



Development of Rempah Kita illustrated book to introduce spice diversity to children aged 7–12

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the process of development and material feasibility as well as the feasibility of the picture book media "Rempah Kita". This study used the Brog and Gall R&D method. The stages that are carried out consist of potential problems, data collection, product design, validation, product design improvement, and product trials. This study was conducted on children aged 7–12 at SD Negeri Sedangsari. Research data collection using observation techniques, interviews, questionnaires and documentation. Data analysis techniques are quantitative and qualitative descriptive. This research and development results are as follows: (1) The picture storybook "Rempah Kita" for children aged 7–12 years is equipped with a Game Card. The story's content is divided into two parts, equipped with the values of character education and love for the motherland. (2) The feasibility results of the picture storybook "Rempah Kita" based on the assessment of material experts get a response score of 90%, while the results of trials for children aged 7–12 years for material quality get a response score of 95%. (3) The feasibility results of the picture storybook "Rempah Kita" based on the assessment of media experts received a response score of 85%, while the results of trials for children aged 7–12 years for media quality received a response score of 96.75%. Thus, the picture storybook "Rempah Kita" gets a very decent category (SL) regarding material and media.

Keywords: *book, illustrated story, spices*

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan proses pengembangan dan kelayakan materi serta kelayakan media buku cerita bergambar Rempah Kita. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode R&D Brog and Gall. Tahapan yang dilakukan terdiri dari potensi dan masalah; pengumpulan data; desain produk; validasi; perbaikan desain produk; dan uji coba produk. Penelitian ini dilakukan kepada anak usia 7–12 tahun di SD Negeri Sedangsari. Pengumpulan data penelitian menggunakan teknik observasi, wawancara, kuisioner, dan dokumentasi. Teknik analisis data berupa deskriptif kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Hasil penelitian dan pengembangan ini, yaitu (1) buku cerita bergambar Rempah Kita untuk anak usia 7–12 tahun yang dilengkapi dengan game card berisi cerita yang dibagi menjadi dua bagian dan dilengkapi dengan nilai-nilai pendidikan karakter dan cinta tanah air; (2) hasil kelayakan buku cerita bergambar Rempah Kita berdasarkan penilaian ahli materi memperoleh skor tanggapan sebesar 90%, sementara hasil uji coba kepada anak usia 7–12 tahun untuk kualitas materi memperoleh skor tanggapan sebesar 95%; dan (3) hasil kelayakan buku cerita bergambar Rempah Kita berdasarkan penilaian ahli media memperoleh skor tanggapan sebesar 85%, sementara hasil uji coba kepada anak usia 7–12 tahun untuk kualitas media memperoleh skor tanggapan sebesar 96,75%. Dengan demikian, buku cerita bergambar Rempah Kita mendapat kategori sangat layak (SL) baik dari segi materi maupun media.

Kata Kunci: *Buku, Cerita Bergambar, Rempah*

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia has a remarkably high biodiversity, especially in terms of flora. This naturally impacts the richness of spices in Indonesia, which can grow abundantly. Spices are plants derived from flowers, fruits, seeds, rhizomes, stems, roots, leaves, or other parts of plants that contain phytochemical compounds and are aromatic, which can be added to food as flavour enhancers (Hakim, 2015). The history of spices is extraordinary; Indonesia was once known as the world's spice centre. Various countries competed to explore the vast oceans to obtain spices, leading to trade competition, power struggles, colonisation, intercontinental societal interactions, and more (Rahman, 2019).

The potential for spices in Indonesia remains significant. This is supported by Andrianita, Director of Export Product Development at the Ministry of Trade, who stated that the demand for spices increased by 19.28% from mid-January to April 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic (www.kompas.com, 2020). Additionally, from 2020 to 2024, the Ministry of Education and Culture has prepared documents to propose the spice route as an intangible cultural heritage to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (Kurniawan, 2020). Various seminars, exhibitions, discussions, and publications regarding spices have also recently been held in Indonesia. These efforts aim to revive the memory that once glorified the archipelago and seize the golden opportunity to elevate the reputation of Indonesia's spice wealth today.

There are many ways to rejuvenate Indonesia's prominence in the spice world. Knowledge about spice richness can pave the way for spice's future prosperity. Therefore, literacy about spice wealth is crucial and needs special attention, particularly for the nation's children. As the future generation, children should know and understand the extraordinary history of spices in Indonesia.

However, the interest in reading among Indonesian children is still relatively low. This is reinforced by the "Most Littered Nation In the World" study conducted by Central Connecticut State University in 2016, where Indonesia ranked 60th out of 61 countries regarding reading interest. Therefore, the government has implemented the National Literacy Movement (GLN) and the School Literacy Movement (GLS) to foster good reading habits. Reading interest is closely linked to reading materials. Children's books and adult books differ significantly. Children's books generally contain more illustrations than text, such as picture storybooks.

A picture storybook is a book written as a story or narrative accompanied by illustrations depicting the events or characters in the story. According to Nurgiyantoro (2016), a picture storybook is a reading book that presents narrative texts verbally, complemented by illustrations. Picture storybooks are an effective way to develop reading skills, vocabulary, and creativity and to help children better understand stories, increasing their enthusiasm for reading.

Picture storybooks offer numerous benefits to children. Unfortunately, the availability of picture storybooks for children that highlight the richness of Indonesian spices is not as abundant as other types of books. Based on observations conducted by the researcher in several libraries in Yogyakarta, such as the Jogja City Library, Yogyakarta State University Library, Bantul Regional Library, and the Sedangsari Elementary School Library, the collection of books on Indonesia's spice wealth is dominated by text-heavy books that are less appealing to children. Some libraries even lack collections of children's books on Indonesia's spice wealth. This discrepancy requires attention, considering the different characteristics of books for children and adults in terms of both storytelling and illustrations. The researcher also visited several bookstores in Yogyakarta, such as Gramedia, Togamas, and Social Agency. The observations revealed that picture storybooks are predominantly about religious stories, manners and ethics, and various fiction or legend stories, such as the tales of Lutung Kasarung, Rawa Pening, and others. The researcher did not find picture storybooks for children that address Indonesia's spice wealth. Observations were also conducted on children aged 7–12 years at Sedangsari Elementary School in Patuk District, Gunungkidul Regency, DIY, to assess their understanding of spices. The results indicated that these children were not fully aware of the history of spices, the definition of spices, the types of spices, and the benefits of spices.

Based on the above explanation, the researcher is interested in developing the picture storybook "Rempah Kita" to introduce the richness of spices to children aged 7–12 years. Considering the many benefits of spices and the importance of educating people about the historical spice wealth to foster a sense of love and pride for Indonesia and support the government's National Literacy Movement and School Literacy Movement, the development of picture storybooks is necessary. The development of the picture storybook titled "Rempah Kita" aims to make it easier for children to understand Indonesia's spice wealth. The picture storybook will be developed with an engaging storyline and illustrations from a child's perspective to prevent boredom. The picture storybook "Rempah Kita" will also include game cards to help children recall the material in the book.

METHOD

This study employs the Research and Development (R&D) method based on the Brog and Gall development model. Sugiyono (2019) defines this method as a scientific method used in researching, designing, and producing a product, followed by testing the effectiveness of the resulting product. The outcome of this research and development is a picture storybook titled "Rempah Kita" for children aged 7–12 years, which will be further developed and validated by subject matter experts and media experts and subsequently subjected to limited trials.

The stages include identifying potential problems, data collection, product design, validation, revision, and testing. This research is conducted with children aged 7–12 at *SD Negeri Sedangsari*. Data collection techniques involve observation, interviews, questionnaires, and documentation. The data analysis techniques utilised are descriptive quantitative and qualitative methods.

RESULT & DISCUSSION

1. Analysis of Potential and Problems

The collection of information regarding the potential problems in the field was obtained through observations and interviews conducted in several libraries and bookstores in Yogyakarta, as well as with children aged 7–12 years. Interviews were conducted with a teacher at *SD Negeri Sedangsari*, Mrs. Zuni Astuti, S.Pd.SD. The findings from the analysis of potential and problems based on these observations and interviews are as follows: (1) the availability of picture storybooks for children, especially those discussing spices, is very limited; (2) existing picture storybooks are dominated by stories about prophets, manners, and virtues, as well as some fictional or legendary stories; (3) no picture storybooks were found for children aged 7–12 years that address the richness of Indonesian spices; (4) books discussing spices are generally text-heavy with thick pages, making them less appealing to children; (5) observations at *SD Negeri Sedangsari* indicate that children aged 7–12 years have limited understanding of spices; (6) the book collection at *SD Negeri Sedangsari* is dominated by textbooks, while fiction and other storybooks are scarce; (7) the interest in reading among children aged 7–12 years is very low, as indicated by interviews; and (8) there is significant potential in educating children aged 7–12 years about the importance of spices, as knowledge about the types and benefits of spices, along with their history, can foster a sense of love and pride for Indonesia.

2. Data Collection

Data collection involved gathering information through observations, interviews, and literature reviews from various sources such as printed books, e-books, e-modules, journals, articles, and other relevant sources. The researcher observed children aged 7–12 years at *SD Negeri Sedangsari* by asking questions about spices and showing 25 types of spice images to 18 children to assess their understanding of different spices. Based on these observations, it was concluded that the understanding of spices among children aged 7–12 years is still lacking; they do not fully comprehend the definition or overall concept of spices, and most children are unaware of the types and benefits of spices.

3. Design Process

a. Story Theme Selection

The picture storybook *"Rempah Kita"* aims to illustrate the prominence of Indonesian spices. The story encourages children to develop a love and pride for Indonesia through spices' extraordinary history, types, and benefits.

b. Software/Applications

The picture storybook *"Rempah Kita"* was created using several software applications, including Microsoft Office Word for writing the script, Adobe Photoshop for creating visual elements, and Corel Draw for the book's layout.

c. Character Design

The characters in *"Rempah Kita"* are designed to suit the characteristics of children. The storybook has six characters: Kak Rere (short for Indonesian spices), San (short for Nusantara spices), Grandpa, Grandma, Father, and Mother. The book provides visual representations of the characters.



Picture 1. Character design

d. Story Board and Plot

The picture storybook *Rempah Kita* is divided into two parts. The first part discusses the history of spices in the past, and the second part covers the types and benefits of spices. The book is concisely packaged and incorporates character education values such as honesty, bravery, helpfulness, curiosity, and patriotism. The plot of the first part is left on a cliffhanger to make readers curious and encourage them to read the next part.

e. Book Cover Design

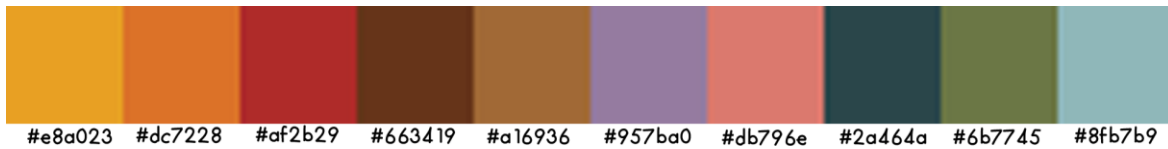
The cover design aims to visualise the content of *"Rempah Kita"*. The front cover focuses on illustrations of Kak Rere and San, the main characters, showcasing various spices. The back cover features Grandfather, San, Kak Rere, and Father walking, with Grandfather holding a flag inscribed with "spices," reflecting the storyline where Grandfather is the first to explain the history of spices to Kak Rere and San, followed by Father in the second part. Below is the visualisation of the cover design.



Picture 2. Cover of "Rempah Kita" illustrated storybook

f. Color Palette

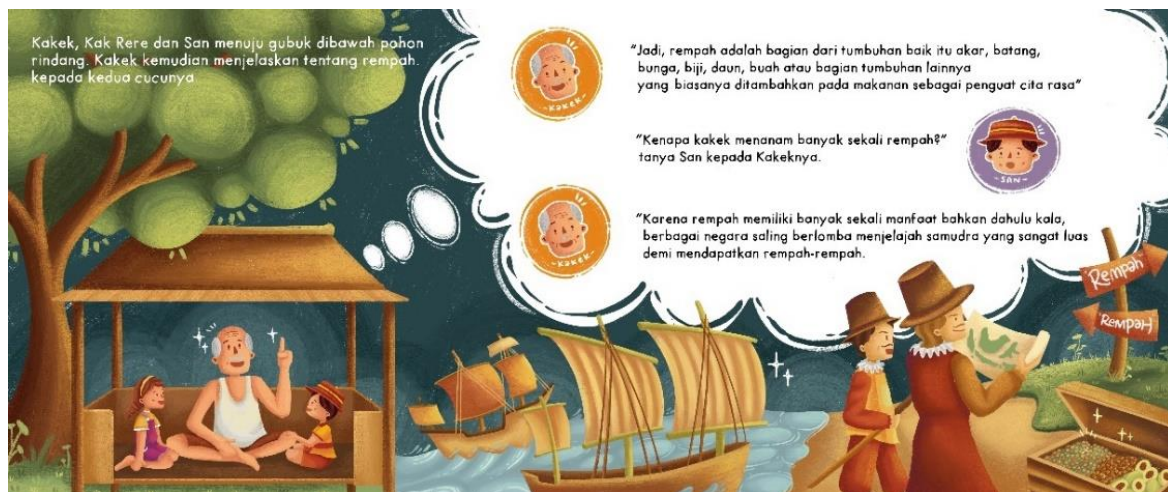
The colour palette selection matches the story concept and children's characteristics. "Rempah Kita" predominantly uses bright colours such as yellow, orange, red, purple, light blue, pink, and green, along with their variations, as bright colours tend to be more appealing to children.



Picture 3. Color palette

g. Illustrations

Illustrations in the "Rempah Kita" picture storybook begin with sketching, applying base colours, adding values for shading, and detailing each object. The illustrations, drawn in a cartoon style, are 19x23 cm on 150 gsm Art Paper. Below is an illustration on pages 8 and 9 of the book.



Picture 4. Illustration of pages 8 and 9

h. Fonts

Three font types are used in the "Rempah Kita" picture storybook: FuturaHand, Chicken Pie Height, and CheeseBurger. FuturaHand is used for body text at 16 pt size, Chicken Pie Height for headlines at 18 pt, CheeseBurger for subheadlines and the back cover at 16 pt.

i. Layout

The layout stage integrates illustrations, narrative text, and page numbers, creating a harmonious book that makes reading and understanding the story content easier for children.

j. Game Card

The "Rempah Kita" game card aims to help children review and recall the book's content, especially the types of spices. The game card set consists of 23 cards per box, sized 7x10 cm. Below is a visualisation of some "Rempah Kita" game cards.



Picture 5. Game card visualisation

4. Design Validation Result

The material expert validation was conducted on October 24, 2023, by Mrs. Beniaty Lestiyarini, S.Pd., M.Pd., yielding an average score of 3.6 with a response score of 90%. The response score percentage indicates that the material's suitability falls within the "very feasible" (SL) category. Meanwhile, the media expert validation was carried out by Mr. Denny Wahyu Triawan, S.Pd., M.Pd., also on October 24, 2023, with an average score of 3.4 and a response score of 85%. The response score percentage also places the media's feasibility within the "very feasible" (SL) category.

5. Design Revisions

Several corrections were made to the "Rempah Kita" picture storybook based on the validation results from the material and media experts and discussions with the supervising lecturers. These include changing the term "Chapter" to "Bagian" (Part), ensuring consistent placement of parts 1 and 2 on the right/left pages, modifying the font style of "t," and adjusting the background colour contrast with objects. Below is an example of the revisions made by the researcher.



Picture 6. Before revisions



Picture 7. After revisions

6. Product Testing

The "*Rempah Kita*" picture storybook was tested with 18 children aged 7–12 at SD Negeri Sedangsari, Kecamatan Patuk, Kabupaten Gunungkidul, DIY. The testing was conducted on November 15, 2023, by providing evaluation instruments to the SD Negeri Sedangsari Hall children. The material aspect received a score of 3.80, with a response score of 95%. Meanwhile, the media aspect scored 3.87, with a response score of 96.75%. Based on these scores, the "*Rempah Kita*" picture storybook is categorised as "very feasible" (SL) in both material and media aspects. Below is the documentation of the product testing conducted by the researcher at SD Negeri Sedangsari.



Picture 8. Trial "*Rempah Kita*" picture storybook

CONCLUSION

The results obtained in the study titled "The Development of the Picture Storybook '*Rempah Kita*' as an Effort to Introduce the Richness of Spices to Children Aged 7–12 Years" can be concluded as follows:

1. The picture storybook '*Rempah Kita*' was created using Adobe Photoshop and CorelDraw software through several stages, such as determining the story theme, designing characters, creating a storyboard and storyline, designing the book cover, selecting the colour palette, choosing fonts, layouts, and creating game cards. These stages produced the '*Rempah Kita*' picture storybook aimed at enhancing children's knowledge, especially those aged 7–12 years, about spices, including their history, types, and benefits. The picture storybook is divided into two parts: the first part discusses the history of spices, and the second part covers the types and

benefits of spices. The development of *'Rempah Kita'* incorporates an engaging storyline and illustrations, accompanied by game cards to help children recall the material in the book, particularly the types and benefits of spices. The book also contains character education values such as honesty, courage, helpfulness, curiosity, and patriotism. Knowledge about spices is essential for children aged 7–12 years because, besides the numerous types and benefits, the history of spices can foster love and pride in Indonesia.

2. The feasibility of the *'Rempah Kita'* picture storybook for children aged 7–12 years has undergone validation by a material expert, Mrs Beniati Lestiyarini, S.Pd., M.Pd., who provided a response score of 90% with an average rating of 3.75 for material expertise. This data indicates that the *'Rempah Kita'* picture storybook developed by the researcher meets the feasibility criteria with a "very feasible" (SL) category. The *'Rempah Kita'* picture storybook trial results for children aged 7–12 received an excellent response, evidenced by a material aspect score of 3.80 and a response score of 95%. Based on these scores, the *'Rempah Kita'* picture storybook is categorised as "very feasible" (SL) in the material aspect trial.
3. The feasibility of the *'Rempah Kita'* picture storybook for children aged 7–12 years has also undergone validation by a media expert, Mr. Denny Wahyu Triawan, S.Pd., M.Pd., who provided a response score of 85% with an average rating of 3.4 for media expertise. This data indicates that the *'Rempah Kita'* picture storybook developed by the researcher meets the feasibility criteria with a "very feasible" (SL) category. The *'Rempah Kita'* picture storybook trial results for children aged 7–12 received an excellent response, evidenced by a media aspect score of 3.87 and a response score of 96.75%. Based on these scores, the *'Rempah Kita'* picture storybook is categorised as "very feasible" (SL) in the media aspect trial.

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