THE TENTH GRADERS' PERCEPTION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PROJECT-BASED LEARNING TO IMPROVE ENGLISH WRITING SKILL

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to gather empirical data on how the 10th-grade students at SMA Islam Sultan Agung 01 Semarang felt about the effectiveness of project-based learning in enhancing their English writing abilities. This research is of the qualitative variety. The population of this study consisted of 10th-grade students who had taken classes using a project-based learning approach and an autonomous curriculum. Six students made up the sample in this study, including two high achievers, two average achievers, and two below average achievers. Interviews were the primary method of gathering data. The researcher looked about the school before the interview. Project-based learning is one of the approaches that students prefer, according to the research findings. The project-based learning approach is quite successful.

Keywords: students' perception, writing skill, project-based learning

INTRODUCTION

Education is key to the success of a country. Success in education means that the country has been developing. A country has different educational roles and goals. The main goal of education is to create students who have skills or competencies (Syahril et al., 2021) . Like any other country, the government of Indonesia is responsible for providing an accessible education which aims to develop students' potential and shape them to become intellectual, creative, independent, and capable human beings. Currently, education in Indonesia uses the national education system. This system aims to foster positive character, provide academic knowledge, and forge students' skills from an early age.

Nowadays, Indonesia uses a new curriculum called Independent Curriculum *(Kurikulum Merdeka)*. A curriculum is a defined plan and sequence of purpose, content, materials, and methods that serves as a guide for organizing learning activities to achieve specific educational goals. Independent curriculum is a kind of curriculum that cultivate students' interests and talents from an early age, focusing on students' foundation, character building and ability development. This independent curriculum is part of Indonesia's efforts to keep up with the times and improve the quality of education. In self-directed courses, students do more than just become smart. It also provides Pancasila scores in the form of so-called Pancasila Student Profiles. There are six profiles of Pancasila students, one of which is creative. With that the independent curriculum, students are creative in their classes. Student progress in learning outcomes is made through assessment or learning assessment. Students who have yet to achieve their learning outcomes will receive support from their schools to achieve their learning outcomes.

Writing skills are parts of the main aspects of learning English. When someone is learning English, writing is one of the skills that he needs in his learning. He learned how sentences are constructed (Elhawwa, 2022). Meanwhile, writing is an aspect that is related to other aspects, like reading, listening and speaking. Writing also needs creativity, such as developing each sentence to make it easily readable. Currently, we can find on social media, many sort writings are used to express ideas in English. Amelia (2021) stated, writing is a skill that only a few people possess. People can share their ideas and their knowledge about facts and opinions (Nurfadhilah, 2018) . Everyone can write but only a few people enjoy writing. For some people, writing is a complicated and tedious activity. Therefore, most of them gave up on writing. In this case, the teacher's role is to increase students' interest in writing by providing the students with exciting writing skills.

The teacher should use exciting and engaging strategies to help students improve their writing skills. One of the various strategies is using project-based learning. According to Nurfadhilah (2018), project-based learning is one of the student-centred methods that allows students to learn. Project-based learning uses the project as a learning method. When doing the writing, students can write creatively. In addition, project-based learning is also one of the learning methods that is highly recommended in the Independent Curriculum. As we know, in Independent Curriculum, the making project is one emphasized aspect. A writing project can support and help the students develop their skills and creativity.

Based on the description of issues above, the researcher would conducted a study entitled "Students' perception of the effectiveness of project-based learning to improve English writing skill a case of tenth graders at SMA Islam Sultan Agung 01 Semarang in the academic year 2022/2023".

METHOD

The purpose of this study was to ascertain how the tenth graders at SMA Islam Sultan Agung 01 Semarang felt about the efficiency of project-based learning in enhancing their English writing abilities. The researcher employed a qualitative research design to fulfill the objectives. One method with a multimethod focus is qualitative research, whose subject matter is connected to the interpretative and naturalistic approaches. This indicates that the findings of a qualitative research study are based on actual event (Aspers & Corte, 2019). By obtaining as much detailed information as possible, qualitative research aims to provide a comprehensive explanation of the phenomenon under study, demonstrating the significance of the breadth and depth of the material examined. According to the justification, phenomenological research was used in the design of this study. Phenomenological research is a qualitative strategy in which people identify the human experience of their phenomenon.

Respondents

The respondents of the study were the tenth graders of SMA Islam Sultan Agung 01 Semarang in the academic year 2022/2023 which were selected using purposive sampling and the respondents based on the gender, they were three boys and three girls. Based on the competencies and the class rank

Instruments

This study used a list of interview guide as the instrument of the study to help the researcher to collect the data.

Interview

An interview is a flexible method of gathering data, interviews can be conducted verbally, nonverbally, visually, audibly, and even in written form for online interviews. One can control the interview's flow to allow for some spontaneity. The interview may ask difficult and in-depth questions in addition to requiring a thorough response. (Cohen et al., 2018)

Procedures

The procedure of collecting data was begun by the author asking a research submission letter from the supervising lecturer and faculty. Then, the author visiting to SMA Islam Sultan Agung 01 Semarang to determine the material to be studied. After that, the author asking permission to do research for the study to head master and English teacher of SMA Islam Sultan Agung 01 Semarang. The next step, the author choosing a class in the tenth graders of SMA Islam Sultan Agung 01 Semarang as a population and choosing six students in the class a sample of this study. After that, the author conducting an interview, in doing interview, researcher would conduct interview one by one. Students are given 20 related questions to interview from the researcher related in learning English by using

the project-based learning. The last step, the author analyzing information to obtain valid data.

Data Analysis

After the data processing, the next is data analysis. In data analysis there are several stages. According to Rijali (2019) the three steps in qualitative data analysis is: data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions.

Data Reduction

The first step in teaching qualitative data is data reduction, data reduction is a selective process that focuses on simplification, abstraction, and transformation of raw data as it appears in written field records. Data reduction involves: (1) summarizing data, (2) coding, (3) exploring topics, and (4) classification. Tip: Choose information, summaries, or short descriptions carefully and arrange them into a larger pattern.

Data Display

The next step is data display, After the data reduction process is complete, the data obtained is presented in detail and comprehensively, and the relationship pattern is sought. The data display format can be narrative text in the form of field notes, matrices, charts, networks and diagrams. Data display is used to further enhance the understanding of the case and serve as a reference for taking action based on the understanding and analysis of the data presentation.

Drawing Conclussion

The last step is drawing conclusions. This step is carried out after the data is collected and organized from the beginning to a complete conclusion. Conclusions are drawn by researchers continuously while in the field. Conclusions are presented as descriptive research objects guided by research studies.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to analyse students' perceptions of the effectiveness of project-based learning to improve students' writing skill. For these reasons, the data from the interviews were analysed to answer the research questions

The Students' Perception of the Effectiveness of Project-Based   Learning to Improve English Writing Skill

Learning to write by using a project-based learning method can improve students' writing skill. Data interview shows that project-based learning method can improve students' writing skill. All of the informants had the same perception of the effectiveness of this learning method. The reasons why this method is effective to improve students' writing skill among them are:
- Project-based learning method encourages students to diligently open the dictionary
- Project-based learning method encourages students to think critically
- The project-based learning method helps students better understand the material

Project-based learning method encourages the students to be diligent to open dictionary. This is accordance with the statement of informants that with this method he found a lot of new vocabulary that motivated him to find out the meaning and so he opened the dictionary. As we know that this method is a direct practice which makes us have to know vocabulary. For example, when they have an assignment to make a procedure text, they make it in English then they must know about the meaning. This learning method spurs the students to think critically. R_2 said that this learning method could improve students' writing skill because in their learning process, students were encouraged to improve their critical thinking and creativity. With this method, students can think more creatively to develop their writing to make it more interesting. In addition, by using this method students can understand the contents of the material they have made. Not only that, R_1 said and support the opinion that this method makes him diligent to open dictionary.

All of the respondents claimed that the used of project-based learning method can improve students' writing skill. There are many learning methods used but the project-based learning is a one of methods that can improve students' writing skill.

How Project-Based Learning Improves Students' Writing

The interview data revealed some reasons why the project-based learning method can improve students' writing skill. First, project-based learning can motivate students to write. Second, this method helps students to study together in a group, and the last, this learning method can help the students to produce better writing.

The Project-Based Learning Motivates Students to Write

Certainly, students are motivated to write for themselves. Writing is one of the fundamental abilities that students must possess in English classes. One of the main reasons some students dislike writing in English is that they believe English to be a difficult topic and a difficult language to understand. Many students stated that they were less motivated to study English as a result of this, which is why they did not enjoy writing in English. Few people, nevertheless, are content with their lives and motivated to learn how to write in English. The results of the respondents' interview can be used to draw the conclusion that project-based learning can encourage students to write in English, with one being inspired to discover the definition of a word. However, there are students who are less motivated to learn English writing class because they still think that writing English is difficult and need a lot of vocabulary.

The data show that, all of the respondents claimed that learning writing by using project-based learning method would motivate respondents to write. Because with this learning method the students felt more curious about the meaning of the word in each sentence.

The Project-Based Learning Helps Students to Work in a Team

In learning process, there are assignments that must be done together or called a team work. In team work, students were asked to help each other to achieve the same goals. The more opportunities for respondents to work in team, they are having to do and complete things together, and also the work team very important in social; train the

students' sensitivity, train the students' ability to communicate, train to establish a relationship and train them to be able to respect other students. In the project-based learning method, collaboration is needed, because project-based learning is identic with project task or tasks to produce something. The work would be easier if it was done together.

The Project-Based Learning Helps Students Produce a Better Writing

The project-based learning method is a fun method for students and is quite effective for improving students' skills. In this interview, the focus is on writing skills. Writing is an activity that is not easy, it requires creativity, critical thinking and needs a lot of vocabulary to produce writing. This learning model is able to build students' abilities by involving project work that produces a real work that can be shown as they have done, namely making a procedure text and show it in front of the class.

Learning to write using the project-based learning method can help students to produce better writing. All respondents agreed with the questions of researcher that learning by using project-based learning method makes writing results better. Because the good project results can be obtained when the respondents are happy with the learning method used in the class.

DISCUSSIONS

The purpose of this study is to investigate the students' perceptions of the effectiveness of project-based learning to improve English writing skill. The researcher used on interviews as his primary method to collect the data. The research question was answered based on two themes found in the interviews. The first theme is The Students' Perception of the Effectiveness of Project-Based Learning in Improve English Writing Skill. The second theme is How Project-Based Learning Improves Students' Writing.

The researcher had indicated that project-based learning method in English writing classes has a good impact on students. All informants answered that the technique can improve their writing skill. The data obtained during interview is that project-based learning effectively to improved students' writing skill because students become motivated to write, the assignments become easier to work on in a group, and the results of the students writing are better than before. Project-based learning presenting students with problems or a specific situation and motivating them to identify and solve to the problems. Students are allowed to participate in learning activities by working together on group projects (Choi et al., 2019).

The same thing has also obtained by Sharma et al. (2020) in his research which found that when students were engaged in project-based learning, they seemed to be more active and enjoyed the learning process. The reason is that the students believed that completing the learning process with their friends in a group setting allowed them to appreciate it more.

According to Harisma et al. (2019) the same research it shows that project-based learning is an exciting and effective method for improving students' writing skills. Based on his research data, it can be concluded that the mastery of vocabulary and grammar in the writing skill of students has increased. The same thing happened in this study; students

felt motivated to open the dictionary to increase their vocabulary.

Based on the research that has been done, it shows that some of the informants are not happy with writing activity, because they think writing is a boring activity. But, some of the informants were happy with writing activities. One informant shared that writing is one of their favourite activities because allows them to express themselves creatively through the writing activity. Writing can help students to express their thoughts, feelings, and knowledge, as stated by Astria (2023). However, although the informants enjoyed writing, the majority of them disliked writing in English.

The findings of this study are consistent with the results of the research carried out by Woodeson (2023), who discovered that the difficulty in composing invitation letters was related to a lack of vocabulary. This result follows those findings. According to Feng (2023), vocabulary addition is essential in learning English, especially in learning to write. Students can produce good writing if they have a lot of vocabulary.

Conclusion

This study aims to investigate how are the students' perceptions of the effectiveness of project-based learning in improving English writing skills. The following decisions can be made based on the findings during the interviews. The informants have a reasonable opinion about the learning strategy of using project-based learning. All informants believed that the method was effective in improving their writing skills. The reasons this method is effective in improve students' writing skills; This method encourages students to diligently open the dictionary, this method encourages students to think critically, and this method make students more understand the material. Based on research shows that this method can improve writing skills; with this method, students are motivated to write. This method can be done in groups, making it easier for students to complete their assignments. The result of the informants' writing was better after using the project-based learning method.

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