



Fairy Tales in German Lesson

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Abstract. This paper examines the use of literature, such as fairy tales, in German lessons to improve students' reading competence. This paper focuses on integrating the usage of literature as the learning material and the problem-based learning method. The data was obtained using a literature study and analyzed through the qualitative method. The result of the analysis shows the lesson. Moreover, the lesson can be planned according to the problem-based learning with these five stages: 1) Project presentation & identification, (2) individual/team research, (3) design development, (4) building & testing & evaluation, and (5) project delivery. This paper concludes that students can read fairy tales in the German lesson designed with problem-based learning. This learning method allows pupils to tackle problems in groups collectively. They may learn how to deal with challenges while participating in the exercise, such as adjusting to diverse groups of kids and remaining secure in their opinions.

Keywords: German fairy tales · Reading comprehension · German lesson · Problem-based learning

1 Introduction

Teaching German as a foreign language involves the importance of mastering four language skills, and they are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Therefore, the teacher must prepare a certain number of activities and practices to let the students use their German language competence. Moreover, the teacher must teach their students German grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and pronunciation and introduce them to German culture through authentic learning materials such as literature.

Literature gives advantages to language teaching and learning in the classroom. There are four reasons to integrate literature in the language class, as mentioned by Collie and Slater in [1]: valuable, authentic material, cultural enrichment, language enrichment, and personal involvement. Consequently, literature is used as a learning material in German language teaching in senior high schools in Indonesia, according to the 2013 Curriculum. Furthermore, the students trained to be teachers of German as a foreign language must learn how to teach German supported by literature usage. This paper focused on fairy tales that are well-liked by many generations.

Reading fairy tales is an activity that happens to most people. Children get their favourite fairy tales read at night, maybe even German fairy tales such as Cinderella,

Rapunzel, and Hansel Gretel. And it has become a tradition in families with children before bed. With children's ability to know the alphabet and read, they start reading fairy tales independently. As a narrative text, fairy tales pertain to stories with imagination [2]. The remarkable imaginary characters such as dwarfs, witches, and animals like the wolf in Little Red Riding Hood, the simple plot around good versus evil, and the positive, optimistic messages at the end of the story intrigue the interest to read fairy tales.

Perhaps as growing up, people may still read them in their leisure time as well in school as learning material in the language class. Fairy tales are read by students in schools in Indonesian Class [3, 4] and in English as a foreign language (EFL)-Class [5, 6]. Furthermore, fairy tales or *Märchen* in German are also mentioned, apart from poetry (*Gedichte*) and short story (*Kurzgeschichten*) based on the syllabus based on the 2013 Curriculum for German lessons in the 11th and 12th grades of senior high school.

To plan the lesson with fairy tales, the teacher must write down the teaching and learning activities. Those activities are divided in general into three parts activities of the lesson, and they are (1) Pre-Activity. In this part, the teacher introduces the learning material with students' initial learning experiences and does the apperception and motivation. (2) Main Activity. This part contains steps of the main learning activities, such as the presentation of the learning material. (3) Post-Activity. This part describes some learning activities, such as concluding the result of the learning process and reflection.

Besides, the teacher must also decide the learning method suitable for student-centered learning and promotes the practice of critical thinking and working in teams. And among student-centered learning methods is problem-based learning, which suits better reading classes that require students' analysis skills to solve the problem or, in other words, to do the reading exercises. "It is crucial that the problem serves as a basis for the learning process because it determines the direction of the learning process and places emphasis on the formulation of the question rather than on the answer [7]". Since problem-based learning focuses on the process than the answer, there is not only one absolute answer for the problem given to the students. Hence it requires students' critical thinking and open-mindedness while decision-making to solve the problem, especially when they mostly work in teams.

Choosing problem-based learning as a method means the teacher must follow certain teaching and learning steps. There are 5 phases: (1) Project presentation & identification, (2) Individual/ Team research, (3) Design Development, (4) Building & Testing & Evaluation and (5) Project delivery [8]. Following these steps, the teacher provides scaffolding for the students to decide on realistic solutions for the given problem. On the other side, the steps give certain guidelines for problem-solving activities.

The first previous study of this paper also used fairy tales as learning material. However, the paper focused not on the description of teaching and learning German but explained the media development with a pop-up book in a German class in senior high school [9].

The second previous research stated that the fairy tale *Der Sterntaler* was used as reading material for senior high school students. The reading lesson was divided into three phases: (1) *Vorbereitungsphase* (Phase of Preparation), (2) *Präsentation und Textarbeit* (*Presentation and Text analysis*), and (3) *Erweiterungsphase* (Phase of Extended Analysis-Phase) [10]. This paper didn't use teaching methods that support

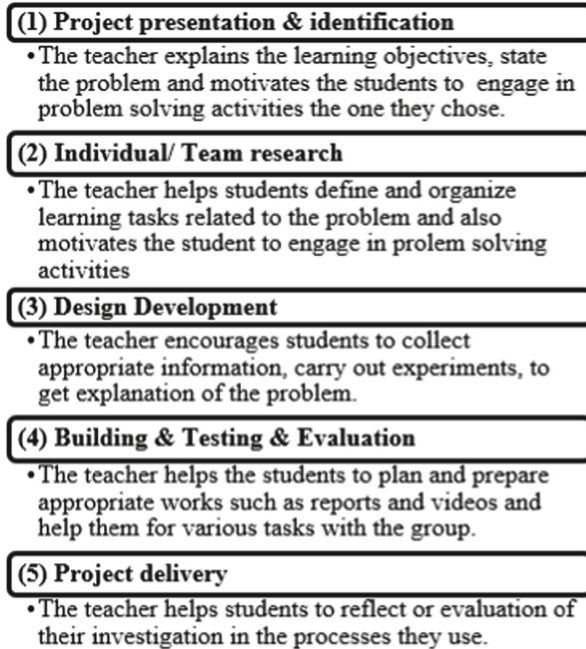


Fig. 1. Phases of problem-based learning

student-based learning and enhance the student's problem-solving, critical thinking, and communication skills during the reading lesson.

The third previous study is research in college English lessons that compare two reading classes. The teacher used the problem-based learning method in the experimental class. The result indicated statistically significant differences between the experimental and control groups for students' reading comprehension for mastering the content and vocabulary acquisition using PBL. The students who received the PBL learning approach achieved higher performance outcomes than those who did not receive the PBL approach [9].

This problem-based learning method entails the students' work to begin with the problem itself. It also requires the students to explore more resources other than the teacher. This learning method enables what it is called experience learning [7], which allows the students to build from their own experiences and interest while researching and working on resolving the problems.

Based on the advantages of this learning method, the writer wants to integrate this learning method in German lessons, especially with fairy tales as the learning material, because the implementation of the problem-based learning method in fairy tale reading in German lessons is not yet been found. Moreover, the writer assumes this learning method is suitable for students trained to be a German teacher. Hence, this paper aims to describe the German class's learning process, which integrates reading fairy tales and problem-based learning methods.



Fig. 2. Media to introduce the fairy tale © Goethe Institut

2 Methods

This research uses an approach to qualitative research and is classified as a literature study. It is a research method by collecting library data which is then processed as a reference to analyze objects or data study. The data used for this paper is a fairy tale by Brother Grimms entitled "*Hänsel und Gretel*" or Hansel and Gretel. This fairy tale is about a brother and sister abandoned in a forest. There they fall into the hands of a witch who lives in a house made of gingerbread, cake, and candy. The witch intends to fatten the children before eventually eating them, but Gretel outwits the witch and kills her. Hence, the two children can escape from the witch alive and return home [12].

3 Results and Discussion

This paper describes the learning process using a problem-based learning method and a German reading lesson with fairy tales as the learning material. The time for the reading lesson is approximately two meetings with 2 x 50 min for each meeting. The selected fairy tale is Hansel and Gretel. The activities during the reading lesson are divided into three parts:

3.1 Pre-activity

During this part teacher explains the learning objectives, states the problem, motivates students, and engages in problem-solving activities. Before reading the text, there is an activity called apperception. The teacher asks students to know prior knowledge with the help of the picture. Before guessing the title of the fairy tale that they are going to read, the teacher asks about the ambiance of the picture, *Wie ist die Atmosphäre (fröhlich/bedrückend/ gemütlich/ bedrohlich)?* After the students say their opinions about the picture, the teacher asks for the title of the fairy tales they will read and discuss in class. After mentioning the answer "Hansel and Gretel", the teacher mentions the objective of the lesson: understanding the fairy tale Hansel and Gretel and making an infographic summary of the fairy tale.

Afterward, the teacher let the students read this quote from the fairy tale "*Knusper, knusper, knäuschen, wer knuspert an meinem Häuschen*" aloud and then ask them to

Nr.	Frage	Gefunden in Zeile ...
1	Wie viele Tage und Nächte sind Hänsel und Gretel im Wald, bevor sie das Häuslein finden?	
2	Welches Schimpfwort benutzt die Hexe, als Gretel nicht in den Ofen krabbeln will?	
3	Warum erkennt die Hexe nicht, dass Hänsel ihr nicht seinen Finger, sondern ein Knöchlein aus dem Gitter herausstreckt?	
4	Wie wird die alte Frau (Hexe) beschrieben, als sie aus dem Haus herauskommt?	
5	Wie oft haben die Eltern von Hänsel und Gretel versucht, die Kinder im Wald zurückzulassen?	
6	Was macht Hänsel mit dem Brot, als sie im Wald sind?	
7	Wie reagieren die Mutter und der Vater von Hänsel und Gretel, als die Kinder wieder zu Hause ankommen?	
8	Wie versuchen die Kinder, den Weg zurück nach Hause zu finden? 1. ... 2. ...	
9	Beschreibt genau, welche Teile des Hexenhauses aus welchen Stoffen / welchem Essen bestehen.	
10	Was gibt es alles zu essen im Knusperhäuschen?	
11	Warum sperrt die Hexe Hänsel in den Stall mit Gitter und gibt ihm gutes Essen?	
12	Wie viele Personen sterben in dem Märchen? Welche?	
13	Aus welchem Material ist die Ofentür?	
14	Was nehmen Hänsel und Gretel aus dem Haus der Hexe mit?	

Fig. 3. Reading exercise in the group © Goethe Institut

predict, who does say that sentence in the story, the witch or Hansel and Gretel. The teacher asks them to mention words related to Hansel and Gretel. The students and the teacher write the words mentioned on the whiteboard as a simple mind map.

3.2 Main Activity

The teacher explains to the students that they will read Hansel and Gretel and discuss it. The teacher gives the text and reading exercises. The teacher can give a different kind of exercises with different questions, such as True or False, Short Answer, Multiple Choice, and Matching. Here is one example of an exercise to check students' reading comprehension. In this exercise, students find and write the answers and the lines where they find the answers in groups.

During doing the exercise the students use reading strategy called scanning. This reading strategy is used to find a particular piece of information. The students look for the information that are asked in the worksheet by paying attention specific piece of information related to the certain keywords in the reading questions. After founding the answer, the student must write down the lines, where the information asked is located, because it will be needed during the discussion to back up their answer. They can mention the lines as evidence to suggest their answer are correct.

In this part, the teacher applies the problem-solving method. These are activities. The learning process is described based on the steps or phases in the problem-based learning method:

(1) Project presentation & identification

In this phase, the teacher states the problem of understanding the storyline of the fairy tale Hansel and Gretel that they already read and discussed. To solve the

problem, students need to make a summary. The summary should mention the five components: the characters, the setting, the plot, the conflict, and the resolution.

(2) Individual/team research

In this phase, the students are divided into groups of 3-5 people. It depends on the number of students in the class. They get paper sizes, minimal A3, and markers to make handwritten infographic summaries. The teacher may ask the students beforehand to bring their laptops to school to make a digital infographic summary. The students work in small groups and read the fairy tale to do the task. The teacher checks students' work and guides them if necessary.

(3) Design development

The students discussed in small groups about making the design of an infographic summary and important information about the five components asked and important scenes in the story that suits the infographic summary. The teacher checks students' work and guides them if necessary.

(4) Building & testing & evaluation

The students start making the infographic summary and write down the five characters of the story: the setting, the plot, the conflict, and the resolution. They check and recheck their work to see if the information delivers correctly and is understandable. The teacher checks students' work and guides them if necessary.

(5) Project delivery

The students present their infographic summary of the fairy tale Hansel and Gretel. In this phase, students may ask groups for a summary and comment. The teacher must properly explain if there is misunderstood information in summary.

3.3 Post-activity

Before closing the lesson, the teacher can ask students what is the memorable part of the fairy tale (character, scene, ...) and why? And what do you think of the lesson today? Then, the students may say opinions about the story of Hansel and Gretel.

Overall, it can be concluded that problem-based learning is possible during the reading lesson with fairy tales as the learning material. The lesson consists of the activities: pre-activity, main activity, and post-activity. The implementation of the problem-based study happens in the main activity. That shows that the student must read the fairy tale and comprehend the plot well by doing the reading exercise. Afterward, they learn in teams with the 5-steps of problem-based learning, which requires critical thinking and open-mindedness to solve the problem given by the teacher.

4 Conclusion

From the findings and discussion above, it can be concluded that fairy tales can be used as learning material in a German lesson, especially in a reading class. The teacher can choose the problem-based learning method to integrate the fairy tales into the lesson. This learning method facilitates the students to solve the problem cooperatively in groups. They could learn how to face difficulties while doing the exercise, such as adjusting to different groups of students and being confident in their opinions. In line with it, this paper suggests integrating fairy tales into the reading lesson and problem-based learning.

Authors' Contributions. Wisma Kurniawati conceived and planned the experiments. Ajeng Kartika and Audrey Titaley carried out the experiments and the simulations. Chikka Prameswari and Elena Andini contributed to sample preparation and contributed to the interpretation of the results. Wisma Kurniawati took the lead in writing the manuscript. All authors provided critical feedback and helped shape the research, analysis and manuscript.

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