

The Use of Fable Stories as Learning Media for the Beginner Students of BIPA

Sirmawan Agustinus Balsnimandra Telaumbanua
sirmawantelaumbanua@gmail.com

Jamaluddin Nasution
jamaluddinnasution@unprimdn.ac.id

Romian H Sibarani
romiansibaranimaruli@gmail.com

Yovita Simangunsong
yovitafebrina.yf@gmail.com

Sherine Alexandra
wialexandrasherine@gmail.com

Universitas Prima Indonesia

ABSTRACT

This research aims to examine the use of fable stories as a medium for beginner-level BIPA learning through literature studies. BIPA is the abbreviation from *Bahasa Indonesia bagi Penutur Asing* or like Indonesian for Foreign Speakers. The method used is a descriptive-qualitative review of literature related to fable stories, language learning, and educational technology. The purpose of the study is to examine how fable stories can be used effectively as a medium for beginner-level BIPA learning. The results show that fable stories are effective in improving learners' language skills and cultural understanding. However, challenges such as adaptation of teaching materials, language complexity, and limited teachers need attention. Digital technology and integration of fables into the curriculum can be innovative solutions. With simple narratives, interesting storylines, and universal moral messages, fables can improve language skills, such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking, while introducing Indonesian cultural values. In conclusion, fable stories have great potential to support BIPA learning, although further development is needed to overcome the existing challenges. Further in-depth research on the effectiveness of fable stories in the context of BIPA needs to be conducted to provide a stronger scientific basis for the development of this teaching method.

Keywords: BIPA; Fables; Indonesian Language; Language Skills

INTRODUCTION

BIPA is an abbreviation from phrase “Bahasa Indonesia bagi Penutur Asing” (later written BIPA). BIPA is also known as “Indonesian for Foreign Speakers”. The term

BIPA is related to the learning Indonesian language activities for those who do not speak Indonesian as a mother tongue. This program is an Indonesian language teaching which aims to introduce Indonesian language and culture to the international community. This program is one of the important cultural diplomacy strategies, as well as supporting Indonesia's competitiveness in the global arena. In BIPA learning, the material presented includes linguistic and cultural aspects to provide a comprehensive understanding to students (Suyitno, 2022).

The history of BIPA dates back to the 1950s, when foreign students began studying in Indonesia through student exchange programs. In the 1980s, the program began to be better structured and received official support from the Indonesian government. The establishment of institutions such as the Language Development and Guidance Agency further strengthened BIPA's position as an integral part of foreign language teaching in Indonesia (Rohimah, 2018).

Today, BIPA teaching has grown rapidly, both domestically and abroad. Internationally, the program is present in universities and educational institutions in various countries such as Australia, Japan, South Korea, Germany, and the United States. Domestically, BIPA programs are offered by universities and language institutes, making Indonesia the center of BIPA learning (Amalia & Damaianti, 2019). With an extensive teaching network, BIPA attracts thousands of participants from various cultural backgrounds every year.

Technological advances also play a significant role in BIPA teaching innovation. The utilization of digital media, such as learning applications, online modules, and webinars, has facilitated access to learning for learners, especially those outside Indonesia. Initiatives such as BIPA Digital launched by the Ministry of Education and Culture show how technology has become an effective tool to support modern language teaching (Miko & Nasution, 2023).

Amidst these developments, interest in Indonesian language learning continues to increase, especially in Asia and Europe. Driving factors include bilateral cooperation, the appeal of Indonesian culture, and the role of the Indonesian diaspora in introducing language and culture. However, challenges remain, such as limited qualified teachers, adaptation of learning materials, and access to learning in certain regions (Simamora et al., 2023). Great opportunities remain with the increasing global awareness of the importance of cultural diversity.

The rapid development of BIPA, as explained above, makes the form of teaching must be more innovative. One innovative approach in BIPA learning is the use of fable stories as a teaching medium, especially for beginner levels. Fable stories, with their simple narratives and universal moral messages, are considered an effective medium to help learners understand the language contextually while introducing Indonesian cultural values (Maharany, 2017). They provide a fun and relevant learning experience for learners from different cultural backgrounds.

However, the implementation of this method also faces challenges. One of the obstacles is the limitation of relevant and interesting teaching materials. In addition, the process of adapting fable stories to suit the needs of novice learners, including the simplification of vocabulary and sentence structure, requires special attention (Nur, 2023). The absence of practical guidance for teachers is also an obstacle in maximizing the potential of using fables in the classroom.

On the other hand, technology offers great opportunities to optimize this method. Fable stories can be packaged in digital form, such as animated videos, interactive applications, or electronic books with attractive illustrations. This allows learners to learn independently while increasing the attractiveness of learning. Research shows that the use of fable stories has great potential in improving language skills, including listening, reading, speaking and writing. In addition, they are effective in conveying cultural values in an engaging and non-burdensome way. Therefore, further studies are needed to empirically explore the effectiveness of using fable stories in the context of BIPA learning.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept and Purpose of BIPA Program

The Indonesian Language for Foreign Speakers (BIPA) program is designed to introduce Indonesian language and culture to the international community, making it one of the important efforts in the promotion of Indonesian culture (J. Nasution, 2020). BIPA serves as a means of language teaching that integrates linguistic elements and local cultural values (Mulyaningsih & Khuzaemah, 2023). In addition to improving language understanding, BIPA has strategic goals in cultural diplomacy, strengthening Indonesia's position as a country with rich cultural potential in the global arena (Raharja, 2023). The program is also recognized as an instrument to improve relations between nations through language learning (J. Nasution, 2022).

History and Development of the BIPA Program

The need to introduce Indonesian to the international community began in the 1950s, when foreign students participated in student exchange programs in Indonesia (Wijaya & Elita Ulfiana, 2020). The BIPA program became more structured in the 1980s after the Indonesian government realized the importance of teaching Indonesian to support international relations. The establishment of institutions such as the Language Development and Development Agency became an important milestone in supporting the sustainability of this program. In its development, BIPA became part of official language teaching with professionally designed curricula and training programs (Widianto, 2021).

Spread of BIPA Program

BIPA programs are now present in various countries, including Australia, Japan, South Korea, and Germany, through the cooperation of Indonesian universities, educational institutions, and cultural communities abroad (Muliastuti, 2018). Leading universities such as the University of Indonesia and Gadjah Mada University also promote the program internationally. In Indonesia itself, BIPA is offered by language institutes and universities, making the country a center for learning Indonesian language and culture. The spread of this program reflects the growing interest in Indonesian as one of the strategic languages for understanding Southeast Asian culture (Purbarani et al., 2021).

Fable Stories as BIPA Learning Media

Fables have long been recognized as an effective learning medium due to their simple narratives and universal moral messages (Zulita, 2021). In the context of BIPA, fables can be an interesting tool to introduce language and culture simultaneously. The use of fable stories helps learners understand new vocabulary and sentence structures naturally, as well as recognize cultural values inherent in Indonesian folklore.

Challenges in Utilizing Fable Stories

The main obstacle in using fables is the lack of customized teaching materials for foreign learners of different ability levels. Fables need to be simplified in terms of vocabulary, sentence structure, and cultural context to be relevant and easily understood by entry-level learners (Ningtiyas, 2023). Teachers also often face difficulties in integrating fable stories into the BIPA learning curriculum effectively.

Benefits of Fable Stories in BIPA Learning

Research shows that fable stories are effective in improving language skills, including reading, writing, listening, and speaking (Vania & Rizal, 2023). They also introduce Indonesian cultural values in an engaging and non-burdensome way to learners, making them a suitable method for beginner-level learners. Nonetheless, further research is needed to measure the effectiveness of this method in an empirical context, particularly in BIPA learning.

METHOD

Design and Samples

This research employs a descriptive-qualitative approach aimed at identifying, analyzing, and synthesizing previous studies on the use of fable stories in beginner-level Indonesian for Speakers of Other Languages (BIPA) learning. The design is

descriptive in nature, focusing on how fables are applied in the learning process for BIPA students, with an emphasis on the process and meaning of the educational practices involved. Qualitative research is particularly suitable for understanding trends, benefits, challenges, and opportunities for innovation in the field of language education. It allows for in-depth interpretation of facts, phenomena, and events as they naturally occur (Nasution, 2023; Harahap, 2020). The study uses purposive sampling, a technique commonly applied in qualitative research where samples are selected based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. The sample includes literature that discusses fable stories, language teaching methodologies, BIPA learning, and the role of technology in education. Sources were gathered from academic databases such as Google Scholar, SpringerLink, Scopus, and PubMed, with inclusion criteria focused on relevance to beginner-level BIPA learning, the use of fable stories as instructional media, and publication dates between 2013 and 2023 to ensure contemporary relevance.

Instrument and Procedures

The primary instrument used in this study is document analysis, which involves the systematic review and evaluation of printed or digital academic materials. The research procedure includes collecting and organizing literature that explores the use of fable stories in language instruction, particularly within the context of beginner-level BIPA learners. Each selected article is reviewed and coded based on specific themes such as instructional strategy, use of media, learner engagement, and teaching outcomes. The process also includes filtering sources according to the established inclusion criteria and applying a structured analytical framework to ensure consistency and objectivity across the reviewed literature.

Data Analysis

The data analysis follows a qualitative content analysis method. This involves thoroughly reading and interpreting the collected literature to extract key themes, trends, and insights related to the use of fable stories in BIPA instruction. The analysis aims to identify the benefits, challenges, and opportunities for innovation associated with fables as a language learning medium. Thematic coding is used to group the findings into categories such as pedagogical approaches, learner motivation, language acquisition results, and the incorporation of multimedia or storytelling techniques. These themes are then synthesized to draw conclusions about the overall effectiveness and pedagogical implications of using fable stories in beginner-level BIPA learning.

RESULT AND DISUSSION

Having collected the data from the results of several researchers who used fables in teaching, the researcher can conclude the results of their findings. The data collection carried out by the researchers shows the findings as listed in the table below:

Table 1. Previous Research

No	Authors	Year	Research Title	Methods	Main Results
1	Putri, A.	2018	Efektivitas Penggunaan Fabel dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia	Experiment	The use of fable stories improved students' reading skills and vocabulary comprehension.
2	Hidayat, R.	2019	Cerita Fabel sebagai Media Pengenalan Budaya Lokal untuk Pelajar BIPA	Qualitative	Fables help foreign students understand Indonesian cultural values in a fun way.
3	Astuti, D.	2020	Peningkatan Motivasi Belajar Bahasa melalui Cerita Fabel Interaktif	Study Cases	Interactive fable stories increase learning motivation and student engagement in the learning process.
4	Rahayu, S.	2021	Pemanfaatan Fabel dalam Pengajaran BIPA Tingkat Pemula	Qualitative	Fables are relevant for beginner levels as they have simple narratives and strong moral messages.
5	Mulyani, T.	2020	Adaptasi Cerita Fabel untuk Pembelajaran Bahasa Tingkat Dasar	Qualitative	Adaptation of fables is necessary to simplify the vocabulary and sentence structure for the beginner level.
6	Santoso, B.	2020	Efek Cerita Fabel terhadap Keterampilan Berbahasa Peserta BIPA	Quasi-experiment	The use of fables significantly improved learners' speaking and writing skills.
7	Halim, M.	2021	Kesiapan Pengajar BIPA dalam Menggunakan Cerita Fabel	Survey	Many teachers need training to make optimal use of fables in the classroom.

			sebagai Media Pembelajaran		
8	Ardi, F.	2020	Pengembangan Media Digital Berbasis Fabel untuk Pembelajaran Bahasa	Research and Development	Fable-based digital media, such as animated videos, increase the attractiveness and effectiveness of learning.
9	Nugraha, A.	2020	Integrasi Cerita Fabel dalam Kurikulum BIPA Tingkat Pemula	Qualitative	Fables can be integrated into the curriculum to provide a structured approach.
10	Lestari, I.	2021	Cerita Fabel Bilingual untuk Pembelajaran BIPA	Developmental Study	Bilingual fables help learners understand the target language while learning the cultural context.

In recent years, research related to the use of fable stories in learning Indonesian for Speakers of Other Languages (BIPA) has shown various findings that illustrate the effectiveness of this media to improve language skills as well as cultural understanding of beginner-level learners. Based on research conducted by several researchers, fable stories are identified as having a number of profound benefits.

First, the use of fable stories in BIPA learning is proven to improve learners' language skills, especially in reading and understanding new vocabulary. Research by Putri (2018) shows that fable stories are effective in introducing new vocabulary to learners, especially with simple narratives and easy-to-follow storylines. Learners can easily understand new words through the context of the story, which leads to a deeper understanding of the language. This is in line with Hidayat's (2019) findings that fables help learners understand Indonesian cultural values, which is the main goal of BIPA learning. Fables often contain moral messages that reflect the culture and ethics of Indonesian society, presented in a fun and easy-to-understand way.

In addition, fables also serve to increase learners' motivation to learn. As stated by Astuti (2020), the use of interactive fable stories can encourage students to be more involved in the learning process. This is because the characters in fable stories are often interesting and easily accepted by learners from various cultural backgrounds. Stories that contain elements of humor, surprise, and clear moral lessons, can keep learners' attention and make them more motivated to learn the language.

However, while fable stories have many benefits, research has also identified some challenges that need attention. One of them is the limitation in relevant and appropriate teaching materials for beginner-level learners. As found by Mulyani (2020), available fable stories often contain vocabulary or sentence structures that are too complex for beginner learners. This requires teachers to adapt the story to suit the learners' language level. Without proper adaptation, fable stories may be difficult to understand, which can reduce their effectiveness as a learning medium.

Another challenge found in the research is the readiness of teachers to optimally utilize fable stories. According to Halim (2021), many BIPA teachers are not fully prepared to use fable stories effectively, especially in terms of story adaptation and teaching techniques. The use of fable stories as a learning medium requires special skills in delivering the material so as not only to teach the language, but also the culture contained in the story. Therefore, special training for teachers is needed to ensure they can optimize the use of fable stories in BIPA learning.

One of the biggest opportunities that can be utilized to overcome these challenges is the use of digital technology. Research by Ardi (2020) shows that the development of fable-based digital media, such as animated videos or interactive applications, can increase the attractiveness and effectiveness of learning. Technology provides flexibility in the way fable stories are presented, allowing learners to learn independently and more interactively. It also helps learners who may be outside Indonesia to access learning materials more easily. Thus, integrating technology in BIPA teaching can be a solution to overcome the problem of limited teaching materials and provide a more interesting learning experience.

In addition, some studies show that the integration of fable stories into the BIPA curriculum can provide a more organized structure in learning. Nugraha (2020) suggests that fable stories can be incorporated into the curriculum to provide systematic and gradual learning, from the introduction of basic vocabulary to the teaching of Indonesian cultural values. This allows learners to learn the language in a more contextualized and meaningful way. Overall, although the use of fable stories in BIPA learning offers many benefits, there are some aspects that still need attention, such as story adaptation and teacher readiness. The utilization of technology and the integration of fable stories into a more structured curriculum can overcome some of these challenges, opening up new opportunities for improving the effectiveness of BIPA learning.

While fable stories in BIPA learning show many positive potentials, previous research also shows that the main challenge lies in the lack of materials that can be directly adapted to the needs of beginner-level learners. The limitations of existing teaching materials still lead to a lack of variety in the use of fable stories that are able to reach various cultural backgrounds of learners. This creates a gap in the application of fables as an effective language teaching medium, especially at the global level which has very diverse learner characteristics.

In addition, while technology offers great opportunities to enhance the learning experience, not all learners or teachers have equal access to this technology. This can create inequalities in the learning experience, especially for learners studying abroad or in areas that have limited access to technology. Therefore, while technology can enrich learning, conventional teaching is still needed as a counterbalance.

The use of fable stories improves students' reading ability and vocabulary comprehension. Because with fables, students are motivated to memorize new vocabulary indirectly. The fun activity makes them want to look up the meaning of the word in the fable in the Indonesian dictionary. Fables help foreign students understand Indonesian cultural values in a fun way. Folk stories or regional stories in the form of fables make foreign students understand Indonesian culture. This is positive because BIPA teachers can teach Indonesian culture through fable stories, for example the story of deer and crocodile, tiger in West Sumatra, the story of fish in Lake Toba, and others.

Interactive fable stories increase learning motivation and student engagement in the learning process. Both children, teenagers and adults are very interested in fictional stories, fairy tales, legends, especially if these stories are packaged in fables. Fables are relevant for beginner levels because they have simple narratives and strong moral messages. Fable stories are composed of only a few paragraphs so that students do not need to remember many things in the new language they are learning.

Adaptation of fable stories is necessary to simplify vocabulary and sentence structure for the beginner level. With simple vocabulary, students will remember and memorize them more easily. The use of fables significantly improves students' speaking and writing skills. Many fable stories are used as "story-telling" activities in BIPA classes. Fables can be integrated into the curriculum to provide a structured approach and bilingual fables help students understand the target language while learning the cultural context.

On the other hand, many teachers need training to optimally utilize fables in the classroom. The teachers are not yet able to create new fable stories in addition to the existing fables. Fables are also sometimes irrelevant to the times and students' critical thinking about stories. Fable-based digital media, such as animated videos, do increase the attractiveness and effectiveness of learning, but on the other hand, many teachers do not have digital skills. This requires collaboration between BIPA teachers and animation experts and computer program experts.

Finally, challenges related to teacher readiness also reflect the importance of more in-depth training. This training should not only include storytelling techniques, but also the ability to adapt and deepen the cultural aspects contained in the stories. This will help teachers not only in teaching the language, but also in transferring a more comprehensive cultural understanding to learners. Thus, although fable stories

have many benefits, a more holistic approach is needed in overcoming the challenges and maximizing the potential of their use in BIPA learning.

CONCLUSION

Fable stories have great potential as learning media in beginner-level BIPA programs. With simple narratives, interesting storylines, and universal moral messages, fables can improve language skills, such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking, while introducing Indonesian cultural values. However, its implementation still faces a number of challenges, including the adaptation of relevant and engaging teaching materials, limited skilled teachers, and unequal access to technology. Therefore, although effective and interesting, efforts are needed to overcome these obstacles so that the potential of fable stories can be maximally utilized in BIPA learning.

It is necessary to develop teaching materials that are more relevant and suitable for beginner level, both in terms of vocabulary simplicity and sentence structure. In addition, increasing the competence of teachers through intensive training needs to be done so that they are able to optimally utilize fable stories in learning. The utilization of technology such as interactive applications and fable-based digital media can also be a solution to increase the effectiveness and attractiveness of this method. Teaching using fables will also stimulate learners to further enrich their vocabulary. In other words, there is also a need to integrate digital-based BIPA teaching that adopts fables in the context of reading.

Further in-depth research on the effectiveness of fable stories in the context of BIPA needs to be conducted to provide a stronger scientific basis for the development of this teaching method. Digitalization of BIPA teaching is also expected to be able to introduce Indonesia to the world and function as a form of diplomacy through language.

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