

PICTURED BILINGUAL STORYBOOK FOR IMPROVING READING SKILL OF ENGLISH FOR YOUNG LEARNERS

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Abstract

This research is aimed to develop the pictured bilingual storybook for improving the reading skill of English for young learners based on the students' need. This Research and Development (R and D) were conducted to develop a pictured bilingual storybook for lower grades students in Golden Christian Primary School and to find out if it was applicable used for young learners to improve their English reading skills. The subject of this research was the lower grades students who joint Advanced Class in Golden Christian Primary School Palangka Raya. The used instruments were questionnaires, expert validation, and assessment from the teacher. The collected data were analyzed and described qualitatively quantitatively. The researcher used ADDIE method when doing the research which consisted of analysis, design product, development, implement, and evaluation. The result of the data analysis showed that students required interesting and useful media for their and teacher's needs. Based on those results, the product of this research was the two pictured bilingual storybooks which consisted of Dayaknese folktales. The experts' validation showed that the pictured bilingual storybooks were valid and applicable to implementation in the class. The pictured bilingual storybook needs to improve on layout, and illustrations, and put some additional contents. The students' pre-test and post-test scores were showed that there was improvement in their reading skill. The teacher also could make the pictured bilingual as one of the references media in teaching reading comprehension in lower grades students of Golden Christian Primary School.

Keywords: Bilingual storybook, reading skill, young learners

INTRODUCTION

On 3rd December 2019, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) released the PISA (Program for International Students Assessments) 2018 results. The results were shocking because Indonesia was 72nd rank of 78 countries that joined the test. Based on that test, the government recognized that the reading ability of students in Indonesia is too low than countries around Indonesia. To overcome it, the Indonesian government launched a program to build a reading culture for Indonesian students named Gerakan Literasi Sekolah.

During the program, students are forced to read, not only to read the textbook at school,

but also fiction or non-fiction at home. When students achieve the goal of the program which is mastering reading ability, they can overcome their academic problems. As said the purpose of reading that is to gain information, students can understand much information and master many sides of knowledge same like Mariam's statements (1991) that stated that reading comprehension is a key to learning. When the student is learning new things, he should gain information to understand it, and sources of information are written documents.

It is similar to learning English. Students need to read a lot of written documents as source information when practicing other skills. Reading helps students gain information

when they are practicing debate or speaking. Before practicing writing, students also have to have background knowledge and research about the topic, and by reading they can get all of those. Even when they are learning the grammatical of English, they need to read the explanation. So, they can understand the function and when to apply it.

Moreover, by having good reading skills, students can read English sources for their homework or projects at school. They can overcome and find solutions to a problem, although the problem has not ever been researched in Indonesia. Without any research, a researcher cannot publish any articles or reports, whereas in the time something is probable, an incident, and an event happened. Lack of information and limited sources can be an obstacle to education in Indonesia. However, when students have a good reading level in English, they can find others sources around the world. They can visit international websites and read a lot of articles that can help them learn and study.

Students also could read reports or news written in English and got unlimited information around the world. Children in this era are so open-minded and realized that they have a bigger world than their environment, school, and family. They have high curiosity and with the internet's help, they can find it. By reading news written in English, they can more understand the world situation, increase their awareness, and gain their social interest. Besides, by reading international news they can learn new things, knowledge, and even culture. It shows them that this world is large and full of pluralism.

These benefits are too important to pass. To that, it will be better if students are taught how to read from in young age. In Indonesia, English was removed from the curriculum of

young learners and will be taught in Secondary school, unless in some private Primary school. The government decisions received pro and contra where many sides stated it will make students young learners passed the chance to learn a foreign language in their golden era. Students at a young age can receive language better than adults because at that age they are in their critical time because their brains encounter plasticity and flexibility (Lenneberg, 1967).

In addition, learning a foreign language, especially English, also has a role in children's character and social development. By learning a foreign language, children are taught to be independent, critical, and creative. They are pushed to overcome the problem that is understanding and using the language they are learning now. They are also encouraged to express their feeling, imagination, and opinion, so they will do an 'experiment' where they are trying to build their utterance or sentence that consists of words that can symbolize their mind.

In order to achieve this goal, students need media that is not only easy to understand in their language but also can lead them to learn the target language. one of the media that can support students, especially young learners, reading's ability is pictured storybook. A storybook with pictured provided many moral values which can be understood by children or students at a young age. It also introduces an abstract concept which never been known by the students before with an easy way and understanding. A picture storybook was written in two languages is able to support students learning a new language.

This media is also used by many other researchers to overcome the same problems even to increase other skills of languages, such as improving students' writing and speaking

skills, even social life such as learning about diversity values.

Tobin (2018) stated that bilingual storybooks help students to understand a book easily, support code-switching between two languages, support second language acquisitions and help students to deal with diversity issues that happened in other countries. The researcher has an opinion that a bilingual storybook is an appropriate medium to improve the students' reading skills in English.

Students in many schools have the same problem when trying to improve their English reading ability. It is the language itself. Rendaya in Lauder (2008) called English a special foreign language because it is used widely in many sides of life. However, people always be terrified when hearing 'English'. Abdullah in his writing entitled *Dilema Status Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing* (2017) stated the first things that appeared in people's minds when learning English are grammar and tenses. Moreover, Kusworo in his article under the title *Bahasa Inggris, Bahasa Asing atau Bahasa "Asing"* (2016) had an opinion that the Indonesian mindset that thinks English as "Asing", means weird and unacceptable, language also an obstacle when learning English.

This case not only happened in people generally but also among students. Some students in the school think English is difficult, and most of the students who study English are focused on grammar and speaking only. When they had to finish reading sessions, they stuck in difficulties caused by lack of vocabulary, low comprehension and reasoning ability, and low reading interest.

However, the researcher has confidence those obstacles can be overcome by providing a

bilingual storybook as a supporting media for reading sessions.

A storybook written in Indonesian and English language will support students to learn many new vocabularies, even utterances, and enhance their ability to comprehend written documents. The book also can be used to support the school's program called *Kelas Literasi*, which is consistent with the government that wants to push students to read and increase their literacy level.

Moreover, students can be introduced to the local culture contained in the storybook, especially Dayaknese culture in Central Kalimantan. In this 4.0 industry era, students can access many things through their gadgets and receive many pieces of information from anywhere. This era also makes people have a modern mindset that can utilize technologies as much as possible. Everyone thinks to go forward and adapt to technologies which are used nowadays. Those make people, especially children not know about their culture.

Through a storybook that contains Dayaknese cultural values, students will recognize moral values and their culture itself. So, they will not only lose their identity but also can continue their culture and traditions.

Based on the background this research was aimed as follows: (1) developing a pictured bilingual storybook for improving the reading skill of English for young learners, and (2) finding out the media is valid and applicable used for young learners to improve their English reading skills.

A bilingual book is a document that contains a story in two languages. The story is the same but is written in two different languages. This kind of book was found in the 1980s and the majority used it for helping children gain and understand two different languages. This book is called a bridge

introduces a new language to children and makes them feel familiar with it. By writing in the native language and another language on the same page, children can compare the language such as, recognizing the unfamiliar words, comprehending the meaning, and exploring the differences between those two languages.

Bilingual books usually have a “side-by-side” layout, where a language is written on the top side of the paper and another language is written on the bottom side of the paper, or the other sides of the page. One of those languages has a role in the translation of another. So, children or readers can understand the story, although it is written in a foreign language. In the reality, bilingual books have other various layouts. It depends on the purpose and the objects of the books. These are layouts that are usually used in bilingual books based on Ernst-Slavit and Slavit in their book entitled *P is for Peru: The ABC of Peru*:

- a. Books with texts are completely written in two languages. In these books, the texts are written in the second language and first language on each page.
- b. Two same books were published in different languages. These books are written in each language and published separately.
- c. Books are written in the second language but code switch to the first language.
- d. Books are written in the second language, but some phrases or words are interpreted in the first language.
- e. Books are available only in a language other than English. These books are still called bilingual, although it seems different.

This kind of book helps children to accept and understand the culture both in Source Language as Second Language (Alamilo & Arenas in Tobin, 2019). When the

children are familiar with those languages, the bilingual environment will be built gradually. Children that grow up in a bilingual environment will have a higher level of reading skills rather than other children that grow up in a monolingual environment (Herzig and Malzkuhn, 2015). So, it can be concluded that besides helping children in understanding and accepting between to language, bilingual books, indirectly, helps children to increase their level of reading skill.

Storybook is stated as the most effective way or media of learning moral value for children at a young age when in that age children cannot accept and understand abstract concepts and comprehension. However, those concepts such as moral value and spoken attitude can be explained well through the storybook.

Moreover, children will experience it in natural ways without pressure. Besides, reading storybooks can grow a deeper connection between parents and children, where parents can give their attention and show their care after working all day in a less energy-consuming way. Then, this connection will decide children's behavior towards their parents that hoped they could obey children and have high respect for others.

To achieve the goals, the pictured storybook can be a choice. A picture storybook is a book that contains pictures. It is a strong media for transferring the message to children at a young age, especially 4 – 6 years old children. The advantage of this kind of book is in the pictures that support the story. Pictures can explain more than a word, especially in particular abstract cases that could not be explained by words, such as situation, atmosphere, and concepts.

Istanto (2000) stated that pictures as supporting details in a story limited different

interpretations of each person. Since written stories without pictures will develop imaginations based on different interpretations depending on the intelligence and background of people. The pictures that support the story will reduce the differences with the result that the message will be delivered clearly and comprehended well by the readers.

There are some criteria for children's storybooks based on some research that can be applied when writing or looking for proper book stories for children. First, the storybook should fulfill children's and students' needs. Therefore, the researcher should to study the needs of children or target readers of the book. An appropriate storybook for children is a book that has positive values, written in a simple and humble language that readers will feel they are reading experiences of the writer itself (Christantowant in Laksitama, 2017).

Second, Effendi, Bangsa, and Yunadi (2013) stated that a proper storybook has a full-color display and supports by decorative and attractive pictures, questions that increase curiosity, additional participant interactive sheet or hidden objects that increase motoric interactions of readers, and at the storybook given questions to review and concluded the story they have read.

Based on the statements above, it can be concluded that a pictured storybook must be appropriate for the readers and fulfill the readers' needs. A picture storybook must be written simple, easy to understand, colorful, and displayed or supported with pictures, to attract the readers to read. So, the readers may catch the contains of the story itself.

Teaching can be done in different method or strategies, based on the students' age and level because their competencies and needs are different also. Sarah Philips (1993:5) stated that young learners include students of primary

school. Other sources and researchers also stated that young learners can be students which are study in Primary and secondary school. However, in short, young learners are students who are not adult yet and still be young.

RESEARCH METHODS

There were five steps that were used by the researcher to develop a bilingual storybook that is adopted from the ADDIE model which was developed by Dick and Carry (1996), and ADDIE stands for Analyze, Design, Develop, Implement and Evaluate.

The subject of this research was young learners in grade 1 to grade 3, students in Golden Christian Primary School Palangka Raya. The subjects of this research were chosen by the Purposive-sampling method. Criteria of the subjects were students who join Advanced Class, an extracurricular in Golden Christian Primary School, and can read in the Indonesian Language.

Before making a book to use in teaching reading at the Primary School of Golden Christian School, the researcher tried investigating and identifying the teacher of students that were chosen as a sample. The researcher gave her a questionnaire.

As a result, the researcher was able to assess their reading requirements. Following the discovery of the student's needs, the researcher created a suitable book for use in their reading instruction.

The book, which the researcher had written, then was given to the teacher to use in class to teach the subject. Following the lesson's conclusion, the researcher distributed a second questionnaire to the teacher to qualify the books that they used and enact the books which are acceptable or not.

In this research, the researcher used questionnaires, expert judgement, and students'

pre-test and post-test as the instruments to gain the data.

The numbers of items on the questionnaire were 11 items. Data is analyzed as a basis for knowing the feasibility of the products produced. At the same time, quantitative data analysis techniques data in the form of scores from assessments by experts and teacher data analyzed as the basis of the results of the questionnaire assessment were converted into interval data. The scale of the evaluation of the bilingual books that developed was excellent, good, not good, and very poor.

Data Conversion Table (Suharto, 2006: 52-53)

Table 3.1 Data Analysis of Expert Judgment

Scales	Interval	Descriptive Categories
1.	$1.0 < X \leq 1.7$	Very Poor
2.	$1.8 < X \leq 2.5$	Poor
3.	$2.6 < X \leq 3.3$	Fair
4.	$3.4 < X \leq 4.1$	Good
5.	$4.2 < X \leq 5.0$	Very Good

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results

The researcher got the data about the suitable demand for the media using the questionnaire provided to an English teacher who taught extracurricular Advanced Class for Lower Grade (Grade 1 – 3) in 2021/2022. The data of need assessment was analyzed as follows:

Table 4. 1 The results of the questionnaire from the teacher

No	Content	Answer
1	Needs to improve students' reading skill	High
2	The biggest difficulty for students when practicing reading	Hard to understand English Vocabulary
3	The second biggest difficulty of students when practicing reading	The book is not interesting
4	The third biggest difficulty for students when practicing reading	Does not have a habit of reading
5	There is a difficulty when preparing reading materials.	Yes
6	Sources of reading materials used in the classroom.	Internet
7	Frequency of using bilingual storybooks for reading activities in the classroom.	Sometimes
8	Impact of a bilingual storybook to improve the English reading skills of students	Big
9	Criteria of the storybook which can attract students' reading interest.	The story has an interesting layout and colorful illustrations.
10	Students are enthusiastic when reading a story that contains culture and moral values.	Very enthusiastic

According to the data analysis of the need assessment, the researcher developed the draft of the stories which would be used in the bilingual storybook. Two stories would be used for the book. Those were Kalimantan folktales which listened to by the researcher during childhood. The stories consist of moral values and descriptions of Dayaknese culture.

The developed pictured bilingual storybook was validated to prove that it had fulfilled the criteria of the objectives in this research. Two experts validated the pictured bilingual storybook. The first expert was an expert on media and the second expert was an English lecturer who validated the appearance, content, and language of the media. The result of the expert's validation gained scores 3,8 and 3,7. Based on the results, could be concluded that the media was good enough to be implemented in the classroom.

In the try-out of the media, the researcher also took pre-test and post-test score, as follows.

Students' Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores

Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores

No.	Initial Name	Pre-test	Post-test
1.	JG	44	67
2.	MBFM	83	100
3.	AST	56	100
4.	SW	44	67
5.	NKO	56	67
6.	NGS	78	83
7.	RW	56	83
8.	DAP	100	100
9.	WR	100	100
10.	GLJS	100	100
11.	CFM	67	83
12.	OIK	89	100
13.	ATEP	78	100
14.	IGNWPM	100	100
15.	JJM	56	83
16.	JDB	22	60
17.	BSD	100	100
18.	AA	60	78
19.	JPP	67	100
20.	TAP	67	78
21.	JGS	89	100
22.	CFP	56	83
23.	AEW	83	100
24.	KCSS	33	67
Total		1.684	2.199
Average		70	91,6

Discussion

The objectives of this research were to (1) developing a pictured bilingual storybook for improving the reading skill of English for young learners. (2) finding out, that the media is valid and applicable used for young learners to improve their English reading skills.

In summary, the result of this research had a good response. The media was responded positively by experts, teachers, and students. In the beginning, the researcher observed that there was a need to improve students' English reading skills. The researcher had an opinion that by having good reading skills in English, students, especially young learners, could increase their academic skills and chance to upgrade themselves in this era. Supported by information on students' needs gained from the English teacher, a pictured storybook that contains Dayaknese folktales and is written in the English-Indonesian language was developed.

The media uses a layout which is stated by Ernst-Slavit and Slavit in their book entitled P is for Peru: The ABC of Peru, that the

folktales were written in two different languages on each page. The English was written on the top left of the page and the Indonesian language was written on the bottom right of the page. So, when the students read the stories, they could understand the target language by reading the source language (Alamilo & Arenas in Tobin, 2019). For the translation, the researcher wrote the folktales in the Indonesian language and translated them into English by using procedures of translation which were stated by Newmark (1988) were borrowing, literal, and descriptive equivalent.

Since the media was targeted to read by young learners or lower grades students, the media contained colorful illustrations created by illustrators based on the story. These illustrations helped the students to understand and interpret the stories. Since each person could have different interpretations and imaginations, the meaning of the story could be different. However, if the storybook is supported by illustrations, it would support the story and reduce the differences (Istanto, 2000). So, the messages would be delivered clearly. The illustrations also were needed for attracting students' reading interest.

After the illustration was finished and the media was developed, it was taken to the experts and the English teacher for validation. The English teacher acted as the practitioner who implemented the media in the classroom.

In the first meeting, the teacher taught reading in the classroom by using a folk written in English only and did not contain illustrations. In this meeting, the teacher also gave an exercise to students and their core was taken as a pre-test score. In the second and third meetings, the teacher implemented the media to teach reading in the classroom. And in the third meeting, the teacher gave an exercise again

based on the story of the media, and the score was taken as a post-test score.

The media was also validated by the English teacher as a practician who has implemented the media in the classroom.

The results of try out showed that the media was applicable and used to improve students' English reading skills. This was supported by the pre-test and post-test scores, there was an improvement that happened to the students. Almost students' post-test score was increased to a high level. This data supported the researcher's statement that a pictured bilingual storybook was applicable and used by young learners to improve their English reading skills. The book which was written in English and translated into the Indonesian language helped students understand English vocabularies which was the biggest obstacle for the students. Then, when they should answer the questions based on the story, they could choose the right answer and got higher scores.

It was amazing when the students were able to improve their reading skills. Having good reading skills, could be a foundation for students when learning English writing skills. Since it encourages the students to focus on vocabulary, grammar, and punctuation. Harmer stated that reading skills are needed to be mastered when the students want to learn a new language.

Sari (2007) also stated some advantages of reading such as easier to find useful information and knowledge, being able to communicate with people around the world, could participate in Science and world-technology developing, faster knowing recently events in the world, and easier to solve various problems of life and making someone smarter.

Colorful illustration and content which were Dayaknese folktales that rarely listened to the students also attracted their interest to read. Students, who are young learners in lower grades of primary school, asked many things during the reading activities. it was the result of their curiosity toward Dayaknese culture which was represented in the storybook.

CONCLUSION

Based on the previous discussion, it could be concluded that the developed pictured bilingual storybook applied well and had a positive response from the teacher even the students. The pictured bilingual storybook could be a material to teach reading in English and was valid and applicable and used to improve the English reading skill of young learners, especially in lower grades of Golden Christian Primary School.

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