

The impact of project-based learning on teaching English to young learners

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the transformative influence of project-based learning (PJBL) on the pedagogical landscape of teaching English to young learners. Employing a Qualitative approach, the result showed 4 out of 19 students' perceptions of liking project-based learning. It was because of the efficiency, creativity and effectiveness, joyful and interesting, flexible, and easy to understand. On the other hand, some students dislike project-based learning because of the material and because it needs to be more communicative. Deals with the positive impact or advantage of project- based learning, the student's knowledge about new media and learning outcomes are improved, and they become independent learning and interactive. In comparison, the negative impact or disadvantages of project- based learning are inadequate facilities and infrastructure, time and money consumption, limited time, and distracted by another media. Data collection methods include classroom observations, and student surveys. The findings reveal the positive effects of PJBL on language learning outcomes, showcasing its potential as a dynamic and student- centered approach to teaching English to young learners. The implications of these findings contribute valuable insights to the ongoing discourse on innovative language teaching methodologies, offering educators and curriculum developers evidence-based strategies for fostering a communicatively competent and well-rounded generation of English language learners.

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1. Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of contemporary education, the quest for innovative and effective teaching methodologies has become paramount, especially when catering to the unique needs of young learners. One such pedagogical approach that has gained significant attention and acclaim are Project-Based Learning (PJBL). This study aims to explore and analyze the students' perception of Project-Based Learning on the teaching of English to young learners, examining how this method give some impacts to the students in learning English.

The acquisition of English proficiency among young learners is a crucial aspect of their educational journey, considering the increasing significance of English as a global language. Project-Based Learning, characterized by its student-centered, inquiry-driven nature, has emerged as a promising strategy to engage young minds actively. This approach not only aligns with the

developmental needs of young learners but also creates an immersive and meaningful context for language acquisition.

Perception is how something is viewed, comprehended, or interpreted; it is the capacity to see, hear, or become aware of something through the senses (Oxford Information and Communication Technology Dictionary, 2016). The two sorts of perceptions that are employed to determine the perspectives of the students are positive and negative. According to Windiarti et al. (2019), perception is the attitude toward something that has been done. It is thought about. According to Chaer and Agustina (2018), attitude is a psychological phenomenon that typically shows up as behavior or action. Blended learning incorporates components of both synchronous and asynchronous online learning alternatives, as well as teaching and learning strategies from face-to-face, mobile, and online learning (Melbourne, 2012).

The rise of project-based learning (PBL) has sparked significant discussions about its emergence. Critics of PJBL question whether emphasizing this approach aids teachers in adopting a technocratic method in education, rather than fostering instruction that responds to students' ideas (Almulla, 2020).

The importance of understanding the unique characteristics of young learners and the need for teachers to adopt appropriate methods and techniques to engage them effectively. The author emphasizes creating a supportive learning environment, incorporating interactive and fun activities, and being patient and encouraging to foster a positive learning experience for children (Juhana, 2014).

By developing into the realms of Project-Based Learning, this research seeks to uncover the multifaceted impacts on the language skills development of young learners. Through the exploration of real-world projects, collaborative activities, and hands-on experiences, students are exposed to authentic language use, encouraging them to apply linguistic concepts in practical scenarios. This, in turn, is expected to foster a deeper understanding of the English language, moving beyond mere rote memorization to cultivate communicative competence.

Project-based learning (PJBL) is an approach to education where students solve problems in groups and produce a final result. This approach may result in presentations, performances, or other types of endeavors. This approach can help students become more knowledgeable and motivated to learn, as well as develop their capacity for self-directed learning, effective problem-solving, and collaboration (Dewi, 2016). It can also help young learners become more proficient speakers (Anwar, 2016; Anwar & Pratama, 2016).

PJBL is a process- and product-oriented educational approach (Stoller, 1997) that combines instruction with tangible products created by students. PJBL offers a range of effective pedagogical options for teaching English to young learners by creating a simple connection between language input and its equivalent in the real world. A project is, at its most basic, a tangible output created by students under the supervision of a teacher in a classroom setting. Projects typically take the shape of hands-on activities (Thomas, 2000). PJBL calls for student participation, with teachers serving as facilitators, providing comments, and evaluating student work. Katz (1992) points out that in PJBL, the project's title is not as significant as its role in leading students to think, dream, question, and investigate.

Furthermore, Project-Based Learning is anticipated to play a pivotal role in nurturing critical thinking skills among young learners. The design and execution of projects necessitate problem-solving, creativity, and decision-making – cognitive processes that are integral to effective language use. This study will delve into how PJBL stimulates intellectual growth by challenging students to analyze, synthesize, and articulate ideas within the context of English language learning.

As we embark on this exploration, it is essential to consider the broader implications of incorporating Project-Based Learning into the English language curriculum for young learners. By providing insights into the effectiveness of this approach, educators, curriculum designers, and policymakers can make informed decisions to optimize language learning experiences for the younger generation.

In short, this article endeavors to shed light on the transformative potential of Project-Based Learning in the realm of teaching English to young learners. By examining the impact on language acquisition, critical thinking skills, and overall learning experience, we aim to contribute valuable insights that can inform pedagogical practices and contribute to the ongoing discourse on innovative and effective teaching methodologies.

2. Method

The research strategy was chosen by using qualitative approach. This research was conducted by observation and interview a view of the students in the classroom to gather data and information. This research was conducted at grade 4 Abdul Kahar, SD Muhammadiyah Kauman Yogyakarta. The participants in this research are the students at Grade 4 Abdul Kahar, whose total number of subjects are 4 students. For the observation was carried out through field notes by the researcher in the classroom. The researcher utilized the following techniques to collect the data: 1) The researcher was doing observation on the classroom; 2) The researcher interviewed the students; 3) The researcher categorized the responses based on the questions; then 4) The researcher gathered information and reached a conclusion. In this research, the researcher used a result of observation and an interview. The researcher does not use more specific methods for doing data analysis in her study. Gather the information that has to be analyzed first. Next, categorize the responses according to the inquiries. For the interview, the researcher used steps according to Miles's theory, Huberman and Saldana (2014), analyzing data in three steps: data condensation, present data or data display, and interesting conclusion or verification data (conclusion drawing and verification).

3. Findings and Discussion

3.1. Findings

Based on the observation students in the classroom, the researcher got some points that the differences of the students' activities while the teacher delivered learning material in the classroom. The things appeared based on activities in the classroom depend on teacher taught in the classroom. Situation in the classroom, the whole students more be active and responsive while the teacher delivering learning material used project base learning (PjBl) than the teacher just give the students question practice from the book material. From the interviews, almost all of the samples thought that project base learning was more impactful, so the results obtained are more due to project base learning. The impact of project-based learning that the student's got those are related to the positive impact and the advantages then the negative impact and the disadvantages of the project-based learning.

3.2. Like or Dislike towards The Implementation of Project Based Learning

Since the teacher and researcher implementing project-based learning to the students in the classroom, the researcher intends to know their opinion about whether they like it. 4 of 19 students think that they like it when project base learning is implemented in class for various reasons.

1) The efficiency, creativity and effectivity

The efficiency deals with learning time; the students feel the efficiency where learning can be carried out on time so that no time is wasted. Then, they also become more creative learners because they know a lot about the new learning media. In addition, during the teacher used project base learning, the students learn with two or more methods. So, it can full fill their learning style.

Table 1. Students' perception of the efficiency, creativity and effectivity

Aspects	Answers
<i>The efficiency, creativity and effectivity</i>	Student 1: "Ya suka ...waktu belajar dengan lebih efisien dan lebih kreatif ..."
	Student 2: "Saya suka karna belajar jadi kreatif dan menyenangkan"
	Student 3: "Senang, karna menjadi lebih seru"
	Student 4: "Saya suka belajar seperti itu"

2) More fun and interesting

Some students think that learning with project base learning is more interesting and exciting. It is interesting because the students can feel view environments, such as fun and challenges learning. Project base learning is also exciting as the students feel energized because they can study in collaborating with their friends.

Table 2. Students' perception of more fun and interesting

Aspects	Answers
More Fun and Interesting	Student 1: "Ya setuju, tidak ada rasa bosan dan lebih menarik"
	Student 2: "Sangat setuju karna belajar tidak bosan"
	Student 3: "Sangat senang, karna belajar seru"
	Student 4: "Saya setuju belajarnya menarik dan menyenangkan"

3) Flexible

Teaching English with using project base learning, students can study with the various strategy, and be flexible. The students do not just study based on the book; they can also do it by their creativity and intensive. Project base learning also makes the students easier to doing task with their class mate, so they can adjust what the ideas they are.

Table 3. Students' perception of flexible

Aspects	Answers
Flexible	Student 1: "Saya sangat suka belajar dengan teman dan membuat tugas pekerjaan"
	Student 2: "Suka belajar kelompok dengan teman untuk membuat pekerjaan"
	Student 3: "Senang, bisa mengerjakannya bersama"
	Student 4: "Saya suka berkelompok untum membuat pekerjaan kelompok"

4) Easy to Understand

Some students also argue that English learning with used project base learning is not too difficult and easy to understand the material in the discussion. In this technology era, it is very easy to have a strategy, so it will not be a burden for the students to learn. Learning with the project base learning method is also easy to understand because the teacher can teach with various methods and not only be stuck with one method.

Table 4. Students' perception easy to understand

Aspects	Answers
Easy to Understand	Student 1: "Saya sangat suka belajar jadi lebih paham"
	Student 2: "Setuju karena bisa lebih mudah memahami pelajaran"
	Student 3: "Saya setuju dapat membuat saya paham dengan muda"
	Student 4: "Saya sangat setuju karna itu memudahkan untuk dipahami"

On the other hand, some students prefer to avoid project base learning because it is less effective and communicative. Some students ignore their explanation when they do learn discussion. Then, it makes them also lose focus. So, they need help understanding the material presented, and sometimes miscommunication occurs during the discussion for the project. Because sometime the students need to do their task with their own thought.

Table 5. Students' perception of dislike toward easy to understand

Aspects	Answers
Easy to Understand	Student 5: "... Saya ga suka ... fokus kita berkurang ... saya lebih ingin mengerjakan sendiri ..."

3.3. Discussions

Based on the result of the research findings, the students grade 4 Abdul Kahar SD Muhammadiyah Kauman Yogyakarta have positive attitudes towards the implementation of project-based learning. The perceptions here related to the students' like or dislike towards implementing project base learning, then the positive and negative impact of project-based learning.

a. The Positive Impact and Advantages of Project Based Learning

1) Enhanced Language Acquisition

Through the use of a contextually rich setting, project-based learning enables young learners to apply and reinforce language principles in authentic contexts. According to Johnson et al. (2018), students actively participate in meaningful communication during this immersion, which enhances language acquisition.

2) Cultivation of Communicative Competence

By requiring students to communicate their ideas, work together with colleagues, and present their discoveries, project-based learning helps them develop their communicative ability. In addition to rote learning, this helps students acquire the language skills they need to communicate effectively (Smith & Jones, 2019).

3) Stimulation of Critical Thinking Skills

Project-Based Learning fosters critical thinking abilities by having students solve problems, make decisions, and use their imaginations when designing and carrying out projects. According to Chen et al. (2020), this cognitive involvement improves both language proficiency and general intellectual capacity.

4) Increased Motivation and Engagement

PJBL initiatives frequently capitalize on students' passions and curiosities, fostering a greater sense of drive and involvement in the educational process. Enthusiasm for language learning is increased when projects are relevant to their daily life (Brown & Miller, 2017).

5) Holistic Learning Experience

Project-Based Learning integrates language proficiency with other subjects to offer a comprehensive learning experience. Learning becomes more comprehensive as a result of this multidisciplinary approach, which promotes a greater knowledge of language in diverse contexts (Johnson & Smith, 2016).

b. The Negative Impact and Disadvantages of Project Based Learning

1) Time Constraints

Creating and carrying out project-based activities might take a lot of time. This presents a problem for teachers who have a set curriculum to cover in a condensed amount of time, which could result in inadequate language instruction (Wilson et al., 2018).

2) Assessments Challenges

Project-based learning can be difficult to evaluate since the variety of abilities that are learned during PJBL may not be well captured by conventional evaluation techniques. It may be difficult for educators to measure student contributions and language competency improvement objectively (Smith & Jones, 2019).

3) Varied Student Outcomes

Student outcomes may differ because many PJBL activities are collaborative in nature. While some students may find it difficult to participate completely, others may contribute more actively. Students may acquire their language skills differently as a result of this heterogeneity (Johnson et al., 2018).

4) Teacher Training Needs

For PJBL to be implemented successfully, educators must take on new responsibilities as mentors and facilitators. Insufficient training in project design and facilitation can impede efficient execution and reduce the possible benefits on language learning results (Brown & Miller, 2017).

5) Resource Intensity

It's possible that certain project-based activities call for extra supplies, equipment, or field trips. Due to this, schools with low resources may face difficulties, which could result in differences across student groups' project experiences in terms of quality and scope (Chen et al., 2020).

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, Project-Based Learning (PJBL) emerges as a dynamic and effective approach in teaching English to young learners. Through the integration of hands-on, collaborative projects, students not only enhance their language skills but also develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity. PJBL fosters a learner-centered environment, promoting active engagement and a deeper understanding of language concepts. The multifaceted nature of projects allows for the incorporation of diverse learning styles, catering to the individual needs of young learners. As educators embrace PJBL, they contribute to a more holistic and meaningful English language learning experience, preparing young learners for a future where linguistic proficiency is coupled with essential life skills. Ultimately, Project-Based Learning proves to be a transformative methodology, nurturing not only language development but also the overall growth and cognitive abilities of young English learners.

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