

Writing Short Stories Based on Project-Based Learning as A Work of Learning in the Chinese Writing IV Course

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Abstract

This research examines the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in short story writing as a learning outcome of the Chinese Writing IV course at Jakarta State University. The study is motivated by the growing importance of Mandarin proficiency in the era of globalization, as well as the challenges faced by students in mastering contextual vocabulary and developing creativity in written expression. Short story writing is considered a suitable medium for integrating linguistic competence and creative skills. The purpose of this research is to apply the PjBL approach to Chinese writing instruction in order to produce contextual and meaningful short stories that reflect students' achievement of course learning outcomes. Previous studies on Chinese writing skills have employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches, including research that emphasizes the role of reading activities in improving writing performance. Increased exposure to Chinese texts has been shown to enhance students' topical knowledge, vocabulary mastery, and understanding of effective writing strategies, thereby positively influencing their writing skills. Based on these considerations, this study adopts an approach that aligns with the objectives of short story writing through PjBL. The results of the research are expected to contribute to the development of students' creativity in Mandarin, encourage the production of authentic written works in the form of short stories, and enrich students' learning experiences through relevant and contextual projects. Ultimately, this short story writing project is anticipated to demonstrate the effectiveness of Project-Based Learning as an instructional model in Mandarin language education, fostering creative, active, and productive learners.

Introduction

In today's era of globalization, Chinese language proficiency is becoming increasingly important. Chinese is not only used as a means of communication but also serves as a key to unlocking opportunities in various fields, including business, education, and diplomacy. Students of the Chinese Language Education Study Program at Jakarta State University are therefore required to master relevant and contextual vocabulary, both orally and in writing. One of the expected learning outcomes in writing courses is the production of written works, such as short stories, which reflect students' linguistic competence and creative abilities.

The application of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in short story writing lessons has shown positive results in various educational contexts. This learning method emphasizes students' active involvement through the completion of real-life projects, enabling them to engage directly with the learning process. Through PjBL, students not only improve their writing skills but also develop creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, and a deeper understanding of the learning material.

In the context of Chinese language learning, particularly in writing courses, the

implementation of PjBL can be an effective instructional strategy. Although specific studies focusing on the application of PjBL in Chinese short story writing are still limited, several related studies in foreign language education indicate that project-based methods can significantly enhance students' writing abilities. These findings suggest that PjBL has the potential to bridge linguistic mastery and creative expression in foreign language learning.

Research on the development of writing skills in foreign language learning, especially Chinese, has grown significantly over the past two decades. Various pedagogical approaches have been implemented, ranging from conventional text-based methods to more innovative models such as Project-Based Learning. Writing short stories in Chinese has been shown to be an effective way to develop holistic language skills, including grammar, vocabulary, and creative thinking. Narrative writing provides students with space for linguistic and cultural expression and increases their motivation to learn. However, many existing studies still emphasize structural exercises or text-based learning approaches, without positioning projects as the core foundation of the learning process.

Project-Based Learning itself has been widely recognized as a learner-centered approach that encourages students to solve real-world problems and produce concrete products as learning outcomes. In foreign language learning, PjBL has been applied with positive impacts, particularly on speaking and reading skills. Nevertheless, its application in writing skills, especially creative writing such as short stories, remains relatively limited, particularly in the context of Chinese language learning in Indonesian higher education.

To date, there has been little research that specifically examines the use of the PjBL approach in the Chinese Writing IV course, which focuses on Chinese short story writing. This gap highlights the need for further exploration of instructional methods that not only enhance students' linguistic competence but also foster creativity, independence, and reflective learning. Consequently, this research seeks to integrate Project-Based Learning into the Chinese Writing IV course as a means of producing authentic written works in the form of Chinese short stories. Through this approach, students are expected to engage in a creative, collaborative, and reflective learning process that culminates in meaningful final products. This study is also expected to contribute to the development of innovative learning models in Chinese language education and to provide empirical references for the implementation of project-based curricula in foreign language learning.

This research focuses specifically on the Chinese Writing IV course, with the assumption that students already possess sufficient vocabulary and mastery of Chinese grammar to write short stories. The study aims to develop effective steps for writing short stories based on the PjBL approach, to identify obstacles encountered during the writing process and strategies used to overcome them, and to measure the effectiveness of Project-Based Learning in improving students' ability to write Chinese short stories.

Method

This study aims to examine the application of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in short story writing within Chinese language writing courses. The research employs Classroom Action Research (CAR) as the methodological approach, as it enables researchers to systematically implement the PjBL model and evaluate its impact on students' Chinese short story writing skills in a real classroom setting.

The implementation of Classroom Action Research begins with the planning stage, in which the research objectives are formulated, particularly the improvement of students' ability to write Chinese short stories through the application of Project-Based Learning. At this stage, project-based learning scenarios centered on short story writing are designed, and evaluation instruments are prepared to assess both the writing process and

the final products produced by the students.

The next stage is the action phase, during which the designed learning scenarios are implemented in a Chinese writing class. Students are actively involved in the learning process by working individually or in groups to develop a short story as their main project. Through this process, students apply their linguistic knowledge, creativity, and collaborative skills to produce a complete and meaningful written work.

During the observation stage, the learning process is closely monitored, focusing on student participation, interaction, and engagement throughout the short story writing project. In addition, obstacles encountered by students during the writing process, as well as the strategies they employ to overcome these challenges, are carefully recorded as research data.

The final stage is reflection, in which the collected data are analyzed to evaluate the effectiveness of the PjBL implementation in improving students' short story writing skills. Based on this analysis, areas requiring improvement are identified, and further actions are planned for subsequent research cycles. Overall, the integration of Classroom Action Research with the Project-Based Learning approach provides an effective methodological framework for enhancing Chinese short story writing skills in Chinese language writing courses.

Results and Discussion

The finding describes research results that are in accordance with research objectives as follows

1. Developing Effective Steps for Writing Short Stories Based on Project-Based Learning (PjBL)

The steps deemed most effective included: Understanding short story concepts (theme, plot, characters, and Chinese style), Planning writing projects through group discussions and theme determination, Preparing initial drafts of short stories with lecturer guidance, Revision and feedback among students (peer review), Publishing work through presentations and digital portfolios, Implementing these steps increased student engagement and creative thinking skills in writing Chinese short stories.

2. Identifying obstacles and strategies to overcome them

During the learning process, several major obstacles were identified, namely: Limited Mandarin vocabulary and sentence structure, Difficulty expressing ideas narratively, Technical obstacles in project collaboration, such as assignment and time allocation, Lack of student confidence in writing and presenting work.

To overcome these obstacles, the strategies used included: Providing thematic vocabulary and narrative sentence pattern guide sheets, Using digital media (Google Docs and Mandarin writing tool apps) for collaboration, Gradual guidance by lecturers during each phase of the project, Group reflection and feedback sessions to strengthen student understanding and confidence.

3. Measuring the effectiveness of project-based short story writing

Evaluation results using assessment rubrics and student questionnaires indicate that the application of project-based short story writing in Mandarin Chinese effectively improves students' writing skills, creativity, and learning motivation.

The average writing skill increased compared to conventional methods. The majority of students stated that the project-based approach made them more active, engaged, and able to write stories that were more expressive and consistent with Chinese writing rules.

The results of this study are effective, efficient, and relevant contextual short stories to

support the preparation for the Chinese language competency exam for students in the Chinese language education study program at UNJ. Furthermore, it is hoped that this will improve students' writing skills, particularly in vocabulary mastery and its application in written work. Positive feedback from students is also highly anticipated in this study.

Targeted achievement indicators include validation of the short story content by Chinese language experts. In this case, the researchers asked native-speaking lecturers to serve on the validation team. Targeted achievement indicators include the content of the short story by linguists and educators, the level of student satisfaction with the produced short story, and improvements in students' Chinese language writing competency exam results after it has been translated into written form.

The team members responsible for this research consisted of the Chief Researcher, who was responsible for the overall research on short story writing; the Research Team Members who conducted analysis, material identification, and short story writing trials; the Chinese language expert who provided validation and input on the short story draft; and the Supervisor who provided direction and supervision throughout the research process. This research is expected to make a significant contribution in improving students' Chinese language skills and preparing them to face competency tests better.

Conclusions

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the application of the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) method in the Chinese Writing IV course has a positive impact on students' short story writing skills in Mandarin. Through this approach, students are not only actively involved in the learning process, but are also able to produce real works in the form of short stories that are original, creative, and in accordance with Mandarin language rules, including improved writing skills seen from the more coherent structure of the short story, the use of more varied vocabulary, and improved quality of Mandarin grammar. The PjBL method encourages meaningful learning, because students are directly involved in the process of planning, implementing, and evaluating the short story writing project. Chinese cultural elements can be well integrated into the story, demonstrating students' understanding of the social and cultural context in the target language. Students' collaborative skills and independence develop through group discussions, work revisions, and presentations of final results. However, linguistic challenges are still found, especially in complex and idiomatic sentence structures, which require further guidance.

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