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### Improving Students' Writing Skill in Teaching Narrative Text by Using Indonesian Folktales

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#### Abstrak

Penggunaan media pengajaran yang menarik bertujuan untuk menciptakan pembelajaran yang menyenangkan bagi siswa dengan memilih bahan ajar yang menarik minat dan perhatian siswa serta menciptakan pembelajaran yang interaktif. Penggunaan cerita rakyat Indonesia merupakan salah satu media yang dapat digunakan oleh guru dalam pengajaran bahasa Inggris, khususnya pengajaran menulis teks narasi. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mendeskripsikan pengajaran keterampilan menulis siswa dalam teks narasi melalui penggunaan cerita rakyat Indonesia untuk meningkatkan kemampuan menulis siswa. Metode penelitian ini adalah penelitian eksperimen. Ada tiga langkah dalam melaksanakan penelitian eksperimen ini untuk memperoleh data, yaitu; Pretest, Treatment, dan Posttest. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa peningkatan kemampuan menulis teks narasi siswa mengalami signifikan secara statistik. Terdapat peningkatan nilai rata-rata kelas eksperimen sebesar 51,19 pada pretest dan 80,42 pada posttest. Sedangkan pada kelas kontrol, hasil pretest sebesar 56,67 dan hasil posttest sebesar 64,89, dalam menulis teks narasi dengan menggunakan cerita rakyat Indonesia. Dapat disimpulkan bahwa dengan menggunakan cerita rakyat Indonesia guru dapat mengarahkan kepada siswanya untuk banyak berlatih dan memperbanyak latihannya tanpa mengabaikan materi lain dengan tujuan terciptanya pembelajaran yang efektif dan menyenangkan.

**Kata Kunci:** Keterampilan Menulis, Teks Narasi, Cerita Rakyat Indonesia.

#### Abstract

*The use of interesting teaching media aims to create enjoyable learning for students by choosing teaching materials that attract students' interest and create interactive learning. The use of Indonesian folktales is one of the media that can be used by teachers in teaching English, especially narrative texts. The purpose of this research is to teach students writing in narrative texts through the use of Indonesian folktales to improve their' writing skills. This research used an experimental method. There are three steps in carrying out this experimental research to obtain data: the pretest, the treatment, and the posttest. The results of this research show that the students' ability to write narrative texts is statistically significant. There was an increase in the average score of the experimental class by 51.19 on the pretest and 80.42 on the posttest. Meanwhile, in the control class, the pretest result was 56.67 and the posttest result was 64.89 for writing narrative texts using Indonesian folktales. It can be concluded that by using Indonesian folktales, teachers can direct their students to practice a lot and increase their practice without ignoring other material, with the aim of creating effective and enjoyable learning.*

**Keywords:** Writing Skill, Narrative Text, Indonesian Folktales.

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## BACKGROUND

Apart from speaking, listening, and reading, writing is the final language skill that a teacher should impart to their students as much as possible. Writing is crucial because students need to be able to do it in order to develop their writing abilities. Firstly, writing is a means of communication with people worldwide. Secondly, nearly all jobs demand the ability to write.

One of the most challenging parts of language proficiency is writing. Writing requires a certain set of abilities, including punctuation, sentence construction, vocabulary, and paragraph organization. According to (Heaton, 1988: 138), "writing skills are complex and difficult to teach, requiring mastery not only of grammatical and theoretic devices but also of conceptual and judgment elements".

According to Djago Tarigan, writing is expressing in writing both opinions, thoughts, ideas, and feelings. Writing can also be interpreted as an activity that expresses ideas or insights by using written language as an intermediary or delivery medium (Tarigan, 1986:15). While, according to (Solehan T. W, 2008:94), the ability to write is not an ability that is acquired automatically, Solehan explained that a person's ability to write is not innate but obtained through learning activities. Related to the way in which writing skills are acquired, someone who has received writing lessons does not necessarily have reliable writing competence without a lot of writing practice. Then, according to (M. Atar Semi, 2007: 14) said that the purposes of writing include: a) to tell something, b) to provide instructions or directions, c) to explain something, d) to convince, and e) to summarize. Meanwhile, according to (Elina Syarif, 2009: 6) the purpose of writing is: a) to inform, b) to persuade, c) to educate, d) to entertain.

Of the four fundamental skills, writing is the one that most students find most difficult. It entails organizing and coming up with ideas as well as turning them into legible language. (Rokhmah, 2020). Writing activities are very important in the world of education. With writing, a student is able to construct a variety of knowledge in the form of essays, articles, scientific reports, short stories, poems, diaries, and so on.

The main problem in teaching English to students was still their writing abilities. The majority of students were aware of this problem, so the teacher needed to know how to fix it. Considering media and strategy was a first step in assisting students with this problem. The eighth grade at SMP Negeri 4 Baubau City in 2023 was one school where students had writing problems. According to their English teacher, the students' interests lie more in reading and listening. However, when it came to writing, they were disinterested, as, according to their English teacher, the majority of the students were indifferent to and unaffected by their writing grades. This was demonstrated by the fact that some of their test results from mid-semester were unsatisfactory.

Students at SMP Negeri 4 Baubau City continued to have poor narrative text writing skills, according to observations made during the eighth grade. The information gathered from the English teachers was used to support the claim that the teachers struggled with creating narrative texts and were unsure of where to start. Their lack of basic understanding, including tenses and vocabulary, and their difficulty expressing their ideas in writing were the explanations given. In creating narrative texts, many students lack motivation and enthusiasm. In the Junior High School curriculum, the basic competence in learning writing is that students are expected to write several texts, for example letters, greeting cards and short messages, monologue texts such as descriptive, recount and narrative texts. Narrative text is chosen as the type of text that will be researched since it is so close to children's world, which also can attract students to write because narrative tells a story in its writing. Besides, narration or stories can entertain, teach, explain, and persuade.

According to (Abbott, 2002:2), narrative is present in every age, in every place, and in every society; it begins with the very history of mankind, and there is nowhere nor has there been a people without narrative. All classes and all human groups have their own narratives, the enjoyment of which is very often shared by men with different, even opposing, cultural backgrounds.

A narrative text is one of many text types taught in Junior High School because narrative texts can amuse and entertain students through the story itself. On the other hand, their abilities in writing narrative texts are not as good as their abilities in reading narrative texts; it will be better if they are able to write narrative texts as easily as they read narrative texts.

In teaching writing strategies, Experts have introduced the use of media in the classroom. However, several approaches are not working as intended due to various reasons, including conditions, the learning process, and teacher comprehension. In order for the teacher to effectively teach, teacher must be prepared for the classroom before entering. The success of the learning process can be determined by the use media, strategies, and methods chosen. Stated differently, the efficacy of teacher and the level of understanding among students will be determined by the chosen approach, strategies, and media. The way the teacher acts in class will alter and have an impact on the way the students feel, think, and behave. This statement is related to (Lazánov's statement in Deporter, 2008): "Everything is to be meaningful, every word, thinking, action, and association, and how long you change your environment, presentation, and teaching planning, as if your teaching process is in your class."

One of the reasons the students didn't seem interested in studying was a lack of media learning, which also prevented them from expanding their knowledge and learning English, particularly when it came to producing narrative texts. A variety of innovative teaching methods should be used while imparting English to students, with a focus on writing skill. Students will be motivated to study English using this method. For the students' grades and motivation to rise, they required creative media. It ought to be possible for teacher to use media in their teaching and learning process. Media serves as a tool in the learning process. Three categories of media can be used in language instruction: audio, visual, and audiovisual. According to (Shabiralyani et al., 2015), media and visual aids are those devices that are used in classrooms to encourage students learning processes and make them easier and more interesting.

Increasing students' interest was the best method to improve their writing skill. Teachers might start the teaching process more effectively if they have the interest of their students. When they have an interest in the subject, they may be content. Boredom can arise when students are dissatisfied with their teachers. They were therefore not prepared to study. (Goleman in Deporter, 2008) claimed that the brain's capacity for rational thought can be impacted by accepting stress or intimidation because the brain becomes smaller and is unable to access higher-order thinking abilities.

Students' attention can be piqued by quality media. Teaching can benefit from the use of media. Media is a tool that teachers can use to help students grasp the lesson and help teachers explain it. In addition, it can support the teacher's creativity in the classroom.. (Arsyad, 2007) said, "Media is a medium to send information from sender to receiver, such as photos, radio, images, TV, and magazines." By this definition, both teachers and students can benefit from using media in the classroom. A variety of media, including audio, visual, and audio-visual materials, can be employed in the teaching process. When employing media, teachers should always keep the situation and conditions in mind. As a result, teachers need to be aware of their students' desires, feelings, and emotions. According to (Gagne in Arsyad, 2007:4) said "Media of learning is the tools of using to explain material in teaching".

So, this is one way that the students enjoy when they do the writing and can improve their writing ability. An example of media that can be used in writing is Indonesian folktales. Another approach to using them as learning material is through folktales, which have several benefits. Teacher from all across the world have utilized folktales to help their students develop a love of reading. A folktale is a customary narrative from a community that is passed down through the generations and is typically documented in written form. It can provide writing inspiration, and the majority of students are familiar with it. A folktale is a customary narrative story, such as a fable, fairy tale, or legend, that is typically told orally and anonymously. Because

folktales are easier to read and more entertaining than other textbooks, students are particularly interested in reading them in Junior High School.

This strategy facilitates learning for students because they require calmness and concentration when studying English, particularly when composing narrative writings. As a result, the students' writing skill will improve after using this technique. due to the strategy's emphasis on the teachers' and students' actions.

Based on the problem above, some previous research has found the same problem. The research, conducted by (Hasriati Nur, 2017), emphasized using folktales to improve students' writing skills. She found that folktales can improve students' writing abilities because the use of folktales could raise students' interests.

The second research was conducted by (Sri Sulastri, Moh. Nur Arifin, and As'ari, 2020) based on the explanation the researcher concludes that fairy tales has significant effect for students writing on narrative text. So, fairy tales can help to improve the writing performance for students and has good effect for writing achievement.

The next research was conducted by (Ramadani, 2023), and the researcher concluded that using folklore videos as media was higher than using PowerPoint as familiarity media. It means folklore videos were effective and more interested in improving students writing abilities in narrative text.

The teaching materials in this research differ from those in the previous research. Through the use of Indonesian folktales, narrative text was taught to students in this present research. Using Indonesian folktales as a teaching tool, the researcher attempted to determine how teaching narrative texts affected students' writing skill and enthusiasm in learning English. This present research concentrated on how students learned and how to write narrative texts in English.

A folktale may be utilized in the classroom as teaching material since Indonesian folktales include cultures that must be maintained. Students are supposed to develop an affinity for reading and an interest in the Indonesian culture as a result of their exposure to folktales (Sinamo et al., 2021). "A folktale is a story that has been passed down through the generations. Myths, legends, fairy tales, and fables represent types of folktales. They normally teach a moral lesson or rationalize world events or phenomena that could not otherwise be explained at the time of the tale's origin, such as how the world came to exist. An author can write a story in the style of a folktale by following its conventions" (Katherine, 2011).

In addition, according to (Collie and Slater in (Hismanoglu, 2005), A language teacher might incorporate language into the classroom for four basic reasons. These include human interaction, cultural enrichment, language enrichment, and authentic materials. Folktales, by their nature, provide diversity. Through comprehending folktales, students are not only enhancing their linguistic ability, but they also have the opportunity to discover valuable insights about their culture or other culture's values, beliefs, history, practices, and customs that have been celebrated within their community or other community (Mantra & Maba, 2018).

Therefore, the researcher used folktales to attract students' attention and liked writing lessons. Folktales are very useful for teaching languages because of their numerous unique qualities. They work well to reinforce new vocabulary and grammar because of their repeated repetitions. Originally told orally, folktales evolved into other forms of writing. Most of them are still fond of reading and listening to folktales. Thus, their knowledge of folktales can facilitate their learning more about narrative text. The students are supposed to improve their knowledge and skills in writing narratives after exploring the folktales given to them. It is imperative that students acquire proficient writing skills. They can write better by writing more, and one method to write better is to compose different kinds of English texts, one of which is narrative text. Folktales are very relatable to teaching narrative text because many folktales tell about legends, fables, fairytales, etc. so that they will facilitate the learning process.

## METHOD

According to (Elliot in Burns, 2010), action research is defined as the study of a social situation with the view of improving the quality of the action in it. Using a nonequivalent control group, the researcher used a quasi-experimental approach. It is used in situations where it is not feasible to divide people into groups at random. (Gay et al, 2006 :258). The researcher conducted research on the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 4 Baubau City, Southeast Sulawesi, in 2023. Two classes were chosen randomly to represent the experimental and control groups. The total sample was 54 students.

This research included two participant groups: the experimental group and the control group. An experimental group was given a treatment that involved teaching narrative text through the use of Indonesian folktales, the treatment was under investigation. While the control group was given a treatment by using conventional method. Throughout the treatment, the students were placed in heterogeneous groups according to the researcher's recommendations based on their pretest results. The researcher treated the students to writing narrative texts using Indonesian folktales after administering a pretest to ascertain their level of ability and prior knowledge in writing English texts.

After conducting the treatment and recording the activities during the treatment, the students' pretest score was collected as raw data, and the students' post-test score of the research as final data was analyzed to know the students progress and achievement in writing a narrative text after getting the constructive treatment by the researcher. The aim of this test was to find out the effectiveness of Indonesian folktales in improving students' writing skills, especially in teaching narrative text.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Findings

When the teaching and learning process takes place, students seem to enjoy the processes they go through more because writing is no longer difficult. Folktale media also helps students to create their imaginations so they can produce works that can be enjoyed visually. Before being given treatment, writing is something that students are not really interested in because instead of translating the language, students are made to feel lazy about just reading, but with folktales, students can first imagine the scene; they will make folktales so that students are more or less able to visualize the story. Apart from that, during the learning process, students are more creative in thinking and expressing words in writing.

### Scoring Classification of the Students' Pretest

To obtain a student's writing ability score, it can be done by assessing five components of writing, namely, content, vocabulary, language use, organization, and mechanics. The pretest scores can be seen as follows:

### Pretest scores of Experimental class and Control class

In the following table, it is shown that the data obtained from the pretest results regarding students' writing abilities in writing narrative texts using Indonesian folktales carried out by the experimental group and the control group can be seen as follows:

**Table 1. Rate percentage and frequency of the students score pretest in experimental class and Control**

| Classification | Range    | Class              |     | Pre-test      |     |
|----------------|----------|--------------------|-----|---------------|-----|
|                |          | Experimental Group |     | Control Group |     |
|                |          | Frequency          | %   | Frequency     | %   |
| Very Good      | 87 – 100 | 0                  | 0 % | 0             | 0 % |

|              |         |           |            |           |            |
|--------------|---------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|
| Good         | 74 – 86 | 0         | 0 %        | 2         | 7.14 %     |
| Fair         | 61 – 73 | 5         | 19.23 %    | 10        | 35.71 %    |
| Poor         | 47 – 60 | 12        | 46.16 %    | 9         | 32.15 %    |
| Very Poor    | 34 - 46 | 9         | 34.61 %    | 7         | 25.00 %    |
| <b>Total</b> |         | <b>26</b> | <b>100</b> | <b>28</b> | <b>100</b> |

Table 1. shows that before being given treatment, the pretest results of the experimental group were mostly in the poor classification, namely that 26 students showed that their writing skills were still poor, namely 12 students (46.16%) were in the poor classification, 9 students (34.61%) were in the very poor classification, only 5 students (19.23%) were in the fair classification, and no students were in the good or very good classification.

Meanwhile, in the control group, table 1 shows that most of the pretest results given were in the fair classification, where the pretest percentage of the control group consisting of 28 students, namely 10 students (35.71%) were in the fair classification, 9 students (32.15%) were in the poor classification, 7 students (25.00%) were in the very poor classification, and 2 students (7.14%) were in the good classification, and in this control group there were no students in the very good classification.

So from this table, it can be concluded that both the experimental group and the control group show that both students' writing abilities are dominant in the fair and poor classifications, which is based on percentage calculation results, which means that students' writing abilities are still considered low.

#### Posttest scores of Experimental class and Control class

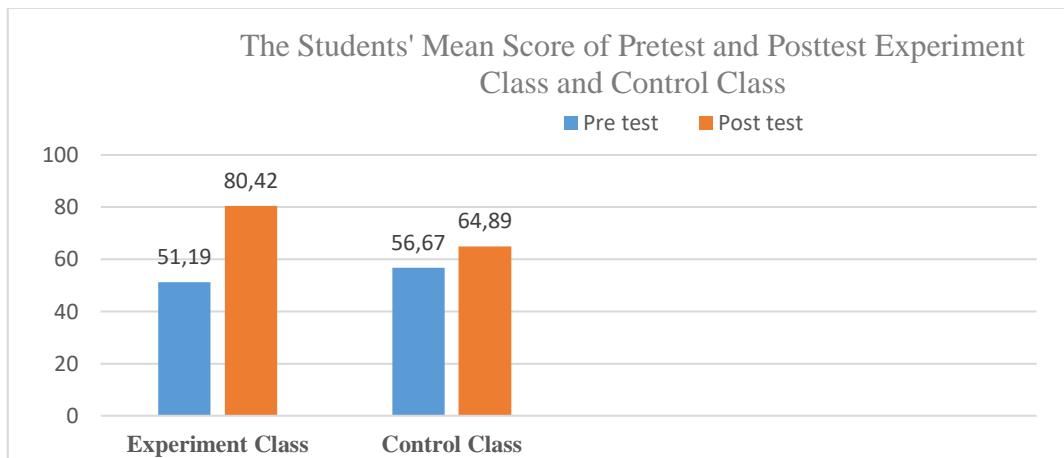
The posttest results regarding students' writing abilities in writing narrative texts using Indonesian folktales carried out by the experimental group and the control group can be seen as follows:

**Table 2. Frequency and Percentage of Students' Posttest of Experimental Group and Control Group**

| Classification | Range    | Post-test |            | Control Group |            |
|----------------|----------|-----------|------------|---------------|------------|
|                |          | Frequency | %          | Frequency     | %          |
| Very Good      | 87 – 100 | 10        | 38.47 %    | 0             | 0 %        |
| Good           | 74 – 86  | 9         | 34.61%     | 5             | 17.86 %    |
| Fair           | 61 – 73  | 5         | 19.23 %    | 16            | 57.14 %    |
| Poor           | 47 – 60  | 2         | 7.69 %     | 5             | 17.86 %    |
| Very Poor      | 34 - 46  | 0         | 0 %        | 2             | 7.14 %     |
| <b>Total</b>   |          | <b>26</b> | <b>100</b> | <b>28</b>     | <b>100</b> |

Table 2 shows that the majority of students in the experimental group after being given treatment, namely by teaching narrative texts using Indonesian folktales, showed a significant improvement in their writing skills so that their English achievement in writing increased. This can be seen from the percentage data obtained, namely that the experimental group was in the "**Very Good**" classification while the control group was in the "**Fair**" classification. The posttest percentage of the experimental group who were in the very good achievement category was 10 students (38.47%), 9 students (34.61%) in the good classification, 5 students (19.23%) in the fair classification, and only 2 students (7.69%) were classified as poor, and none of the students were classified as very poor. Meanwhile, in the control group, based on percentages, it shows that students' scores tend to be evenly distributed, namely good, fair, poor, and very poor. Only 5 students (17.86%) were in the good classification, 16 students (57.14%) were in the fair classification, 5 students (17.86%) were in the poor classification, and 2 students (7.14%) were in the very poor classification. and none of them are classified as very good.

**Students' improvement writing skill of Mean Scores of experimental group and control group.**



The description of data obtained through written tests in this section shows that the use of folktales can provide a significant increase in students' writing achievement. This is supported by the percentage results of students' pretest and posttest scores from the five writing components taught. At the first meeting, students were given a pretest in both classes, namely the experimental class and the control class, before the researchers conducted learning on treatment activities. From the results of the students' task and their pretest results, researchers were able to analyze and conclude that the five writing components obtained were that most of the students had low expression skills and even had difficulty expressing their ideas in starting and writing stories, in this case folktales. Apart from that, most students still have difficulty completing their writing assignments, especially when they are still confused about how to develop their topics, convey their ideas, and arrange sentences into a good paragraph.

#### **Discussion**

Another problem is that they still have a low understanding of what the components of writing are and how to write. After finding out the students' writing abilities from the results of the pretest given to them, the students received several treatments to write narrative texts using Indonesian folktales, and the researcher tried to improve the students' writing abilities in English. Based on the students' problems as stated from the results of their pretest, their writing ability in both classes, namely the experimental class and the control class, is still in the poor classification while the control class is still in the fair classification. The problem is that they have difficulty mastering vocabulary, useful language, and writing mechanisms. They also still use the Indonesian style when writing in English.

After the pre-test, the researcher evaluates the students writing as a result of the test. The score of the pretest is low, especially in the grammar, organization, vocabulary, and mechanics of writing. In the experimental class, the researcher uses Indonesian folktales to write narrative text as the treatment. After the treatment was considered sufficient, the researcher conducted a post-test on both the experimental and control classes. After the researcher gave treatment to the experimental class using Indonesian folktales, the score of the students significantly improved, while the post-test score of the control class was not significantly improved.

The researcher explained the material to the students, then reviewed narrative topics such as social function, generic structure, kinds of narrative text, etc. The researcher focused more on the parts of the narrative text. During the learning process, students are provided with writing exercises with the topics they are going to write about. When students face difficulties understanding the topic, they are asked to read

Indonesian folktales that relate to the topic. In addition, students are also provided Indonesian folktales that contain the generic structures of the narrative text. Students need to keep going with their writing exercises.

During the teaching and learning process of writing Indonesian folktales, most of the students were able to create good narrative texts by selecting interesting stories that they knew from the famous Indonesian folktales. The use of Indonesian folktales in learning English can not only improve the students' mastery of vocabulary but can also train the students' writing skills. Using Indonesian folktales in learning English can also attract students' attention and make them more active in participating in the learning process, especially in English. Writing narrative texts by using Indonesian folktales makes students more relaxed, easy, and exciting. They can do all their activities together and share information with each other. This is supported by several theories, as stated by (Evasanti, 2009), that the implementation of folktales in vocabulary mastery has been effective and has succeeded in increasing students' vocabulary mastery by preparing material in folktales, and teaching through folktales brings an increase in students' vocabulary mastery.

This research proved that, as stated by (Giawa, 2022) in her classroom action research, the result showed that the use of fairy tale stories improves the student's achievement in writing narrative text; in other words, there is no significant improvement in the students' achievement in writing narrative text. It is in line with (Nurhayati, 2007), who informs us that the use of folktales is able to increase student interest.

In addition, (Mantra, 2017) found that the use of folktale-based learning activities in language teaching made the students more active and motivated to participate in the teaching and learning process because they were familiar with the materials.

From the explanation above, the researcher can conclude that the use of Indonesian folktales can improve students' writing skills, especially students at SMPN 4 Baubau City, and of course, this research also supports the findings of previous studies, which explained that using Indonesian folktales in English learning activities, especially in teaching writing, is one of the alternatives that teachers can choose to help attract the students' attention in the process of teaching and learning activities. So it can be stated that students' writing abilities, which were previously poor, have improved to become good, as evidenced by the scores obtained.

In particular, teaching writing skills was one area where this research was expected to contribute to improving teaching and learning strategies. In order to improve students' writing skills, they are also expected to simultaneously hone their talents and expand their ideas and imagination. As a learning resource, Indonesian folktales are recommended for students to enhance their writing skills, as the materials were created with their learning preferences in mind.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings and discussion, the use of Indonesian folktales in teaching narrative texts has a significant influence on improving students' writing skills in the eighth grade at SMPN 4 Baubau City. There was a significant difference between the scores of the experimental class and the control class that occurred after being given treatment. So the researcher could conclude that using Indonesian folktales in learning English could increase students' interest and abilities, especially in improving students' writing skills, because it could attract students' attention and make students feel relaxed, easy, and enjoyable when doing writing assignments. Students can also do all their activities together and share information with each other. Besides that, this is an alternative method for teachers to successfully improve students' writing skills because developing teaching materials requires teachers to be innovative and creative.

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