

Construction Of The Meaning Of Students' Creativity And Problem Solving Values In The Book "Kue Pisang Asyik"

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Abstract. This study aims to explain how the meaning of creativity values and problem-solving skills are formed in students through the children's storybook *Kue Pisang Asyik* by Syarifah Zurriyati with illustrations from AMECO. The research approach applied is descriptive qualitative with content analysis methods that study narrative elements, visuals, and educational contexts for early childhood. The research findings show that creativity values are formed from three main elements, namely the use of creative language and encourage exploration of ideas, the behavior of the main character that illustrates the courage to experiment and innovate, and images that depict the creation process in a fun way. Problem-solving values are reflected in children's thinking processes in identifying problems, exploring various solution options, making decisions, and reflecting on the results. The book *Kue Pisang Asyik* shows a combination of innovation and problem-solving skills in children's daily lives. These results indicate that storybooks for children have the potential to be an effective literacy medium in developing creative character, critical thinking skills, and independence in preschool children.

Keywords: Construction of Meaning, Creativity, Problem Solving, Children's Books, Early Childhood Education.

INTRODUCTION

Early Childhood Education (PAUD), particularly Kindergarten (TK), is a crucial phase in a child's development. At this stage, children's ability to imagine, explore, and create experiences significant growth. Recent studies have shown that early childhood creativity can be fostered through the use of innovative media, the implementation of project-based learning, and the creation of a stimulating and supportive learning environment. PAUD plays a strategic role in shaping the foundation of personality, character, and creative thinking and problem-solving skills. Early childhood is known as the golden age in child development, where stimulation of creativity and critical thinking skills will significantly influence their future mindset and learning behavior (Nuryanti, 2023; Ministry of Education and Culture, 2022).

Children's storybooks, as an element of early literacy, serve as an effective means of developing various positive values in children. Through storylines, children can engage in symbolic contexts that enable them to understand situations, identify problems, and formulate solutions in creative ways (Nurgiyantoro, 2018; Musthofa, 2024). One work related to this is *Kue Pisang Asyik* by Syarifah Zurriyati (2022), which tells the story of a child facing a simple but challenging situation—having a lot of bananas and trying to find the best way to use them..

Several previous studies have emphasized efforts to enhance children's creativity through various types of reading materials and teaching media. For example, a study entitled "Enhancing Creativity and Imagination in Early Childhood Through Natural Loose-Part Media" revealed that the use of natural materials as loose-part media can significantly enhance the creative and imaginative abilities of young children. Furthermore, research on the application of project-based learning in early childhood education has concluded that project-based learning models are closely linked to enhancing various aspects of children's creativity. Developing creativity through visual arts and exploring color has proven effective in enhancing artistic abilities and visual expression in young children.

Conversely, various sources also indicate that despite the use of various strategies, several challenges remain in fostering children's creativity. Some children still struggle to express their creative ideas freely, preferring to imitate the work of their peers or teachers, and are hampered by the limited variety of media and teaching methods used. In this context, children's storybooks like

"Kue Pisang Asyik" (Fun Banana Cake) offer significant potential as tools to stimulate kindergarten children's creativity through the power of their narrative, characters, and illustrations. However, to date, there has been little research specifically exploring how the meaning of creativity is constructed in children's storybooks, and how these values are understood and accepted by kindergarten students..

Numerous studies have demonstrated that art and design media play a significant role in stimulating creativity in early childhood. For example, a study titled "Stimulating Creativity Through Clay Play Activities in Children Aged 5–6 Years" suggests that play activities using manipulative materials such as clay can enhance children's creative abilities, flexibility of thought, imagination, and originality. Meanwhile, research on Inquiry-Based Picture Storybooks demonstrates that storybooks designed using an inquiry approach are effective in sparking curiosity, developing creativity, and fostering creativity in children at the kindergarten level.

Regarding the use of storybooks as a learning medium, the study "Development of Project-Based Picture Storybooks to Improve the Cognitive Abilities of Children Aged 5–6 Years" confirms that the combination of picture storybooks and a project-based learning approach can encourage the development of children's critical and creative thinking skills. In line with these findings, the study "The Role of Picture Story Books as Language Learning Media in Improving Students' Creativity and Communication in Elementary Schools" also revealed that picture story books not only act as language learning aids, but are also effective in honing students' creativity and communication skills.

Although various studies have examined the use of creative learning media and picture storybooks, studies specifically examining how the meaning of creativity is constructed in children's story texts, particularly at the kindergarten level, are still limited. Elements such as narrative plot, characterization, style, and illustrations, as well as how children internalize the meaning of these elements, have not been thoroughly studied. This gap is important to address, as a comprehensive understanding of the construction of creativity values can provide a foundation for teachers and children's book authors in designing more effective learning strategies and literacy works to foster students' creativity.

The children's storybook Kue Pisang Asyik presents a simple story yet rich in moral meaning, particularly regarding the values of creativity, wise use of resources, responsibility, and the spirit of sharing. This work is highly relevant for use in early childhood learning, both at the kindergarten and early elementary school levels, as a literacy medium that supports positive character development. However, for optimal use in teaching and learning activities, this book should be supplemented with supporting activities, reflective questions or discussion starters, and enrichment materials tailored to the local cultural context. In this way, the learning process will be more comprehensive, contextual, and meaningful for children.

Children's storybooks such as "Kue Pisang Asyik" (Fun Banana Cake) have significant potential as effective learning media, as they present a creative context through depictions of problematic situations, imaginative alternative solutions, and the collaborative value of the characters. By examining the construction of the meaning of creativity contained in the story, this research is expected to make an important contribution to the development of character education and creativity theory. Furthermore, the results of this study also have the potential to enrich educational practices at the early childhood education (PAUD/TK) level, particularly in the selection and use of storybooks as literacy media that encourage creative, reflective, and meaningful learning for children.

Based on the description above, this study focuses on efforts to analyze how the construction of the meaning of creativity values is represented in the book *Kue Pisang Asyik*, examines its relevance to the development of creativity in kindergarten-aged children, and examines its implications for learning practices in kindergarten educational environments.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with content analysis. This approach is considered relevant because it can explore the implicit meanings contained in the text and visuals of children's literature, as well as examine how educational values such as creativity and problem-solving skills are constructed through narrative and illustrative elements (Krippendorff, 2018; Moleong, 2021). The qualitative approach also allows researchers to interpret the data in depth, taking into account the social and psychological contexts of early childhood. Thus, the analysis focuses not only on the story content but also highlights the relevance and implications of these values for learning practices in kindergarten (TK) (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The object of this research is a children's story book entitled "Kue Pisang Asyik" by Syarifah Zurriyati with illustrations by AMECO, published by the Language Agency of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology in 2022. This book is one of the collections in the list of *Indonesian Children's Literacy Books* and is used as a literacy medium to instill creative character values in the Early Childhood Education (PAUD) environment.

RESULT AND ANALYSIS

1. Story Description

The book "Kuku Pisang Asyik" (Fun Banana Cake) tells the story of a child named Moni who has a large harvest of bananas. Moni is faced with a dilemma: should she eat them all herself, share them with others, or process them into something more useful. After much thought and experimentation, Moni decides to make banana cakes with a variety of toppings, such as chocolate, cheese, and combinations of both. The story concludes with Moni's successful sale of all her cakes, illustrating her creative spirit, independence, and responsibility in utilizing her resources. The following is a version that has been clarified and organized in a coherent academic style, so it can be included directly in the analysis section.

2. The Construction of the Meaning of Creativity

The value of creativity in the book "Kue Pisang Asyik" (Fun Banana Cake) is constructed through three interconnected layers of meaning: language and imagination, character behavior, and visual illustrations.

a. Language and Imagination

The language used in the story is simple, communicative, and full of positive expressions that can stimulate children's imaginations. Expressions such as "You can choose the topping!" and "Hooray, my bananas are gone!" convey enthusiasm and a strong sense of accomplishment. This language not only conveys the storyline but also invites children to mentally engage in the creative thinking process. Thus, the language structure serves as a means of developing creative awareness through children's imagination and emotional participation in the story.

b. Character Behavior

The character Moni represents a child who is productively creative, not merely imaginative. She is able to transform ideas into tangible works by making and decorating banana cakes. This aligns with Munandar's (2012) view, which states that children's creativity includes the ability to produce something new, useful, and enjoyable for themselves and others. Moni's actions reflect independent thinking, courage in decision-making, and the ability to develop ideas into products with functional and social value.

c. Illustration Visualization

The illustrations created by AMECO reinforce the meaning of creativity through colorful and expressive visual displays. Scenes of Moni experimenting, decorating cakes, and displaying joyful expressions illustrate that the creative process is a joyful experience, not a stressful one. Consistent with the findings of Yuliani and Pratama (2023), kindergarten-aged children think primarily through visual representations, so visual elements play a crucial role in constructing meaning and internalizing the value of creativity.

3. The Construction of Meaning and the Value of Problem Solving

The value of problem solving in the story "Kue Pisang Asyik" (Fun Banana Cake) is explicitly constructed through a simple yet meaningful plot. From the beginning, Moni is faced with a concrete problem: too many bananas from the harvest. The problem-solving process reflects the stages of problem-solving thinking as outlined in modern cognitive theory.

a. Problem Identification

Moni recognizes the condition of "too many bananas" as a problem that needs to be addressed. This awareness teaches children that not all abundance equates to ease; instead, it can be a challenge that requires a solution.

b. Search for Ideas and Alternatives

Moni considers several alternative solutions, such as eating, sharing, or processing the bananas into a new product. This stage represents divergent thinking, the ability to think openly and explore various possible solutions before selecting the best option.

c. Solution Implementation

After considering various options, Moni chooses to make banana cakes with various toppings and then sell them. This process demonstrates convergent thinking, the ability to combine various ideas into one concrete, effective and applicable solution.

d. Evaluation and Reflection

The ending of the story, which depicts Moni's success in selling all of her cakes, symbolizes a positive evaluation of her creative, responsible, and results-oriented problem-solving efforts.

Through these stages, children are encouraged to understand that every problem can be solved through open thinking, exploring ideas, experimenting, and the courage to try new solutions (Utami, 2023). This process also instills the values that persistence and creativity are key to success in facing the challenges of everyday life.

The following is an academically refined version to align with the previous section and be ready for inclusion in the analysis or discussion chapter of a scientific paper.

4. The Relationship Between Creativity and Problem Solving

Creativity and problem solving are two complementary cognitive and affective abilities that play a crucial role in the development of early childhood thinking. Creativity serves as a source for new ideas, while problem-solving skills guide those ideas for application in solving real-life situations (Runco & Acar, 2019).

In the context of the story "Kue Pisang Asyik," Moni represents a child who is both creative and capable of reflective problem-solving. Her creativity is evident in her ability to generate ideas for making banana cakes with various toppings, while her problem-solving skills are evident in the decision-making process and the implementation of those ideas, resulting in concrete results.

This story teaches children that creative thinking does not stop at generating ideas; it must also be accompanied by the ability to test and apply ideas to solve real-life problems. Thus, "Kue Pisang Asyik" provides a holistic learning experience combining cognitive, affective, and social aspects that foster:

- a. confidence in decision-making,
- b. flexible and adaptive thinking skills,
- c. and the awareness that every challenge can be an opportunity for innovation.

This reciprocal relationship between creativity and problem solving reinforces the view that early childhood education needs to provide space for children to experiment, take risks, and express ideas through meaningful play activities (Craft, 2013).

5. Implications for Kindergarten Education

The Fun Banana Cake book has great potential as a thematic learning medium in kindergartens (TK), especially under the themes "Food and Small Business" or "I Am a Creative Child." Through a story-based literacy approach, teachers can instill the values of creativity and problem-solving skills in a contextual and enjoyable way. Some possible implementations include:

- a. Reflective Discussion
Teachers engage children in dialogue using open-ended questions such as, "If you had a lot of fruit, what could you make?" This question stimulates divergent thinking and helps children develop their imagination and confidence in expressing ideas.
- b. Practical Activities
Children are invited to make cake models from playdough or recycled materials. This activity trains fine motor skills while fostering pride in their own creations.
- c. Simple Projects
Teachers can facilitate simulations of buying and selling cakes made by children. Through this activity, children learn to understand the values of entrepreneurship, cooperation, communication, and product management in a fun and meaningful way.

With this implementation, the Kue Pisang Asyik book not only functions as literacy material, but also as an integrative learning tool that develops creativity, problem-solving skills, and entrepreneurial character from an early age.

CONCLUSION

Analysis of the text and illustrations in Kue Pisang Asyik (Fun Banana Cake) shows that this work explicitly and implicitly fosters the values of creativity and problem-solving skills, which are closely related to the world of early childhood. These values are conveyed through a simple yet meaningful story, dynamic and reflective child characters, and engaging illustrations relevant to children's everyday experiences.

Creativity is evident in the way Moni, the main character, thinks and acts innovatively when faced with a problem related to an excess of bananas. Moni's thought process demonstrates her ability to

combine imagination with concrete actions to create a work that is useful, engaging, and relevant. The creativity developed in this narrative focuses not only on the artistic side but also encompasses the ability to think productively, adaptively, and take initiative when faced with real-life situations.

Furthermore, the value of problem-solving is represented through a logical and reflective thinking process that includes identifying the problem, exploring alternative solutions, selecting an appropriate course of action, and evaluating the results. Through these steps, this story teaches children that every problem can be overcome with an open mind, the courage to try, and learning from experience.

The Fun Banana Cake book generally serves not only as a source of entertainment and literacy for children, but also as an effective educational tool for instilling creative character values, critical thinking skills, and independence in decision-making. In the context of kindergarten education, this book can be used by teachers as a thematic learning tool that focuses on developing creativity, flexibility of thinking, and problem-solving skills through meaningful play activities and projects..

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