

ELIZABETH AND THE GREAT FOREST (SERIES 1) ELIZABETH AND THE STRANGE ISLAND (SERIES 2)

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ABSTRACT

Children literature is one way to deliver important moral values to children all over the world. Therefore, I made *Elizabeth and The Great Forest (Series 1)* and *Elizabeth and The Strange Island (Series 2)* as my creative work for the final project. In those two books, I want to bring up some issues which are; technology cannot replace direct interaction between people, fears are not supposed to be avoided but to be faced, and mother-daughter relationship is the most important relationship. The first book will focus on technology that damages a girl's social life and a girl's bravery in overcoming her own fears. The second book will focus on mother-daughter relationship with sub-theme: overcoming the characters' own fears. Through the girl's journeys, she will finally realize that technology cannot replace human interaction, people need to overcome their own fears, and mother-daughter relationship is the most important relationship ever in her life.

Keywords: technology, bravery, mother-daughter relationship

INTRODUCTION

Children literature is the first literature that everyone reads in their life. By reading children literatures, children can learn about the world from the story. Children literature can help children to understand more about the world, their cultures and others' cultures, too. Martha Crippen from A Publication of Luther College & Decorah Public Library said, "Children literature is indeed important because it provides students with opportunities to respond to literature; it gives students appreciation about their own cultural heritage as well as those of others; it helps students develop emotional intelligence and creativity; it nurtures growth and development of the student's personality and social skills; and it transmits important literature and themes from one generation to the next" (Crippen, 2012). Moreover, children literatures are books that implicitly, didactic children in a fun way. It can also be a media to send "messages" from the authors to children. The messages can be anything. The messages can talk about life lessons or issues that happen in nowadays life.

Nowadays, technology is everywhere. Everyone can have cellphone now, including children. This development of technology harms relationship between people and slows down the development of children's psychomotor. In addition, Cris Rowan, a pediatric occupational therapist also said, "Children now rely on technology for the majority of their play, grossly limiting challenges to their creativity and imaginations, as well as limiting necessary challenges to their bodies to achieve optimal sensory and motor development" (Rowan, 2013). While in fact, what children need to do is to be far-far away from their gadgets and all the technology because interaction between the children and their parents and their peers is more important for their development. Cris Rowan in one of her articles said, "Four critical factors necessary to achieve healthy child development are movement, touch, human connection, and exposure to nature" (Rowan, 2013). The dependency of a child to her gadget will be one of the topics in one of my story books.

Other issue that I want to bring up is by letting go their gadget, children will find out their hidden strengths. I want to encourage children to be brave so they know how to handle problems when they are becoming an adult. Being brave means using all your body and brain to do something, to make decisions. Rabbi Boteach, an American public speaker, an author of 30 books, and TV host, once said in Oprah Winfrey show that children have a greater sense of entitlement, they help less around the home and are less communicative with parents than previous generations (Boteach, 2008). While in fact, children need to know that they have to be brave and smart to get what they want. Since they were a child, parent needs to embed in their children's mind that they have to be a

brave child so they can overcome their own fears in the future. To be brave does not mean to be a rebellious children towards parents, teachers, or older people, but to overcome fears in positive ways.

Nowadays, there are less interaction between members of the family because of the rapid development of technology. Even there are some cases about mother who killed her own children to get peace while she was playing a game in a social media. One of the cases happened in Jacksonville, Florida, United States (Kawilarang, Armandhanu, 2010). From the example given it is truly sad knowing technology that takes over family's love. Communication is the key to maintain a healthy relationship between members of the family. The importance of communication between parents and children is what missing in nowadays life. Family is the first environment that children need to keep forever in their life. In one my story books, I will discuss about the relationship between two members of a family which are mother and daughter. By all means, father-son relationship is also important. However, I decided to focus more on mother-daughter relationship because, for me, mother and daughter bond is like infinite best friends. Dr Christiane Northrup, author of the book *Mother-Daughter Wisdom* (Hay House), says, "The mother-daughter relationship is the most powerful bond in the world, for better or for worse. It sets the stage for all other relationships" (McNulty, 2015). In order to understand each other, mother needs to talk to her children. Children also need to know what their mother wants so they can build a harmonious relationship in that small environment.

I am going to use fairy tales genre for the story for children are very fond of fairy tales stories. Children are fond of fairy tale stories because they allow children to explore the depths of their creativity and imagination. Many fairy tale stories also teach every day values that children depend on solidarity throughout their adult lives (Campbell, 2003). Fairy tale is one of important genres that can introduce creativity and/or a capability to children. Fairy tale can develop children's imagination. Melissa Taylor, a writer from imagination soup said that there are 8 reasons why fairy tales are essential to childhood; fairy tales show kids how to handle problems, they build emotional resiliency, they give us a common language (cultural literacy & canon), they cross cultural boundaries, they teach story, they develop a child's imagination, they give parents opportunities to teach critical thinking skills, and they teach lessons (Taylor, 2012). Fairy tales genre offers beautiful places and strange magical creatures that children never seen before, therefore I choose this genre to introduce them these two things; beautiful places and strange magical creatures.

My target market will be 7-9 years old children because children in this age have the tendency to explore the world. In this age group, children need to know that they are still very dependent to their parents. By making a story that relate with "incidents" that happened for 7-9 years old children, that will make them realize how parents' role is still very important to them. According to Child and Youth Health, 7-9 years old children are likely to be full of grave doubts about themselves. Therefore, my main character will be a 7 years old girl with Chinese Indonesian as her race to make it more lively.

The main character is a 7 years old Chinese Indonesian girl. Readers can see the culture and the way of life of a Chinese Indonesian through my main character. Female protagonist plays more with feeling and emotion which are my main "weapons" in my stories besides action and dialogues. Through the characteristics of my main character, I want to show the readers about Chinese Indonesians because I rarely find books whose main characters are Chinese Indonesian.

The statements of the problems in this projects are; how technology damages children's social life, why children need to be brave to overcome their fears, why is it important to maintain a good mother-daughter relationship. However, in the context of the story, these questions become; how technology damages a girl's social life with her surroundings? Why the girl needs to be brave to face her fears? Why does the girl need to maintain a good relationship with her mother? For statement of problems 1 and 2 can be found in Series 1. Statement of problems 2 and 3 can be found in Series 2.

The purpose of the creative work is I want to show that; an over-reliance of technology could bring bad effect to children's social life, children need to know that bigger problems are waiting for them when they become grownups, a mother plays very important roles as her children's teacher, best friend, and mother, in her children's life which will affect her children's attitude and relationship towards life and people. However, in the context of the story, the statements above become; an over-reliance of technology damages the daughter's social life as a

friend, as a daughter, and as an independent creature, the girl needs to know that she needs cannot run from her problems instead face the problems, the girl's mother will be her very best friend. For purpose of the creative work 1 and 2 can be found in Series 1. Purpose of the creative work 2 and 3 can be found in Series 2.

Theories that are used in my creative work are Erik Erikson's Stages of Development and Pauline Dewan's Fantasy Genre Code. Erik Erikson's Stages of Development is used to describe the main character's changing personality, Elizabeth. While Pauline Dewan's Fantasy Genre Code is used to compare between Pauline Dewan's Fantasy Genre Code and my creative work.

Erik Erikson's Stages of Development. There are 8 stages of them:

First stage	basic trust versus basic mistrust	Infant (0 to 1 ½)
Second stage	autonomy versus shame and doubt	Early childhood (1 ½ to 3)
Third stage	initiative versus guilt	Play age (3 to 5)
Fourth stage	industry versus inferiority	School age (5 to 12)
Fifth stage	identity versus role confusion	Adolescence (12 to 18)
Sixth stage	intimacy versus isolation	Young adult (18 to 40)
Seventh stage	generativity versus stagnation	Adulthood (40 to 65)
Eighth stage	integrity versus despair	Maturity (65+)
Ninth stage (by Joan Erikson)	Gerotranscendence	Very old age (80 to 90)

TABLE 1.1 Erik Erikson's Stage of Development

I will use Erik Erikson's fourth stage to explain the changing personality of my main character. Children at fourth stage will learn, produce, and accomplish new skills and knowledge by themselves (Learning Theories, 2014). They do all the things by themselves. Children will develop an industry (Erikson, 1997). This characteristic will appear in Elizabeth's personality. She will explore a whole new world (The Great Forest and The Strange Island), make new things (learn how to make a shelter), make new friends (with some fairies and other magical creatures in Elizabeth and The Great Forest), and make decisions (a decision to help The Great Forest and a decision to help her mother). Everything is done by herself. She will also gain some knowledge from her experiences. Also, in this stage, children are encouraged and reinforced for their initiative, they begin to feel industrious and feel confident in their ability to achieve goals (McLeod, 2013). There are two effects; if children are encouraged they will become a competence child, on the other hand, if children are not encouraged they will have an inferior feeling which lead them to doubting his or her own skill and therefore may not reach his or her potential (McLeod, 2013). Elizabeth also experienced this kind of problem in her life. She will faced with a situation where she needs to make her own initiative, whether to trust a talking little dog or not. Also, she will have the initiative to take over her mother's fear and fight it. In the end, she becomes a competence child.

The other theory is Fantasy Genre Code by Pauline Dewan. There are 6 codes of them:

	Fantasy Codes	My Creative Works
1	Events occur outside the ordinary laws that operate within the universe.	Elizabeth (main character) can go to The Great Forest and The Strange Island through particular things.
2	Magic is central to the fantasy genre.	<u>Series 1</u> : Elizabeth's journey in The Great Forest is the central story of <i>Elizabeth and The Great Forest</i> <u>Series 2</u> : The journey of Elizabeth and her mother in finding the way out from The Strange Island is the central story of <i>Elizabeth and The Strange Island</i>
3	Fantasy stories often involve journeys and quests.	<u>Series 1</u> : Elizabeth finds herself in a strange place she never thinks of. She starts her journey by getting used to the place and moving on to one place in other place in the forest. Until she

		meets the leader of The Great Forest who is The Wise Elf. Then, she fought together with The Wise Elf to conquer The Evil who disturbs The Great Forest. <u>Series 2</u> : Elizabeth and her mother need to overcome their own fears in The Strange Island in order to get out from that island.
4	Settings start in the real world and move into a fantasy world.	<u>Series 1</u> : The first setting in <i>Elizabeth and The Great Forest</i> is in Elizabeth's house, Braya, The Nesia. Then the setting changed to The Great Forest, which is when her journey starts. <u>Series 2</u> : The first setting in <i>Elizabeth and The Strange Island</i> is in Elizabeth's house, Braya, The Nesia. Then the setting changed to The Strange Island, which is when her journey with her mother starts.
5	Realistic settings are often called primary worlds; fantasy settings, secondary worlds.	The primary world: Braya, The Nesia. The secondary world: The Great Forest and The Strange Island.
6	Protagonists usually cross some kind of opening or “portal” between the two worlds	Series 1: Elizabeth's bedroom windows , Series 2: A box package

TABLE 1.2 Fantasy Genre Codes

The left side of the table is a fantasy genre code from Pauline Dewan, English PhD from York University, and the right side is my creative work. By comparing the fantasy genre code by Pauline Dewan with my creative work, we can see that my creative work fulfill the requirements of fantasy genre code. Therefore, my creative work is included in fantasy genre because it fulfills the fantasy genre code according to Pauline Dewan.

OUTLINE OF THE CREATIVE WORK

For my creative work, it will consist of two series, the first series is *Elizabeth and The Great Forest*, and the second series is *Elizabeth and The Strange Island*. For the first series, it will have around 25-35 pages with the drawings, and the second series, it will have around 20-30 pages with the drawings. The size of the paper that I will use is 16.5 cm x 22.5 cm.

2.2.1. Theme

For series 1, my themes are technology cannot replace social life and bravery of a girl. The girl will understand that technology cannot replace her social life to others human being. Also, the girl will conquer her own fears in a strange place. For series 2, my theme is the importance of mother-daughter relationship. The girl will realize that her love to her mother is bigger than anything else in this world and she needs her mother to help her developed into a great girl with great personalities.

2.2.2. Plot

Series 1

Elizabeth is a 7 years old Chinese Indonesian girl who likes to play with her gadget. She is very addicted to her phone. Because of her fondness to her phone she even does not realize that she has another world which is her playground outside her house. Her mother always reminds her to play outside, but she chooses to play games in her gadget instead. On Chinese New Year, Elizabeth holds her gadget all the time. She greets and asks for Hong Bao from her relatives, but after finishing collecting Hong Bao, she goes to her room and plays with her gadget. Her mother asks her to talk to the relatives but she even does not replies. On the night of the Chinese New Year, when she falls asleep, her bedroom window is opened and there is a little hurricane that sucked her up. She does not realize what happened because she is asleep. When she opens her eyes, she is in the place that she does not recognize at all. It is a strange place to her. The place called The Great Forest. She has

no idea about that place because it is a magic world. In the great Forest, she will meet her new friends and she has tasks to do. Unintentionally, while she is in the great forest, she does all the stuffs that many 7 years old children do. She plays with her new friends there which are fairies, unicorns, mermaids, a talking dog, and the king of the great forest who is an elf. She is very afraid at first. However, she can overcome her fears and solves all the tasks that the Great Forest offers. The first task is to overcome her fear to be alone in a strange place. The second task is to overcome her fear in making friends with strange creatures. The resolutions for the first and the second task are by becoming friends with the talking dog. Even she can make a shelter for her own by collecting leaves and branches. The last task is to face the evil together with the leader of the Great Forest who is Idhrenion, The Wise Elf. In the end of her journey, she finally comes back home, rarely touches her phone, and starts to make friends with her neighborhood girls.

Series 2

Since her returns from the Great Forest, Elizabeth likes to play with her new friends. She spends most of her time playing with her new friends outside the house. In the morning, she goes to school then she has her lunch at home. After finishing her lunch she takes an afternoon nap. Then, she has singing courses, mathematic courses, and English courses for an hour every different day. Singing courses is on Monday and Wednesday, English course is on Tuesday and Thursday, and mathematic courses is on Friday and Saturday. Next activity that she does is playing with her friends. Nadine and Grace are her friends. They are neighbor, but they usually play in Nadine's house. After playing with her friends, she goes home and has dinner. A quick dinner for herself and then she does homework and studies for tomorrow's lessons. Then she sleeps. When she wakes up, she goes to school and starts her day in school. Her routines stay the same until one day, Maria, her mother waits for her to come back home because it is too late. She stays in one of her friend's house but she does not tell her mother. Maria waits for her for a long time. In short, there is no communication at all between Maria and Elizabeth. They never talk and spend time together as a mother and daughter. One day, Maria gets a delivery that is addressed to her daughter. She opens it and suddenly she is in the middle of an ocean. She has no idea where she is and why she is there. She then finds a piece of wood that she can hold on. A moment later, Elizabeth also comes out of nowhere and joins her in the middle of an ocean. Maria helps her to hold on the piece of the wood until they reach the shore. After they reach the shore, Elizabeth asks Maria what happened. Maria then explained to Elizabeth about the package. The delivery that Maria opened was not meant for her, it was for Elizabeth. Once a wrong person opened the delivery, the destination changed. Elizabeth saw the open package, touched it, and she caught up her mother. Now there they are in a strange island, Maria and Elizabeth explored the island together to find their way back home.

2.2.3. Characterization

Elizabeth

Name : Elizabeth Lie

Age : 7 years old

From : Braya City, The Nesia

A 7 year old Chinese Indonesian girl who likes to play with her gadgets. She has black short hair and brown eyes. Her body is proportional for her age. Her height is 140 cm. At first, Elizabeth was a very kind and cheerful girl. But everything changed since her father's death. She turns into a quiet girl. Then she gets a phone which makes her quitter than she used to be. She likes to play with her gadgets more than with her friends. She likes to shut her mouth and pay attention to her gadgets than have a conversation with her mother and her surroundings. She likes to stay inside her room rather than play outside her house. She is not really good at making conversation, in short, she is socially awkward now. One day, she has to face a condition where neither her gadget nor her mother together with her. Depending on her ability to survive in the strange world, she finds her hidden strength that she never finds out before while she was busy with her gadgets. Since then, she becomes a brave girl who can make her own decisions. In addition, since she left her gadgets, she is getting closer to her mother. She becomes a loveable daughter for her mother and a wise friend for her friends.

The Wise Elf

Name : Idhrenion

Age : Immortal
From : The Great Forest

The leader of The Great Forest. He is a wise elf and he is immortal. The Great Forest is always under control when he leads until one day comes the villain which is the Evil. He is a good leader who joins his people to conquer the evil. The Wise Elf has long brown hair, with pointed nose and ears. He is very tall and his eyes' color are brown. He is a very mysterious yet friendly leader. He is a very nice elf.

Crown

Name : Crown
Age : 2 years old
From : The Great Forest

A talking dog who then become Elizabeth's best friend while Elizabeth has her journey in The Great Forest. It accompanies her anytime, anywhere, and helps her with her problems. It is a two years old puppy whose color is white. It is a Kintamani Bali dog.

The Evil

Name : The Black Shadow
Age : unknown
From : Somewhere dark

A big black shadow creature that has no face, but small eyes. He does not have nose, ear, and mouth; only small slanted eyes. He does not have body either, his physic is like a big black flowing curtain. He has small and tiny hands, but he does not have feet. He is the black flowing curtain who works with his mouth and plays with people's heart and mind. He comes to destroy the peace in The Great Forest. His vision is to take over The Great Forest and make it his. He plays off people in The Great Forest against one and another so there will be hatred amongst them. He almost did it until Elizabeth and The Wise Elf defeat him in the battle.

Maria

Name : Maria Lie
Age : 30 years old
From : Braya City, Nesia

A 30 years old mother of Elizabeth Lie. She has long curly brown hair. Her eyes' color are black. She is quite tall and she is slim. She is a very nice and nimble mother who likes to do house chores. She likes to keep her house clean. She really loves her daughter, Elizabeth and her husband. However, after her husband's death, there is a gap between her and Elizabeth. But still, she lives a good life in Braya city with Elizabeth. She is a housewife. She'd like to spend her time more with Elizabeth, but her daughter is busy with her gadgets and her friends. Until one day, she gets a delivery that is addressed to Elizabeth and she opens it. That delivery is the door to The Great Forest, but since she opens it the place is changed. The place changed to The Strange Island, a place where she and Elizabeth will have their journey that will change her relationship with her daughter forever.

Nadine Suyono

Name : Nadine Suyono
Age : 7 years old
From : Braya City, Nesia

One of Elizabeth's close friends. She is a 7 years old Javanese girl who is very cheerful and likes to ask Elizabeth to play with her and her friend, Grace. Nadine has black long hair and brown eyes. Nadine and Grace were already friends when they met Elizabeth for the first time. They met Elizabeth when Elizabeth was sitting on the swing near Elizabeth's house by herself. Nadine and Grace are Elizabeth's new neighbors. She is a very loyal friend and she is very talkative. Nadine's first impression when she met Elizabeth was, "She looks nice and beautiful! I think three of us can be best friend forever and ever."

Grace Hartanto

Name : Grace Hartanto
Age : 7 years old
From : Braya City, Nesia

One of Elizabeth's good friends. She is a 7.5 years old Chinese girl who is very calm and likes reading book. She has short black hair with black eyes. Her height is 155 cm. She is very fond

of swimming. Grace's personality matches with Nadine's personality because Nadine likes talking while Grace likes listening. Grace always feels curious with Elizabeth's personalities. Elizabeth is a new kind of girl to Grace because Elizabeth is an adventurer girl. She never meets this kind of girl. Therefore, she sticks around Elizabeth to find out more about her. She is an introvert, no one ever know her deepest secret. However, she is very kind and loyal. Grace's first impression when she met Elizabeth was, "She looks like an adventurer."

2.2.4. Settings

The Great Forest

The Great Forest is a forest that consist of many magical kind creatures. In this forest, the creatures live in peace with the nature. It has many magical things inside it. There are fairies, elves, talking animals which are 12 zodiac animals in Chinese, mermaids, and unicorns. There is one leader in this Great Forest who can rule the forest wisely, he is The Wise Elf. As long as he is in the forest, everything is under control. Until one day, here comes the Evil who always disturbs The Great Forest's people. The Wise Elf finds it hard in controlling the balance of forest because of The Evil. I will use this setting in Series 1 only.

Braya

It is a metropolitan city in The Nesia. Most people in Braya work in the office. They do not really care about nature anymore. All of them own a gadget, at least they have one for themselves. This place is very crowded and full of vehicles. To be specific, the setting will take place in Elizabeth's house which located in Braya city. I will use this setting in Series 1 and Series 2.

The Strange Island

The Strange Island is a round island surrounded by the ocean. In this island there are two main parts, the ocean and the forest. It is like common forest in general. However, the forest can give the imagination or the illusion of a thing that a person fears the most. There is an exit door inside the forest that the person will find after the person wins the fight of his or her own fear. If the person cannot wins the fight, then he or she will die in The Strange Island. I will use this setting in Series 2 only.

CONCLUSION

4.1 Lessons Learned

The first lesson that I got is writing made me understand outside world more than I expected. There is a saying that said, "Books are window of the world" and I think that saying is true. By reading books we can see what the world has offered to us from others' perspective. Therefore, I, as a writer, want to give the best explanation of what I have known the best or what I have learnt in some of my classes. By giving the best explanation, readers can understand and feel what I feel the same way. Readers can also understand the issue that is happening in nowadays life through the topics that I discussed in my books.

The second lesson is every children book authors could use "difficult" and "heavy" issues that happen in the world. I can discuss not only simple matters that happen in a family environment, but also big matters that happen in society for example the bad effects of technology for children. However, we need to write the issue with a light style of children books. I got a lot of suggestions from my advisor and other lecturers that children story "show", they "don't tell". What I meant by "show, don't tell" is the author needs to show more what happen in the story rather than tell what happen in the story. "Show, don't tell" then finally became my main principle to do my creative work.

The third lesson that I got from writing these children books is teaching me how to appreciate children's thought and ideas. In general, adults have a tendency to ignore children's ideas even their words. However, children's imagination is much bigger than adults. They can easily make a story by what they touch, feel, see, listen, and taste. That is what make them special, their unique thoughts. For this lesson, I found it difficult to imagine what a 7 year-old-girl would do in a strange place. Also, how to relate between what happen in real world and in my magical world. Even though most of my story will take place in magical place, the story, the characters, and the flow must believable or plausible. It should be a plausible-fantasy. In my opinion, if an author could make a fantasy story but all the main elements are plausible, it would be an astonishing masterpiece.

4.2 Future Plan

In the future, I am planning to publish these two books. If these two books can be accepted in society, I will try to make other series of Elizabeth's journey. So, the readers will grow with the main character.

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