

Implementation of Story-Based Learning in Narrative Writing: A Case Study at SMPN 1 Wonotirto

Jeni Kristina^{1*}, Hesty Puspita Sari², Nita Sutanti³, Supriyono⁴

Universitas Islam Balitar

Keywords:

Narrative writing, qualitative study, student response, story-based learning.

***Correspondence Address:**

jenikristina1394@gmail.com

Abstract: Narrative writing remains a challenge for many junior high school students, particularly in generating ideas, structuring stories, and selecting appropriate vocabulary. This study investigated the use of Story-Based Learning (SBL) as an instructional strategy to enhance narrative writing skills and to explore students' responses toward their application. Employing a qualitative case study design, the research was conducted at SMPN 1 Wonotirto with one English teacher and 2 eighth-grade students. Data was collected through classroom observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation, and analyzed using Miles and Huberman's model of qualitative analysis. The results showed that SBL was implemented through contextual storytelling, audiovisual media, scaffolding, and teacher feedback. Students responded positively, demonstrating clearer understanding of narrative structures, increased confidence, creativity, and motivation. Despite difficulties in vocabulary and sentence construction, SBL created an interactive learning atmosphere that supported students' writing development. In conclusion, SBL is an effective approach to improving narrative writing and is recommended for integration into English language instruction at the junior high school level.

INTRODUCTION

The ability to write narrative texts is one of the essential competencies in English language learning at the junior high school level. However, many students still experience difficulties in developing story ideas, incorporating deeper narrative elements, and organizing their stories coherently. Interviews at SMPN 1 Wonotirto revealed that most students were confused about how to start their writing, tended to produce shallow stories, and had not yet understood the importance of narrative elements such as conflict, characterization, and theme. Previous research also supports this condition. For instance, Widyahening and Rahayu (2021) reported an improvement in students' narrative writing skills, from an average pre-test score of 35.5% to a post-test score of 74.9%. Nevertheless, students continued to face challenges in selecting appropriate vocabulary and constructing communicative

sentences. This indicates that narrative writing remains a significant challenge for junior high school students.

Several studies have explored various approaches to improving narrative writing skills. McQuiggan et al. (2008) found that the use of Story-Based Learning (SBL) increased students' motivation, although it did not always impact learning outcomes. In addition, Asi and Fauzi (2023) showed that SBL could enhance students' understanding of the social function, text structure, and linguistic features of illustrated narrative texts. Another study by Amelia and Nurmaily (2021) also emphasized that storytelling-based training was effective in enriching students' vocabulary.

Although previous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of SBL, most of them focused on different contexts, such as science learning (McQuiggan et al., 2008) or text structure (Asi & Fauzi, 2023). This study is different in that it employs a case study design to describe the implementation of SBL directly in junior high school English classrooms and emphasizes students' responses to the approach. Thus, this research provides a new contribution by showing how SBL not only enhances students' motivation but also improves the quality of their narrative writing at the junior high school level.

The purpose of this study is to describe the implementation of Story-Based Learning (SBL) in improving the narrative writing skills of eighth-grade students at SMPN 1 Wonotirto, as well as to explore students' responses to this method. Practically, this research is expected to contribute to the development of more innovative and contextual writing instruction strategies. SBL not only strengthens students' understanding of narrative structure but also enhances their creativity, motivation, and self-confidence in writing. For teachers, the findings may serve as a reference for designing more engaging and effective writing lessons, while for future researchers, this study opens opportunities to further explore the application of SBL in other language skills.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study applied a qualitative case study design to examine the implementation of Story-Based Learning (SBL) in enhancing narrative writing skills. The research was conducted at SMPN 1 Wonotirto, involving one English teacher and two eighth-grade students as key participants, selected purposively to provide relevant insights.

Data was collected using semi-structured interviews, non-participatory classroom observations, and documentation. Interviews explored the teacher's strategies, challenges, and students' responses to SBL, while observations focused on classroom interaction, instructional practices, and student engagement during writing activities. Documentation, including lesson plans, students' writing samples, teacher's notes, and story materials, served to complement and validate the findings.

The data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's (1994) framework, consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Coding was also conducted in three stages—open, axial, and selective coding—to identify emerging themes and ensure the findings addressed the research focus. Triangulation was applied to strengthen the validity and credibility of the results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings revealed that the English teacher at SMPN 1 Wonotirto implemented Story-Based Learning through structured and layered strategies. The teacher began by stimulating students' prior knowledge using short stories, picture series, or audiovisual media. These activities encouraged students to generate ideas and prepare cognitively before writing. This scaffolding technique aligns with Nunan's (1989) framework of writing, which emphasizes pre-writing activities as essential to activate background knowledge and facilitate the drafting process.

Students were then guided to complete incomplete stories, analyze narrative elements, and construct their own narratives based on videos. The use of audiovisual media was particularly effective in stimulating students' imagination and enriching vocabulary. This approach is consistent with Renkl (2014), who

argues that Story-Based Learning bridges abstract concepts with real-life experiences, thus enhancing comprehension and emotional engagement. By integrating SBL, students not only improved their understanding of narrative structure (orientation, complication, resolution) but also experienced a more engaging and meaningful learning process.

Students' responses to the implementation of SBL were predominantly positive, both cognitive and effective. Cognitively, students reported that SBL helped them better understand narrative structures and expand vocabulary. Affectively, they felt more enthusiastic, confident, and motivated in the writing process. One student expressed that writing became easier when they could recall or adapt stories provided in class. This resonates with Anderson's (2010) taxonomy of learning, in which students moved beyond remembering to apply and creating their own narratives.

Moreover, the teacher observed that students were more engaged and expressive during SBL-based activities. They perceived writing as enjoyable and less formal, which encouraged greater creativity. These findings echo Lee's (2022) study, which highlights that SBL fosters meaningful narrative competence through structured storytelling practices. Thus, students' positive responses confirm that SBL is not only an effective instructional strategy but also a motivational tool that nurtures creativity and independence in writing.

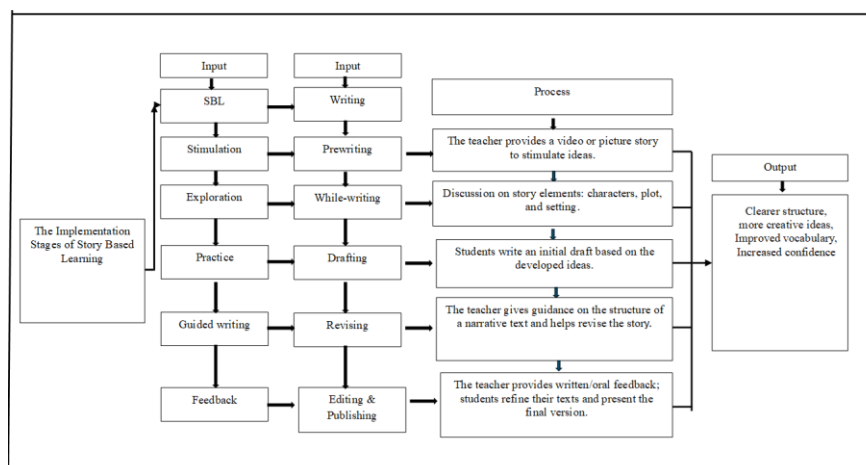


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual model emerging from this study illustrates the integration of SBL stages with Nunan's (1989) framework of writing. The process begins with stimulation or prewriting, where students are exposed to stories, images, or videos as sources of ideas. This is followed by exploration and while-writing, during which students discuss story elements and begin drafting. The drafting and guided writing stage involves teacher scaffolding, ensuring students construct coherent plots and characters. Next, in the revising and feedback stage, the teacher provides constructive feedback, enabling students to improve grammar, vocabulary, and narrative structure. Finally, in the editing and publishing stage, students produce their final texts with improved clarity, creativity, and confidence.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study concludes that Story-Based Learning (SBL) is effectively implemented in enhancing students' narrative writing skills. The teacher systematically applied SBL through stages such as story presentation, plot and character discussion, vocabulary exploration, and independent writing, which helped students develop coherence, creativity, and linguistic accuracy in their texts. Students responded positively, reporting higher motivation, clearer organization, and reduced writing anxiety, showing that SBL provides both cognitive and affective support in the writing process. Overall, the findings confirm that SBL is a relevant and beneficial strategy for teaching narrative writing at the junior high school level, as it integrates cognitive, linguistic, and affective aspects of learning.

Considering these findings, teachers are recommended to continue applying and developing SBL in writing classes by using varied media and providing constructive feedback to sustain students' creativity and confidence. Educational institutions should support SBL integration through teacher training and adequate facilities. Future researchers may further explore SBL in other genres of writing, different language skills, or at various educational levels to broaden its applicability and impact.

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