



Integrating Folktales Teaching in Improving Students' Writing Skills

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Abstract

This paper aims to explore the role of folktales in enhancing students' writing skills in English learning classrooms. It is expected to be used as a teacher guide in teaching and learning by teaching students in improving creative writing skills in Papua New Guinea primary educations where students lack good English writing skills. This literature analysis shows that by integrating of folktales students can improve their writing skills. In addition, students will develop critical thinking skills. The research method involved collection of previous studies of folktales and folklores studies done by researchers and the conclusions they suggested after their primary and secondary researches. I analysed 14 previous studies in a able to look for patterns and synthesises on it. The analysis is made by looking at reoccurring benefits that was discussed in the studies. This article supports the integration of utilizing fairy tales and fables, that students are familiar with, Teachers can assist students in connecting with the material and gaining a deeper understanding of it. Careful planning is needed to execute this approach. This tool designed to improve students' creative-writing skills.

Keyword: Creative writing, critical thinking, improve English writings

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Introduction

The important skills in learning a language is to target the four competencies of speaking, reading, listening, and writing. Compared to the other skills, writing skill is a fundamental competency that students must acquire. Proficiency in writing is a complex integrated skill, Deane.P.et.al. (2008). Hence, when writing is mastered all other competencies become easy. To improve writing skills folktales has been proved by many authors as a tool in improving writing practice in language learning, such as integrating folktales in the teaching of German language, Fabusuyi, (2014). Fabusuyi defines folktales as rich oral histories grounded in cultural tradition and life experiences that are passed on from generations. Writing practice using folklore boosts students' creative writing skills.

Writing skills has many benefits for students' success. It serves not just as a medium of communication but also as an instrument for articulating ideas, thoughts, and creativity. The power of writing reveals the multifaceted ways in which writing

influences human communication and cognition, Sutopo, A. (2023). However, the current situation shows that students' writing abilities often fall short of their academic abilities. These results from other causes, such as insufficient motivation, restricted access to stimulating reading materials, and less creative pedagogical approaches. In addition, children who come from poor family backgrounds or low-income homes have limited access to reading books, Chall, Jacob & Baldwin, (1991). These habits continue in high school, Harris, 1961).

Writing practices should ideally employ methods that spark students' performances. Theoretical research indicates that including folktales may enhance students' writing abilities. Writing is a highly goal-oriented intellectual performance, Fowler & Hayles (1977). Folktales, possess universal allure, imbued with cultural values, and provide a straightforward yet profound narrative framework, serving as a wellspring of inspiration for students in articulating their thoughts in writing. **Folktales**, practices, myths, fables and deeper states of consciousness **imbued** with sacred experience, Craig, (2024).

Theoretical Analysis

Constructivist theory posits that effective learning integrates students' experiences with authentic surroundings. In constructivism or cognitive psychology, knowledge is assimilated through learning, whereas social constructivism characterizes learning as collaborative group activities involving individuals of varying abilities who engage in sharing, exchanging, and participating to assist one another, particularly peers, in comprehending the acquired knowledge, Yunus, Thambirajah, et.al. (2019).

Folktales, as components of local cultural heritage, offer pertinent context for students. This hypothesis is corroborated by the narrative-based learning method, which underscores the significance of employing tales as a pedagogical medium to cultivate critical, analytical, and creative thinking abilities among students. In order to enhance this skill, students are recommended to look from the lens of creativity because creativity leads to imagination and this trait is innate in nature, Yunus, Thambirajah et.al.(2019).

Analysis of Issues and Gaps

While numerous studies have examined the advantages of folktales in education, many emphasize cultural comprehension or the enhancement of verbal skills. Folktales involve fables, fairy tales, legends, myths and tall tales passed on through generations. These narratives serve as a means for individuals to represent and comprehend past experiences, organize and assess them in the present, and strategize for future occurrences, Schick & Melzi, (2010).

Research regarding the efficacy of folktales in enhancing students' writing abilities remains scarce, particularly within the educational framework of Papua New Guinea. This gap represents a significant area for further investigation to comprehend how folktales might properly incorporate into the writing education process.

State of the Art

This research offers novelty by linking folktales as a learning medium Safitri,(2023) Utilization of folktales as reading materials for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students. Scholichah & Purbani,(2018) fostering language skills development through fairy tales, with an interactive and creative approach to enhance students' writing skills. Unlike previous research that focused more on the aspects of oral narration, oral narrative skills for reading development, Neblett, Elizabet et.al.(2011); Uccelli &Paez (2007). This study examines how the structure and elements of folktales can be utilized to help students understand writing techniques, such as building a plot, developing characters, and creating an engaging story ending, Armstrong,Keddle & Preternature,(2022).

The purpose of this study's research aims for thorough investigation of how folktales might improve students' writing abilities. Analyzing the degree to which using folktales can improve students' writing motivation is the first goal. This goal stems from the knowledge that writing is a difficult and complex skill for students, and that their readiness to practice and advance their writing skills influenced greatly by their motivation (Fower & Hayles, 1977).

The second goal is to determine which aspects of folktales are best suited for use in writing education. This entails studying the relevance and applicability of folktales' many elements, including story structure, character development, and moral lessons, in order to improve students' comprehension and proficiency of writing approaches (Armstrong, Keddle & Preternature, 2022). The study's identification of the most influential folktale components can give teachers precise instructions on how carefully include these components in their writing curricula.

The third goal is to create a thorough learning approach based on folktales that will help students become better writers. This purpose aims to develop a pedagogical framework that successfully incorporates folktales into the writing education process, building on the knowledge gathered from the preceding two objectives. By filling in the existing gaps in the literature and offering educators useful advice, this all-encompassing strategy anticipated to aid in the creation of more interesting and successful writing instruction strategies (Safitri, 2023)

By tackling these three interrelated goals, the study hopes to offer a comprehensive understanding of how folktales be used to improve students' knowledge, motivation, and creative writing skills, which will ultimately result in more accomplished and self-assured writers.

Methodology

The study adopts a qualitative research methodology, incorporating literature analysis to examine the role of folktales in enhancing students' writing skills. By analysing existing studies, educational theories and documented practices, the research aims to explore the use of folktales as an effective pedagogical tool for improving creative writing skills in rural primary schools in Papua New Guinea. This will coupled with preserving local fables and narration through folktales writing practices. The following methods were utilized; Literature reviews and content analysis, a comprehensive literature review, focusing on academic articles, books and

reports that discuss the use of folktales in education. Theoretical framework, such as constructivism and narrative based-learning methods support the findings. After that, a secondary data analysis was used to utilize existing research, datasets, and case studies from previous investigations on the application of folktales in language learning. Followed by a comparative analysis, which was to comparative analysis conducted between traditional teaching methods for writing skills and folktale-based methods including case studies from Papua New Guinea and international contexts to identify gaps and opportunities for adaptation. Furthermore, a descriptive analysis is used to categorize the identified folktale elements (e.g., plot structure, character development, and moral lessons) and their relevance to improving writing skills. The final method was the development of a pedagogical framework based on the findings.

Result and Discussion

This discussion and findings will answer the research question that was asked above followed by solutions. The discussion will support the integration or improvement of folktales in schools enhancing creativity in writing skills. It follows a sequence

Table 1. Previous Studies Examining the Significance of Folktale Integration as A Benefit in Improving Writing Skills

No	Author	Key Findings	Source	Relevance
1	Andi Heriawan (2019)	The research finding indicates that Folktales can improve students' vocabulary.	BA thesis	Building students vocabulary through integrating folklores
2	Nurul Iltum, Rahman & Salija (2022)	Local Folktale-Based English Materials were effective to be used as learning materials for improving students' reading comprehension	Journal	Local Folktale-Based English Materials are effective to be used as learning materials for improving students' reading comprehension skills
3	Serhat C (2009)	Questions were asked on whether using of folktales can help building students vocabulary skills	Article	Translating folktales into English to simplify for the students' that will increase motivation and enhance the learning process.
4	Annette DE Bruijn (2017)	The author argues that further research into the potential intercultural benefits of folktales should not only focus on issues of textual representation, but also on	Journal	benefits of folktales should not only focus on issues of textual representation, but also on children's active intercultural participation in the classroom

		children's active intercultural participation		
5	Godwin Olaoye & Elizabeth Henry	It addresses the tensions arising from commercialization and the marginalization of indigenous voices, emphasizing the need for a balanced approach to preserving authenticity while embracing Innovation	Journal	Emphasizing the need for a balanced approach to preserving authenticity while embracing innovation.
6	Praise Peace, Grace Donald (2014)	Examines the evolution of folklore in modern contexts, particularly through the lens of technology, cultural identity, and popular culture	Article	A call for continue engagement with folklore to ensure its preservation and evolution in an increasingly interconnected world.
7	Alaa Sadik (2008)	The findings from classroom observations and interviews revealed that despite problems observed and reported by teachers, they believed that the digital storytelling projects could increase students' understanding of curricular content and they were willing to transform their pedagogy and curriculum to include digital storytelling	Article	The findings from the analysis of students-produced stories revealed that overall, students did well in their projects and their stories met many of the pedagogical and technical attributes of digital stories.
8	Bernard Robin (2006)	An overview of Digital Storytelling and describes where it came from, how it can be used to support instruction and how students who learn to create their own digital stories improve multiple literacy skills. In addition, information is presented about the tools that can be used to support the educational use of Digital Storytelling	Journal	It is relevant in supporting digital storytelling for students such as fables and tales.
9	Isi Agboaye (2020)	Folktales may be seen as literature with meanings that possibly challenge communal and contemporary ideas.	e-book	Students will develop critical thinking skills by interpreting the literature's meaning.
10		A set of interrelated studies by researchers in all of those fields,	Article	It speaks of the spoken folktales of Papua New

	Rumsey, Alan et.al.(2011)	and by a Papua New Guinea Highlander who has assisted with the research based on his lifelong familiarity with one of the regional genres.		Guinea that are yet to be recorded and its importance.
11	Regis Stella (2001)	PNG writing at the crossroads of is-lands, culture, and language is about negotiating a political and cultural space within the spectrum of disciplines, institutions, and new configurations of power.	Article	It reveals Papua New Guinea folktales at a crossroad of dying out so it needs preservation by allowing students to write
12	Tashkent, Uzbekistan)	The reason behind the popularity is that it is easy to understand a folktale of its simple style, language and theme.	Journal	In the language learning classroom, popular folk tales could be a very effective teaching material for improving four main skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking
13	Suryani,Misrita, Ristati(2021)	Provides a systematic review of journals discussing folklore in reading narrative texts	Journal	Folklore has the potential to improve students' ability to read narrative texts.
14	Rahiem, Rahim,Subchi, et.al (2020)	The extensive literature study indicates that the integration of folklore and digital technology results in compelling and interactive catastrophe education for early children.	Conference article	Utilization digital folklore into education

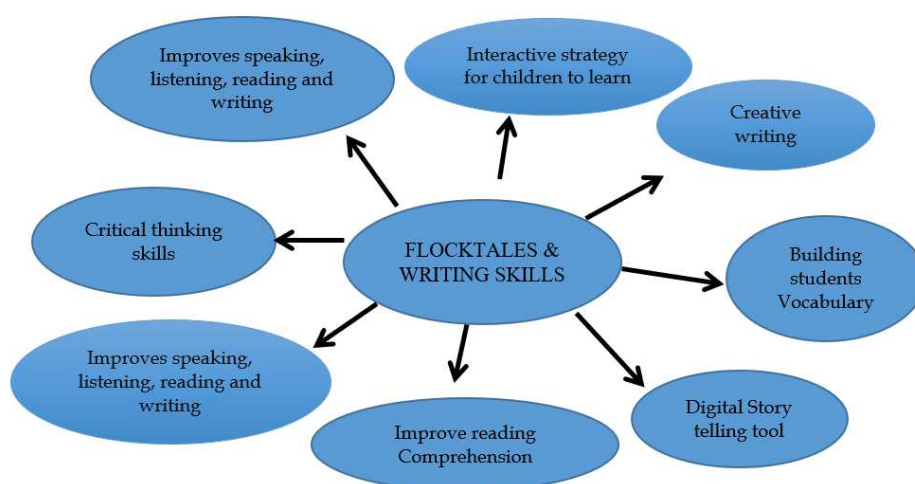


Figure 1. A Conceptual Map of the Findings and Its Benefits

The conceptual map in Figure 1 provides a visual representation of the key elements and relationships explored in the study on the role of folktales in enhancing students' writing skills. In addition, it provides relevance approaches in creative English-language writing in Papua New Guinea primary education.

The first aspect highlighted in the map is the theoretical underpinnings of the research. The study is grounded in constructivist and narrative-based learning theories, which emphasize the importance of integrating students' cultural experiences and employing storytelling as a pedagogical tool to cultivate critical, analytical, and creative thinking (Yunus, Thambirajah, et al., 2019). These theoretical frameworks suggest that folktales, as components of local cultural heritage, can offer a relevant context for students to engage with the learning material.

The second component of the conceptual map examines the specific elements of folktales that can be leveraged to improve students' writing skills. The research delves into how the structure, character development, and moral lessons embedded in folktales can be utilized to help students understand and apply effective writing techniques, such as plot construction, character building, and creating an engaging narrative (Kieran, E.1989). Children learn from concrete hands on experience such as Cinderella story telling or traditional tables. Drawing on the familiar and captivating nature of folktales, the study aims to enhance students' motivation, engagement, and proficiency in creative writing.

The final aspect of the conceptual map outlines the research objectives, which are to analyze the extent to which folktales can improve students' writing motivation, identify the most effective folktale elements for writing instruction, and develop a comprehensive folktale-based learning strategy to enhance students' writing skills. This multi-faceted approach is expected to contribute to the development of more effective and engaging writing methods, addressing the current gaps in the literature, particularly within the educational context of Papua New Guinea (Schick & Melzi, 2010; Safitri, 2023).

The analysis of existing literature and secondary data reveals that folktales significantly contribute to the improvement of students' creative writing skills. This is attributed to their structured narrative framework, cultural relevance, and universal appeal. The findings align with the constructivist theory, which emphasizes learning through authentic, context-driven experiences.

Motivation and Engagement through Folktales

The study identifies that folktales boost students' motivation by providing culturally resonant and imaginative content. This is particularly important in Papua New Guinea, where access to diverse reading materials is often limited. As supported by Yunus et al. (2019), the integration of culturally relevant narratives fosters a deeper

connection to the learning material, encouraging students to participate actively in writing tasks.

Additionally, folktales' inherent creativity sparks students' imagination, helping them overcome the challenges of writer's block and limited vocabulary. Students exposed to narrative-based teaching methods showed a higher level of engagement and enthusiasm for writing compared to traditional methods.

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Folktales possess elements such as simple yet profound plots, relatable characters, and moral lessons that inspire creativity in writing. For example, Schick and Melzi (2010) found that storytelling enhances students' ability to organize and articulate ideas. Similarly, Safitri (2023) and Armstrong et al. (2022) highlighted that folktales encourage students to experiment with character development and plot construction, making the writing process more engaging and accessible.

Challenges in Folktale Integration

While folktales are effective, the research identifies challenges in their integration into the curriculum. These include a lack of teacher training in narrative-based teaching methods and insufficient access to documented folktales from local cultures. Moreover, some educators struggle to balance the creative aspects of folktales with the structured requirements of academic writing.

Proposed Folktale-Based Writing Framework

Based on the findings, the following framework is proposed:

1. Selection of Relevant Folktales: Choose stories that resonate with students' cultural and social contexts, Mannion, Miller et.al (2009).
2. Guided Narrative Exercises: Teach students to identify and analyze plot structures, character arcs, and themes, Cortazzi, M. (2008). Narrative Analysis
3. Creative Writing Activities: Encourage students to reimagine and rewrite folktales with unique endings or modern twists.

4. Peer Collaboration: Implement group activities where students share and comment on each other's writing.

Implications for Writing Education in Papua New Guinea

The study emphasizes the need for culturally responsive teaching methods to address the challenges of low literacy levels and limited access to reading materials. By leveraging folktales, educators can create a more inclusive and engaging learning environment that nurtures creativity and improves writing proficiency.

Conclusion of Findings

Overall, the integration of folktales as a pedagogical tool provides a practical and innovative solution to enhance students' writing skills especially in primary education. This approach aligns with the cultural richness of Papua New Guinea and addresses existing gaps in educational resources and teaching strategies. Future research should focus on developing teacher-training programs and documenting local folktales to maximize the impact of this method.

Conclusion

The integration of folktales as a pedagogical tool provides a practical and innovative solution to enhance students' writing skills in the context of Papua New Guinea primary education. More emphasis on motivating students to be writers by assigning them to write fables and imaginative short stories is important. This approach aligns with the cultural richness of the country and addresses the existing gaps in educational resources and teaching strategies. In addition, this will help students improve their English writing proficiency. The study has also demonstrated that folktales can significantly improve students' motivation, engagement, and proficiency in creative writing. By leveraging the narrative structure, relatable characters, and moral lessons embedded in folktales, educators can create a more inclusive and engaging learning environment that nurtures students' imagination and writing abilities. However, the successful implementation of this method requires addressing challenges such as the lack of teacher training in narrative-based teaching and limited access to documented local folktales. Future research should focus on developing comprehensive teacher training programs and establishing a comprehensive database of Papua New Guinea's rich folktale heritage to maximize the impact of this innovative approach to writing education.

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