



Development of Storytelling-Based Hand Puppet Media to Enhance Narrative Text Comprehension among Third-Grade Elementary Students

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Abstract: This study aims to develop storytelling-based hand puppets to improve the reading comprehension skills of third-grade elementary school students. The research employed a Research and Development (R&D) method involving third-grade students at SD Negeri 2 Kuwu as the research participants. The study also involved teachers, students, and expert validators in media and learning materials. Data were collected through observations, interviews, tests, and questionnaires, and were analyzed using both descriptive qualitative and quantitative methods. The effectiveness of the developed media was evaluated by comparing students' pre-test and post-test scores using N-gain analysis. The validation results indicated a very high level of feasibility, with scores of 94% from media experts and 90.90% from material experts. Student responses reached 91.11%, while teacher responses were 100%, all of which were categorized as very good. The t-test results showed a significance value of < 0.001 , indicating a statistically significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores. Furthermore, the N-gain analysis revealed an increase in the average scores from 70.24 to 89.63, with an N-gain value of 0.65, which falls into the moderate category. In conclusion, the storytelling-based hand puppets are valid, practical, and effective for use in learning. The developed media have been proven to positively influence the narrative text comprehension skills of third-grade students at SD Negeri 2 Kuwu.

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Introduction

Education is a conscious and planned effort to develop the potential of students in accordance with the values and norms of society, so that they have spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and the skills necessary for themselves, society, the nation, and the state as stated in (Undang - Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 20 tahun 2003) concerning the National Education System.

The Language Development and Guidance Agency (2022) reported that the 2021 AN results showed that primary school students' literacy levels were still low, with one in two students not yet achieving minimum competency. In addition, Abdul Mu'ti stated at Konsolnas 2025 that 75% of 15-year-old students had reading skills below the PISA level two standard set by the OECD (Alim, 2025). Students often have difficulty understanding the main ideas of a text; even though they are able to read, they do not fully comprehend the content. Research by Pratiwi, et al., (2024) indicates that poor comprehension is influenced by students' lack of focus and concentration, which is partly caused by learning methods and media that lack variety.



Based on Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Number 20 of 2003, Indonesian is designated as the language of instruction in national education and is a compulsory subject in the curriculum, including Article 37 paragraph 1 of the Merdeka Curriculum. In Indonesian language learning, one of the competencies that must be mastered is understanding simple fictional and non-fictional texts that are neutral, gender-friendly, and respect diversity, with a focus on developing oral and written communication skills as stated in (Kepka BSKAP Nomor 032/H/KR/2024).

Language skills, both oral and written, play a crucial role in supporting students' ability to communicate effectively. Through these skills, students are expected to be able to convey ideas, feelings, and information clearly so that they can be understood by others. Therefore, developing reading and writing skills is a crucial aspect of the learning process. These two skills not only support successful communication but also contribute to improving the ability to think, understand information, and express ideas systematically and structuredly (Sismulyasih Sb, 2018).

Narrative texts are Grade 3 primary school material that contains a series of events in sequence with one main event and limited characters, aiming to broaden the knowledge of readers or listeners (Semi in Hasriani, 2021). Narrative texts can be delivered orally through storytelling activities supported by learning media. Learning media plays an important role in helping students understand the material because it is able to convey messages in an instructional manner, facilitate the learning process, and improve learning outcomes (Pagarra, et al., 2022; Rohima, 2023). Indonesian language learning itself aims to train critical and creative language skills (Khair, 2018). In the context of reading comprehension, students not only read but also understand, remember, and relate the content of the reading to their experiences and knowledge (Purnomo, 2022; Fitriani, Aksara, & Masalah, 2020).

Titin et al., (2023) argue that the selection of learning media must consider the background, needs, characteristics, learning styles of students, suitability of material, learning environment, and cost aspects. To improve understanding of narrative texts and Indonesian language learning outcomes, attractive and interactive media, such as hand puppets, are needed. Sofi & Praheto, (2023) explain that flannel hand puppets shaped like humans or animals according to the story help students understand the narrative concretely. This medium is popular with students, provides real experiences, and can increase learning motivation (Sundi et al., 2021; Winda, 2014).

In addition, the storytelling method is a strategy for conveying stories in a sequential manner that helps students understand the content and elements of the story (Maknun & Adelia, 2023). This method is more effective than conventional learning, especially when combined with the right media, as it has been proven to increase the effectiveness of learning and student learning outcomes (Shella Zuliana, Sylvia Lara Syaflin, & Sholeh, 2023).

Several previous studies support the use of hand puppets and storytelling in learning.. Sangadah, Purwanti, Abidin, & Sismulyasih, (2020) stated that hand puppets are effective in Indonesian language learning, especially in retelling material, because they help students remember the material. Krisanti, Suprihatien, & Suryarini, (2020) also emphasise that hand puppets can develop students' imagination and interest, and are considered practical and feasible to apply in narrative learning (Al, Widad, & Damayanti, 2021). Additionally, Hasanah tahun (2024) found that hand puppets are effective in increasing learning interest. On the other hand, the storytelling method has been proven to have a positive influence, improving students' critical thinking skills and understanding (Mubarak, Rozi, & Husin, 2022; Safitri, Wiranti, & Farida, 2024).



However, previous research (Krisanti et al., 2020; Mubarak et al., 2022; Sangadah et al., 2020) has not specifically combined hand puppets with storytelling methods. This study examines and combines the use of hand puppets with storytelling to offer a novel approach to addressing existing issues, such as students' lack of interest in learning, declining grades, and improving students' reading comprehension. Therefore, this study developed storytelling-based hand puppets for teaching narrative text comprehension. The development of this media took into account the suitability of content, language, presentation, learning objectives, and media quality and appearance (Chrisyarani, 2018).

In Grade 3 at SD Negeri 2 Kuwu, the learning outcomes achieved by students were not satisfactory. Of the 39 students who participated in the learning process, only 17 students (44%) achieved the minimum competency standard (KKTP), while 22 students (56%) did not. This is in line with AN data that elementary school student literacy is still in the low category with scores below minimum competency. This is a real problem that needs to be solved. Then, interviews with the principal and teachers at SD Negeri 2 Kuwu revealed that students had difficulty understanding the content of stories and were therefore unable to summarise what they had read. Teaching was still dominated by lectures and discussions using a teacher-centred learning (TCL) approach, supported by limited facilities and infrastructure.

Learning media plays an important role in helping students understand material more easily (Hutauruk et al., 2022 & Batubara, 2021). Based on these conditions, the development of storytelling-based hand puppets is an alternative solution to improve narrative text comprehension skills through structured learning stages for third-grade students. The combination of this media and method is still rarely applied, so it has novelty value. This study aims to develop and test the feasibility and effectiveness of storytelling-based hand puppet media on narrative text material for third-grade students at SD Negeri 2 Kuwu to improve student understanding and learning outcomes.

Research Method

This study uses R&D (Research and Development) development research. This study is a learning media development study, so it uses the Borg and Gall development model in Sugiyono, (2022) which states that development research is a method for developing and validating products. The final product of this study is not only in the form of concrete objects in the form of learning media, but also a combined teaching method. Product validation is intended to test the effectiveness of the product developed by the researcher, and product development is intended to update the product to be developed into a more practical, efficient, and effective learning media. There are eight stages of research for this study, namely 1) Potential Problems, 2) Data Collection, 3) Product Design, 4) Design Validation, 5) Design Revision, 6) Product Testing, Product Revision, and 8) Product Usage Testing. Design validation was conducted with the assistance of expert media and material validators, who are experts in their respective fields. The material validators focused on Indonesian language and literature, and the media experts focused on media elements and their use.

The research was conducted at SD Negeri 2 Kuwu, Jl. Kepanjen No. 26, Kuwu, Kradenan District, Grobogan Regency, Central Java. Students acted as research subjects with two research subjects, namely students acting as small and large test subjects. The small-scale research subjects consisted of 6 third-grade students at SD Negeri 2 Kuwu, while the large-scale research subjects consisted of 33 third-grade students at SD Negeri 2 Kuwu.



This qualitative data was obtained from non-test techniques, namely interviews, questionnaires, and observations conducted at SD Negeri 2 Kuwu. Data in the form of numbers or qualitative data that has been converted into numbers is called quantitative data (Sugiyono, (2022). This quantitative data was obtained from the learning outcomes of third-grade students at SD Negeri 2 Kuwu in the initial data on student learning outcomes and the results of the pretest and posttest.

This study used several data tests, the first of which was a media feasibility test using a feasibility questionnaire by experts for validation. The criteria were as follows:

Table 1. Media Eligibility Criteria

Percentage	Criteria
86 % - 100 %	Highly Feasible
71 % - 85 %	Feasible
56 % - 70 %	Somewhat Feasible
41 % - 55 %	Nor Feasible
25 % - 40 %	Highly Not Feasible

Second, the study used a T-test to analyze the effectiveness of the learning media used, namely storytelling-based hand puppets, in improving students' learning outcomes, with the following criteria:

Table 2. T-Test Criteria (Sugiyono, 2022)

calculated t > table t	Ho rejected (there is a significant difference)
calculated t < table t	Ho accepted (there is no significant difference)

Third, the n-gain test is used in calculating pretest and posttest scores. This aims to determine the comparison between the difference in pretest and posttest scores and the difference in SMI (Ideal Maximum Score) with the pretest before treatment and the posttest after treatment using storytelling-based hand puppet learning media on narrative text material. The gain criteria are as follows:

Table 3. Normalized Gain Criteria

Value n - gain	Intepretation
$0,70 \leq g \leq 100$	High
$0,30 \leq g \leq 0,70$	Moderate
$0,00 < g < 0,30$	Low
$g = 0,00$	No Increase
$-1,00 \leq g < 0,00$	Decrease

Results and Discussion

This study produced a learning media product in the form of storytelling-based hand puppets for narrative text material in Indonesian language lessons. This product was used to improve the reading comprehension skills of third-grade students at SD Negeri 2 Kuwu, by adapting 8 of the 10 stages of R&D (Research and Development) research. There are various factors that are the reason why students have not achieved competencies that need to be addressed, such as student interests, school facilities, teaching methods, and other support

Potential and Problems

According to Sugiyono, (2022:404) research can begin with potential and problems. In the preliminary research, the researcher conducted preliminary research using interviews, documentation, and document data in the form of the learning outcomes of third-grade students at SD Negeri 2 Kuwu. The findings from this data were then used to identify



problems at SD Negeri 2 Kuwu. The data obtained showed that the facilities and infrastructure were inadequate and that the teachers were not teaching optimally.

The second finding was that one of the subjects considered to be a major problem at SD Negeri 2 Kuwu was Indonesian language. Students were assessed as having little interest in reading. Although there were daily literacy activities, teachers said that students had little interest in reading.

Data Collection

This problem is supported by student learning outcome data, particularly in Indonesian language in grade III at SD Negeri 2 Kuwu, namely that the learning outcomes obtained by students have not reached the KKTP (Criteria for Learning Outcome Achievement). Of the 39 students, only 17 students have reached the KKTP or have fully understood the material (44%). However, there are still 22 students who have not reached the KKTP or have not fully understood the material (56%).

Furthermore, the student needs survey results show that students are interested in Indonesian language lessons but find it difficult to understand the material well because teachers have not used learning media during the learning process. This condition has triggered the development of storytelling-based hand puppet to improve their understanding of narrative texts.

Product Design

The needs analysis indicates that the development of storytelling-based hand puppets for narrative text learning is necessary. This development requires a design that must be adapted to the content of the material and the learning media needs tailored to the characteristics of the students. In the needs questionnaire, the criteria that were adjusted were large hand puppets, bright colours, human characters, and fictional stories to be conveyed. In agreement with Chrisyarani, (2018) he size is approximately 25 cm with a hole at the bottom used to operate the hand puppet, and Sumasno, (2024) explained that hand puppets are made with a head, mouth, and hands. This makes them visually appealing and attracts students' interest in learning.

Before making hand puppets, a story is needed as material for delivering the narrative text. Suryaman, (2018) is a form of writing that has a series of events arranged in a systematic chronological order. The content of the stories presented is adapted from material found in books, articles, scientific journals, and internet references. The content of the stories is related to everyday life in accordance with the original environment. The stories must contain the structure, elements, methods, and content elements contained in a good narrative text.



Figure 1. Hand puppet front view, back view, face, fingers, and stitching details

Design Validation

The design of this storytelling-based hand puppet has been developed through an assessment questionnaire by media experts and material experts. Media experts will provide an evaluation of the puppet design, and material experts will assess the content of the material

provided. The consideration is Arsyad, (2019:74-76) that in choosing media, there are criteria, namely 1) adjusted to the learning objectives to be achieved. The following are the results of the media expert's assessment.

Table 4. Table of Suitability for Hand Puppets

Expert Validator	Maximum Score	Score Obtained	Percentage	Criteria
Media	72	68	94%	Higly Suitable
Material	44	40	90,90%	Highly Suitable



The results of the evaluation of the design and presentation components of the media show a media suitability percentage of 94%, indicating that the learning media is in the highly suitable category. The results of the evaluation by subject matter experts are as follows. Furthermore, the evaluation results for the content aspect of the learning media show a media suitability percentage of 90.90%, indicating that the learning media is in the highly suitable category.

Therefore, based on the results of the assessment recapitulation listed above, the storytelling-based hand puppet learning media developed as a whole meets the criteria of being very suitable for use as a supporting medium in the learning process.

Design Revision

At this stage, media and material experts provided criticism and suggestions for improving the developed media. The material experts' suggestions for improvement were to emphasise the use of hand puppets to read individual students' understanding, which leads to reading activities. The media experts then suggested strengthening the stitching at the end of the seam, namely at the bottom of the puppet.

Table 5. Revision of Hand Puppets

Before Revision	After Revision
At the end of the stitching, there is still one dead knot that has not been reinforced.	At the end of the stitching, more than one dead knot has been added to reinforce the stitching so that it does not come apart.
	

Following the advice of both experts, the researchers made the appropriate improvements to the hand puppets. After the revisions were made, the storytelling-based hand puppets were ready for the trial phase. The purpose of the trial was to assess the suitability of the improvements to the users' needs and to determine the extent to which these hand puppets could improve the quality of learning.

Product Trial

In the next stage, the researchers conducted a small-scale trial with six third-grade students at SD Negeri 2 Kuwu. The criteria were two students each with high, medium, and low abilities. The testing process began with 1) a pre-test, 2) learning with the hand puppets, 3) a post-test, and 4) filling out a response questionnaire to assess the product's suitability. The results of the response questionnaire are as follows.

Table 6. Summary of Questionnaire Responses

Indicator	Percentage	Description
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Student Response Questionnaire Results	91,11%	Very Good
Teacher Response Questionnaire Results	100%	Very Good

The results of the analysis of student and teacher response questionnaires produced good percentages with excellent criteria, namely 91.11% and 100%. Thus, the hand puppets meet the criteria for products suitable for product use trials.

Product Revision

Based on the assessment results, which indicate that the storytelling-based hand puppets are highly suitable for use, no further product revision is required for the developed hand puppets. The storytelling-based hand puppets can proceed to large-scale product testing.

Usage Trial

This stage is the final and most important stage in answering the research question. The usage trial was conducted on 33 third-grade students at SD Negeri 2 Kuwu. This large-scale trial was used to assess the effectiveness of storytelling-based hand puppets on narrative text material developed by the researcher. The results of the pre-test and post-test analysis are as follows.

Table 7. Pre-Test and Post-Test Analysis Results

Activity	Lowest Score	Highest Score	Average	Number of Students Who Passed	Learning Completion Rate (%)
Pretest	33	93	70,24	14	42,42%
Posttest	73	100	89,63	32	97%

Based on the data presented in the table above, it is known that the learning outcomes of grade 3 students at SD Negeri 2 Kuwu improved after the implementation of storytelling-based hand puppets. The average pre-test score obtained by students was 70.24, while the average post-test score increased to 89.63. In addition, the number of students who achieved learning completeness at the pre-test stage was 14 students or 42.42%, while at the post-test stage the number increased to 32 students or 97%. This shows that the use of storytelling-based hand puppets has a positive impact on improving student learning outcomes in Indonesian language narrative text material. The normality test using Shapiro-Wilk showed that the use of storytelling-based hand puppets had a positive impact on improving student learning outcomes in Indonesian language narrative text material.

Table 8. Normality Test Results

Evaluation	Statistic	df	Sig
Pretest Puppet	.948	33	.119
Posttest Puppet	.952	33	.149

The significance value for the pre-test data was 0.119, while for the post-test data it was 0.149. These significance values are > 0.050, so it can be concluded that the pre-test and post-test data meet the assumption of normal distribution. Then, a T-test was conducted using the T-test to determine whether or not there was a significant difference in learning outcomes after the application of storytelling-based hand puppet media in Narrative Text material.

Table 9. T-Test Results

Evaluation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pretest and Posttest Puppet	7,871	32	<.001

Based on the data listed in the table above, a t-value of 7.872 was obtained, while the t-table value at df = 32 with a significance level of 5% was 2.037. These results indicate that t-value > t-table, so Ho is rejected. Thus, it can be concluded that storytelling-based hand



puppet learning media are effective in Indonesian language learning in terms of student learning outcomes. In addition, the results of the paired sample t-test analysis between the pre-test and post-test scores using SPSS version 27 showed a sig (2-tailed) result of < 0.001 . This significance value is < 0.005 , so it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between the learning outcomes of students before and after the application of storytelling-based hand puppet learning media in the narrative text material. The last test was the N-Gain test, which was used to determine the average increase in student learning outcomes in Narrative Text material after the application of storytelling-based hand puppet learning media. The results are as follows.

Table 10. N-Gain Results

Indicator	Value
<i>Pre-test Average</i>	70,24
<i>Post-test Average</i>	89,63
Average Difference	19,39
Class N-Gain	0,65
Criteria	Moderate

Based on the table above, it is known that the N-Gain value is categorised as moderate with a value of 0.65. Thus, it can be said that there was an increase in pretest and posttest learning outcomes. This can be seen in the following line diagram, which shows an increase in pre-test and post-test learning outcomes. Thus, it can be concluded that storytelling-based hand puppet learning media is effective for use in Indonesian language narrative text lessons in grade 3 at SD Negeri 2 Kuwu.

Learning media is a tool that helps teachers deliver material so that students can more easily understand concepts and create a conducive learning environment (Hutauruk et al., 2022; Sapriyah, 2019). Media not only functions as a tool, but also has the ability to create an interesting and enjoyable learning atmosphere. One type of media that meets these criteria is three-dimensional media, such as hand puppets, which can be seen and used directly (Hasan et al., 2021).

Hand puppets are popular among students because of their attractive appearance with bright colours, their ability to convey developed narrative texts, their ability to increase student attention, and their ability to help students understand narrative text material, from its types to its intrinsic elements. This is in line with the statements of hat hand puppets make it easier for students to understand the material. In addition to providing concrete experiences through the appearance of hand puppets and developing students' imagination to understand the content and meaning of stories, hand puppets also encourage student activity in learning. According Sofi & Praheto, (2023) dan Winda, (2014) hand puppets are synonymous with stories, so the combination used is storytelling activities. Zulfitriia & Fadhila, (2021) argue that storytelling can make students more active in learning, such as answering questions, asking questions, and being more confident in their activities. Borusilaban, Rifdiani, & Sumadi, (2022) explain that storytelling is the activity of telling stories to an audience. This activity is one strategy to improve students' linguistic intelligence. One of them is reading comprehension in Indonesian language learning, assisted by hand puppets. Its implementation has a positive impact on students, namely that they understand the stories being told.

Reading comprehension is not only achieved through verbal means in acquiring knowledge and insights. However, Halawa & Lase, (2022) also say that reading comprehension can be improved in understanding reading material with the help of previous experiences and knowledge. Fazrul Sandi Purnomo, (2022) also explains how reading



comprehension is not only about reading but also knowing and understanding the content of the reading material that is remembered. Thus, readers are able to represent the information and knowledge obtained in writing and speech.

Hand puppets help maximise the provision of real experiences for students, with the stimulation provided enabling students to gain valuable experiences and teaching. Furthermore, storytelling-based learning strategies provide an understanding of the content of the story presented with the visual support of hand puppets. In agreement with the research by Rohmati, Rohiani, & Muslimin, (2025) it is stated that hand puppets can improve reading skills. The various studies mentioned are those conducted by Rohmati, Rohiani, & Muslimin in 2025, which explain that text comprehension skills increased from 31.25% to 85.42% with the help of hand puppets.

Hand puppets have the advantage of providing an interesting and new learning experience for students, as stated by Winda, (2014) that the benefit of hand puppets is that they provide a concrete and real experience. They can also develop children's imagination when used. This is in line with the opinion Sofi & Praheto, (2023) who say that hand puppets develop students' imagination with the help of visual aids. They make it easier for students to understand the material, information and messages conveyed, as stated by Saptawuni, (2021) saying that storytelling makes it easier for students to absorb information. Learning becomes more interactive with the help of hand puppets combined with storytelling. Zulfitria & Fadhila, (2021) share the same opinion, stating that storytelling can foster self-confidence and make students more active in question-and-answer sessions during learning.

Based on the feasibility test results by subject matter experts and media experts, the media received an excellent score and was classified as highly feasible. This feasibility was supported by the suitability of storytelling-based hand puppets as a learning media development tool. In addition, the results of observations during the study showed that this media met the feasibility criteria and was effective when applied in the learning process. The pre-test and post-test data showed an average N-Gain score of 0.6 with an average difference of 19.39, which is classified as moderate. This data shows an increase in student learning outcomes after learning. Thus, storytelling-based hand puppets have been proven to be effective in improving Indonesian language learning outcomes in narrative text material.

Conclusion

This research produced a product in the form of storytelling-based hand puppets. The novelty of the product lies in its attractive and flexible design and visuals that can be used in various stories, thereby creating an enjoyable learning experience and helping students understand the concepts more easily. The feasibility test results for the storytelling-based hand puppet media were declared very feasible for use in learning. The validation results showed a feasibility percentage of 94% from media experts and 90.90% from subject matter experts. In addition, the results of the teacher response questionnaire showed a percentage of 100%, while the student response was 91.11%. Based on these results, this media is recommended for use in learning activities.

The final results of the effectiveness test for storytelling-based hand puppets proved to be effective in teaching Indonesian language narrative texts. The T-Test results showed a significance value ($\text{sig.} < 0.001$), which means that there was a significant difference between learning outcomes before and after using the media. The N-Gain analysis shows an average difference between the pre-test and post-test of 19.39 with an N-Gain value of 0.6 (moderate category). Thus, this media contributes positively to improving student learning outcomes.



Recommendation

For teachers, for optimal implementation, it is recommended to combine the use of storytelling-based hand puppets with other learning modes, methods, or strategies according to student characteristics. Integrating media with appropriate learning strategies is expected to create a more collaborative, active, and effective learning atmosphere. The development of storytelling-based hand puppets in this study is still limited to narrative text material in Indonesian language content. Therefore, future research is expected to develop similar media for other materials and subjects, so that its use becomes broader and makes a greater contribution to the world of education.

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