

PICTURE BOOK ON RAISING CHILDREN'S AWARENESS AGAINST SEXUAL ABUSE

Christy, E,¹ and Handojo, P, F ²

^{1,2}English Department, Faculty of Letters, Petra Christian University, Siwalankerto 121-131, Surabaya
60236, East Java, INDONESIA

E-mails: eveline_christy@hotmail.com ; priskafebrinia@peter.ac.id

ABSTRACT

One of the common problems leading to the sexual abuse is that the child is not aware about it. This project aims to raise children's awareness against sexual abuse through picture book. This picture book use realistic fiction as the genre of my picture book. The purpose is to make the children familiar with the story and can relate it to their life. This picture book uses the narrative theory as the framework of the story. The narrative story is consist of abstract, orientation, complication, resolution, and evaluation. This picture book tells about a child name Deni, who survives from sexual abuse by his neighbor named Mr. Dodi. The problems start when Mr. Dodi lures Deni to come with him using lollypop. In the climax, Deni shouts for help and runs from Mr. Dodi. Then, he finds his mother and asks her to go home immediately. At the end of the story, Deni's mom gives Deni more explanation about his private body parts and how to keep it private.

Key words: Children picture book, sexual abuse, narrative theory, realistic fiction

There have been many cases of children sexual abuse that happened in Indonesia. Mattangkilang (2001) stated that the National Commission for Child Protection, a non-governmental organization advocating children's issues, has declared 2013 as the year of national emergency over child sexual abuse" (Rape Case Highlights Growing Child Abuse Epidemic in Indonesia, para. 11).

Raising children's awareness against sexual abuse can be delivered in many ways, and literature is one of them. The reason why chose picture book for 5-9 years old children rather than any other forms of children's literature because picture book can deliver the message effectively. Through stories, parents or teachers can teach moral messages in a fun way and not in a forceful or intimidating way. Caldecott Medal (1978) published the definition of a picture book as something that is distinguished from other books with illustrations, it is one that provides children a visual experience. Children will have a better understanding for sexual abuse awareness through visual experience because it can help the children to directly connect the message to their daily life.

With this creative work, the author wants to find out the kind of story or plot that is most suitable for children age 5-9 and the way to use language appropriately for children age 5-9 in order to raise their awareness against sexual abuse. The purpose of this project is to produce a children's picture book that can help the children to raise their awareness against sexual abuse. In order to give children the message effectively, this picture book need to use the story and language that can attract and understand by children age 5-9 years old.

This picture book is using narrative theory by Labov and Waletzky (1972) from their research essay "The Transformation of Experience in Narrative Syntax" as the theoretical framework of my creative work. Labov and Waletzky refers to the six stages of a narrative as abstract, orientation, complication, evaluation, resolution, and coda (Narrative Analysis, p. 359-365). The use of Labov's theory is for classifying the story. This theory helps the author to stay on track and focus on the main purpose of the story. For example: in this theory, complicating event should be resolve by resolution. By classified my story into those stages, the author can clearly look into my story whether the complicating events have already resolved or not.

Through this project, I hope that this picture book can give advantages to the readers and institutions. This picture book will help the children to raise their awareness and how to respond sexual abuse. To make the children know how to have the right response, they should first know what private body parts are. This book can facilitate parents, teachers, or anyone who concerns about the children to tell the children that protecting their own body is very important. The last, this project

will help me to have better understanding in making a good story for children and awareness towards children sexual abuse.

In one of the researches, the data were collected by interviewing two experts. Gill (2008) mentioned that “there are three fundamental types of research interviews: structured, semi structured and unstructured.” (Methods of data collection in qualitative research, para 3). Steward (2008) stated that structured interview is administered questionnaires, in which a list of questions are asked, with little or no variation. In other hand, unstructured interview method is the opposite of the structured interview. Unstructured interview simply start with opening question and then progressed based upon the response. Moreover, according to Steward (2008) “semi-structured interview is consist of several key questions that help to define the areas to be explored, but also allows the interviewer or interviewee to diverge in order to pursue an idea or response in more detail.” (Methods of data collection in qualitative research, para 5).

The interview process is using semi-structured interview, because with this method, the interviewee can develop a keen understanding of the topic and also make me to have relevant questions. Before interviewed the sources, the interviewee have some questions as my guides in questioning the sources. The questions help the interviewee to remember what he/she has to ask to the source. However, the interviewee can change the questions, when he/she feels that the questions are irrelevant with the discussion. The interviewee can use tape-record during the interview and take notes for the important thing from the sources. After that, the interviewee transcript tapes from the interview for analysis and getting the data.

ANALYSIS

Wilson (2014) stated the definition of realistic fiction as a genre consisting of stories that could have actually happened to people or animals in a believable setting. Realistic fiction represents what happens in the real life. The fictional characters within these stories have similar behavior to real people. Stories that are categorized as realistic fiction have themes that are mostly about social or personal events or issues (What is Realistic Fiction? - Definition, Characteristics & Examples, para. 3-4)

The topic for this project is raising children’s awareness against sexual abuse. The genre of this picture book is realistic genre because the children need to realize that sexual abuse can happen in the real life. In this creative work, the characters are using real people and settings that children can relate to their daily life. In addition, this story is using linear plot in order to make the children easily understand and follow the story. This picture book is an original creative work, because not many people would bring this topic for children. Creative work for raising children’s awareness against sexual abuse mostly came from abroad. Some of the examples are *Your Body Belongs to You* by Cornelia Spelman and *I Said No* by Zac and Kimberly King.

This picture book is different from any other picture books. The first one is because it is bilingual. This book is using Indonesian and English language. The use of Indonesian language is because my target market is Indonesian children. By using Indonesian, the author hopes that the children can easily understand the message. Moreover, the reason this picture book include English language is to educate the children about the second language. According to Johnson (2012) “reading books or being told stories in the second language, helps young children understand the new vocabulary they are learning and place it in a meaningful context” (How Books Help Bilingual Children Learn, para. 1)

The styles of language in this picture book are both formal and informal. The formal form is for the narrator or the third person point of view in this picture book. “Formal language is a register of language that is appropriate for formal purposes and settings. It features Standard English rather than slang or dialect, and uses more precise or polite vocabulary. Formal language also avoids contractions and personal remarks or opinions.” (Formal Language, 2013, para 2). In other hand, the dialogues between Mom, Deni, Dela, and Mr. Dodi are using every day talk which is informal. I want the children to feel familiar with the conversation in this picture book, so that they can relate the story with their real life. Another thing is the choice of words in the picture book in order to give the education about the private body parts. Private body parts are the parts which are only certain people may touch. They should not be touched or shown to anyone except mother or to the doctor

under the supervision of the mother. This picture book use the word wee wee instead of penis in describing penis. For Indonesian version, this picture book uses the word “*burung*” instead of penis. It is because according to the psychologist that I interviewed, using the word “penis” directly in picture book is too vulgar for children aged 5-9 years old in Indonesia. I am aware that children should have the right term for their body parts. However, because of the main purpose of this picture book is to raise children awareness against sexual abuse, it is prefer to use the term that children have already familiar with.

Narrative theory is the framework of this picture book. According to Labov, there are six stages in the narrative story. I will show the application from the narrative theory in the story that I have already made.

This story will starts with Deni questions about his own genital. When Deni and Dela change clothes, Deni realized that he has something that Dela does not have. He asks his mother about it and his mother gives an explanation about the difference between a boy and a girl’s body. Deni’s mother also gives explanation that besides her and the doctor, no one should touch his private body parts. The reason why I choose mother to give the explanation to Deni, is because children 5-9 years old are still very dependent to their mother. Mostly, children age 5-9 have closer relationship with their mother rather than their father (Prasetyo E, personal communication, September 21, 2014).

Moreover in this orientation section, I will explain more about the choice of characters, places, and time of the story. Deni, Dela, and their mother live in one suburb in Surabaya. They came from middle upper class society. Going to swimming pool is their routine every weekend. I use swimming pool as the setting where Mr. Dodi sexually abused Deni. I am using public place as the setting because I want to make the children realize that child sexual abuse can happened everywhere even in a public place. The main character’s name is Deni. He was born in Surabaya 2009. I choose an Indonesian child because I want the children will be able to identify themselves as the character. I also want the children know that the story is not something that happened in somewhere far away, but in their surroundings. When the children realized that the story is familiar with their life, they can relate the story to their life. Mr. Dodi is the main character besides Deni. He is the one who tries sexually abuse Deni. I chose a male character as the abuser based on the research from Children’s Assessment Center (2000). They pointed out that most child sexual abusers are men, and may be respected members of the community drawn to settings where they gain easy access to children like schools, clubs and churches. They come from all age groups, races, religions and socioeconomic classes (Child Sexual Abuse Facts, para. 28). In this story, Mr. Dodi is not a stranger to Deni, he lives near Deni’s house and he is also Deni’s tutor. I made Mr. Dodi relationship with Deni based on the research too. Only 14% of children who suffered sexual abuse were violated by an unknown perpetrator (Statistics on Perpetrators of Child Sexual Abuse, 2012). It means that 86 percent of the victims were close or familiar with the perpetrator. The setting in this story is in Indonesia, especially Surabaya.

The next parts of this story are complication, resolution, and evaluation. Those stages are connected to each other. The first complicating event is when Mr. Dodi offers Deni and Dela to come with him. He uses lollypop as an attraction to Deni and Dela. Most of the children get into the perpetrator’s “trap” because they take anything offered by the perpetrator, obviously something the children like, without thinking any further. The resolution that Deni takes is he decide to go with Mr. Dodi without telling his mother. Mother has already told to Deni that he should not go too far. However, because Mr. Dodi offers him something that he really likes, he cannot resist to take it. He afraid that his mother will be angry to him. What Deni does is very logical. Deni thinks that he will be happy because he gets the lollypop and his mother will not be angry to him because she does not know it. The second complicating event is when Mr. Dodi asks Deni again to go to the toilet. Mr. Dodi promises to Deni to give him toy bubble. This time, he uses more interesting promise to Deni. Kids and even adults are never satisfied with what they have. Pranata, stated that children are hard to be satisfied with what they have already had. After children accomplished what they want, they will desire another thing. Giving something that children want will not make them to stop asking (Pranata, personal communication, November 26, 2014). The resolution here is no different with the first one. Deni hopes that his mother does not find out that he goes with Mr. Dodi. The next complication event starts when Mr. Dodi manages to take Deni to the toilet. He starts to grab Deni and touch Deni’s penis. Deni realizes that’s not right. He tells to Mr. Dodi that he does not want him

to touch his penis. This action is referring to what his mother has told him before he went to the swimming pool. Deni remembers that people should not touch his penis except his mother and the doctor. Meanwhile, the following complicating event happens. Della asks her mother permission to go with Mr. Dodi. Mother asks Della about Deni and both of them looks for Deni. When they look for Deni in the swimming pool, Deni is already gone. Della and her mother looks for everywhere and starts to worry about Deni. They find Deni when Deni shouts and runs from Mr. Dodi. In this part, Deni does not directly tells his mother about what happened with him. Based on experiences from several of victims, they feel incomprehension, shame, fear of retaliation, and the misperception that the child is to blame (Pranata, personal communication, November 26, 2014). In this story, what Deni does to Mr. Dodi is a brave action. Therefore, as a child, Deni also feels afraid with what Mr. Dodi does to him. However, because of his close relationship with his Mom, Deni is able to tell his Mom about what happened to him and Mr. Dodi

The other important features in this story is climax. The climax of this story happens when Deni shouts for help. He shouts as loud as he can he feels uncomfortable when Mr. Dodi touches his penis. When he feels insecure, he shouts and runs as soon as possible and looks for his Mom. In my opinion, those actions is a possible action that a child can take in that kind of situation. The steps that Deni took to escape from Mr. Dodi is an important message for children. What Deni did was simple but he really needs to be brave to do it. I hope that parents or teachers can take a role to encourage the children to be brave like Deni. The final resolution is when Deni's mother tries to ask what happened with him with Mr. Dodi. Here, Deni's mother convinces Deni that he can trust her. Deni's mother makes sure that Deni knows that he is not in trouble. Building trusting relationship is the important foundation for the children to feel save and tell their problem. Deni's mother also understands why Deni could not directly tell what happened with him and Mr. Dodi.

The most important message of this story will be point out in the coda stage. Deni's mother emphasize that what Deni's did is right. He should say no and run looking for help. To make the children want to be honest and open up, parents must show that they will not be angry to the children. Being angry cannot make the children tell their problem, it will be make the children afraid to speak (M. Pranata, education for children, 2014, November 26). Saying "no" and looking for help are important messages for children, children need to know how to react when someone wants to sexually abuse them. "All children should know that it's okay to say "no" to touches that make them uncomfortable or if someone is touching them in ways that make them uncomfortable and that they should tell a trusted adult as soon as possible" (Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network, 2009, para. 15.). Deni's mother also gives Deni information about private body parts. I will put body parts illustration in this page to make the children have a better understanding about private body parts. To raise children's awareness against sexual abuse, children should know about that their private body parts should not be touch by others except mother and the doctor under the supervision of the mother. "A child should not be touched by others on parts of the body usually covered by their underwear. And they should not touch others in those areas" (The Underwear Rule, 2014, para. 2).

CONCLUSION

I realize that making picture book is not as simple as it looks. I work using children's perspective. Before writing the story, I have to know about children and their issues and characteristics. The story should be understood by children and the message should be delivered through the story. Making a picture book is not only about the story and pictures.

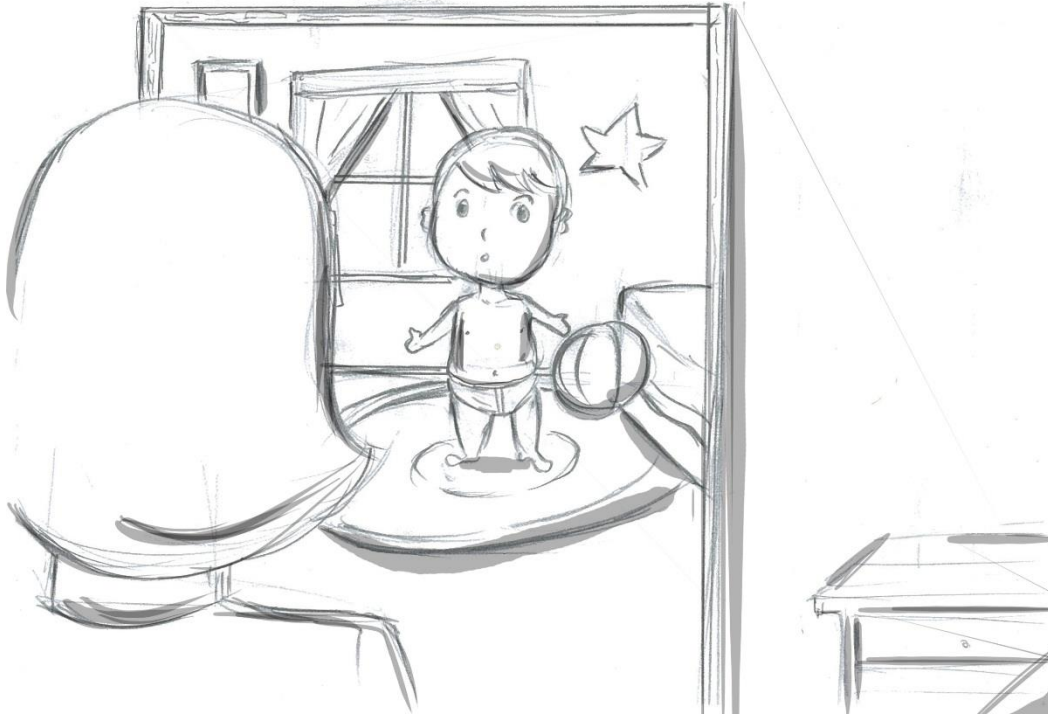
There are some important aspects in writing for children that I learned. The first is about the target market of the picture book. I should know about children's behavior, what they like and dislike, then combine it into the picture book so they can identify themselves with the story and understand the messages.

The second thing is about the language. The use of language is an important aspect to convey the message. I had quite many struggles in deciding the use of language in this picture book. To make sure that I use the right language for children, I looked for several picture books for children. These books are using everyday language, so that the children can feel familiar and relate the story with their real life.

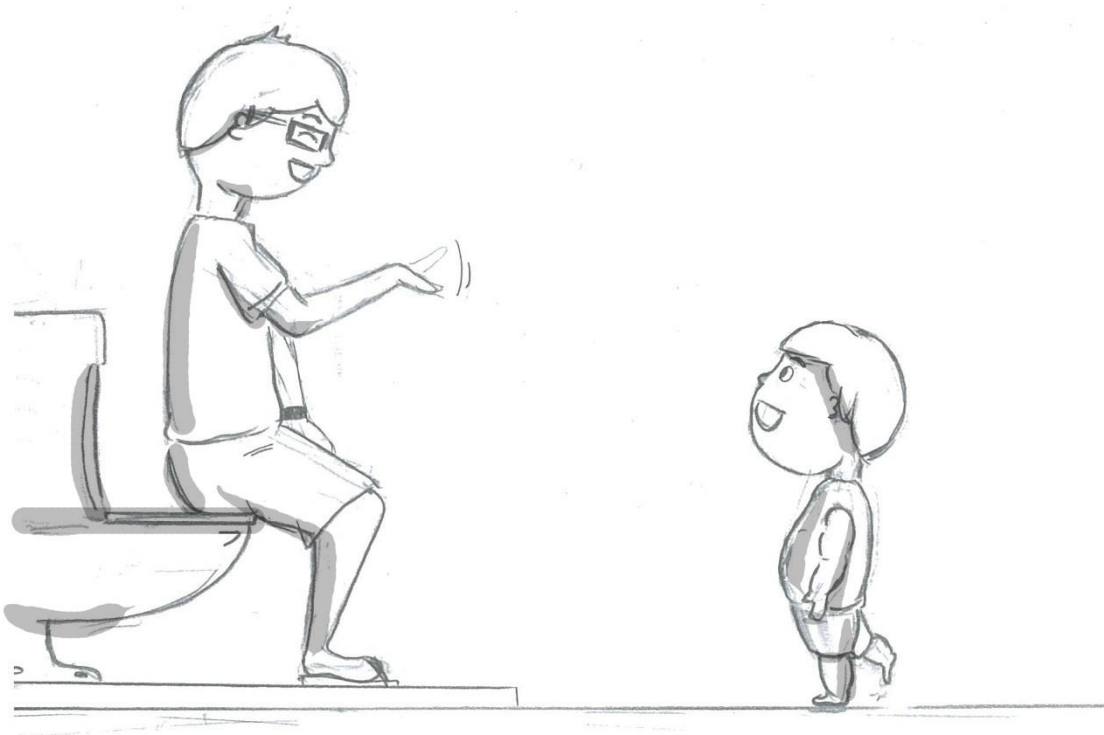
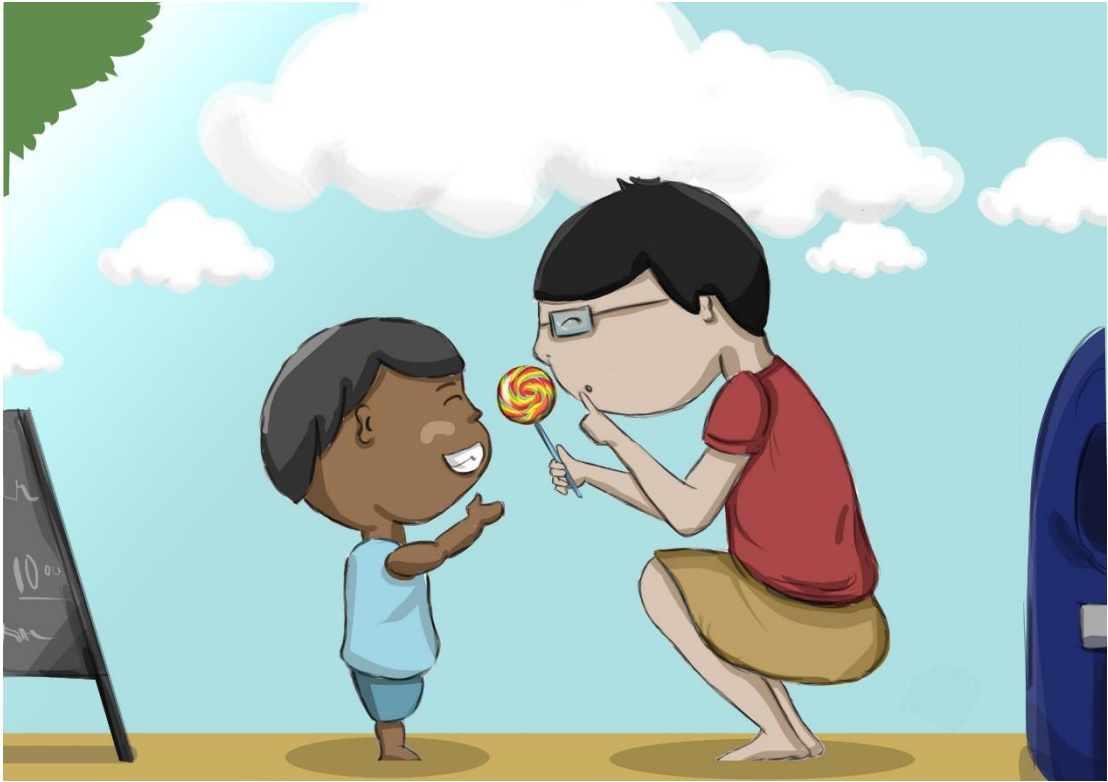
I also learned from the process of choosing characters' names for this picture book. I changed their names several times because I found that those names are uncommon for Javanese people. The

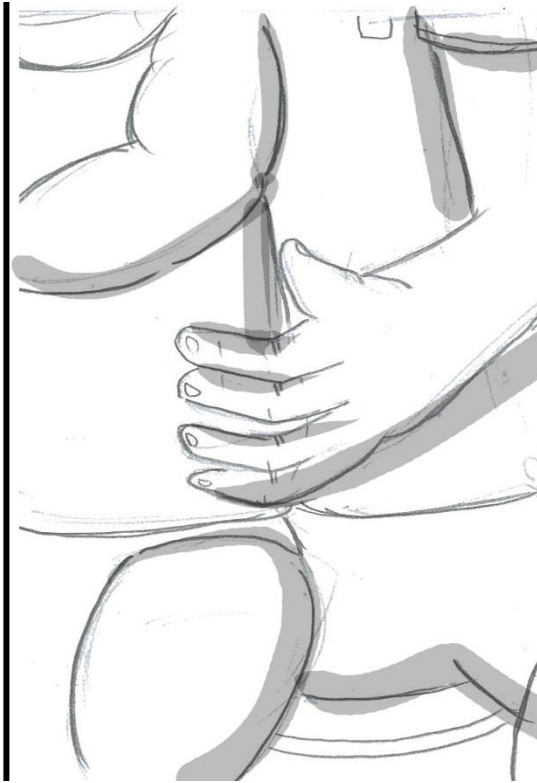
purpose of choosing common Javanese names is to make children feel close with the character. Choosing the names for characters in the story is important. Name of the characters should be easy for children to remember. Remembering the names of the characters can help the children to recall the story.

PICTURES









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