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THE INFLUENCES OF IMPLEMENTING PROJECT-BASED LEARNING AND STUDENTS' MOTIVATION IN IMPROVING WRITING SKILL

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the impact of implementing Project-Based Learning (PBL) and students' motivation on improving writing skills. The research adopts a factorial design method, incorporating both a control and an experimental group. The sample consists of two randomly selected classes, with one group applying the PBL method and the other serving as a control group without any specific instructional method. Data collection was conducted through writing tests and student motivation questionnaires. The analysis reveals a significant difference in students' ability to write explanation texts between those taught using the PBL approach and those who did not receive structured instructional methods. Furthermore, students' learning motivation positively influences their writing skills. Those with higher motivation demonstrated greater improvements in writing proficiency compared to students with lower motivation levels. Based on these findings, this study concludes that implementing Project-Based Learning can effectively enhance students' writing skills, particularly in explanation texts, when accompanied by strong learning motivation. As a result, it is recommended that teachers incorporate the PBL method into writing instruction and actively foster student motivation to maximize learning outcomes.

Keywords: Project-Based Learning, Learning Motivation, Writing Skill

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental necessity for humans, as it enables individuals to acquire knowledge, values, and essential skills through the learning process. In Indonesia, English holds a significant role as one of the subjects taught in schools. The teaching of English should be approached with strategies that foster the development of various skills closely linked to cognitive processes (Hockly, 2023; Widiastika & Iswaram, 2022). A person's language proficiency greatly affects the clarity and sharpness of their thinking. Schools serve as educational institutions established with the primary objective of enhancing students' knowledge, allowing them to grow and develop as expected. To achieve this, schools implement a structured curriculum that systematically organizes subjects, focusing on mental development, intelligence improvement, and skill enhancement.

In the learning process, several factors influence educational outcomes, particularly in English language instruction. These factors can be divided into two main categories: internal and external. Internal factors include aspects such as talent, attention, intelligence, motivation, interest, and cognitive abilities, which originate from within the students themselves. Meanwhile, external factors encompass elements such as the curriculum, learning materials, the teacher's role, library resources, administrative and management support, as well as environmental conditions, all of which contribute to shaping the learning experience and students' success in mastering

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English. Students' learning activities are influenced by motivation or incentives that drive them to achieve specific goals in the learning process. This motivation serves as the primary determinant for students to engage in various learning activities, directing each learning action towards the desired learning objectives.

Education plays a crucial role in human life, enabling individuals to acquire knowledge, values, and essential skills. In Indonesia, English is given special attention as a core subject in schools. Teaching English should involve strategies that promote skill development, particularly those linked to cognitive processes. A person's proficiency in language significantly impacts the clarity and depth of their thinking. Schools, as formal educational institutions, are designed to facilitate students' intellectual growth and development. To achieve this, they implement structured curricula that systematically arrange subjects, focusing on mental development, intelligence enhancement, and skill acquisition.

According to the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 69 Year 2013, the English curriculum for eleventh-grade students in upper secondary education (SMA) aims to develop language proficiency. The focus is on mastering both receptive skills (listening and reading) and productive skills (speaking and writing) to enable effective and accurate language use.

Writing, particularly in the context of explanation texts, is a fundamental skill in education. It serves not only as a medium for communication but also as a means for students to articulate and demonstrate their understanding of various concepts and ideas. Patel & Jain (2008) define writing as a linguistic behavior that visually represents language sounds through symbols. While writing may hold varying degrees of importance for different student groups, it remains a skill that must be explicitly taught and practiced. Writing is essential in language learning as it reinforces vocabulary, spelling, and sentence structure, becoming an integral part of student expression at higher levels.

Similarly, Broughton et al. (2002) emphasize that writing supports learning by extending previously presented material, either at the sentence level or within broader contexts such as dialogues and structured compositions. However, based on observations, many eleventh-grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Penukal Utara struggle with writing explanation texts. This challenge is further exacerbated by low motivation and the continued use of conventional teaching methods, which reduce students' enthusiasm for learning to write.

Student motivation is not solely intrinsic; it is influenced by personal, sociocultural, and environmental factors, including the learning atmosphere, family expectations, and perceptions of education. The school environment plays a vital role in shaping students' motivation to write. Factors such as teaching strategies, social interactions, teacher engagement, and classroom conditions significantly affect motivation levels. Addressing these factors is essential to improving students' ability to write explanation texts effectively.

The difficulties students face in writing explanation texts are often due to the lack of variety in instructional methods and the underutilization of learning media. Traditional teaching approaches, which rely heavily on teacher-led instruction and direct learning, contribute to student passivity and dependence on the teacher. This method, characterized by preparation, demonstration, and practice, has several limitations: (1) it is less effective in achieving complex learning objectives, (2) it is more suitable for students with minimal prior knowledge, (3) it fosters dependence on the teacher, (4) it is best suited for early learning stages, (5) it lacks opportunities for student interaction, and (6) it struggles to meet diverse learning objectives. These limitations highlight the need for alternative teaching strategies to enhance students' writing abilities.

A major challenge for educators worldwide is maintaining student interest and engagement in learning. This challenge has led to the adoption of student-centered learning approaches, which prioritize active participation and foster deeper learning. For eleventh-grade students, improving

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explanation text writing skills requires both an effective instructional approach and high student motivation.

A learning model is a structured framework outlining systematic steps for organizing educational experiences to achieve specific objectives. It serves as a guideline for instructional planning. The 2013 curriculum recommends several learning models, including Project-Based Learning (PjBL), which aligns with the Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation Number 81 A Year 2013. This regulation highlights the importance of the 5M learning process: (1) observing, (2) questioning, (3) gathering information, (4) associating, and (5) communicating.

To enhance students' writing skills, teachers must provide effective motivation and implement collaborative, active learning models, often through group activities. In this study, Project-Based Learning (PjBL) is utilized as an instructional approach for teaching explanation text writing. This method not only helps students develop academic abilities but also equips them with practical skills relevant to real-world scenarios. According to Ariyatna, as cited in Ekawati and Mutsyuhito (2014), PjBL stimulates higher-order thinking by engaging students in problem-solving activities that mirror real-life challenges.

Motivation is a key factor in academic success. PjBL encourages student participation by allowing them to work on meaningful projects, identify problems, formulate plans, test strategies, and reflect on their learning experiences. This process fosters a trial-and-error approach, granting students greater autonomy in their learning while teachers serve as facilitators rather than direct instructors. Through PjBL, students take control of their education, developing essential skills such as collaboration, critical analysis, and self-reliance.

Halimah & Marwati (2022) emphasize that project-based learning prioritizes direct experience over secondary information sources. Students are expected to seek additional information only after engaging in hands-on activities, promoting deeper understanding through peer interactions, teacher guidance, and practical applications of language. MacDonell (2007), as cited by Halimah & Marwati (2022), highlights that project-based approaches help students develop lifelong problem-solving skills, which are often lacking in traditional middle and high school curricula. These soft skills are crucial for success in modern society.

This study explores the impact of PjBL on eleventh-grade students' ability to write explanation texts. Additionally, it examines how student motivation influences writing outcomes. By integrating PjBL with strategies to enhance motivation, the research aims to provide insights into improving students' writing skills within the context of explanation texts. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of more effective teaching methods, fostering both academic growth and essential life skills among students.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Project Based Learning

Project-Based Learning (PjBL) is an instructional approach that engages students in meaningful projects to develop knowledge, skills, and competencies. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud) in Komalasari (2014, p. 70), this method creates a learning environment where students investigate real-world problems, work independently, and produce tangible outcomes. Similarly PjBL as a learning model that uses projects as a medium, starting with problem-solving to integrate new knowledge through real-life experiences (Hosnan, 2014; Baleghizadeh & Maryam, 2011; Crespí et al., 2022; Umar et al., 2023; Jaya et al., 2019).

Mahanal (2009, p. 2), Merris et al. (2021) and Musa et al. (2012) describes PjBL as a method designed for addressing complex issues and focusing on product-oriented learning, where students create projects individually or in groups to develop a portfolio. Furthermore, Samanthis (2014) emphasizes the teacher’s role as a facilitator, guiding students through collaborative inquiry, problem-solving, and comprehensive assessment.

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From these perspectives, PjBL can be understood as a teaching method that utilizes projects to foster students' attitudes, knowledge, and skills. This model not only offers engaging and meaningful learning experiences but also accommodates diverse learning styles, encouraging students to explore and collaborate in their learning process.

Learning Motivation

Motivation plays a crucial role in shaping human behavior and actions. According to Uno (2018, p. 3), the term motivation originates from "motive," referring to an internal force within an individual that drives them to act. Similarly, Adi (1994, p. 154) emphasizes that motives cannot be directly observed but can be interpreted through behaviors, which manifest as stimuli, impulses, or triggers leading to specific actions.

Gorman (2004, p. 1) defines motivation as behavior directed toward goals, highlighting the factors that influence an individual's choice of one action over another. He explains that motivation encompasses various forms of behavior, shaped by psychological characteristics and external influences. In this context, Long (2003, p. 104) describes motivation as a psychological process that energizes individuals to engage in specific actions, often viewed as a key factor in reinforcing behavior and goal achievement.

Passer et al. (2009, p. 327) further elaborate on motivation as a combination of factors that influence the direction, endurance, and intensity of goal-oriented behavior. This perspective aligns with Brophy (2004, p. 3), who considers motivation a conceptual framework explaining the initiation, persistence, and quality of behavior aimed at specific objectives. Parsons et al. (2011, p. 312) support this view, describing motivation as the driving force that activates and guides behavior toward an intended goal.

Regarding types of motivation, Dimyanti & Mudjiono (2006, p. 87) distinguish between intrinsic motivation, which arises from personal enjoyment, and extrinsic motivation, which is driven by external factors. Uno (2018, p. 4) reinforces this classification, stating that intrinsic motivation emerges without external stimuli, while extrinsic motivation is influenced by external rewards or pressures.

In conclusion, motivation serves as the driving force behind an individual's actions, whether originating internally (intrinsic) or externally (extrinsic). It influences behavior, goal-setting, and perseverance in achieving desired outcomes.

Writing Skill

Writing is a fundamental skill in English language instruction, serving as a means of communication that allows individuals to express knowledge, ideas, and emotions through written text (Bailey, 2014; Sreeletha, 2022). It requires the ability to articulate thoughts clearly, particularly when writing in a second or foreign language. According to Broughton et al. (2002, p. 116), writing is both a private and public activity—private in its creation but public in its intended audience. Unlike speaking, writing is less spontaneous and more permanent.

Weigle (2002, p. 1) and Brown (2004) emphasizes the importance of writing in academic, business, and global communication contexts, highlighting its role in assessing students' ability to construct meaningful texts. Writing is not only a means of expressing thoughts but also a dynamic process that fosters exploration and cognitive development. It allows for the documentation of ideas and facilitates consensus-building among individuals. However, mastering writing is particularly challenging for foreign language learners, as it requires the development of complex skills.

Meyers (2005) explains that writing involves discovering, organizing, and refining ideas, while Hedge (2000) describes it as a structured process that includes goal setting, idea generation, organization, drafting, reviewing, and editing. Langan (2006) likens writing to other learned skills, such as driving or cooking, asserting that it can be acquired through practice. Similarly, Oshima & Hogue (2006) outline four stages in the writing process: prewriting, outlining, drafting, and polishing. These stages

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collectively guide writers in producing coherent and refined texts.

Sokolik (2003), cited in Nunan (2003), defines writing as the act of shaping letters and characters on various surfaces to document and communicate ideas. Writing not only serves as a tool for conveying information but also acts as an essential indicator of language proficiency. Thus, students must develop a deep understanding of the creative writing process, as it is a critical aspect of language learning and academic success.

3. METHODS

Research Design

This research employs a quantitative approach using a factorial design, where students are divided into an experimental group, taught writing skills through the PjBL method, and a control group, which receives no method. Motivation, categorized as high or low, serves as a moderator variable. As described by Fraenkel et al. (2011), factorial design analyzes the effects of multiple independent variables on a dependent variable. Following a pre-experimental design with a single-group pre-test and post-test approach (Creswell, 2014), the study assesses one group before and after treatment without a control group or random assignment (Neuman, 2013; Gay & Airasian, 2000; Veto Mortini et al., 2023). By examining students with different motivation levels in both groups, this design allows for evaluating the individual and combined effects of variables, particularly how motivation influences learning outcomes (Arikunto, 2019; Arikunto, 2021).

Data Collection Method

The data collection for this study involves a writing skills test and a questionnaire. Three instruments will be used: a motivation questionnaire with 40 questions in Bahasa Indonesia to classify students into high and low motivation groups, a jumbled sentence approach to assess their understanding of the general structure of an explanation text, and an essay test evaluating their ability to write an explanatory text on the rain process. A pre-test was administered before the instructional intervention to assess students' prior comprehension. During the study, students received instruction using a new approach, followed by specific treatment before taking the post-test. The final post-test was conducted to measure students' progress in writing explanation texts using the PjBL method.

Data Analysis Procedures

All data will be analyzed utilizing SPSS version 29 in this study. The writer intends to employ the Likert scale to assess students' attitudes and opinions regarding student motivation. In this study, the writer intends to develop a survey comprising 40 items written in Bahasa Indonesia. The motivation questionnaire's outcomes will then undergo analysis to ascertain whether students exhibit high or low motivation in learning English. Prior to conducting data analysis for evaluating any significant distinctions and interactions resulting from the employment of PjBL on students' motivation, the students' scores will be subjected to the following assessments: a normality test, data homogeneity check, independent T-test, and Two Way ANOVA.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

The writer employed an independent sample t-test in this study to compare the post-test scores of students in the experimental and control groups regarding writing achievement among highly motivated students. The experimental group was taught using the PjBL method, while the control group received no treatment of teaching methods. Using SPSS version 27, the writer determined that the mean post-test score for the highly motivated experimental group taught with PjBL was 85.00, whereas for the control group, it was 77.33. This indicates a mean difference of 7.67points between the post-test scores of the experimental and control groups, suggesting an increase in average scores following the treatment. Thus, the students who did not receive any treatment of PjBL showed differing achievement levels in their post-test scores compared to them whom got the treatment of PjBL method. It was shown in table below.

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Table 1. Paired Sample Statistics (High)

Paired Samples Statistics				
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Pair 1	High Exp	85.00	15	4.221
	High Con	77.33	15	3.114

The writer employed an independent sample t-test in this study to compare the post-test scores of students in the experimental and control groups regarding writing achievement among low motivated students. The experimental group was taught using the PjBL method, while the control group received no treatment of teaching methods. Using SPSS version 27, the writer determined that the mean post-test score for the low motivated experimental group taught with PjBL was 73.00, whereas for the control group, it was 63.00. This indicates a mean difference of 10.00 points between the post-test scores of the low motivated experimental and control groups, suggesting an increase in average scores following the treatment. Thus, the students who did not receive any treatment of PjBL showed differing achievement levels in their post-test scores compared to them whom got the treatment of PjBL method. It is shown in table below.

Table 2.Paired Sample Statistics

Paired Samples Statistics				
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Pair 1	Low Exp	73.00	15	4.553
	Low Con	63.00	15	4.862

The writer employed a paired sample t-test in this study to compare the pre-test and post-test scores of students in the experimental groupsregarding writing achievement among high and low motivated students. Using SPSS version 27, the writer determined that the mean pre-test score for experimental group taught with PjBL was 64.67, whereas for the post-test, it was 79.00. This indicates a mean difference of 14.33 points between the pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental group, suggesting an increase in average scores following the treatment. It is shown in table below.

Table 3. paired Sample Statistics (Pretest-Posttest)

Paired Samples Statistics				
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Pair 1	Pretest	64.67	30	7.429
	Posttest	79.00	30	7.483

The writer employed a paired sample t-test in this study to compare the pre-test and post-test scores of students in the control groups regarding writing achievement among high and low motivated students. Using SPSS version 27, the writer determined that the mean pre-test score for control group taught with no method was 62.17, whereas for the post-test, it was 70.17. This indicates a mean difference of 8.00 points between the pre-test and post-test scores of the control group, suggesting an increase in average scores following the treatment. It was shown in table below.

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Table 4. Paired Sample Statistics (Pretest-Posttest Control)

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Pair 1	Pre-test Con	62.17	30	9.508
	Post-test Con	70.17	30	8.339

Discussion

The experimental group was taught using the PjBL method, while the control group received no specific instructional treatment. Analysis using SPSS version 29 revealed that the mean post-test score for highly motivated students in the experimental group was 85.00, whereas the control group scored 77.33, showing a mean difference of 7.67 points. This suggests an improvement in writing performance after the treatment. The significance value (sig) was found to be <0.001, which is below the 0.05 threshold for a two-tailed test, indicating a significant difference in writing achievement between the pre-test and post-test results in both high-motivation groups. Since the sig value of 0.001 is lower than 0.025, it confirms a substantial improvement in students' writing skills.

These findings support the effectiveness of the PjBL method in enhancing students' writing performance, aligning with previous research by Davis (2020) on the impact of PjBL in improving students' speaking achievement and self-confidence. The study suggests that PjBL fosters contextual and collaborative learning, making writing tasks more engaging and meaningful. Additionally, the collaborative nature of PjBL encourages peer feedback and cooperative learning.

A paired test was also conducted to analyze differences among variables. In the experimental group, the mean pre-test score was 64.67, increasing to 79.00 in the post-test, with a difference of 14.33. The significance value (sig) of 0.00, being lower than 0.05, indicates a significant improvement in writing achievement. Similarly, in the control group, the mean pre-test score was 62.17, increasing to 70.17 in the post-test, with a difference of 8.00. The significance value (sig) of 0.001, also below 0.05, confirms a notable improvement in writing skills, although the increase was less substantial compared to the experimental group.

Due to the improvement in students' learning outcomes with the PjBL method, this aligns with the statement of Majid & Chaerul (2014, p. 164) state that the advantages of the project-based learning model include:

a. Enhancing students' learning motivation, encouraging their ability to perform important tasks, and stimulating the need for recognition.
b. Improving problem-solving skills.
c. Making students more active and successful in solving complex problems.
d. Enhancing collaboration among students.
e. Encouraging students to develop and refine communication skills.
f. Improving students' skills in resource management.
g. Providing a learning experience for students in organizing projects, allocating time, and utilizing other resources such as equipment.
h. Offering a complex and real-world-designed learning experience.
i. Involving students in information retrieval, demonstrating knowledge, and implementing it in real-world contexts.
j. Making the learning process enjoyable, allowing both students and educators to enjoy the learning activities.

An independent sample t-test was conducted to compare the post-test scores of students in the experimental and control groups concerning writing achievement among highly motivated students. The experimental group was taught using the PjBL method, while the control group received no specific instructional treatment. According to the analysis using SPSS version 27, the mean post-test score for the highly motivated students in the experimental group

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was 79.00, whereas the control group scored 70.17, reflecting a mean difference of 8.83 points. This suggests that the students who underwent PjBL instruction performed better than those who did not receive any specific teaching method.

As stated in the data above, the significance value (sig) was found to be <0.001, which is below the 0.05 threshold for a two-tailed test, with a critical t-table value of 0.025. Since the obtained t-value was lower than this critical value, the results confirm a significant difference in writing achievement between the experimental and control groups. With a sig value of 0.001 being less than 0.025, it further supports the substantial improvement in students' writing performance.

A two-way ANOVA was performed to analyze the interaction between writing skills as the dependent variable and two factors: PjBL as the independent variable and motivation as the moderator variable. The descriptive statistics from the two-way ANOVA indicated that 15 highly motivated students taught with the PjBL method had an average score of 85.00 and a standard deviation of 4.221. Meanwhile, 15 students with low motivation who also received PjBL instruction had a mean score of 73.00 with a standard deviation of 4.553. In contrast, students who were not taught using any specific method had lower scores; 15 highly motivated students scored an average of 77.33 with a standard deviation of 3.114, while 15 students with low motivation achieved an average score of 63.00 with a standard deviation of 4.862.

Based on this analysis, students with low motivation who received PjBL instruction scored an average of 73.00, which was relatively close to the 85.00 achieved by highly motivated students. This suggests that PjBL is highly effective in enhancing writing skills regardless of students' motivation levels. To assess the interaction effect between PjBL and motivation, the significance of the interaction was analyzed using the p-value. According to the findings, the motivation score was 0.346. Since the significance test ($p > 0.05$) resulted in a p-value of 0.346, which is greater than 0.05, there was no significant interaction between the teaching method and students' motivation.

However, the interaction between the teaching method and students' achievement had a p-value of 0.001 (<0.05), indicating a significant interaction between these variables. Furthermore, the interaction between students with high and low motivation levels also showed a p-value of 0.001 (<0.05), suggesting that motivation significantly influenced students' writing performance. In other words, Problem-Based Learning (PjBL) was equally effective for students, regardless of whether they had high or low motivation levels.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and analysis in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that the implementation of guided learning through Project-Based Learning (PjBL) and students' motivation significantly influence the improvement of English writing skills. This instructional approach not only strengthens students' comprehension of the subject matter but also fosters their creativity and enthusiasm for deeper learning. A high level of motivation is essential in maintaining students' engagement and directing them toward achieving their academic objectives more effectively.

The implications of this study suggest that integrating PjBL with strategies that enhance student motivation can be a highly effective method for developing writing proficiency. Educators should consider incorporating structured project-based activities that encourage active participation and collaborative learning, as these elements can significantly enhance students' engagement and writing performance. Additionally, providing continuous feedback and fostering a supportive learning environment can further maximize the benefits of this approach.

For future research, it is recommended to explore the long-term effects of PjBL on students' writing development and investigate its application across different skill levels and learning contexts. Further studies could also examine the interplay between motivation, self-efficacy, and writing

performance to gain deeper insights into how different motivational factors influence language acquisition. Expanding the scope of research by integrating digital learning tools with PjBL could also offer new perspectives on optimizing instructional strategies for English writing skills.

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