



The Use of Storytelling to Develop The Cognitive Aspects of High Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in Ninth Grade Junior High School

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Article Info	Abstract
Article History Received: 2023-10-12 Revised: 2023-11-23 Published: 2023-12-01 Keywords: HOTS; Cognitive Aspects; Storytelling; Junior High School.	This study investigates how storytelling techniques can help students enhance their cognitive aspects of HOTS. The data for this study were gathered through class observations, teacher and student interviews, and field notes with one participant teacher and thirty-three ninth-grade students. According to the previous research, students can improve their cognitive aspects ability through a variety of methods, one of which is storytelling. Storytelling can help students to hone their ability to analyze, evaluate and create well. However, there are certain students who have yet to master this skill. And the results show that storytelling techniques can increase HOTS cognitive abilities when people are more fully involved in storytelling activities and subsequently have talks about analyzing stories together. The teacher asked them to find stories and tell stories in front of the class. This practice is another solution for how to apply storytelling technique to develop students' cognitive aspects of HOTS in schools with limited of facilities and infrastructure. Then it was found that they could master the material and analyze and evaluate the problems in the story through this application. Students stated that the storytelling technique made it easier to understand the learning material and seemed exciting.
Artikel Info	Abstrak
Sejarah Artikel Diterima: 2023-10-12 Direvisi: 2023-11-23 Dipublikasi: 2023-12-01 Kata kunci: Berpikir Tingkat Tinggi; Kognitif Aspek; Bercerita; Sekolah Menengah Pertama.	Studi ini menyelidiki mengenai bagaimana teknik story telling dapat meningkatkan kemampuan kognitif aspek siswa dalam HOTS. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan desain penelitian tindakan kelas yang dimana memperoleh data dari observasi kelas, wawancara guru dan siswa serta catatan lapangan dengan partisipan satu guru serta tiga puluh tiga siswa kelas sembilan. Hasil penelitian sebelumnya menunjukkan bahwa mendongeng dapat membantu meningkatkan kemampuan kognitif aspek siswa dalam HOTS. Mendongeng dapat membantu siswa dalam meningkatkan kemampuan mereka untuk menganalisa, mengevaluasi, dan menciptakan dengan baik. Namun, beberapa siswa masih belum memiliki kemampuan tersebut. Hasil juga menunjukkan bahwa teknik bercerita dapat meningkatkan kemampuan kognitif aspek dalam HOTS, karena siswa terlibat lebih dalam dalam kegiatan bercerita dan kemudian bekerja sama untuk menganalisis cerita. Guru menugaskan mereka untuk mencari cerita dan meminta mereka untuk berdongeng di depan kelas. Kegiatan ini adalah solusi lain untuk cara pengaplikasian teknik storytelling untuk mengembangkan kemampuan kognitif aspek siswa dalam HOTS, yang dimana sekolah sangatlah keterbatasan dalam segi sarana dan prasarana. Kemudian ditemukan bahwa mereka dapat menguasai materi dan menganalisa serta mengevaluasi permasalahan dalam cerita melalui cara pengaplikasian ini. Siswa menyatakan bahwa dengan teknik storytelling ia lebih mudah dalam memahami materi pembelajaran dan terkesan tidak membosankan.

I. INTRODUCTION

At this time, among Indonesian students, it is familiar to learning and developing High Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) abilities. However, there are still many junior high school students who have not been able to reach a HOTS because most of the activities in HOTS are intended for adult students who aim to improve their ability to read and write in language learning (Afshar & Rahimi, 2017 as cited in Setyarini et al., 2018). Therefore, junior high school students still cannot master

the cognitive aspects of High Order Thinking Skills (HOTS), namely analyzing, evaluating and creating, as stated in Bloom's Taxonomy (1956). Learning and improving higher-order thinking skills is very important in language learning because it can help students learn and understand English well. As said by Dewi (2021) suggests that higher-order thinking skills can have a positive impact on students in the process of learning English. The main objective of HOTS is how to improve students' thinking skills at a high

level, which relates to their thinking skills in receiving all kinds of information, thinking creatively in solving a problem with the knowledge students have, expressing opinions well, being able to construct explanations and being able to make decisions in complex situations (Azar et al., 2019 as cited in Lidiporu & Sumarni, 2022).

In learning English, HOTS such as critical thinking, is a combined activity that can improve students' skills in writing and speaking (Collins, 1991 as cited in Setyarini et al., 2018). The researcher found this when carrying out tests on English questions regarding descriptive text with the types of Low Order Thinking Skills (LOTS) and High Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) questions, where students were very confused in answering each item. This is similar to research conducted by Setiawati and Setyarini (2018), where students had difficulties with HOTS and their abilities were only limited to remembering.

Besides that, the cause of students who are not able to think at a high level is the lack of students in reading and learning English due to difficulties in learning it. Based on these problems, the solution to improve the skills of young students that can be used is storytelling. Setyarini et al. (2018) suggest that fun learning activities such as storytelling can be one way to improve students' way of thinking with fun activities in the classroom. In fun learning, the teacher plays an important role in creating a classroom atmosphere and making students interested in learning. The teacher must prepare an interesting story that can improve students' higher-order thinking skills. As a teacher, it is expected to have the ability to fulfil their responsibilities as instructional, namely in providing a conducive learning environment where students can achieve a more meaningful, free learning process without any obstacles (Gaffar et al., 2019). If a teacher successfully implements learning by reading and retelling fun stories, students will surely be very happy listening to every knowledge they get in class and will make them even more excited to learn. According to Gaffar et al. (2022) that interactive reading activities can effectively develop students' sense of responsibility.

Based on previous research conducted by Setyarini et al. (2020) entitled *Thinking Critically While Storytelling: Improving Children's HOTS and English Oral Competence* suggests that HOTS has a very influential impact on education as an effort to improve the results of the learning

process. In this research, the researchers found a solution to improve higher-order thinking skills by using digital storytelling media. By using more sophisticated media to tell a fairy tale so that students don't get bored easily, the researchers believe that students will easily understand every lesson of English later.

In addition, the research conducted by Zahroh (2020) entitled *Integrating Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) to Increase Students' Productive Skills*, said that by thinking at a high level, students can bring students to compete at the international level and also face a new world of education from getting more and more sophisticated every year. Therefore one strategy that can improve this skill is storytelling, which is divided into three phases in the lesson. The first phase is the pre-activity before the story, where the teacher begins the activity by determining storytelling rules, which can develop students' understanding. The second phase is storytelling activities, and the teacher does his best to keep students' intentions through telling stories and guiding them so they can understand the story's contents well. Then the last phase, the teacher determines whether students understand the story well or not by asking questions and giving students the opportunity to express what they understand or feel when telling stories.

High Order Thinking Skills were first put forward in Bloom's Taxonomy (1956) which Benjamin S. Bloom coined. In Bloom's Taxonomy, it is stated that the level of thinking has six objectives, namely: Knowledge, Understanding, Application, Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation (Bloom, 1984). Then, to make these goals more identifiable, Anderson and Krathwohl (2000) revised the educational goals into six different objectives, namely stating that the six skills consist of Remembering, Understanding, Applying, Analyzing, Evaluating and Creating. From what has been revised, it is stated that higher-order thinking skills are divided into three levels, namely: higher-order thinking in analyzing, evaluating and creating. At the Analyzing skill level, students must be able to analyze, categorize and understand. Then the second level evaluates, where students can assess, compare, comment, conclude, contrast, and then evaluate and support ideas with reasonable or logical responses. And the last is the level of creating, at this level students must be able to create a new idea, an innovation that is different from the existing one, then make decisions and solve the problems they are facing.

In improving High Order Thinking Skills (HOTS), students can use it in various ways, including storytelling. Mallan (1991), cited in Rahmansyah and Pricilia (2018), stated that storytelling is storytelling, which is storytelling activities based on oral traditions. Wajnryb (2003), cited in Satriani (2019) states that storytelling is simple and practical because the stories used are very easy to obtain.

Based on the explanation above, the objective research is to analyze the use of storytelling in improving students' high-level thinking and to find out changes and developments in students' cognitive aspects, namely analyzing, evaluating and creating HOTS abilities using storytelling. The problem to be examined is why students in junior high schools still cannot master the cognitive aspects of HOTS. Setyarini et al. (2018) state that this problem is very less desirable for research. Therefore, the researcher decided to examine this problem to find out how of junior high school students develop in the cognitive aspects of HOTS.

II. METHOD

In this study, the researcher used a qualitative approach method. According to Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun (2012), a qualitative approach is a research study that investigates the quality of relationships, activities, situations and materials. The author chose a qualitative approach because it can describe the situation of learning English in the field so that it can answer the questions in this study. The design used is classroom action research, which will focus on how teacher teach and how students develop their cognitive aspects in HOTS. Techniques in data collection that will be used in this study to conduct observations and interviews. Observation activities are carried out in order to see how the teacher and students improve the cognitive aspects of higher-order thinking skills by using storytelling. The researcher will analyze every lesson in class, starting from how the teacher teaches the material using storytelling and how the students respond during the lesson.

Meanwhile, interview data are needed to investigate teacher and students' responses to improving the cognitive aspects of HOTS abilities using storytelling. In addition, the instrument used in this study was field notes which aimed to collect all information while in the field to see how they responded to the research. This instrument is really needed to find out how the results of research on how storytelling has an

effect on improving cognitive aspects of HOTS in research that has been conducted.

In analyzing the data, the researcher will enter the class as a passive participant. Then, the writer will observe the learning activities between teachers and students in class without disturbing learning. The researcher will observe every learning process by the teacher and students in teaching HOTS through storytelling. The researcher will verify each activity and also the possibility that it will occur in the observation checklist that has been prepared. The results of the observations are recorded and transcribed into notes so that they can answer research questions regarding the use of storytelling in improving students' HOTS. In addition to the results of observations, the writer will also record the answers from the teacher and students during interviews and then their answers will be summed up to answer research questions. The participants involved in this research are one teacher and thirty three students in one grade nine at SMP PGRI Cicalengka. Researcher will analyze how teachers and students learn using storytelling to improve cognitive aspects of HOTS.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Result

In this section, the researcher will discuss the results obtained from observations, interviews and field notes while the research. Participants in this study were one English teacher and thirty-three students of Class IX-C at SMP PGRI Cicalengka.

1. Cycle I

Based on the results of observations, in the first cycle the teacher entered the class and started learning well and was able to pay attention to each student, then students returned the greeting that the teacher gave. Then the teacher begins to deliver material about the narrative text, definition, structure and characteristics in narrative text. When the teacher explained, the students looked quite good and focused on paying attention to the teacher and were quite active. After explaining the material, the teacher asked the students to see how much they understood the material that had been presented. The teacher asks, starting from the beginning of the material, what includes narrative text and gives tips on how to answer every questions about narrative text later quickly. After they begin

to understand a narrative text, the teacher begins to tell their students that they will tell a story, where the teacher will begin to apply the storytelling method in learning. The teacher conveys how to tell stories properly and correctly so that listeners can understand the story's contents.

After that, the teacher begins to tell a story entitled "The Singing Turtle" by paying attention to every intonation, gesture and expression. In telling the story, the teacher only relies on the text and his skills in storytelling without any media aids to tell the story. In this activity, there is plenty in terms of delivering material and telling stories using the storytelling method, the teacher is very good at this. However, when the teacher tells stories, some students who pay less attention. After telling the story, the teacher asks about the characters in the story, what is the background of the story and what are the problems in the story and how to solve them. Students can easily answer each character in the story and where the setting is; therefore students can reach level one in the HOTS cognitive aspect, namely analyzing. However, at the second level, namely evaluating related problems in the story and how to solve them, some have not reached this level.

2. Cycle II

In the second cycle, the teacher assigned them to find interesting stories to read in front of the class. In this cycle, students tell stories in front of the class and analyze stories together. Students tell stories that they have searched before; some of them need help in pronunciation and need to pay attention to intonation, gestures and expressions in storytelling. However, some students also managed to tell stories well even though they did not master pronunciation well. During this activity, students pay close attention and note every important part of the story. During the discussion, students expressed their opinion about the stories told by their friends in front of the class. In this cycle, it was seen that there was progress where students were increasingly able to analyze stories well after several students came forward to tell their stories. Therefore, in this cycle, progress in the second cognitive level, namely evaluating, is increasing,

although there are some students still cannot reach this level. After the students started to understand, the teacher again gave them the task of honing their skills further by assigning them to make a story synopsis. During this activity, some students seemed to have no difficulty in expressing their ideas. However, some students still could not complete the task and the teacher tried to help students in this activity, how to put ideas into writing.

Meanwhile, based on the results of interviews with teacher regarding their opinions regarding storytelling techniques to improve cognitive aspects in High Order Thinking Skills, namely: 1) this technique is quite effective to be used in improving students' way of thinking; 2) the storytelling technique makes students more independent in solving each problem; 3) storytelling techniques facilitate learning activities in narrative text material. In addition, fifteen out of thirty-three students admitted that studying narrative text material with storytelling techniques made it easier for them to analyze every problem in the story, and the second eighteen out of thirty-three students agreed that with storytelling they understood the material of narrative text better. Therefore, there has been a development from the first cycle to the second cycle, that with the story telling technique the cognitive abilities in the HOTS aspects of students have increased. However, in terms of creating students it still has yet to reach this level perfectly.

B. Discussion

Cognitive abilities aspects of students in HOTS at the junior high school level are still need to be mastered, because HOTS is more widely applied in high schools or college students (Afshar & Rahimi, 2017 in Setyarini et al., 2018). However, several techniques that can be used to improve students' cognitive abilities in HOTS, one of which is storytelling. According to Malan (1991), cited in Rahmansyah and Pricilia (2018) defines that storytelling is a storytelling activity based on oral tradition. Storytelling is an effort someone makes to convey the contents of the storyteller's feelings and the contents of the story to children orally. Additionally, Dujmovi (2006), cited in Choo et al. (2020), said that storytelling is the art of telling a story from memory, not from reading. Loban (1972: 521),

cited in Rahmansyah and Pricilia (2018) suggests that storytelling activities motivate in developing awareness, expanding the imagination of the child and parents or activating storytelling activities at every opportunity. Storytelling is a process of constant variation, depending on the storyteller's memories, talents or goals (Anderson, 2002 as cited in Choo et al., 2020). Storytelling activities can have a positive impact on students, as stated by Akhyak & Indrawan (2013) as cited in Dewi (2021) whereby storytelling, students can more easily digest each story that is read because storytelling can give them motivation, meaning and fluency, awareness of language, and stimulation of students in telling stories or expressing their opinions.

Based on the findings that have been obtained by researchers from observations and field notes during the study, it was found that students had not mastered the cognitive aspects of HOTS in narrative text material. Where they only master the basics, such as who the characters are and where the events of the story are located. When the teacher asks about any conflicts in the story, students still answer soberly without any arguments about how to resolve the conflict. However, they can answer any questions regarding the nature of the characters in the text. These results are similar to the research conducted by Setyarini et al. (2018), where students' skills were limited in knowledge and understanding at the time of learning. Where students have not reached a higher level, namely evaluating and creating, the level of student thinking is still at the level of Low Order Thinking Skills (LOTS).

Then it was found that the teacher really mastered storytelling skills well during storytelling activities. The teacher is very good at expressing every sentence with gestures and strong intonation. However, when giving questions to students, the teacher seemed to ask more questions that did not make students think more broadly. Teachers ask more about "what, who and where". If students answer this question, they will answer soberly with what they have read and heard in the story. These results are similar to the results of research conducted by Setiawati and Setyarini (2018), where when conducting storytelling activities the teacher only focuses on questions that seem closed, such as "Who is this? What do ants do? What happened to the Grasshopper?", where these questions cannot

stimulate their HOTS abilities. According to Ellis and Brewster (2002) as cited in Povey (2019) that the focus questions that should be asked during storytelling so that the activity comes alive are: 1) connecting the story with the listener's life; 2) coming up with languages such as words and answers; 3) find out what they already know; 4) arouse curiosity about what they already know; 4) arouse curiosity about characters, places, and events; 5) focus on certain things; 6) encourage predictions; 7) check the progress of understanding; 8) encourage thought and reflection; 9) show interest in their response with follow-up questions.

It was also found that communication between teachers was indeed good during storytelling activities. However, like the statement above, the teacher only focuses on the questions "what, who and where" which cannot make students argue. Therefore, the relationship between the teacher and the students during this storytelling activity seemed boring and unpleasant. Based on Dujmovi (2003), cited in Choo et al. (2020), storytelling is a possibility where students can relate stories to their own lives so that they can understand every human behaviour. With this statement, the teacher does not try to build more intensive relationships when storytelling is to build life in the classroom and hone the cognitive abilities aspects of students' HOTS. The role of the teacher in improving the cognitive abilities in the HOTS aspect is very important; based on the findings of this study the teacher is still not able to build a really pleasant classroom atmosphere and based on the results of interviews, the teacher said that with storytelling she had no difficulties but thought that this technique would make bored students. With her statement, she did not try to build the class into a more pleasant atmosphere. The results of this study are the same as the results of research conducted by Setyarini (2018) where teachers experience difficulties in helping students to improve HOTS skills with storytelling techniques. The teachers feel they are unsure about the technique regarding how important it is to integrate thinking skills into the learning process.

Based on the research results in cycle II, the teacher prepared more mature concepts. Where this time, the teacher tries to invite students to tell stories. Students were asked to

find story texts in the fable genre at the previous meeting, understand and analyze them and then tell them in front of the class. Before the students started, the teacher again practised telling the story correctly by paying attention to intonation, gestures and expressions, which is where this activity is called pre-activity. According to Wright (2003), cited in Setyarini and Ling (2019), the success of storytelling depends on what the teacher does before he starts. So the success of this storytelling technique in improving the cognitive abilities aspects of students' HOTS depends on what the teacher prepares and what the teacher does. After that, the students came to the front of the class one by one and then told the stories they had been looking for before, even though they had difficulties with the intonation and pronunciation of English. In this activity, significant developments were found where they expressed their opinions more about how their friends told stories and how they analyzed stories and the teacher's role in giving feedback to students. In this process, the teacher succeeded in making the classroom atmosphere more active and there was a relationship between the teacher and students and students between students. This process is in line with what has been said by Yang et al. (2016) as cited in Setyarini and Ling (2019), that HOTS abilities can be obtained through an active learning environment provided in the classroom where students are placed as learning resources and thinkers who make the learning process better.

After the students narrated the story, the teacher then assigned the students again to make a synopsis of a one-paragraph story with a free genre so that they could express their ideas freely. This task is intended to determine how students develop cognitive abilities in aspects of HOTS. Based on study's result, some students had difficulty expressing their ideas and only a few succeeded in expressing their ideas properly. Therefore, at the level of creating, students still cannot fully master it. These results are similar to research conducted by Setiawati and Setyarini (2020) wherein the second cycle carried out by researchers at the creation stage, students were still at a very low stage. Only a few of them gave arguments and put forward more creative ideas. The students only gave their opinions on the stories they had read and

listened to, not even coming up with more creative ideas. Therefore it is stated that at the level of creation, students still need help to achieve it perfectly.

As for the challenges teachers face when learning takes place, teachers have difficulty managing time because learning time is limited. Then, the teacher also has difficulty teaching students to tell stories properly and correctly and how to pronounce English vocabulary properly and correctly, considering that students still do not master English very deeply. It was also found that the facilities and infrastructure available at schools needed to be completed, such as the absence of a projector to apply storytelling techniques using media. Wiwikananda and Susanti (2022) say that using media in storytelling can encourage them to develop their ability to think together with the characters in photos and videos. This problem hinders teachers from being more creative. However, teacher are looking for other solutions, namely by inviting students to contribute more to learning activities where they are asked to tell stories as well. The results of this study are similar to the results of research conducted by Setyarini and Ling (2019), where teachers find it difficult to teach HOTS learning to students because time is so limited and lack of experience, and the class is too large.

However, this research yielded results drawn from student interview data. The students liked the storytelling technique carried out in cycle II because it was very fun and not boring and then it really helped them understand each main idea and conflict in the story and how to solve it. Apart from that, it makes them more active in class, communicative and compact in discussions. The results of this study are similar to research that has been conducted by Moradi and Feng (2019), which carried out digital storytelling techniques; even though the application is slightly different, in this case there are similarities where using storytelling, students can express themselves more, students can further strengthen and improve their interpersonal collaboration and communication skills, to ask them to collect as much information as possible in the story and how to solve every problem in the story. Based on Akhyak and Indrawan (2013) as cited in Dewi (2021), suggests that there are several advantages to storytelling, namely: 1) students will

feel that the teacher is giving them something very individual; 2) easier to understand the contents of the story.

IV. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

A. Conclusion

As a final observation, this research concludes several important points. First, the role of the teacher in learning is very influential in the comfort of students in learning; the teacher has a very important role so that they can make their students develop and master the cognitive abilities aspects of HOTS. Second, in the storytelling technique, the teacher must pay close attention to every word that is spoken with correct pronunciation, as well as how to convey a good story with intonation, gestures and also expressions so that students don not get bored listening to the story being told. Third, it was found that with the storytelling technique, students better understood the learning material and found it easier to express their opinions. Fourth, media is needed in teaching storytelling techniques so that students can more quickly develop the cognitive aspects of HOTS. Therefore the results of this study succeeded in answering questions from research objections where by using story telling techniques students can achieve the cognitive skills of HOTS, they are can analyze and evaluate story content well and can create story essays even though they are not completely perfect.

However, in the research that has been carried out, there are still some things that still need to be resolved. The teacher has to create more fun storytelling techniques so that students feel more learning in the classroom is very enjoyable and can help them develop even more by taking the initiative to prepare media in the form of pictures or videos so that students are more interested in learning. In addition, there are still some students who still cannot master cognitive skills in HOTS. Some of them only master the first level, namely mastering analytical skills, where they cannot fully master the creative stage. Therefore, further studies should involve several teachers and students in order to solve problems more comprehensively in improving cognitive abilities in aspects of HOTS in Indonesia, especially at the junior high school level.

B. Suggestion

In this study, the development of High Order Thinking Skills in Indonesian students utilizing storytelling approaches, it was discovered that this issue needs to be researched further. This study might be an option for future researchers who want to develop HOTS abilities in students, particularly those in junior high school. It is intended that this research will be expanded to be more thorough. And it is hoped that by conducting this research, schools and teachers can further improve facilities and infrastructure in schools so that learning is more controlled which will positively impact the development of students' High Order Thinking Skills.

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