process. The child's focus shifted from worry because he could not become a belief that one day he would definitely be able to.

Thus, "*Hooray, Dalo Bisa!*" Not only is it an inspirational story, but also a reflective means for educators in developing learning strategies that foster courage, confidence, and emotional health in early childhood.

Table 1. Analysis of Narrative Mechanisms to Overcome Early Childhood Performance Anxiety

Dimensions of Analysis	Representation of Conflict/Performance Anxiety Problems	Character Value	Key Education Implications
Cognitive/Emotional	Dalo felt insecure because he had not found talent like his friends (Fear of social judgment).	This story conveys the value of self-confidence, which is learning to be confident in yourself through the process of trying.	For teachers and parents, this message is important so that children are not always compared, but directed to focus on their own abilities.
Behavioral/Physical	Dalo was very nervous when he took turns showing his abilities and failed to act in front of his friends (Performance Barrier).	Stories show the value of courage, which is to dare to try even though they are still afraid.	Children are taught that fear is natural, but it must be faced, not avoided. In this way, the child learns to control his emotions and grows stronger.
Developmental Cycle	Anxiety is triggered by the pressure of time/the immediate demands to demonstrate ability.	The story teaches about discovering potential at the right time, that is, every child has their own "golden time" to develop.	Teachers can use these messages to calm the child and reduce the stress that can cause anxiety.
Key to Intervention	Fear often makes children lose confidence and feel inadequate.	In this story, the urgent situation actually triggers Dalo's courage to try and finally succeed.	Teachers can use stories like these as tools to build children's character for example, through storytelling, role-playing, or simple reflection. Children learn about courage, unyielding, and confidence from characters they know and like.

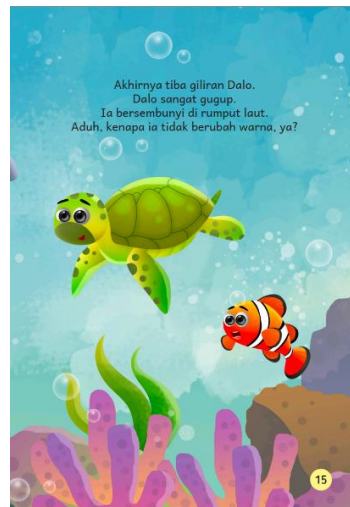


Fig. 1. Anxiety of Dalo's Performance in the Midst of Group Pressure.

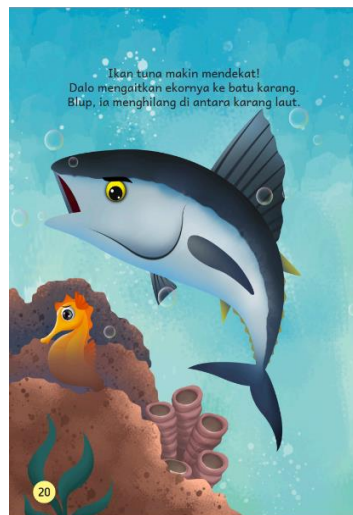


Fig. 2. Courage as a Trigger for Potential Development

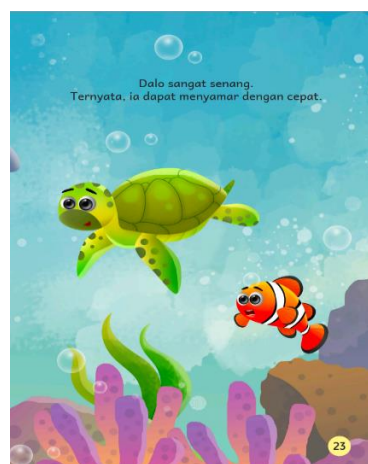


Fig. 3. Fostering Confidence and Understanding Each Child's Development Time

CONCLUSION

The story of "*Hooray, Dalo Bisa!*" It has an important value in early childhood education because it helps children understand that everyone has different abilities and developmental times. This message indirectly reduces *performance anxiety* and fosters confidence and courage. For early childhood educators, this story is an effective example of how simple media such as children's storybooks can be used to build emotional and social balance for children. With loving support, children will learn that "not yet" does not mean "can't", but "it is not yet time to do it".

References

- Aprilian, M. (2024). Pembentukan kepercayaan Diri Remaja. *ISTISYFA: Journal of Islamic Guidance and Counseling*, 3(3). <https://doi.org/10.29300/istisyfa.v3i3.6328>
- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy in changing societies*. Cambridge university press.
- Erminawati. (2023). Hore, Dalo Bisa!!! In *Hore, Dalo Bisa!!!* Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi.
- Habibi, M. M. (2022). Penanganan Kecemasan pada Anak Usia Dini Melalui Terapi Bermain. *Jurnal Ilmiah Profesi Pendidikan*, 7(1), 156–162. <https://doi.org/10.29303/jipp.v7i1.297>
- Madyawati, L., & Nurjannah, N. (2020). Kecemasan anak usia dini dan intervensinya (Studi kasus di TK Majaksingi). *Aulad: Journal on Early Childhood*, 4(1), 7–16. <https://doi.org/10.31004/aulad.v4i1.84>
- Oktamarina, L., Kurniati, F., Sholekhah, M., & Nurjanah, S. (2022). Gangguan Kecemasan (Anxiety Disorder) Pada Anak Usia Dini. *Jurnal Multidisipliner*, 1, 119–134.
- Rahman, M. M. (2013). Peran Orang Tua Dalam Membangun Kepercayaan Diri Pada Anak Usia Dini. *Edukasia : Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Islam*, 8(2). <https://doi.org/10.21043/edukasia.v8i2.759>
- Rohmah, J. (2018). Pembentukan Kepercayaan Diri Anak Melalui Pujian. *Martabat: Jurnal Perempuan Dan Anak*, 2(1). <https://doi.org/10.21274/martabat.2018.2.1.117-134>
- Syafri, F., Sumarni, T., Mardalena, M., & Tini, J. A. (2024). Hukum Konvergensi Dan Tempo Perkembangan. *Al Fitrah: Journal Of Early Childhood Islamic Education*, 7(2), 217. <https://doi.org/10.29300/ja.v7i2.6477>