

Research Article

Lights, Camera, Write! Exploring the Power of Reels in Project-based Learning for Improving Story Writing Skills

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Abstract.

Writing skills are a fundamental competency for elementary school students, as they support the development of literacy and critical thinking abilities. This study aims to examine the effect of a project-based learning model supported by video reels media on improving the narrative writing skills of fourth-grade students. The research method employed is a pre-experimental design with pre- and post-intervention assessments. The subjects of this study were 19 fourth-grade students from an elementary school in Bandung Regency. The instrument used was a narrative writing rubric, which assessed aspects such as story structure, creativity, language use, and cohesion between story sections. The data were analyzed quantitatively using both descriptive and inferential statistics, with hypothesis testing to examine differences. The results show a significant improvement across all assessed aspects, with the highest gains observed in creativity and story structure. This study implies that the use of PBL supported by video reels media is effective in enhancing students' writing skills, particularly in creativity and story organization, and contributes to the development of more engaging and creative writing teaching methods in elementary schools.

Keywords: project based-learning, reels, story writing

1. INTRODUCTION

Writing skills are one of the essential competencies in the context of modern life (1). In a world that increasingly emphasizes communication abilities, writing serves not only as a means to express ideas (2), but also as a tool for critical thinking, problem-solving, and active participation in social discourse (3). Writing allows individuals to organize their thoughts, convey information clearly, and document their understanding. In the context of elementary education, writing skills serve as a crucial foundation for the development of students' literacy, which will support their abilities across various subjects (4). One form of writing skill that elementary school students need to master is narrative writing, which functions not only as a language exercise but also as a means to develop creativity and students' imaginative abilities.

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Writing instruction in elementary schools, particularly in narrative writing, must create an environment that encourages students to express themselves and develop their ideas (5,6). Ideally, narrative writing instruction should be communicative, engaging, and based on students' experiences. Additionally, this instruction should involve a creative process that allows students not only to understand the structure of narrative texts but also to engage in the development of ideas, characters, and storylines that are relevant to their world. Therefore, an appropriate and enjoyable approach to writing instruction is key to helping students overcome challenges in writing and enhance the quality of their writing skills.

To achieve effective learning, the application of appropriate teaching strategies is crucial (2,5,7). One model that has proven effective in fostering creativity and understanding is Project-Based Learning (PBL). This model emphasizes project-based learning that involves students in real-world activities, enabling them to apply knowledge in relevant contexts and solve problems directly (8). In its implementation, PBL provides students with opportunities to collaborate, plan, and produce work, as well as develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills (9). Project-based learning encourages students to view projects not as separate tasks but as activities connected to their everyday lives (10).

In addition to the right teaching model, educational media also plays a significant role in enhancing students' abilities (11,12). The integration of media into the learning process creates meaningful experiences for students while making abstract concepts more tangible (13). One media form that has become increasingly popular and relevant in the digital age is multimedia content uploaded on social media platforms (14). With its ability to combine visual, audio, and textual elements in brief durations, multimedia content can serve as an engaging and effective tool to stimulate students' imagination (15). The use of multimedia content in language learning can enrich experiences and meet the contemporary need for diverse literacy practices that extend beyond traditional oral and written forms (16). In project-based learning, multimedia content can also be used to document the process of creation or as a tool to present students' work in an engaging manner.

Previous studies have shown that the use of project-based learning in elementary schools can enhance argumentative writing skills (17), problem-solving abilities (18), 4C skills (19), literacy (20,21), creativity (22), and critical thinking (23). Similarly, research on the use of media indicates that digital media (6), film trailers (2), digital tools (24), YouTube media (25), social media videos (26), Android-based videos (27), explanatory videos

((11,28), digital encyclopedias (29), and animated videos (13) can help students develop their skills more effectively. Moreover, project-based learning supported by media, such as videos, has also been shown to be more effective in improving students' collaborative and communication skills (19). These studies provide evidence that the implementation of innovative approaches can be a solution to improving the quality of education in elementary schools.

This study offers novelty by combining the project-based learning model with the use of video reels to improve elementary students' narrative writing skills. While videos have been frequently used in various forms of instruction, the specific use of video reels in the context of project-based learning for narrative writing in elementary students has rarely been explored. This study aims to fill this gap by investigating video reels as an effective trigger in the narrative writing learning process, while also providing a positive impact on the enhancement of students' writing skills. The results of this study are expected to provide recommendations for elementary school educators on creative ways to integrate digital technology to improve students' writing skills.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study aims to examine the impact of a project-based learning model supported by video reels on the improvement of elementary school students' narrative writing skills. Therefore, the research method used in this study is a pre-experimental design with a one-group pretest-posttest (30), where the researcher measures students' writing skills before and after the implementation of the learning model. The subjects of this study are 19 students from a fourth-grade class at an elementary school in Bandung Regency. The subjects were selected using convenience sampling (31). The instrument used to assess students' writing skills is a narrative writing rubric developed by the researcher based on criteria for writing stories, which include story structure, creativity, language use, and cohesion between parts of the story. The instrument has undergone expert validation, including assessments by experts in language, pedagogy, and instructional models. Data obtained through this rubric assessment are then analyzed quantitatively to determine whether there is a significant difference in students' narrative writing skills before and after the application of the project-based learning model supported by video reels. This quantitative data analysis will provide insights into the effectiveness of the method applied in improving students' writing skills.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Writing is one of the productive skills required by students, in addition to receptive skills (2). Writing skills involve a process that also engages thinking, particularly when organizing ideas or thoughts into a cohesive whole (32). Based on the data analysis obtained, the following are the results of the research data analysis.

TABLE 1: Analysis of Narrative Writing Skills.

	N	Normality	Homogeneity	Wilcx. Test	n-gain
Pretest	19	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.73
Posttest	19	0.000	0.000		

The research results presented in Table 1 reveal a significant improvement in students’ writing skills before and after the intervention, with a high n-gain score. This improvement indicates that the implementation of the project-based learning model, supported by video reels, has a substantial positive impact on students’ narrative writing abilities. These findings strengthen other evidence suggesting that students’ writing skills improve through the application of project-based learning models (17). This is due to the more active learning process that directly involves students in the creation of work. In this approach, students are not merely provided with theory on how to write, but are also engaged in creative activities that encourage them to develop their own story ideas, plan the plot, and express their thoughts in more engaging and relevant ways. Thus, teaching strategies play a crucial role in determining writing abilities (2,5,7).

The use of video reels as an auxiliary media in the learning process serves as a highly effective trigger to enhance students’ imagination and creativity. This confirms that the integration of media into learning enhances various student abilities (13). Writing involves transferring or expressing ideas, which requires engaging learning media (2). Video reels, which combine visuals, audio, and text in a short and engaging format, help students gain a clearer and more inspirational understanding of the story they are going to write. By viewing videos that focus on specific themes or topics, students can obtain visual stimulation that enriches their understanding (11,13,15,26–28) of story elements such as characters, setting, and conflict. This makes the writing process more enjoyable, thus boosting students’ motivation and interest in producing written work.

Moreover, project-based learning that integrates video reels encourages students to work collaboratively and actively engage in discussions about the stories they create. Collaborative writing is an example of a shared knowledge space where students

work together as a learning community to share knowledge and produce written content (24). This activity helps them provide feedback to one another and exchange ideas (9,10,18,19,21,33), which undoubtedly enriches the quality of their writing (17). This approach also gives students the opportunity to experience the entire writing process, from planning to completing the work, helping them understand the importance of each stage in creating a good narrative text. Overall, the combination of the project-based learning model and video reels in narrative writing instruction has proven effective in improving students' writing skills, as evidenced by the significant improvement observed in this study.

The following is an analysis based on the assessment aspects of narrative writing conducted before and after the intervention, using a writing rubric that includes four main aspects: story structure, creativity, language use, and cohesion between story parts. The results are presented in the table below.

TABLE 2: Analysis of Aspects of Narrative Writing Skills.

Aspect	Average		
	Pretest	Posttest	n-gain
Story structure	2.5	4.0	0.75
Creativity	2.3	4.2	0.80
Grammar	2.6	3.8	0.60
Coherence and cohesion	2.4	3.6	0.50

From Table 2, it can be seen that all aspects of the assessment showed significant improvement, with the highest n-gain scores observed in the creativity and story structure aspects. This indicates that these two aspects received better attention during the learning process. The highest improvement in creativity was driven by the stimulation provided by engaging story topics. This finding is supported by the argument that topics that are age-appropriate make students enjoy writing activities (7). The second factor contributing to this improvement is the use of video reels, which sparked students' imaginations to produce more original and engaging stories. By watching videos focused on story elements, such as characters and settings, students were able to more easily develop their creative ideas (11,13,15,26–28). Additionally, the project-based learning model, which allowed students to plan and create their own stories, also played a role in encouraging freer and more diverse creativity exploration (9,10,18,19,21,33).

In the aspect of story structure, although there was significant improvement, there were still some challenges for students in arranging the story in a logical and well-organized sequence. Story structure includes elements such as character introduction, setting, conflict, and resolution, which can be difficult for elementary school students to apply perfectly. Learning to be a writer is akin to becoming an expert in other complex cognitive domains (34). However, with project-based learning that involves initial planning, students became more accustomed to the steps needed to write a structured story. This is reflected in the improvement of the average scores from the pre-test to the post-test, although there is still room for improvement in creating a more coherent story.

Language use, while showing improvement, remained a relatively lower aspect compared to others. Language use refers to the correct choice of words, effective sentence structure, and a proper understanding of grammar. This difficulty may be attributed to the limited vocabulary and grammar skills of fourth-grade students, who are still in the process of developing these skills. Language acquisition requires complex cognitive skills (4). This is because text production places significant demands on working memory, which handles various tasks, including grammar (34). While video reels provide examples of good language usage in the context of storytelling, students may not yet fully be able to replicate or apply this in their writing. This requires more time and practice to reach a higher level of proficiency in using language effectively in narrative writing.

The final aspect, coherence and cohesion, showed a lower improvement, indicating that while students were able to write more creative and structured stories, they still faced challenges in maintaining consistency and smooth transitions between story sections. This finding is supported by evidence that only 54% of elementary school students are able to write texts that meet these criteria (1). Organizing words into sentences, then paragraphs, and making the writing coherent and cohesive is not an easy task (2). This involves the use of conjunctions, clear references, and smooth transitions between events in the story. This is an aspect that requires a deeper understanding of how to organize ideas logically and create clear connections between each part of the story. Although there was improvement, the greatest challenge lies in students' ability to link the sections of their stories in a more integrated and naturally flowing way. Therefore, more focus is needed on exercises that strengthen coherence and cohesion in texts.

4. CONCLUSION

The study concluded that the project-based learning model, supported by video reels, significantly improved fourth-grade students' narrative writing skills. All assessed aspects—story structure, creativity, language use, and cohesion—showed notable improvement, with creativity and story structure showing the highest gains. Video reels proved effective in stimulating imagination, increasing motivation, and aiding in more structured, creative writing. This research contributes to the development of innovative writing instruction methods for elementary classrooms.

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