
RESEARCH ARTICLE

Exploring Project-based Learning Model Applied in Writing Activities based on the 2013 Curriculum

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ABSTRACT

The research aimed to determine teachers' perception toward Project-based Learning and the implementation of Project-based Learning in Writing Activities. Project-Based Learning is an instructional model aiming to focus learners on complex issues that need to be investigated and comprehended the subject matter through investigation. The research method used was the Qualitative Method with descriptive analysis. The data were obtained using two kinds of instruments. An open-ended Questionnaire is used to know teachers' perceptions toward Project-based Learning. In contrast, an observation checklist is used to know the implementation of Project-based Learning applied by the teacher in writing activities. The descriptive analysis found that the teacher's perspective toward Project-based Learning in the teaching and learning process was positive. The teachers most agreed that PjBL assists teachers in maintaining classroom discipline and a pleasant atmosphere, and PjBL can improve students' discipline towards assignment deadlines. Conversely, teachers were skeptical that Project-based Learning could strengthen student-teacher relationships, considering that the teacher's role in Project-based Learning is "only" a facilitator. Other findings revealed that the teachers' implementation of PjBL in writing activities still does not adhere to PjBL syntax, mainly in designing a plan for the project and evaluation stages. Therefore, it suggested that teachers be aware of their role in implementing Project-based Learning to ensure the objectives of the Project-based Learning models are adequately met.

KEYWORDS

Project-Based Learning, Perception, Implementation, Syntax

ARTICLE INFORMATION

ACCEPTED: 15 February 2023

PUBLISHED: 02 March 2023

DOI: 10.32996/ijels.2023.5.1.8

1. Introduction

The Digital Age has begun due to the rapid and massive growth of technology and information. Students in the digital age are vastly different from those who graduated 10 to 15 years ago. They are well-equipped with advanced technology and easily learn new things daily. Seeing the current situation, educators overcome the challenges and develop 21st-century skills to engage in life-long learning, which students require today.

The Indonesian government issued a new curriculum called the Curriculum 2013 (K-13) in 2013. A curriculum is a set of plans and arrangements of the purpose, content, materials, and methods used as guidelines for implementing learning activities to achieve specific educational objectives (UU No. 20,2003). This curriculum is intended to emphasize students' creativity and morality. As a result, students are expected to exercise their creativity through a variety of learning activities in order to improve their learning objectives in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains.

Mulyasa (2014:7) states in his book that Curriculum 2013 (K-13) is a character and competence base curriculum, which reveals as the answer critics to Curriculum 2006. This curriculum requires students to be actively involved in learning activities. In reaching the goal of implementation in Curriculum 2013, it should be started by increasing the quality of teachers. They faced many challenges and constraints, especially in terms of the teaching and learning process. In this case, Mulyasa (2014:13) states that

Learning is a strategy teachers use in curriculum implementation to attempt students to achieve the objectives. As hoped by Curriculum 2013, many variables and important components exist to consider in building a meaningful and effective teaching and learning process. First, Learning should be emphasized on how teachers use strategy and models of Learning. Second, Learning should be democratic, open, cohesive, and participative, focusing on students. The teaching and learning process is conducted as student-centered Learning and contextual Learning (Permendikbud, 2012:25), which aims to develop the three aspects elaborated for each school level (Standar Proses Permendikbud No. 65, 2013). Third, learning should be emphasized on actual problems which contextually happened in society. Fourth, scientific methods need to be developed (Mulyasa, 2014:134-135).

In Curriculum 2013, it is recommended that teachers apply learning models such as Discovery Learning, Problem-Based Learning, and Project-Based Learning to facilitate students' learning. Those learning models are assumed to be suitable to realize and succeed in the implementation of Curriculum 2013, appropriate to the condition and the development of the society as well as with students' characteristics. Those models have been practiced to step by step with teachers in *Diklat Kurikulum 2013* (Mulyasa, 2014).

One learning model mentioned previously is Project-Based Learning. It can stimulate motivation and processes and improve students' achievement by using the problems related to a particular subject in a real situation. According to Helle. et al. (2006) argue that Project-Based Learning (PBL) is a collaborative form of Learning as all participants need to contribute to the shared outcome and have elements of experiential Learning with active reflection and conscious engagement rather than passive experiences being essential. While Mulyasa (2014:145) mentions that Project-Based Learning is a learning model used to make students focus on complex problems required to investigate and understand the Learning through investigation.

Project-Based Learning, as one of the learning models used in Curriculum 2013, should be integrated into the skills in English language learning and the activities to deliver the material based on the skills that the teacher wants to teach, such as writing activities. Writing is one of the productive skills that students should master. As stated by Hyland (1996), writing is a way of sharing personal meaning, and writing courses emphasize the power of the individual to construct his or her views on a topic. It can be inferred that a person delivers his/her ideas through his/her own writing, and everyone can have a different perspective about something that they think. Through writing, students can express feelings, describe something, discuss an idea, present a point of view, and share their experiences as a written product (Argawati & Suryani, 2017). Besides, writing extends and deepens students' knowledge; it acts as a tool for learning subject matter (Graham & Perrin, 2007).

Hasani et al. (2017) investigated the suitability of the implementation of PjBL and Writing, finding that through PjBL, students can develop their creative ability according to the theme they prefer. In previous research, PjBL was shown to be capable of increasing students' creativity in the teaching and learning process (Rahmania, 2020). Furthermore, students are more engaged in learning independently in groups to complete the assigned project. As a result, student-centered Learning, which is one of the 2013 curriculum's objectives, has been well implemented.

To establish this proof, the researcher collected preliminary data from three English teachers at SMP Negeri 1 Bulukumba. It obtained the result that, PjBL is very interesting to use because it helps students improve their creativity; therefore, the teacher's role is to facilitate and support students in developing their ideas. Teachers agree that Project-Based Learning is an effective method for teaching writing. Furthermore, teachers perceived Project-Based Learning as very interesting because it can bring Learning alive in the class environment.

Based on the findings and preliminary data presented above, the researcher is interested in exploring more information about the implementation of Project-Based Learning carried out by English teachers in writing activities, particularly at SMP Negeri 1 Bulukumba as a school appointed by the government to be a school model for implementing the K-13. There were two 1. Problem statements formulated: What is the teachers' perception of the Project-Based Learning Model? 2. How did the teachers do implemented the Project-Based Learning Model in writing activity based on the 2013 Curriculum?

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1 Project Based Learning

According to Mulyasa (2014:145), Project-Based Learning is an instructional model that aims to focus learners on complex issues that need to investigate and comprehend the subject matter through investigation.

The aims of this learning model are also to guide learners in a collaborative project which requires integrating a variety of subjects (material) in the curriculum, allows learners to explore the material using a variety of ways that are meaningful to them, and

conduct experiments collaboratively. Some of the benefits of using PjBL Aydin (2017) are skill improvement, real-world practice, improved discipline, better relationships among students, a better relationship between student and teacher, and a pleasant atmosphere in the classroom.

The syntax of Project-Based Learning, according to Faturrohman (2016), consists of designing a plan for the project, creating a schedule, monitoring the student's progress and project, presenting the result, assessing the outcome and experience and evaluating

1) Designing a Plan for the Project

The first step of Project-Based Learning always begins with essential questions (Nurohman, 2014:15). This question can be proposed by the teacher or students or collaboratively between the teacher and students. Teachers' duties are guiding the students to make a plan for the project based on the questions made and core competencies. Planning is done collaboratively between teachers and learners. Thus, students are expected to implement the project. Planning contains rules, the selection of activities that can support answering questions essentially by integrating a variety of subjects and knowing the tools and materials that can be accessed to help completion of the project (Kosasih, 2014:99).

2) Creating a Schedule

Teachers and learners collaboratively construct a scheduled activity to complete the project. Activities in this phase include:

- (1) create a timeline for completing the project,
- (2) make the deadline project,
- (3) bring learners to plan how new,
- (4) guide learners when they make way which is not related to the project, and
- (5) Require learners to make an explanation (excuse) on the selection of a way (Kosasih, 2014:99).

3) Monitoring the Students' Progress and Project

The teacher is responsible for conducting and monitoring the activity of learners to complete the project. Monitoring can be done by facilitating learners in each process. In other words, the teacher should be a mentor teacher for activity students. In order for the monitoring process, creating a rubric that can record all activities is important (Kosasih, 2014:100)

4) Presenting the Result

Students show their product and explain the process of making it and its advantages of it. It can be done in class discussions (Kosasih, 2014:100).

5) Assessing the Outcome and Experience

Assessment is done to assist teachers in assessing achievement standard, plays a role in evaluating each learner's progress, provide feedback on the level of understanding already achieved by learners, and help teachers prepare the next learning strategies (Nurohman, 2014: 16).

6) Evaluating

At the end of the learning process, teachers and learners reflect on the activities and results of the project are already run. The process of reflection is done either individually or in a group. At this stage, learners are asked to disclose their feelings and their experience in completing the project. Teachers and learners developed the discussion to improve performance during the learning process and eventually found new findings (new inquiry) to address the problems posed (Kosasih, 2014:100).

2.2 Writing

The writing process is the stage that goes through in order to produce something in its final written form (Harmer, 2004, p.4). To deliver that explanation, of course, we used to practice of express what ideas were in our mind in the form of a list, letter, essay, report, or novel. The written language is simply the graphic representation of spoken language, and that written performance is much like an oral performance; the only difference lies in a graphic instead of auditory signals (Brown, 2001, p.335). In addition, when writing something, it usually expects somebody to read it. It is easy for the reader to understand what the writers have written. However, it might be difficult for other people to understand. The writing process is the stage that goes through in order to produce something in its final written form. The writer not only needs to know the process of writing but also needs to apply these processes to the works. It will help the writer to organize ideas logically.

Writing is one of the four language skills taught in school. Writing is an important skill to be developed from the beginning of language instruction (Larsen and Anderson, 2013). On the other hand, writing is a powerful way to describe and examine, reflect on, and understand our thoughts, feelings, ideas, activities, and experiences (Yagelski, 2015). Additionally, writing is a written productive language skill. The purpose of writing skills is to share information from spoken language into written language. It needs great thinking to produce writing which begins with getting the main idea, planning, and revising the procedure. Reaching the whole requires a specific skill that not everyone can develop (Ramadhani, 2013).

2.3 Curriculum 2013

Curriculum 2013 puts teachers as characters who hold important roles, especially in teaching and learning. The core and basic competencies make this curriculum different from the previous one. The main essences of this curriculum are implementing the scientific approach and student-centered Learning.

The teaching and learning process should develop students' attitudes, skills, and knowledge, make them creative, innovative, and critical, and optimally achieve learning objectives. In such a way, the assessment should be authentic toward the input, output, and income in each teaching and learning process (Mulyasa, 2014:3-4).

Curriculum 2013 is meant to develop an active, creative, and joyful learning process for students. It is expected to produce golden generations who are productive, creative, innovative, and effective. It can be achieved through observing, listening, reading, questioning, reasoning, trying, and communicating (Retnaningsih, 2012:11). Despite students being the subject of the teaching and learning process in the curriculum 2013, it does not mean that teacher does not take any important role. As the implication of the policy, teachers are demanded to have skills in developing methods and approaches for teaching learning. In addition, it is hoped that teachers can create conducive and effective classroom management (Mulyasa, 2014:7-9).

3. Method

This research applied the Qualitative Method with descriptive analysis that describes the teachers' perception toward using Project-based Learning and the way of implementing Project-based Learning in writing activities.

3.1 Subject of the Research

The subject of this research is the English teachers of SMPN 1 Bulukumba, where the total number is five teachers. The researcher chose two teachers as study subjects because, based on the data, the two teachers met the researcher's purposive sampling criteria.

3.2 Research Instrument

The researcher used two instruments; an open-ended questionnaire and an observation checklist. An open-ended Questionnaire is used to know teachers' perceptions of implementing Project-based Learning. In contrast, Observation Checklist is used to know how English teachers implement Project-based Learning syntax.

3.3 Data Collection

1. Open-ended Questionnaire

The researcher collected data for the Open-ended Questionnaire by sharing the link <https://forms.gle/ang5RkUUo5QM6Nyb9> already arranged in Google Form with both the research subject.

2. Observation

- a. Prepare an observation checklist covering the procedures for Project-based Learning.
- b. Asking permission to attend the meeting class
- c. Make observations throughout the lesson
- d. Keep a record of noteworthy events for the research objectives.

4. Findings and Discussions

4.1 Teachers' perception of the Project-Based Learning Model

Mulyasa (2014:145) that Project-Based Learning is an instructional model that aims to focus learners on complex issues that need to investigate and comprehend the subject matter through investigation. This learning method is one that the two English teachers at SMPN 1 Bulukumba frequently employ in writing activities. In accordance with its objectives, project-based learning is a learning model capable of empowering students to act independently. As a result, teachers must ensure that students take an active role in project completion, encourage students to gather information and connect ideas, and ensure that projects are carried out according to plan to assist students in evaluating the outcomes of their projects. The teacher's role is important, especially in writing activities. According to Wening (2016), teachers play an important role in teaching writing because they need to create the right environment for students to generate ideas and be motivated to write.

Data analysis revealed that the two English teachers at SMPN 1 Bulukumba were positive about the existence of the Project Based Learning learning model. Positive perception is a personal judgment about a specific object that is positive or as expected (Robbins, 2002). Teachers form their opinions about PjBL based on its benefits. Aydin (2017) states the following benefits of PjBL:

1. *PjBL is an effective self-learning to be applied in writing activities*

The two teachers in this study agreed that PjBL was an effective self-learning strategy for writing activities. According to Harmer (2007), teaching writing entails dealing with the future and assisting students in understanding their writing-composing process. This theoretical statement was supported by experimental research conducted by Kusmiyati (2020), who discovered that the Project-based Learning model impacted writing skills. Larasati discovered similar research (2021); several studies have found that Project-based Learning can help students improve their writing skills. Students were found to be more active in their writing classroom instruction.

2. *PjBL is capable of developing a student-centered approach to class*

The two teachers agreed with the above statement, adding that the presence of PjBL was to fulfill the demands of the 2013 curriculum. According to Mulyasa (2014), in Curriculum 2013, teachers should create conducive and effective classroom management, so a student-centered approach will be formed, with the teacher responding as a monitor in the teaching and learning process. Simpson (2012) A facilitator and advisor in project-based Learning is a teacher. It is done to ensure that the student-centered approach is implemented correctly.

3. *PjBL strengthens the bond between teacher and student*

Given the teacher's role as a project-based learning facilitator, the teacher in this study disagreed with the statement above (Simpson, 2012). However, one teacher confirmed that PjBL makes the learning environment enjoyable for both students and teachers. However, contrary to Larasati's (2021) findings, Project-based Learning strengthened the bond between the teacher and the students because the teacher monitored and supervised the students throughout the project work. The teacher can provide psychological and moral support and encouragement by simply being with students and spending time with them.

4. *PjBL strengthens student relationships*

The two teachers strongly agreed with the preceding statement because students must be active collaboratively (Kosasih, 2014). The relationship between students becomes closer to seeing the students' role in PjBL, which was argued by Simpson (2012) that students' roles are self-directed learners, team members or collaborators, and knowledge managers or leaders. Students' roles in PjBL demonstrate that they rely on one another and become more acquainted.

5. *PjBL assists teachers in maintaining classroom discipline and a pleasant atmosphere*

The two teachers in this study agreed by stating the supporting sentences that PjBL was running according to the planning controlled by the time allocation. Students will work in a disciplined and structured manner as they collaborate to complete projects on time. According to Nurrohman (2014), the teacher guides the students in creating a project plan so that the project is carried out in a directed manner to create a pleasant atmosphere in the classroom.

6. *PjBL helps students develop specific skills and abilities*

The two teachers in this study agreed that PjBL helps students develop specific skills and abilities. According to Kosasih (2014), through PjBL, students can be creative and innovative and develop their potential through activities based on their learning, either individually or collaboratively.

7. *PjBL assists students in developing critical thinking and creative skills.*

The two teachers agreed that this PjBL encourages students to think critically and creatively. Implementing PjBL in the teaching and learning process will produce students capable of critical thinking, collaboration, and communication. Following PjBL's objectives, According to Kosasih (2014), Pjbl exists to help students develop their competencies and skills, including their ability to think creatively and critically. In her research, Ekasari (2020) demonstrated that using PjBL effectively increased students' cognitive and psychomotor levels. The PjBL approach can shape students into human resources capable of critical and creative thinking (Rahmania, 2021).

8. *PjBL gives students real-world experience*

The two teachers in this study agreed that PjBL provides students with work experience because the process of completing projects by students gives the impression of real work. According to Kosasih (2014), students benefit from the materials they learn daily. Furthermore, PjBL's syntax gives the impression of collaborative and individual work. Students plan an activity or product that they will produce (Kosasih, 2014)

9. *PjBL Method makes students' abilities more apparent*

The two teachers agreed because students' roles in PjBL are team members or collaborators, requiring students to be responsible for their own based on their capacities and roles. According to Simpson (2012), the outcome is part of their responsibility in group work, so students must be team members willing to work and put in the effort to make it right.

10. *PjBL can improve students' discipline toward assignment deadlines*

The two teachers in this study agreed that PjBL could improve student discipline toward assignment deadlines. The logical reason is that PjBL had already set a deadline during the planning stage, so students must work consistently and optimally not to exceed the time limit. The second syntax of PjBL is creating a schedule (Faturrohman, 2016). The creating schedule has established a timeline for completing the project and setting the project deadline.

4.2 The implementation of Project Based Learning (PjBL) in Writing Activities

The writing process is the stage through which something is produced in its final written form (Harmer, 2004). Both classes produced a product as part of the learning process related to writing activities. The project assigned by the two teachers was done in groups. Working on projects in groups or individually is one of the PjBL characteristics (Kosasih, 2014).

Six syntaxes should be implemented by the teacher in general when teaching. Faturrohman (2016) defined PjBL syntax as creating a project plan, creating a schedule, monitoring students' progress and project, presenting the result, assessing the outcome and experience, and evaluating. The following is a discussion of the results of the two teachers' observations of PjBL for writing activities:

1. *Designing a plan for the project*

The first step in creating a project is determining what project will be created. The first step in designing a project in PjBL is identifying the fundamental questions. PjBL always starts with fundamental questions (Nurrohman, 2014). Several activities, according to Faturrohman (2016), should be carried out when determining the basic questions: *The teacher asks students to determine questions that contain 5W + 1H elements, The teacher asks questions to students, The teacher asks students to determine the investigation variable, The teacher asks students to determine questions based on the variables of investigation, The teacher asks students to determine hypotheses.* The fifth point, "*The teacher asks students to determine hypotheses,*" was not implemented by the two teachers in this study. Even though the formulation of this hypothesis in PjBL is intended to train students in problem-solving based on the project concept to be worked on (Murniarti, 2016). T1 asked students to ask questions independently based on the results of video observations, while T2 assisted students in asking questions related to the results. According to the two different steps following the explanation (Nurrohman, 2014), the fundamental question can be proposed by either the teacher or the students or collaboratively by the teacher and students.

Based on the results of the video observations, students design the type of project that will be produced. The two teachers' videos contain projects related to the material being taught. Students learn various skills from the videos shown, including how to write sentences and complete projects. Alfaki (2015) Word choice is one of the most difficult aspects of writing. Students are expected to be able to create projects that will be worked on without experiencing cognitive difficulties when writing sentences related to the content writing that will be done (Alfaki, 2015). T2 allowed students to choose the type of greeting card to be written when working on the project. Brown and Douglass (1994) have one approach to teaching writing that allows students to discover what they want to write.

2. *Creating a schedule*

In PjBL, teachers and students collaborate to create a project completion schedule (Faturrohman, 2016). T1 and T2 in the PjBL implementation have met the schedule requirements. Create a timeline for completing the project, do the deadline project, bring learners to a new plan, guide learners when they do what is not late for the project, and require learners to explain the selection way (Kosasih, 2014).

T1 helped students design work time outside of face-to-face sessions when creating a schedule. This includes avoiding issues with writing activities, specifically Credit Hours. Alzubark (2016), more credit hours should be added to teach writing skills. T2 assisted students in arranging the schedule when creating one. T2 made suggestions to ensure that students actively participate in working on projects on time. One of the Students' roles in PjBL is a team member or collaborator (Simpson, 2012). The preparation of the schedule carried out by T2 also suggests dividing the roles of each student in the group for project completion.

3. *Monitoring the Students' Progress and Project*

The teacher controls and monitors the students' activities in order for the project to be completed (Faturrohman, 2016). T1 and T2 use roughly similar methods to track the progress of student project work. While monitoring student progress, the two teachers

inquired about the difficulties encountered in completing the project. T1 focused on writing sentences that introduce my family and their profession, whereas T2 focused on writing greeting cards using a generic structure.

While monitoring the progress and project, the teacher focused on observing students' writing skills in project work. The result of writing is not instantaneous (Harmer, 2007). Students must brainstorm ideas, choose vocabulary, write, edit, and publish a writing project. The two teachers did an excellent job of monitoring student progress and project activities. Teachers' role in PjBL is as facilitators and advisors (Simpson, 2016).

4. *Presenting the result*

The fourth stage of Project Based Learning is project presentation. It is possible to do this in a whole-class discussion (Kosasih, 2014). T1 and T2 asked each group to present their project in front of the class. T1 selected a student to present the result of their work project. T2, on the other hand, immediately invited group members to give project presentations. This demonstrates that self-directed learners are more effective in the T2 class. Students who do the task within the group are self-directed learners (Simpson, 2012).

5. *Assessing the outcome and Experience*

Students assess in order to assist teachers in determining achievement standards (Nurrohman, 2014). This stage occurs during or after the project presentation. T1 and T2 approach the assessment stage differently, including other assessment instruments used by both of them. T1 and T2 evaluated students' writing abilities concerning the linguistic elements used in the project for writing activities.

T1 fully conducts student project assessments, beginning with monitoring project work and continuing through the presentation stage. T1 provided feedback on student project work at the end of the presentation. T1 did not involve students in conducting assessments; instead, students were only allowed to provide oral suggestions during the project presentation.

Students assist T2 in carrying out the assessment. Peer assessment is the type of assessment in which students participate. T2 created an assessment rubric, which was distributed during the project presentation. T2 asked students to evaluate their friends who deliver project presentations. The scoring rubric provided is related to the generic structure of greeting cards. Teachers must create an assessment tool, such as a rubric, in the early stages of Project-based Learning (Simpson, 2012). T2 also offered suggestions for improvements to the projects that had been presented at the end of the presentation.

6. *Evaluating*

At the end of the learning process, teachers and students reflect on the project's activities and outcomes (Faturrohman, 2016). T1 and T2 asked students to share their experiences while working on the project at the end of the activity. According to Kosasih (2014), during the evaluation stage, learners are asked to disclose their feelings and experiences while working on the project.

T1 concluded the learning activity by answering the basic questions that students raised during the project design stage. T2 did the same thing, but at the end of the lesson, T2 assigned individual greeting card-making assignments. T2 emphasized the importance of paying attention to the content of greeting cards. According to Douglas Brown (1994), giving students time to write and rewrite belongs to the approach in writing activities.

5. **Conclusions**

The teacher's perception of PjBL in the teaching and learning process is positive. It is demonstrated by the amount of agreement expressed in response to each question. Both teachers agreed that PjBL assists teachers in maintaining classroom discipline and a pleasant atmosphere; PjBL could improve students' discipline toward assignment deadlines. Meanwhile, one question was responded only reasonably to agree: PjBL strengthens the bond between teacher and student. The teacher contended that it is only entirely agreed upon because it recognizes that the teacher's role as a facilitator in the classroom is more prominent during the project's duration.

Teachers' implementation of PjBL in Writing Activities still does not adhere to PjBL syntax, especially at the stage of determining basic questions and evaluating the project. The first teacher did not ask students to develop hypotheses before beginning work on the project, and neither did the second teacher. The second teacher appeared to be more active in determining basic questions, as evidenced by the fact that students were not involved in determining questions that contained 5W + 1 H elements. The first teacher conducted direct assessments without involving students in stage assessment. Meanwhile, the second teacher conducted an assessment alongside with students. Students participated in peer assessments using the rubric score provided by the teacher.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Acknowledgement: We would like to thank both the teachers in SMPN 1 Bulukumba who, as the subject of research, are ready to become subjects in research related to the implementation of the PBL method in teaching

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