Some Measures for Organizing the Teaching of Reading Comprehension of Modern Vietnamese Short Stories Using the Project-Based Learning Method

Đoan Manh Tung

Graduate student K26 Linguistics and Literature Teaching Methodology, Faculty of Philology, Hanoi Pedagogical University 2, Vietnam
Email address: doanmanhtung2512@gmail.com

Abstract— *Project-based learning is one of the innovative teaching methods highly regarded in the teaching of Literature in high schools. This method helps students become more engaged and passionate about hands-on practice, fostering their critical thinking and awareness, as well as instilling perseverance and determination in their work. Moreover, through project-based learning, students also develop a sense of responsibility, which contributes to the growth of essential skills such as collaboration, problem-solving, and communication. For these reasons, this paper focuses on the research topic "Some Measures for Teaching Reading Comprehension of Modern Vietnamese Short Stories for High School Students through Project-Based Learning." The goal is to propose methods for organizing the teaching of modern Vietnamese short stories through project-based learning, which contributes to addressing pressing questions in the teaching of reading comprehension in general, and reading comprehension of modern Vietnamese short stories in particular*

Keywords— *Text comprehension, Modern Vietnamese short stories, Project-based learning method, High school students.*

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the teaching of reading comprehension in Vietnamese Literature classes in high schools has seen significant positive changes. With the aim of promoting students' active, independent, and creative learning, students are being placed at the center of the learning process, becoming "co-creative readers" and "dialogue partners" with teachers, peers, and texts to explore knowledge and develop their competencies. However, there are still many challenges in developing reading comprehension skills and enhancing students' competencies.

Project-based learning is one of the innovative teaching methods highly regarded in the teaching of Literature in high schools. This method helps students become more engaged and passionate about hands-on practice, fostering their critical thinking and awareness, as well as instilling perseverance and determination in their work. Moreover, through project-based learning, students also develop a sense of responsibility, which contributes to the growth of essential skills such as collaboration, problem-solving, and communication.

For these reasons, this paper focuses on the research topic "Some Measures for Teaching Reading Comprehension of Modern Vietnamese Short Stories for High School Students through Project-Based Learning." The goal is to propose methods for organizing the teaching of modern Vietnamese short stories through project-based learning, which contributes to addressing pressing questions in the teaching of reading comprehension in general, and reading comprehension of modern Vietnamese short stories in particular.

II. RESEARCH CONTENT

2.1. Concept of Project-Based Learning

"The word 'project', derived from the Latin word 'proicere', is generally understood as a proposal, pattern or plan implemented to achieve a specific goal. The concept of a project is widely used in most socio-economic fields: production, business, scientific research, and social management. The concept has transitioned from the socio-economic field into education, not only in terms of educational development projects but also as a teaching method." [1]

"The Project Method, also known as project-based learning (PBL), is understood as a teaching method that directs students toward acquiring knowledge and skills through solving a situational problem, referred to as a project, that simulates their living and working environment." [2]

According to to Thomas Markham: "Program-based learning A program of study is a method of teaching. in the course of which students investigate and solve real-world problems or challenges, thereby developing critical thinking, creativity and collaboration skills." [5]

John W. Thomas also suggests: "Project-based learning is an educational approach in which students undertake complex, challenging tasks related to real-world issues, requiring the integration of knowledge from various disciplines." [6]

The Buck Institute for Education (BIE) defines it as: "Project-based learning is a pedagogy where students engage in exploring and solving a real-world question, problem, or challenge over an extended period, helping to develop deep learning skills and comprehensive knowledge." [3]

Krajcik & Blumenfeld state: "Project-based learning is a process where students engage in investigating and solving real-world problems, developing critical thinking, collaboration, and communication skills in the process." [3]

According to to Larmer, Mergendoller and Boss: "Project-based learning is pedagogy. is a process in which students engage in research and solve a question or problem, promoting critical thinking, creativity and collaborative skills." [4]

Thus, we can understand project-based learning as an educational method where students engage in the learning process through the execution of real-world projects. This approach encourages learners to explore, investigate, and solve practical problems, helping them develop skills such as creative thinking, teamwork, and time management.

2.2. Measures for Organizing the Teaching of Reading Comprehension of Modern Vietnamese Short Stories through Project-Based Learning

2.2.1. Selecting Appropriate Project Content
a) Purpose of the Measure

In teaching reading comprehension of modern Vietnamese short stories through project-based learning, the main objective is to enable students to take ownership of their learning process and exploration of the literary work. The selection of project content aims to ensure:

- Alignment with educational goals and curriculum:
  o The project content must align with the high school curriculum, particularly focusing on developing students' abilities in reading comprehension, analysis, and appreciation of literature.
  o Projects should provide fundamental knowledge, enhance critical thinking, and encourage students to apply it in real life.
- Feasibility and practicality:
  o The project should be designed to fit students' levels, capabilities, and real-life conditions.
  o The content should be closely related to students' lives and experiences, making it easier for them to engage and participate enthusiastically.
- Diversity and richness:
  o Choose short stories with a variety of themes, styles, and periods of creation to help students approach different perspectives on modern Vietnamese literature.
  o Projects should encourage students to delve into cultural, social, historical, and human aspects through the literary works.
- Interaction and collaboration:
  o Projects should create opportunities for students to work in groups, discuss, and learn from each other.
  o Encourage students' active participation in the research, analysis, and presentation process.
- Comprehensive skill and competency development:
  o The project content should help students develop essential skills such as information search, analysis, synthesis, presentation, and teamwork.
  o Additionally, it should foster creativity, independence, and confidence in learning.
- Real-world relevance and application:
  o Projects should provide opportunities for students to connect and apply knowledge to real-life situations, helping them understand the value and significance of literary works in life.

o Encourage students to reflect on social, ethical, and human issues raised in short stories, thereby fostering critical thinking and social responsibility.

b) Content of the Measure

The content of project selection in teaching reading comprehension of modern Vietnamese short stories involves identifying project themes that suit students' abilities, interests, and learning needs. The content must closely relate to the text and allow students to fully utilize their creativity and critical thinking. Specific project content may include the following aspects:

- Themes of the work: Focus on prominent themes in modern Vietnamese short stories such as war, rural life, urbanization, social issues, and human life during the period of reform.
- Characters and personalities: Students can research the psychological development of characters, relationships between characters, and how historical and social contexts influence their fates.
- Narrative techniques: The project can revolve around how the author uses unique storytelling techniques, language, imagery, and other artistic devices to convey messages.
- Historical and social context: Investigate the correlation between the content of the short story and the social and cultural context of modern Vietnam.

c) Steps of Implementation

Step 1: Define learning objectives and project requirements
- Teachers need to clearly define the learning objectives for each lesson based on specific short stories. These objectives should align with the required knowledge, skills, and competencies that students must achieve and be suitable for the project-based learning method.
- From these objectives, the teacher proposes specific project requirements, such as exploring characters, analyzing themes, or expressing personal opinions about the work.

Step 2: Survey students' interests and capabilities
- Teachers organize activities to survey students' interests, capabilities, and enthusiasm regarding the work and related issues. This helps teachers design appropriate project content.
- The survey can be conducted through group discussions, questionnaires, or asking students to write a short paragraph about their initial impressions of the work.

Step 3: Select project content
- Based on the survey results, teachers analyze and select project content suitable for different student groups. This content must ensure a sufficient level of challenge for students to learn and grow, while also opening up creative exploration opportunities.
- Teachers provide a list of suggested topics, for example: "Analyze the psychological changes of the main character in the context of war," "Compare rural and urban imagery in modern Vietnamese short stories," or "Explore the language and style of a specific author." Students can choose one of these topics or propose their own under the teacher's guidance.

Selecting project content in teaching reading comprehension of modern Vietnamese short stories helps students identify appropriate learning projects. This lays the foundation for them to carry out the following steps.

2.2.2. Identifying Necessary Components for a Project

a) Purpose of the Approach: The purpose of identifying the necessary components for a learning project on modern Vietnamese short stories is to create a clear and effective framework that helps students engage with literary works in a positive, creative, and profound manner. Through this, the selected learning content will:

- Enhance students' ability to comprehend modern Vietnamese short stories, enabling them to grasp the content, meaning, and artistic value of the works.
- Foster critical thinking and creativity through project-based learning activities related to the content of the texts.
- Through project-based learning, students will develop teamwork, communication, and collaboration skills with classmates to accomplish shared tasks.
- Encourage students to relate and apply the knowledge gained to real-life situations, helping them see the relevance of literature to current social and cultural issues.
- Projects require students to take responsibility for planning, task execution, and time management, thus cultivating self-discipline and self-management in their studies.
- Through dynamic and engaging learning activities, students will find the subject of literature more appealing, thus boosting their motivation and passion for the subject.
- Projects demand that students synthesize information from multiple sources, analyze various aspects of the texts, and present creative solutions or learning products, helping them develop effective problem-solving skills.

b) Content of the Approach: When organizing the teaching of modern Vietnamese short stories using project-based learning methods, identifying the necessary content for the project is key to ensuring the success and effectiveness of the learning process.

Firstly, setting clear learning objectives is crucial for guiding the project. Objectives must be specific and clear, helping students understand what they need to achieve through the project. For example, objectives may include developing text analysis skills, creativity, and teamwork skills. When students clearly understand these goals, they will be more motivated in carrying out assigned tasks and can self-assess their progress throughout the learning process.

After determining the objectives, creating a detailed plan for the project is the next critical step. This plan should include specific steps, completion timelines for each phase, and necessary resources to support students. A detailed plan not only helps students gain an overview of the project process but also allows them to manage their time effectively, avoiding work overload close to the deadline.

Task delegation is also an important factor in organizing a learning project. Each student or group of students should be assigned specific tasks that match their skills and strengths. Clear task allocation helps avoid work overlap while ensuring that each student has a specific role, thereby enhancing responsibility and individual contribution to the group's success.

Throughout the project, organizing group work sessions allows students to exchange ideas, discuss, and support one another. These group sessions not only train students in teamwork but also create a positive learning environment where they can learn from each other's experiences, address emerging issues, and boost creativity through collaboration and idea-sharing.

Lastly, evaluation and review are indispensable steps in any learning project. Setting clear evaluation criteria allows both teachers and students to assess the project results objectively and fairly. The evaluation should include both presentation and academic content to ensure that students not only understand the material deeply but also develop the necessary soft skills. After the evaluation, organizing a review session for students to share experiences and learning outcomes offers an opportunity for them to reflect on the process, learn from successes and failures, and draw valuable lessons for future projects.

The above components not only help build an effective learning project but also encourage active student participation. Moreover, the project implementation process provides students with opportunities to develop a wide range of necessary skills, better preparing them for both their academic pursuits and future life.

c) Steps for Implementation:

Step 1: Planning

- Theme Development:
  o Choosing Texts: Teachers select modern Vietnamese short stories suitable for the 10th and 11th-grade curriculum that offer various aspects for students to explore.
  o Project Theme Identification: The project theme can revolve around elements like content, characters, themes, artistic style, or the historical and social contexts of the texts. Example: "Analyzing characters and exploring symbolic meaning in the short story *Giang* by Bảo Ninh," or "Exploring the social context in *Chí Phèo* by Nam Cao and its connection to contemporary reality."
- Objective Setting:
  o Students understand the content, meaning, and artistic value of modern Vietnamese short stories.
  o Students grasp the historical, social, and cultural context reflected in the texts.
  o Develop reading comprehension and text analysis skills.
  o Foster teamwork, critical thinking, creativity, and presentation skills.
  o Create excitement and motivation for learning, encouraging self-study and research.
  o Help students gain a deeper awareness of the literary and humanistic values of modern Vietnamese short stories.

Step 2: Project Execution
- Information Search and Collection: Teachers provide students with a list of official references, including textbooks, articles, and online resources. Students gather and analyze relevant information regarding the project's theme, covering the story's content, characters, context, theme, and artistic style.
- Information Processing and Product Creation: Students analyze collected data and create their project products such as essays, presentations, mind maps, posters, videos, or other creative outputs that reflect the core content and creative thinking.

Step 3: Project Evaluation and Summary
- Self-assessment: Students evaluate their process, assess the effectiveness of methods used, and compare results with initial objectives to gauge project success.
- Feedback from Teachers and Peers: After self-assessment, students receive feedback on both the process and final products. Teachers provide detailed evaluations, while peers offer insights for improvement. This step ensures continuous learning and skill development for future projects.

2.2.3. Flexible Use of Assessment Methods for Evaluating the Learning Outcomes of Modern Vietnamese Short Stories in Grades 10 and 11 through Project-Based Learning

2.2.3.1 Evaluation Criteria

a) Content Criteria:
>Understanding of the text:
>Students must demonstrate a deep understanding of the content, themes, and meanings of the modern Vietnamese short stories analyzed in the project. They should be able to link and analyze literary elements such as characters, situations, and settings within the text.
- Accuracy and Logic: The information and arguments presented in the project must be accurate, based on reliable references, and relevant to the text. Students' presentations and reasoning should be logical, coherent, well-structured, and support the viewpoints or opinions being presented.

b) Skills Criteria:
- Analytical and Critical Thinking Skills: Students must demonstrate their ability to analyze literary elements in the text, providing deep and critical insights. They are evaluated on how they use critical thinking to explore different aspects of the text and relate them to real-world issues.
- Teamwork Skills:
>This assesses the students' ability to cooperate and work in teams, including task delegation, interaction among members, and individual contributions to the project's success. The level of unity and effective coordination within the group is also a key criterion.
- Presentation Skills:
>Students' ability to present their ideas is assessed, including communication skills, clarity of expression,

and the use of supporting materials (slides, videos, posters, etc.) during the presentation. Their ability to answer questions and interact with the audience is also crucial.

c) Creativity Criteria:
- Creativity in the project product: Students should display creativity in how they approach and create their project, from selecting presentation tools to interpreting and analyzing content. Projects may include new, unique forms of expression, not only based on the text but also expanding ideas and connecting them to contemporary social issues.
- Connection and Expansion Ability: The ability to extend ideas from the original text to new associations, connecting with cultural, social, and historical issues, is assessed. Offering fresh perspectives and making connections to real-life situations or other literary works also counts as creativity.

d) Learning Attitude Criteria:
- Sense of Responsibility: Students' sense of responsibility in completing individual tasks and contributing to group tasks is evaluated. They should demonstrate initiative in seeking materials, participating in discussions, and completing work on time.
- Attitude towards Learning and Feedback: Students should show openness to receiving feedback, a willingness to learn from teachers and peers, and a positive attitude toward overcoming challenges. Their readiness to improve and perfect their project through each stage is also considered.

Applying these evaluation criteria ensures that the project-based learning process not only focuses on the final outcome but also encourages the comprehensive development of students' skills and a positive learning attitude.

2.2.3.2 Methods of Ongoing and Periodic Assessment

a) Ongoing Assessment:

a1. Assessment during project implementation:
- Observation and recording:
>Teachers observe students' working processes, including how they participate in group discussions, task delegation, and the level of cooperation among members. Teachers also note students' initiative, creativity, and problem-solving skills.
- Quick feedback:
>Timely feedback is provided on project steps, allowing students to adjust immediately when necessary. Feedback can be given through short group meetings, direct comments, or notes on students' work.
- Informal assessment tools:
>Tools such as quick feedback questionnaires, small group discussions, or learning journals are used to track students' progress and effectiveness. Students are encouraged to self-assess and adjust their working processes.

a2. Assessment of project stages:

- Progress checks:

Periodic progress checks are conducted to monitor task completion and project objectives. Timely achievement of important milestones and adherence to the plan are also evaluated.

- Interim product evaluation: Drafts or preliminary versions of the project are reviewed to assess quality and provide specific feedback. Guidance is provided to help students refine their final products.

b) Periodic Assessment:

b1. Evaluation after project completion:

- Final product evaluation:

A comprehensive evaluation of the students' project is carried out based on the predetermined criteria, including content, skills, creativity, and learning attitude. Detailed rubrics are used to ensure fair and transparent assessment.

- Presentation and discussion:

Students' presentation skills are evaluated during the project report sessions, including how they present ideas, answer questions, and handle feedback from the audience. Class discussions are organized to assess student participation and reflection on the project.

b2. Summative evaluation and reflection:

- Self-assessment and group feedback: Students are encouraged to conduct self-assessments and provide feedback on the group's working process, product quality, and challenges encountered. Group meetings are held to discuss what was learned and areas for improvement.

- Teacher feedback:

Teachers provide detailed feedback on the entire project, including strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations for future projects. Feedback should include strategies and techniques for improving study and teamwork skills.

b3. Long-term assessment:

- Monitoring development:

Students' progress and development across various projects are evaluated to assess improvements in skills and learning attitudes. Information from previous projects is used to adjust teaching methods

and support students in achieving long-term learning goals.

- Feedback from students:

Students' opinions about the assessment process and feedback on evaluation methods and criteria are collected to adjust and improve assessment methods for future projects.

Ongoing and periodic assessment helps ensure that the learning process is effective, providing timely feedback for students to improve their projects while also promoting the comprehensive development of learning skills and attitudes.

III. CONCLUSION

With the three proposed measures—selecting appropriate project learning content, identifying the necessary tasks for a project, and flexibly applying various forms of assessment to evaluate students' comprehension of modern Vietnamese short stories using the project-based learning method—we aim to enhance teaching effectiveness, encourage creativity, and foster the comprehensive development of students' skills.

However, to achieve the best results, the application of project-based learning must be done flexibly, in alignment with the students' abilities and the actual conditions of each school. Educators should continue to research, innovate, and diversify teaching methods to meet the current demands of educational reform.

REFERENCES

[1] Nguyen Van Cuong, Nguyen Thi Dieu Thao, "Project-Based Learning, a Dual-Function Method in Teacher Training," Education Journal, No. 80, pp. 15-17, 2004
[2] Tran Thi Huong (chief editor), Nguyen Thi Bich Hanh, Ho Van Lien, Ngo Dinh Qua, *General Pedagogy*, Internal Circulation Document, Ho Chi Minh City University of Education, 2009
[3] Krajcik, J. S., & Blumenfeld, P. C, *Project-Based Learning*. In R. K. Sawyer (Ed.), *The Cambridge Handbook of the Learning Sciences* (pp. 317-333). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006
[4] Larmer, J., Mergendoller, J. R., & Boss, S, *Setting the Standard for Project Based Learning: A Proven Approach to Rigorous Classroom Instruction*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2015
[5] Markham, T, *Project Based Learning: A Bridge Just Far Enough. Teacher Librarian, 39*(2), 38-42, 2011
[6] Thomas, J , *A Review of Research on Project-Based Learning. Autodesk Foundation*, 2000