

# Brave Early Childhood Characters in The Children's Story “Play Together Yuk!” by Watiek Ideo

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## Abstract

One of the important aspects of early childhood is character. Character is attached to the child and helps him to be able to live life. This study aims to describe and analyze the brave characters of early childhood in the children's story "Main Bareng Yuk" by Watiek Ideo. This research is qualitative with a type of literature research. Data collection uses reading and recording techniques. Data analysis uses reduction techniques, data encoding, verification, and conclusion drawing. The results showed that there are brave characters of early childhood in the story "Play Yuk" by Watiek Ideo, namely: Courage to invite others to play, courage to compromise, courage to take other people's things, courage to express feelings, and courage to apologize.

**Keywords:** *brave characters, early childhood, child stories.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

More and more news circulated about the existence of cases of violence in various media. The Indonesian Child Protection Commission reported that as of January-June 2022, there have been 1444 complaints, with 981 complaints of child rights fulfilment cases and 463 special child protection cases (Elpanso, 2013). Data from the Online Information System for the Protection of Women and Children (Symphony PPA) report of the Ministry of Women and Child Protection (KemenPPPA) reported, 797 children were victims of sexual violence throughout January 2022 (PPA Symphony, 2020)

Acts of violence can be experienced by different walks of life, from adults to children. Violent acts fall into the category of bullying. Bullying is a pattern of behaviour that occurs repeatedly to hurt and is carried out intentionally (Unicef, n.d.). Bullying can occur using direct physical contact, direct verbal contact, direct non-verbal behaviour, indirect non-verbal behaviour, Cyberbullying and sexual harassment (Yuliani, 2013). Cases of bullying often occur in the environment of children. Bullying is not only done by adults but also by fellow children. Olweus (in Dey Putri) explained that bullying is aggressive behaviour that is carried out repeatedly as a form of negative action carried out by a student or group of students towards another (Dey Putri et al., 2020).

Bullying that occurs in a children's environment is often considered normal by adults. Especially if the perpetrator and the victim of bullying are both underage children. Adults assume that bullying is carried out by children because there is no good or bad knowledge of what they do. The act of bullying can have many negative impacts at large, especially for the victim. Victims can experience trauma ranging from physical to psychological. Parental involvement greatly impacts the growth and development of children. Children are still under the responsibility of parental supervision. Bullies are usually individuals who feel that they have the most power so that they can behave as they please. Meanwhile, the victim of bullying is an individual who feels that he is the weakest

and dares not do anything about it. Therefore, the recognition and cultivation of character from an early age are very necessary so that children can have a positive character. One of them is a bold character.

The character can be the foundation of children in living life. Character is not something instantaneous so it requires a process of recognition and embedding. There are so many positive characteristics that children must have, one of which is the character of courage. Courage is a trait of maintaining and fighting for what is considered right by facing all forms of danger, difficulty, pain, and others (Masruroh & Kusumawati, n.d.). Courage can protect a child from a bad environment. Brave children will know what they have to do to protect themselves. However, immature emotional development sometimes makes children out of control and can do anything out of control. Children need to be given understanding and mentoring in a way that is appropriate to the child's development.

Parents and educators can introduce and instil a character of courage in children in a variety of ways. One way that is appropriate to the child's development and liking is through children's stories. Children's stories can be used as a medium or role model in the cultivation of children's characters. Musbukin (in Kuniawaty) explains that children will get to know various characters through the characters in the story. From there the child will know which characters are allowed to be imitated and which characters should not be imitated. (Kurniawaty, 2020). The behaviour of the characters and the events present in the story largely determine the message that the child will get. Therefore, it is important to give and read children's stories that are by the child's development

Character recognition through children's stories is one of the choices that are in great demand by parents and educators. Therefore, many conduct research on this theme. Among them, the research conducted by Enda Sardiana with the results of her research explained that a series of fabled fairy tales studied depicted positive values, namely brave, honesty, responsible, forgiving, entertainment, ingenious, hard-working friendship, helpful, creative (Sardiana et al., 2020). Another study conducted by Juanda with the results of his research found that there were 14 character educations found, namely: caring, respect, cooperation, helping, democracy, filial piety, humility, creativity, forgiving, brave, discipline, hard work, honesty, and religious (Juanda, 2019). Mayasari also explained in her research that storybooks can be used as a medium for character education, including cultivating brave characters, love for living things, family characters, responsibility and independence (Mayasari et al., 2021). The importance of character recognition in early childhood and from the research that has been presented above the author wants to conduct more in-depth research and focus on introducing brave characters in early childhood through children's stories *Play Yuk* by Watiek Ideo

The children's story entitled *Play Yuk* is contained in the book series *I'm a brave child can protect yourself* series 4. This book contains 10 stories written by Watiek Ideo in collaboration with Fitri Kurniawan. Contains 143 pages and is published by PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama. As in its title, the book tells the story of children who dare to protect themselves. The book in this fourth series, Watiek Ideo, focuses on discussing how children can dare to counteract the negative influences of the social environment around them. Through the characters and events presented by Watiek Ideo, it provides an overview and response that children must do. The Story of *PlayingYuk* is a story presented at the beginning of this book.

## **2. Research Method**

This research uses a type of descriptive qualitative research with a library research method. A text study that focuses on explaining and studying in depth the content of children's stories entitled *Play Yuk* in the children's storybook *I'm a Brave Child Can Protect Yourself* series 4 by Watiek Ideo. Contains 10 children's stories that illustrate the courage in counteracting the negative influences that exist in the environment around the child. Collection of information sources for research purposes by reading and recording. Read one of the stories entitled *Play Yuk* in its entirety. Then understand and record and collect various information needed to analyze directly related to the courageous character of early childhood. Furthermore, data analysis is carried out by collecting, conceptualizing, and sorting or filtering relevant data. From these activities, researchers will find important information or data and will conclude the results and discussions (Sugiyono, 2010).

## **3. Result and Discussion**

The children's story entitled *Play Yuk* tells the story of two brothers named Desi and Dito. During the school holidays, they have a lot of time to play together. One day Desi the older brother was engrossed in playing with his beads. Meanwhile, the younger brother focused on playing with arranging wooden blocks. As time passed, Desi felt bored and wanted to invite her sister to play together. Desi invites Dito to play a girls' game. Dito doesn't like him

because Dito is a boy. Dito felt annoyed and reported it to mom. Dito no longer wants to play with Desi. Seeing this, Mom tried to calm the two down. Eventually, Desi apologizes to Dito and they get back to playing along with his game which they love. This story has a character value that can be imitated by early childhood. One of them is the character of courage. The character of early childhood courage is contained in the children's story Play Yuk which is described as follows:

### ***3.1. Courage to Play***

Inviting to play is something that children often do. Children can invite anyone to be able to play with them. Starting by inviting adults, peers and even younger ones. Children who invite others to play have an attitude of courage that others do not necessarily have. Children who invite to play require strong determination and careful self-preparation. As done by the character Desi who invites his sister Dito to play, in the following quote:

*"Dek main bareng, yuk! Kakak bosan, nih," bujuk Desi.*

The story quoted above illustrates that Desi's character as an older brother wants to invite his sister to play together because he feels bored. Desi hopes that his sister will be willing to play together. Desi dared to invite them to play Dito to relieve boredom.

Playing activities carried out in early childhood are normal to do. Starting from the age of 0-2 years where according to cognitive theory initiated by Jean Piaget, it has begun to enter the sensorimotor period. At this age, the baby begins to develop his understanding of the surrounding environment with his first sensory development by seeing and hearing also with motor actions that are touching and reaching. The response given at this stage can be said to be an invitation to play with babies. This will continue to evolve along with his cognitive development. Entering the preoperative period children have begun to understand what they need. One of them is the need to play together. Inviting to play together requires courage and strong determination. Courage requires familiarized strategy and skills. The courage to invite to play can train a child's social development. That way the child will know and understand various kinds of individual characteristics.

### ***3.2. The Courage to Compromise***

A compromise is an attempt to get agreement from every party who has an opinion or difference of understanding. The concept of compromise is an agreement born of communication and the right time to compromise. Usually, individuals will compromise to get the desired goal. Not a few are also willing to do anything to get what they want. Compromise requires an attitude of courage from the individual in question. Conveying intentions and goals with the right language and time so that the opponent can accept them well. As done by the character Desi who tries to compromise with his sister so that he wants to play together.

*Desi enggan menyerah, "Sini deh, kakak bantu buat jembatannya. Lalu kita main bareng ya?". Seketika mata Dito berbinar. Jembatan buatan kakaknya biasanya keren.*

The excerpt of the story above, depicts desi's character making a compromise by making a bridge out of beams. Desi did this because he thought that after he did the thing that his sister liked, then his sister would want to play with him. Before making the bridge Desi first conveyed his intentions and purpose. That is, after making a bridge, his sister must be willing to play together. After the beam bridge was completed by Desi, Dito felt happy and decided to play with Desi.

Compromise is an activity that is often carried out in early childhood. As an individual who has egocentric characteristics, the child always wants to have and achieve whatever he wants. The focus is only on yourself. Do everything you can to get what you want. However, not all children have the ability to compromise. Children must also understand the characteristics of their surroundings to be able to make compromises. They must have the courage and skills that have been familiarized. This courage to compromise can train children in diplomacy and cultivate their interpersonal development. Train children's sensitivity and responsibility to their social environment.

### ***3.3. Courage to Express Feelings***

Expressing feelings is one of the ways that individuals tell and express what they feel. Feelings are important as a link, understanding and communicating with other individuals. Express feelings can be done in different ways according to the characteristics and needs of each one. Expressing feelings can prevent individuals from misunderstandings and disputes with others. A clear and good delivery of feelings will clarify a problem. Expressing feelings can also build relationships with other individuals. Not all individuals can easily express feelings. It takes courage and the ability to express what is felt. As the dito character did to his Mama in the following quote:

*Dito menjelaskan semuanya ke Mama. "Bilang ke kakak dengan tegas, Dito mau main sama kakak, tapi tidak mau dibedaki atau pakai kebaya," kata Mama.*

Dito is reluctant to play with his brother who invites him to play girls' games. Dito felt annoyed and disappointed. Dito attempts to report and express these feelings to his mama. Dito tried to explain in easy-to-understand language so that his mother understood what he was feeling. The courage to express the feelings carried out by Dito did not come instantly. Dito had first known the kinds of feelings so that he understood what he was feeling. Dito's environment, especially the mother, also provides an understanding of how to express feelings well.

The courage to express the feelings of early childhood is influenced by the maturity of its social-emotional development. Based on the Standards for the Level of Child Development Achievement (STPPA) at the ECCE level as stated in the Minister of Education and Culture of Research and Technology number 5 of 2022 concerning competency standards for graduates of early childhood, primary education, and education, it is explained that children who reach a level of development that can recognize emotions, can control their desires as an attitude of appreciating the wishes of others, and can interact with their peers. (SKL STPPA PAUD Curriculum Merdeka Permendikbud No 5 2022, n.d.). The environment around the child greatly affects the maturity of his social-emotional development. Children will gain knowledge and how to respond from those closest to them. That way, the child's courage in expressing feelings is the result of the best recognition and assistance from people in the child's surroundings.

### ***3.4. Courage to Apologize***

Apologizing is a form of plea and self-confession for the mistakes that have been made. Apologizing is not an easy thing to do. Apologizing requires great courage because the individual must lower his ego and admit his mistakes. The delivery of an apology is not necessarily responded to with a good response by the interlocutor. Sometimes the individual needs to give confidence so that the interlocutor is willing to accept an apology. As Desi has done to his younger brother Dito, in the following story excerpt:

*"Maafin, kakak ya? Kakak janji nggak akan maksa-maksa lagi kalau kamu nggak suka," ucap Desi.*

Desi realized that what he did was wrong. Taking his younger brother to play a girl's game is not a good thing to do. After Dito reported the incident to his mother, Desi felt that he had to admit his mistake and apologized. Desi didn't want his relationship with Dito to be unkind. Desi tried to lower his ego and ventured to apologize.

An apology made at an early age is an attempt at pleading and acknowledging the wrongdoing that has been made. Early childhood will initially feel compelled to apologize because early childhood has egocentric characteristics that are more concerned with self-interest. Along with the development of maturity and parental assistance will provide understanding to the child. Even so, as parents and educators, they should also not force early childhood too much to apologize. Early childhood should be given a prior understanding of how and when to apologize. Apologizing is not an easy thing to do in early childhood, it takes courage and refractoriness from an early age. The courage to apologize can foster early childhood empathy. By apologizing the child will understand the various kinds of feelings that other individuals experience. By understanding it, the child will know what kind of attitude he should take. In addition, the courage to apologize will also foster an attitude of responsibility in the child. Admitting mistakes and daring to apologize is a form of early childhood responsibility. That way, the courage to apologize can be a positive character that can be introduced and applied to early childhood.

## **4. Conclusion**

The brave character of early childhood in a children's story entitled Play Yuk in the children's storybook I'm a Brave Child Can Protect Yourself series 4 by Watiek Ideo contains several bold characters that are done with the first, the courage to invite to play, the second the courage to express feelings, the third the courage to compromise, and the fourth the courage to apologize. These characters can be introduced to early childhood through children's storybooks.

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