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THE EFFECTIVENESS OF JAVANESE LANGUAGE COMIC WRITING PROJECT ON THE WRITING SKILLS OF 7TH GRADERS OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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Abstract

Writing skills for Javanese pacelathon (dialogue) texts among junior high school students are often sub-optimal due to monotonous, conventional learning methods. Students struggle to align direct dialogue writing with the appropriate levels of unggah-ungguh basa (Javanese speech levels). This study aims to examine the effectiveness of the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) method through a Javanese comic-writing project in improving the pacelathon text writing skills of 7th-grade students at SMP Negeri 4 Karanganyar. This quasi-experimental quantitative study involved class VII B as the experimental group (32 students) and class VII A as the control group (32 students). The experimental group received the comic-writing project treatment, while the control group utilized conventional methods. Data were collected through a writing performance test using a 1–4 scaled rubric, and subsequently analyzed using the Independent Samples t-Test assisted by SPSS. The results showed that the posttest mean score of the experimental class reached 81.87, which was significantly higher than that of the control class at 76.71. The t-test yielded a significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.034 ($0.034 < 0.05$), thereby rejecting H_0 . It is concluded that the Javanese comic-writing project is effective in improving students' pacelathon text writing skills, triggering visual-linguistic creativity, and facilitating the internalization of unggah-ungguh basa.

Keywords: *Javanese comic; pacelathon; Project-Based Learning; unggah-ungguh basa; writing skills.*

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Abstrak

Keterampilan menulis teks *pacelathon* (dialog) bahasa Jawa siswa SMP sering kali kurang optimal akibat pembelajaran konvensional yang monoton. Siswa kesulitan menyelaraskan penulisan dialog langsung dengan tingkatan unggah-ungguh basa yang tepat. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menguji efektivitas metode Project-Based Learning (PjBL) melalui proyek penulisan komik bahasa Jawa terhadap peningkatan keterampilan menulis teks *pacelathon* siswa kelas VII SMP Negeri 4 Karanganyar. Penelitian kuantitatif kuasi-eksperimen ini melibatkan kelas VII B sebagai kelompok eksperimen (32 siswa) dan kelas VII A sebagai kelompok kontrol (32 siswa). Kelompok eksperimen mendapatkan perlakuan proyek penulisan komik, sedangkan kelompok kontrol menggunakan metode konvensional. Data dikumpulkan melalui tes kinerja menulis menggunakan rubrik berskala 1-4, lalu dianalisis dengan uji Independent Samples t-Test berbantuan SPSS. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan nilai rata-rata posttest kelas eksperimen mencapai 81,87, lebih tinggi secara signifikan dibandingkan kelas kontrol yang bernilai 76,71. Uji-t menghasilkan nilai signifikansi (Sig. 2-tailed) sebesar 0,034 ($0,034 < 0,05$), sehingga H_0 ditolak. Disimpulkan bahwa proyek penulisan komik abasa Jawa efektif meningkatkan keterampilan menulis teks *pacelathon* siswa, memicu kreativitas visual-linguistik, serta mempermudah internalisasi unggah-ungguh basa.

Kata kunci: Komik bahasa Jawa; keterampilan menulis; *pacelathon*; Project-Based Learning; unggah-ungguh basa.

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INTRODUCTION

The existence of Javanese language is currently facing challenges from both external and internal factors, one of which results from domination of Indonesian and foreign languages in many communication domains. Indonesian and foreign languages, particularly English, are often viewed more relevant to the development of technology, education, social media, and popular culture so that their use increases continuously among young generation. The condition potentially reduces the intensity of Javanese language use in both daily life and educational context. Based on data of Agency for Language Development and Cultivation (2021), the use of local language among young generation tends to decrease in the last decade. The phenomenon has an impact on the students' language competency in Javanese language learning at school. One of competencies important to master is writing skill (*Javanese: kaprigelan nyerat*), because writing activity requires the ability to integrate grammar, thinking structure, diction, and understanding of social-cultural context (Tarigan, 2008).

Empirical reality in SMP Negeri 4 Karanganyar (the 4th Public Junior High School of Karanganyar) shows that writing skill of 7th graders for *pacelathon* text has not achieved the learning target expected. The target includes the capability of arranging

dialog chronologically and communicatively, using direct sentence appropriately, selecting vocabularies appropriate to the context, and applying *undha-usuk basa* (Javanese speech levels) appropriately, particularly in the use of *ngoko* and *krama* registers. In the learning practice, the students still find difficulty in determining the speech level appropriate to the relationship between characters and the communication situation. The condition is also affected by the use of conventional learning approach in the form of one-way lecturing and writing practice without adequate visual stimulus so that the learning activity is less interesting to the students. Therefore, a learning innovation is required to be able to provide visual stimulus and to motivate the students to actively develop their skill of writing *pacelathon*.

To bridge the instructional gap, a recreative-educative innovative strategy is required, one of which is through Project-Based Learning (PjBL) based on comic creation. Referring to Dual Coding Theory concept suggested by Sadoski and Paivio (2013), Prasanty et al. (2025) and Koc-Januchta et al. (2017), the processing of cognitive information in humans will run much more effectively when it is stimulated by the simultaneous integration of visual representation (image) and verbal representation (text). Comic, as a sequential art media, mates the power of illustrative image and narrative text to deliver contextual message concretely. A relevant study conducted by Nugroho and Rahayu (2021) and Apostolou (2023), proved that the task of creating comic facilitates the students to capture the essence of abstract material. International researches conducted by Ying et al. (2024) and Kembaren et al. (2026). also confirmed that comic media potently multiplies students' intrinsic motivation and linguistic understanding in language learning through the power of visual storytelling. Furthermore, Dewi et al. (2025) and Ekorini (2018) confirmed that comic- and webtoon-based creative writing activity evidently improves significantly the Junior High School students' self-confidence in writing. Although the effectiveness of comic use has been studied widely, the research gap currently shows that majority of previous studies were still limited to examining comic only as static reading media (receptive literacy) or only measuring interest, without evaluating productive performance of writing local language using structured PjBL syntax (Pratiwi et al., 2025; Thomas, 2020). The novelty of current research lies in the full integration of PjBL (learning by creating) method where Junior High School students are positioned to be active creators constructing the plot of story, designing characterization, and formulating original dialog based on local wisdom with the accuracy Javanese sociolinguistic etiquette. This research aims absolutely to examine and to analyze the effectiveness of Javanese comic writing project in boosting the capability of writing *pacelathon* text in the 7th graders of SMP Negeri 4 Karanganyar compared with the use of conventional method.

METHOD

This research used quantitative approach with quasi-experimental design in the form of matched-group comparative group design. This research was carried out in SMP Negeri 4 Karanganyar in the even semester of the school year of 2025/2026. The author used purposive sampling technique to select sample based on equal mean

score of Javanese language subject in the official school report (report) before the research conducted. From the technique, two grades were selected as the sample, 7th B grade as experiment class (32 students) learning using comic creating project and 7thA grade as control class (32 students) still learning using conventional lecturing method.

Data of research was collected using an independent performance test, where each of students was asked to write the text of *pacelathon* dialog with the theme of local culture. The result of students' work was scored after the treatment (post-test) using scoring rubric with scale 1-4. There are five basic points valued from the students' writing: dialog plan, appropriateness of Javanese language registers (*unggah-ungguh*), story creativity, students' independence, and consistency of story idea (Arsyad, 2020). Before this worksheet was distributed to the students, the author had conducted content validity test on it through discussing it with Javanese language expert teacher in the school to make the test instrument legitimate and feasible to use.

After the posttest scores of the two grades were collected, the author analyzed the data using inferential statistic with SPSS program help. Before conducting hypothesis testing, the author carried out prerequisite test first to ensure that the data was distributed normally and had the same (homogeneous) variance. Normality test was calculated using Shapiro-Wilk's formula because the number of sample was less than 50 students. If the data was evidently normal and homogeneous, the last step would be to conduct Independent Samples t-Test at significance level of 0.05 to see whether or not there is a significant difference of scores between experiment and control classes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After the two classes completed their posttest, fairly different scores were obtained. In the control class (7thA) learning using conventional media, the students' score ranges between 60 and 95, with total mean score of 76.71. This score indicates that the students' writing ability has actually been fairly good, but it still can be improved. Meanwhile, in the experiment class (7thB) creating Javanese comic project, the score ranges between 60 and 95, with higher class mean score, 81.87. This mean score belongs to very good category. From this descriptive data, it can be seen that the difference of mean score is 5.16 points favoring the experiment class.

Before drawing final conclusion, the author conducted statistic prerequisite test using SPSS. The result of data normality test using Shapiro-Wilk's formula can be seen briefly in Table 1.

Table 1. Result of Normality Test

No	Groups	Statistics	df	Significance	Conclusion
1.	Control Class	0.286	32	0.286	Normal
2.	Experiment class	0.214	32	0.214	Normal

Based on the data information presented in Table 1, the significance value (Sig.) is 0.286 for control class and 0.214 for experiment class. Because the two significance values are higher than 0.05, it can be concluded that the data of both classes are distributed normally. Next, in the variance homogeneity test, significance value of 0.619 is obtained. This figure is also higher than 0.05, meaning that the data variances of both classes are the same (homogeneous). Because all prerequisites have been met, the analysis can be continued to hypothesis test (t-test).

Hypothesis test was carried out using Independent Samples t-Test formula with SPSS system on the line of Equal variances assumed. The summary of t-test result is presented obviously in Table 2.

Table 2. Result of Independent *Sample t-Test*

Variance Assumption	t-statistic value	df	Mean Difference	Sig. (2-tailed)
Equal Variances Assumed	-2.168	62	-5.160	0.034

Considering the figure of analysis result presented in Table 2, the significance (Sig. 2-tailed) value obtained is 0.034. Based on the rule of statistics, if the significance value is less than 0.05 ($0.03 < 0.05$), the null hypothesis (H_0) is not supported and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is supported. t-statistic value recorded is -2.168, with Mean Difference of -5.160. The minus (-) sign here only indicates that the mean score of control class is indeed significantly lower than that of experiment class. So, the result of statistic test proves that the Javanese comic project-based learning method effectively improve the students' skill of writing *pacelathon* text.

This finding proves that the comic creating project is not only a conventional playing or drawing activity, but also a strong aid to refine the children's language ability. In the control class learning without visual aid, the students tend to be confused to imagine real situation in dialog. They only memorize the speech level formula theoretically so that they often write conversational sentence incorrectly during the test.

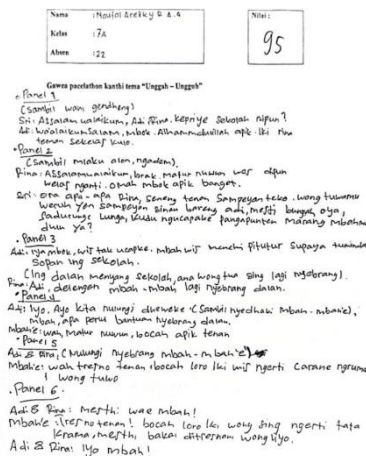


Figure 1. Control Class Learning without Comic Media

On the contrary, the students in experiment class were greatly aided with sequential images existing in the comic. In line with the dual-coding theory, the combination of image and text serves as a bridge converting abstract materials into concrete ones (Nugroho & Rahayu, 2021; Sadoski & Paivio, 2013). In creating a scene depicting the image of character, the students automatically analyzes the social situation: who is speaking, to whom he/she speaks, and how the circumstance is. This visual description directly leads the students' thinking to selecting an appropriate speech level. For example, if the character in the image is a child speaking to his/her mother, the visual memory makes the students automatically write dialog with *krama alus* register (Dewi et al., 2025; Pranchis & Kuppen, 2022). It evidently successfully reduces the error in the use of *unggah-ungguh basa* (speech level) in the student worksheet (Thomas, 2020). In addition to making local language writing more exciting, this comic project also improves the confidence of students initially less smart in the class, because they can freely express their creative ideas coherently and interestingly.

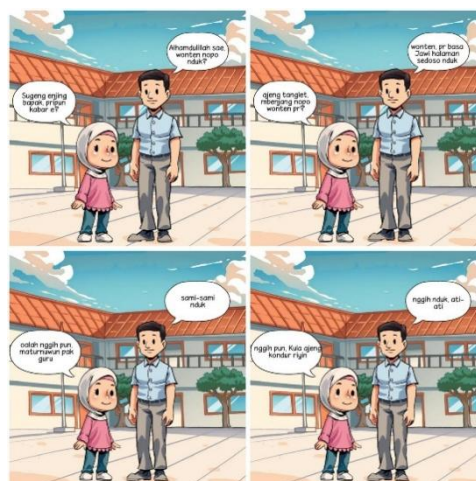


Figure 2. Experiment Class Learning Using Comic Media

CONCLUSION

Considering the result of data analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that Project-Based Learning method using Javanese comic creating project evidently effectively improves the skill of writing *pacelathon* text in the 7th graders of SMP Negeri 4 Karanganyar. This is indicated with the mean score of posttest of 81.87 for experiment class successfully surpassing that for control class (76,71), and supported by the result of t-test at significance level of $0.034 < 0.05$. This comic project successfully changes the circumstance of local language class from the rigid one initially into the more interactive, creative, and applicative one. This pictorial media evidently become a potent visual aid facilitating the students to understand the context of polite language use, reduce error in terms of *unggah-ungguh*, and enabling the students to write confidently. As practical recommendation, the teachers of Javanese language are expected to apply this culture-based creative comic creating project in the class to conserve local language in this digital era.

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