



Writing a narrative text in Writing for Information and Engagement Class utilising Project Based Learning

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Abstract

The objective of this study was to examine the impact of project-based learning (PBL) on enhancing students' proficiency in narrative writing. The study employed a mixed methods approach, specifically utilising a quasi-experimental design and incorporating writing test and interview as a data collection method. The total sampel was 54 students in experiment and control group. The utilisation of Project-based Learning in the composition of narrative texts yielded more favourable outcomes in enhancing students' writing proficiency, as evidenced by the analysis of data. It has been demonstrated that the value of the t-statistic exceeded the critical value. The results indicated that 44% of students demonstrated improvement according to the established criteria following the intervention. Based on the findings from the interview session, it was observed that students who underwent Project-based Learning (PBL) expressed a sense of satisfaction. This can be attributed to the fact that PBL proved to be effective in assisting students in attaining their writing objectives by the conclusion of the academic term.

Keywords: project-based learning; writing narrative; undergraduate

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1. INTRODUCTION

The acquisition of English language proficiency necessitates the development and mastery of four essential skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Jusun & Yunus, 2018). The successful acquisition of a language can be attributed to an individual's mastery of the four essential language skills. Conversely, a significant number of students encounter challenges when acquiring proficiency in all aspects of the English language. Indeed, it is not uncommon for individuals to possess subpar abilities or even exceedingly minimal ones. In a separate instance, the challenge associated with acquiring proficiency in the English language can be attributed to a multitude of factors (Megawati, 2016). The current scenario presents a contrasting perspective to the assertion that as students progress in their educational attainment, their writing skills should correspondingly improve. Numerous stages have been undergone by students in order to attain an advanced level of proficiency in writing.

The act of writing is regarded as a fundamental aspect in the advancement of literacy, and is consistently advocated for by professionals in the field of education. The significance of writing as a crucial skill arises from its necessity in a wide range of professions, wherein the ability to effectively document matters pertaining to a specific field is often required (Selvaraj, M., & Aziz, 2019). Writing is widely regarded as the most tangible manifestation of language or means of communication. In the English language, the mastery of writing is considered an essential skill that carries significant importance and demands proficiency. Numerous approaches have been implemented and tested in order to enhance proficiency in spoken English. According to the findings of (Munawar, S., & Chaudhary, 2019), cooperative learning has been identified as an effective strategy for enhancing writing skills. The utilisation of cooperative strategies in the learning process enables students to engage in both written and oral communication. Nevertheless, it is imperative to acknowledge that writing skills and reading skills are inherently interconnected, as they both fall under the umbrella of productive skills (Ihsan, 2021). It is widely acknowledged that the four essential language skills, namely speaking, listening, reading, and writing, are inherently interconnected and mutually reinforcing.

Writing skills serve specific objectives, encompassing both academic and non-academic pursuits. The most recent PISA data from 2018 indicates that literacy skills in Indonesia remain comparatively low. This is evident from the survey findings, which position Indonesia at the bottom of the rankings, specifically at number 62 out of a total of 70 countries. The act of writing is considered a fundamental aspect in the promotion of literacy,

and is consistently advocated for by professionals in the field of education. (Zati, 2018) posits that a lack of quality and enthusiasm in literacy has a direct correlation with the diminished quality of human resources. Hence, it is imperative to sustain the promotion of the literacy movement. The acquisition of writing skills, particularly in English as a second language, is subject to multiple influences, including the availability of media resources that aid learners in enhancing their writing abilities. These resources are particularly beneficial in terms of facilitating the appropriate usage of word order and grammar within sentence structures, thus complementing the writing skills derived from reading (Kaharuddin, 2021). In essence, the utilization of an application or writing service provider platform can enhance one's writing skills, resulting in increased fluency.

Numerous scholars and researchers have extensively examined diverse pedagogical approaches for imparting English writing skills, thereby contributing to the existing body of knowledge on effective teaching methods. Project Based Learning (PBL) is an educational approach that incorporates activities and projects as integral components of the learning process. The PBL method encompasses various components, namely project planning, the compilation of activity schedules, the implementation of activities, assessment, and evaluation. As stated by Essien (2018) Project Based Learning has emerged as an alternative pedagogical approach that diverges from conventional daily learning practices. Typically, in the context of Project-Based Learning, students are presented with an engaging project that spans a significant portion of the academic term. Subsequently, their evaluation is contingent upon their performance during the project and the subsequent outcomes that arise from it (Elias, s., & karim, 2017). According to Collier (2017), Project -based learning (PBL) can also facilitate the implementation of authentic assessments by teachers during the learning process and project execution.

Project-based learning is a pedagogical approach that can be implemented across various educational levels, ranging from elementary to tertiary education. According to Ruskandi, K., Hikmawan, R., & Suwangsih (2019), Project-Based Learning has been found to be an effective approach for cultivating social skills among elementary school students. According to Chu, S. K. W., Tse, S. K., & Chow (2011), project based learning has a substantial impact on the development of literacy and information technology (IT) skills in primary schools. According to a study conducted by Praba, L. T., Artini, L. P., & Ramendra, (2018), Project -based learning (PBL) has been found to enhance the writing abilities of students in junior high school. Project based learning has emerged as a viable approach for

developing English writing skills in higher education institutions (Syarifah, E. F., & Emiliasari, 2019). The development of writing skills is crucial within the English Education Study Programme, as it plays a vital role in preparing prospective educators who possess the necessary qualifications. Hence, the researcher aimed to investigate the potential impact of the Project -Based Learning (PBL) approach on the narrative writing skills of students enrolled in the English Language Education Study Programme at Private university of East Kalimantan.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study involved participants who were second-semester students of the English Language Education Study Programme at Universitas Muhammadiyah Kalimantan Timur who were enrolled in the Writing for Information and Enjoyment course. This course provides a conducive environment for conducting research on the aforementioned topic, as it pertains to the composition of narrative texts. The participants in the study consisted of second-semester students. The students were allocated into two distinct groups: Group A, which was designated for experimental research, and Group B, which served as the control group. Group A consisted of 27 individuals, while an equivalent number of 27 students comprised Group B. The procedure followed a customary structure, comprising four distinct phases: pre-test, treatment, post-test, and interview. The examination of the impact of implementing Project -based learning in the context of this writing course is undeniably valuable.

The research methodology employed a combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques within a quasi-experimental framework. The data collection methods employed in this study involved the use writing test and interview. The rubric utilised for the writing examination was derived from the Ela College Standard (2015) which covered the student's response provides evidence of an attempt to write a narrative based on text as a stimulus, the student's response is an incomplete or oversimplified narrative based on text as a stimulus, the student's response is a complete narrative that develops a real or imagined experience based on text as a stimulus and The student's response is a well-developed narrative that fully develops a real or imagined experience based on text as a stimulus. In addition, the semi structured interview investigate the student's view relating implementing Project based learning in the classroom.

3. FINDINGS

The table below illustrates the criteria of frequency and presentation, specifically in the context of comparing the pre- and post-treatment outcomes for each group. The criteria are categorized into four levels: very good, good, sufficient, and insufficient. The criteria utilised in this study were derived from prior research. In a technical sense, the students belonging to both groups were provided with an essay narrative. The participants were instructed to compose a brief narrative utilising their own lexicon and original concept within the specified timeframe. The tables present the pre-test and post-test results for both the control and experimental groups.

Table 1. Pre-test result from Control Group.

Criteria	Frequency	%
90-100 (very good)	0	0
80-89 (good)	0	0
70-79 (enough)	5	18.51
55-69 (not enough)	13	48.14
<55 (less)	9	33.33

According to Table 1, it is evident that none of the students met the requirements outlined in criteria number 1 and 2. This implies that none of the students were classified as achieving a high or satisfactory level based on the criteria outlined in the writing rubric. In the study, it was found that approximately 18% of the participants met the necessary criteria, while a majority of 48.14% did not meet the required criteria. Furthermore, it was observed that approximately 9 students, accounting for 33.33% of the total sample, exhibited a lower level of proficiency in meeting the criteria for writing a narrative text.

Table 2. Pre-test result from Experiment Group

Criteria	Frequency	%
90-100 (very good)	0	0
80-89 (good)	0	0
70-79 (enough)	4	14.81
55-69 (not enough)	17	62.96
<55 (less)	6	22.22

There was no significant difference observed between the pre-test results of the experimental group and the control group. None of the students in this group meet the criteria for being classified as "very good" or "good." Additionally, a total of four students, accounting for 14.81% of the sample, achieved a score within the range of 70-79 on the writing rubric, indicating that they met the required criteria to a satisfactory extent. However, the majority of students achieved scores ranging from 55 to 69, which corresponds to a percentage of 62.96%.

From those pretests between control and experimental group don't have any superiority as due to the participant were randomly chosen to enter each group.

Table 3. Post-test result from Control Group

Criteria	Frequency	%
90-100 (very good)	0	0
80-89 (good)	10	37.02
70-79 (enough)	9	33.33
55-69 (not enough)	7	25.92
<55 (less)	1	3.70

Table 4. Post-test result from Experiment Group

Criteria	Frequency	%
90-100 (very good)	1	3.7
80-89 (good)	12	44.44
70-79 (enough)	14	51.85
55-69 (not enough)	0	0
<55 (less)	0	0

According to the findings presented in Table 3, the control group, which was exposed to problem-based learning, exhibited varying levels of performance. Specifically, 10 students (37.02%) achieved a good level of performance, while 9 students (33.33%) reached an adequate level. Additionally, 7 students fell below the adequate level, and only 1 student obtained a score lower than the specified criteria. The results from the experiment group, as indicated in Table 4, demonstrate that 1 student (3.7%) achieved the highest criteria, while 12 students (44.44%) attained good criteria. The majority of students met the necessary criteria.

The percentage was approximately 51.85%. Fortunately, none of the students failed to meet the established criteria.

Table 5. Value Difference for Control and Experimental Group

Class	Pre-test	Posttest	Change
Group A	57.74	74.81	17.07
Group B	59.96	81.22	21.26

According to the data presented in Table 5, the control group exhibited a change of 17.07 from pretest to posttest, whereas the experimental group demonstrated a change of 21.06. Based on the findings, it was determined that the group utilising project-based learning (referred to as Group B) exhibited a greater degree of change compared to Group A, which also employed project-based learning. Research findings have suggested that project-based learning has been shown to be more effective than problem-based learning when it comes to enhancing writing skills, particularly in the context of narrative text. Based on the results of the t-test, it was demonstrated that the calculated t-statistic exceeded the critical t-value ($2.80 > 2.00$). There existed a slight distinction between the t-statistic and t-critical values. Nevertheless, empirical evidence has demonstrated a substantial disparity between the experimental and control groups.

Another data was taken by using an interview session. The interviewee was taken randomly and they were interviewed by the researcher at the end of the semester after the treatment given.

Table 6. Themes and subthemes of Interview

Themes	Subthemes	Examples of Excerpts
Project Based Learning	Challenges in Developing Narrative Writing Skills in Project-Based Learning	Yes, it helps me write about 60% of the time, but it wasn't very good for my writing skills, especially my narrative writing, because we had to find our writing topic based on the problem given, which was hard for me because sometimes I don't have a good idea for how to develop my writing. I can use what I've learned to write. (Participant 6)

Hands-On Exploration and Pursuit of Interests in Project-Based Learning	Yes, I think project-based learning helped me write my narrative story by letting me explore my hobbies and passions in a hands-on way. I was able to work on projects that fit with my goals and values, which helped me see how I can use my education to follow my interests. (Participant 3)
Lack of Creativity and Personalization in Project-Based Learning	No, I don't think project-based learning helped me write my dramatic story. I felt like the tasks were too rigid and didn't give me much room to be creative or make them my own. I would have liked to have had more freedom to pursue my own ideas and hobbies. (Participant 7)
Discovery and Exploration in Project-Based Learning	To some extent. Project-based learning gave me a way to study different topics and points of view, which helped me learn more about the world and find new things I was interested in. But I still had to work to put my events together and make sense of them. (Participant 12)

The subtheme of Challenges in Developing Narrative Writing Skills in Project-Based Learning. The aforementioned subtheme emphasizes the difficulties that students may encounter when cultivating their narrative writing abilities within the context of project-based learning, underscoring the necessity for increased assistance and direction in this domain. Here is example of excerpt from participant 6:

"Yes, it helps me write about 60% of the time, but it wasn't very good for my writing skills, especially my narrative writing, because we had to find our writing topic based on the problem given, which was hard for me because sometimes I don't have a good idea for how to develop my writing. I can use what I've learned to write.

According to the statement, the participant expressed a perception that project-based learning was effective in facilitating their writing approximately 60% of the time. However, it

was observed that this instructional approach did not significantly enhance their narrative writing abilities. The individuals encountered difficulty in formulating their writing topic in relation to the provided problem, thereby impeding their capacity to construct an original narrative.

The subtheme of Hands-On Exploration and Pursuit of Interests in Project-Based Learning. This subtheme emphasizes the significance of affording students with chances to investigate their interests and engage in project-based learning, thereby facilitating the development of their individual narrative story. Here is example of excerpt from participant 3:

Yes, I think project-based learning helped me write my narrative story by letting me explore my hobbies and passions in a hands-on way. I was able to work on projects that fit with my goals and values, which helped me see how I can use my education to follow my interests

The participants expressed a positive perception of project-based learning as it provided them with an opportunity to engage with their hobbies and passions in a practical manner. This experience facilitated their understanding of how their educational pursuits can be applied to pursue their personal interests.

The subtheme of Lack of Creativity and Personalization in Project-Based Learning. This subtheme emphasizes the significance of granting students the autonomy to explore their individual interests and ideas within the context of project-based learning, thereby facilitating the cultivation of their distinct narrative narratives. Here is example of excerpt from participant 7:

"No, I don't think project-based learning helped me write my dramatic story. I felt like the tasks were too rigid and didn't give me much room to be creative or make them my own. I would have liked to have had more freedom to pursue my own ideas and hobbies.

The participant expressed a perception that the tasks exhibited a high degree of rigidity, thereby limiting opportunities for creative expression and personalization. Consequently, this constraint impeded the participant's capacity to generate an original narrative story.

The subtheme of Discovery and Exploration in Project-Based Learning. This subtheme emphasises the significance of affording students with opportunities to engage in project-based learning, enabling them to uncover and investigate their interests. This

approach can facilitate the cultivation of their individual narrative story. Here is example of excerpt from participant 12:

"To some extent. Project-based learning gave me a way to study different topics and points of view, which helped me learn more about the world and find new things I was interested in. But I still had to work to put my events together and make sense of them.

The participant expressed their belief that project-based learning afforded them the opportunity to investigate diverse subjects and viewpoints, thereby enhancing their understanding of the world and fostering the development of novel interests. Nevertheless, it was incumbent upon them to exert the necessary endeavour in order to establish connections and derive meaning from their respective encounters.

4. DISCUSSION

The aforementioned findings offer empirical support for the proposition that project-based learning is a more efficacious approach in fostering the development of narrative writing skills, particularly within the context of higher education. Based on the findings of the quantitative study, it was determined that Group B, which implemented project-based learning, exhibited a greater degree of change when compared to Group A, which also employed project-based learning. The research findings suggest that project-based learning has exhibited superior efficacy in enhancing writing skills, particularly in the context of narrative text, when compared to project-based learning.

Furthermore, based on qualitative data, the students acknowledged that project-based learning was perceived as effective in promoting their writing skills approximately 60% of the time. The students also expressed their belief that project-based learning provided them with the chance to explore various subjects and perspectives, thereby enriching their comprehension of the world and cultivating new interests. The findings of Collier, (2017) study align with previous research, indicating that project-based learning offers distinct benefits in terms of academic performance and achievement when compared to other instructional approaches.

Moreover, a previous empirical investigation has provided evidence that the implementation of Project-Based Learning leads to advantageous results for students, as it effectively supports their development of proficiency in constructing fundamental networks. Moreover, project based learning cultivates a cooperative educational setting, facilitating the engagement and exchange of knowledge among students (Syarifah, E. F., & Emiliasari, 2019). Moreover, research has indicated that the implementation of Project-Based Learning

can effectively augment students' levels of motivation, skills acquisition, and collaborative aptitude (Myrtaj, 2018).

5. CONCLUSION

The research findings indicate that Project-based learning is a highly effective approach for instructing writing. The implementation of project-based learning has the potential to influence and impact students' writing proficiency. This activity offers students the chance, difficulty, and context to engage in writing practice. The incorporation of project-based learning in writing has a positive impact on the advancement of educational endeavors. This study presents a potentially effective and efficient approach for enhancing students' writing skills, regardless of the suitability of their previous learning methods. The efficacy and efficiency of project-based learning as a valuable approach to education is evident from the positive outcomes it yields. Given the effectiveness of project-based learning as a pedagogical approach for teaching writing, English instructors have the opportunity to incorporate this method into their instructional practices.

The present study has a few limitations worth considering. First, the sample size is relatively small, consisting of a specific group of students or a single class, which limits the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, due to time constraints, the project-based learning experience may not have been as comprehensive or in-depth as desired. Lastly, external factors such as students' prior writing skills or individual differences in learning styles may have influenced the results.

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