Project Based Learning to Improve the Learning of English Writing Skill Among Students of XI TKJ 1 Class at SMK Politeknik YP3i Banyumas
(A Classroom Action Research at XI Graders of SMK Politeknik YP3i Banyumas in Academic Year 2024/2025)

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Abstract

This research was aimed to enhance the learning of students' Narrative genre writing skill at SMK Politeknik YP3i Banyumas by using Canva as a technology through Project Based Learning (PJBL) as the instructional media and approach. This research was a classroom action research carried out in two cycles and each cycle had three meetings with the steps of the research consisting of planning, action, observation and reflection. The subjects were 36 students of XI TKJ 1. The data were collected by observing the instructional process, conducting a pre-test and a post-test, conducting an interview, and taking photographs. The instruments for collecting the data were observation checklists, answer sheet, and interview guides. The data were analyzed qualitatively. The observation checklists and interview transcripts were analyzed qualitatively through data collection, data reduction data display, and drawing conclusion. The validity of the research was through process validity, democratic validity, dialogic validity, catalytic validity and outcome validity. The result showed that Project Based Learning (PJBL) effectively enhanced the students' learning of English writing skill about Narrative genre writing. The use of canva as a technology was through PJBL showing the improvement that the students were accustomed to having writing practice with the process of writing within. It made quite much improvement on the students' writing learning process in terms of participation, involvement, and achievement. Students should learn individually and in group and produce the real product from their learning and they study involving technology. Based on the enhancement result, the researcher suggested that the teacher could implement canva as a technology through PJBL simultaneously as an effort to enhance students' Narrative genre writing skill.

Keywords: Writing Skill; Project Based Learning

Introduction

The development of education in the 4.0 revolution era is marked by the use of digital technology in every learning activity that forms learning activities that occur continuously without space and time limitations, and the learning process in the current era must be relevant to the industrial revolution 4.0 era. Learning means learning activities carried out by students and teachers. In compulsory education,

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implementation leads to a new paradigm of education characterized by students as creators and constructivists aiming to produce and app innovation (Akmal&Rustan, 2020). Education is required to realize mastery of 21 st-century skills, namely 4C, which includes (1) creativity and innovation, (2) critical thinking and problem solving, (3) communication, and (4) collaboration (Santyasa, 2020).

Facing the demands of education in the 21st century, Vocational High Schools as vocational education institutions must develop rapidly to meet demand in the world of industry and education. Vocational High School graduates are expected to master good communication skill and be able to compete in industrial world. Mastery of foreign languages is very important for them. Mastery of foreign languages, especially English, is very helpful in all aspects of life. Because English has been established as an international language, the ability to master English is a must and important component of progress of a country, so learning English in this modern digital era is an important priority and a demand in twenty-first century. This ability is to understand and/or produce spoken and written texts. These abilities are realized in four language skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing.

In SMK Politeknik YP3i Banyumas, English learning is taught by the teacher mostly though textbook exercise. The teachers have not conducted collaborative learning, especially using technology. Conventional teaching in classroom has been an obsolete matter for students in learning. The students are also lack of creativity in writing and they are not brave and confident enough to make a real product from their writing at the end of the study involving the use of technology. As a result, despite being taught English with sufficient enough sources of text in learning, students' writing skill is still lacking. Students feel unconfident every time the teacher asks them to write. They are confused what to write and how to use the tense and express their ideas correctly. When they had already got the idea, they are lack of vocabulary and grammatical mastery. They are also afraid of making mistakes while writing English. The limited time given to them is also become the problem for the students, so they don't have enough time to practice. As for teaching method play a huge role in motivating the students to hone their writing skill, teachers' selection of varying the media for learning becomes fundamental. (Denise Quah Seok Hoon, 2021) defined some of the benefits in utilizing technology in learning are learning becomes more interesting, provides easy-to-access-information that extends beyond the classroom, improves digital skills and it is future oriented. Teachers must develop a media with technology involve to help students learning English. Technology with internet integration could assist as it can be the media for teaching and learning in more effective way. For this reason, the teacher efforts are required to enhance the quality of the learning process through enhancing students' abilities in learning which can ultimately improve learning achievement which is marked by daily assessments that meet success criteria according to basic competencies. One of the improvement efforts made by the author in enhancing the learning process, especially writing skill, is effectuating learning using the Project Based Learning (PjBL) to enhance students' writing skill.

Project-based learning is a method that emphasizes learning through practical and applicable experience. Moreover, Project-Based Learning is an in-depth investigation of a topic important to the students' attention and effort in the real world (Kemdikbud, 2014). In addition, project-based learning also encourages collaboration among students. They can work in teams to develop their ideas, provide feedback, and motivate each other. Creating a good class atmosphere, getting the class interested, selecting the topic, creating a general outline of the project, doing basic research around the subject, reporting to the class, processing feedback, putting it all together, presenting the project, and assess and evaluate the project are the ten main techniques for implementing Project-Based Learning method. Project based learning improves students' competencies that are used to face market challenges that make free markets between countries, such as Critical Thinking, Communication, Collaboration, and Creativity.

Writing is one skill that is not only important in the classroom, but also in everyday life. In both academic and professional contexts, good writing skills can help a person to communicate clearly, craft strong arguments, and articulate ideas well. Project-based learning is proposed to improve critical

thinking significantly (Wang, 2022) and creativity (Chang & Chen, 2022). Project-based learning also allows students to hone critical thinking, problem-solving, and decision- making skills, which are very important competencies in everyday life and careers (Kaldi et al., 2011).

Moreover, multiple studies have indicated that the quality of vocational education can be greatly enhanced by project-based learning (Sukamta et al., 2018), strengthening students' involvement, attitude, and higher-order thinking skills by providing learners with diversified perspectives from others (Viswambaran & Shafeek, 2019). However, other scholars also proposed different conclusions, indicating that project-based learning did not significantly affect critical thinking and creativity (Siew & Ambo, 2020). The inconclusive results may arise from the shortcomings of project-based learning, which refer to its time limitations in class and requirements for comprehensive knowledge coverage (Sezer & Esenay, 2022). Therefore, some researchers are evaluating other approaches to overcome the disadvantages of project-based learning. Therefore, teachers and educators have a responsibility to develop students' writing skills as best as possible. However, conventional writing teaching often tends to be boring and less challenging for students. This is why project-based learning approaches are becoming increasingly appealing. In this paper, we will explore more about how project-based learning can be implemented to improve the learning of English writing skill among students of XI TKJ 1 at SMK Politeknik YP3i Banyumas. We will look at examples of projects that can be used in a variety of subjects, as well as strategies for overcoming challenges in project-based teaching. By understanding the potential of project-based learning in improving the learning of English writing skill can help to create a more engaging, meaningful, and effective learning environment.

Method

In this research, the researcher used Kemmis & Mc Taggart (1988) research design. They proposed the spiral of action research consisting of planning, acting, observing and reflecting. This research was conducted in August – Oktober 2024 at SMK Politeknik YP3i Banyumas, Yogyakarta. Subjects of the research were the 36 students of XI TKJ 1 with different background of life. The researcher used test, interview, observation, and field notes for collecting the data. There were two kinds of tests conducted in this research: a pre-test and a post-test. A pretest was conducted in the beginning of the research to find out and diagnose students' initial ability of writing English. In this pre-test, students were asked to compose Narrative genre writing (Legend) with free themes. The theme was some familiar stories known by the students and it attempted to recall students' background knowledge.

The length of story that students must compose was restricted, it was 100 words suitable with their capability. Most of them chose Legend story to be written in this pre-test, such as *Sangkuriang, The legend of Cry Stone, Roro Jonggrang.* While, a post-test was conducted after all actions have done. A post-test was aimed at finding out whether there was enhancement of the students either in the process or the product. This post-test also rolled as the determiner whether there must be the next cycle or the research must be ended up. Similar with the pre-test, in the post-test, the students were also asked to compose their own writing with the restricted length, it was 100 words. The theme of writing in the post-test was *Jaka Tarub legend* with CANVA. Beside the tests, this research also employed observation checklists to observe students' activities during actions conducted. It assessed each student's activeness during joining Narrative genre class and their involvement during working with their group in discussion. The next one that supported to collect the data was conducting interview with English teacher and some students selected. The researcher only interviewed English teacher of XI TKJ and selected the students randomly to obtain information based on their point of views. The interview employed was semi-structured type which had a rigorous set of questions but allowing ideas to be brought up during the interview as a result of what the interviewee said. It was aimed to ask them about their responses to the learning process before, during and after actions. This interview used *Bahasa Indonesia* to avoid students' and teacher's misinterpretation. While, field notes were aimed at describing the occurrence records result

in the field of research. The researcher took notes the occurrence and the gesture which probably existed in the field, from the beginning till the end of the research. It was also to make the report easy to do since the data obtained might be forgot by the researcher. The researcher also used vignette as the more complete field notes written during the research conducted. It was written as a daily note after conducting each meeting in this research.

After collecting the quantitative and qualitative data, the next step was to analyze the data. The quantitative data was analyzed using IBM SPSS *(Statistical Program for Social Science)* program. The researcher used this program for finding the reliability of both raters' assessment using *Cronbach's Alpha* reliability program. While, for finding the mean and average of the score, the research used Microsoft Excel's help. The qualitative data were analyzed through four steps: data collection, data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions. After collecting the data such as interview scripts, observation checklist, and field notes, data were reduced. Data reduction was done by selecting, limiting, simplifying, transforming by summarizing or paraphrasing interview scripts, and analyzing observation's checklist, and field notes. Then, the researcher and the collaborators concluded all of those data that had been analyzed to obtain the valid findings. For analyzing, the researcher also used CAR validities, such as:

a) Democratic Validity

For fulfilling this validity, the researcher conducted the interviews to English teacher and some students selected randomly after each cycle had been done.

b) Outcome Validity

This validity was fulfilled with the result of the actions that had been conducted in each cycle.

The researcher analyzed the observation, interview, field notes and students' writing results to be able to draw the conclusion and become part of outcome validity.

c) Process Validity

The process validity was fulfilled by reflecting on the data collection and modifying the strategies to answer the questions occurred during the process. This validity was also accompanied by the time triangulation where the researcher collected the data in the determined time.

d) Catalytic Validity

It was fulfilled by giving the participants the explanation the relation between the research and the social setting and encouraging students to focus on enhancing their achievement.

e) Dialogic Validity

It was fulfilled by discussing and asking their opinion and suggestion on what the researcher has conducted by interviewing them. To obtain the trustworthiness, the researcher used triangulation technique. First, time triangulation in which the researcher collected the data is on investigator triangulation is the researcher that was helped by the collaborators (English teacher and fellow researcher). Third, theoretical triangulation is the researcher that used some theories from experts and asked to other friend of English Education department of Yogyakarta State University to give her perspective on the research. The researcher also chose her whose good understanding on the classroom action research theories.

Findings

Before conducting the actions, the researcher observed the instructional process, interviewed the teacher and students, identified and limited the problems described as follows:

Table 1. The Problems Identified in English Learning of Class XI TKJ 1 in SMK Politeknik YP3i Banyumas

No.	Problem	Code
1	The students lacked of motivation in joining English class.	Std
2	The students were passive when being questioned and asked to give their opinion.	Std
3	The students did not pay attention to teacher's explanation.	Std
4	The students found it difficult to dig up their ideas for writing.	Std
5	The students found it difficult to arrange sentences and understand the meaning of words in English.	Std
6	Some students were not involved to do the group assignment.	Std
7	Interesting media was used limitedly in learning process.	Med
8	The most materials were taken mostly from textbooks and LKS in which they were monotonous.	Mat
9	The use of conventional teaching methods made students bored.	Med
10	The teaching process was teacher-center.	Ac&T
11	The activities were boring.	Ac

Note:

Std: Student   Mat: Learning Material

Med: Media   Ac: Activities

T: Teacher

From the pre-test result, the students' score average was as much as 61.92 according to both raters, while to pass the criteria, the students must have score as much as 75 respectively. From 36 students, there were just 6 students who passed the achievement criteria with the percentage as much as 23.02% and the others were under the achievement criteria with the percentage as much as 76.98%. The assessments from both raters were reliable since the Cronbach's Alpha > 0.7. Based on the identification and the pretest results, the major problems related to the students' writing must be solved soon. The use of interesting media and approach were needed. Therefore, utilizing Canva as technology through Project Based Learning (PJBL) to enhance the learning of writing skill among students of XI TKJ 1 Class about Narrative genre writing skill was being the main goal.

Table 2. The Actions to Solve the Field Problems

No.	Action
1	Implementing project based learning approach as an approach to teach.
2	Applying interesting activities based on project based learning approach
3	Giving the students opportunities to express their ideas
4	Changing classroom management

Discussion

The Report of Cycle 1

Planning Action

The researcher identified the problems, drew the conclusion, and discussed with the English teacher and the collaborator what the actions would be done for enhancing students' achievement in the process and product. The researcher created the lesson plans and the course grid for some meetings.

Meeting 1

The first meeting was conducted on 22ⁿᵈ August 2024. The researcher and the collaborator 2 entered the class and started teaching using Project Based Learning (PjBL). The first stage of PjBL was Project Step Planning carried out by the following activities:

a) The teacher greeted the students and prepares students to carry out learning by praying.
b) The teacher asked the class leader to lead the prayer (P5) and the teacher checks the attendance and readiness of students.
c) Explained the learning goals that the students were expected to be able to do in the first meeting. They were: students were able to understand the concept of Narrative Text, recognize and analyze some sample texts would be provided by the researcher.
d) While showing the pictures and videos to the students, the teacher provided trigger questions related to the learning topic. Such as: "Are you familiar with this story?", "What is the story about?", "What is the legendary story?", "What do you know about legends in Indonesia?", "What language features can you identify in the presented narrative text?", "Why is it important to understand these language features in narrative writing?".
e) Students and the teacher related the trigger questions given in the initial activity to the learning objectives.
f) The teacher conveyed the goals and benefits of mastering the material to be studied so that learning becomes meaningful
g) The teacher started the lesson by displaying narrative text on the screen. The narrative text contained examples of Simple Past, Past Continuous, reported speech, and adverbs.
h) Students analyzed and identified language features contained in the text. (Activity 1)
i) Students identified with help and the teacher gave a few key words to help students.
j) Students paid attention to the teacher's explanation about narrative text includes important language elements and emphasized that understanding these language features would improve their understanding and expression in writing
k) The teacher started the first meeting by showing a short video explaining the difference between Simple Past and Past Continuous. (Activity 2)
l) Students paid attention to the teacher's explanation regarding the differences between simple past and past continuous
m) Students played games with their classmates. (Activity 3)
n) The teacher distributed puzzle paper v2
o) Students and their classmates began to look for and lined the correct word v2 in the puzzle
p) Students did the next activity (Activity 4) about choosing the verb in the bracket and choosing between simple past and past continuous
q) Students discussed with their pairs.
r) The teacher provided explanations and feedback after the students had finished carrying out. (Activity 3)
s) Students were divided into groups. (4C/Collaboration)
t) The students made time line/ schedule for doing the project.
u) Students were assigned to make class story book using CANVA as technology.

Meeting 2

Same as meeting 1, the researcher entered the class, greeted, asked one student to lead others to pray, and explained the learning goal. In the meeting 2, the students were expected to be able to recognize, understand and start writing class story book using CANVA as the technology. Firstly, the researcher reviewed the material in the previous meeting by asking the students *"Do you remember what we have learnt in the previous meeting?", "What is Narrative Text? What is the purpose of it?"* The researcher started Monitoring stage of PJBL in which the researcher planned to use CANVA as a technology and

Project Based Learning (PJBL) for instructional process in making class story book. Students work together to design and create a creative class story book related to the legend story chosen by the students through www.canva.com, the teacher monitors student projects, the teacher directs students if they are deemed inappropriate in their work, this visual representation helps solidify their understanding of the differences between the past simple and past continuous tenses, their functions, and related time expressions. The students can use colors, pictures, and keywords to enrich their story book.

Meeting 3

Same as meeting 2, the researcher and collaborator entered the class, greeted, asked one student to lead others to pray together, asked their condition, and explained the learning goal in the beginning of instructional process. Students were expected to be able to construct the class story book with group. In this meeting, students were asked to continue making class story book using canva and the teacher monitors the students' activity in the classroom. Here, the researcher and collaborator could assess their involvement in their groups. Not all students were involved and just a student did it in each group. But, when the researcher came to their desks, they started doing it. Some male students were also having chat and busy with others. After 20 minutes they finish doing the story book with the group, the researcher invited all groups for report preparation and presentation about their discussion results in front of the text. The researcher also invited some different constructions/sentences based on what they could tell from class story book. Many students rose their hands and gave their answers.

On the other hand, there were still many students feeling shy to express their ideas so the students speaking up were the same. Then, students display the results of their projects via LCD projector in front of the class (4C/Communication and collaboration)/TPACK. The teacher provides feedback about the story book shown (4C/Communication and collaboration).

Reflection of Cycle I

1. Students still found it difficult to understand the concept of Narrative Text.
2. Students still found it difficult to be more creative in writing Narrative Text involving technology.
3. Researcher's instruction still could not be caught by students
4. Students' writings were still incoherent and the contents were still confusing.
5. Most students did not pay attention to the grammar and vocabulary choice.
6. The use of media was not yet optimal.
7. Researcher still found it difficult to manage the class while students were busy to have chat with others and some male students liked disturbing others.
8. Researcher still found it difficult to manage the time since the time gap and students' work time was not short.
9. Through the observation carried out by the collaborator, students were more enthusiastic and interested in joining the class since they could watch the video and use storyboard creatively in constructing their writings.

From progress test 1 result, there were just 9 students that had passed the criteria of achievement with the percentage as much as 34.62% with 2 students that got 'very good' score and the rests had not passed the criteria of achievement with the percentage as much as 44.44% as much as 27 students should have addition better implementation of PJBL in the actions of the next cycle. Those assessments from both raters were reliable with Cronbach's Alpha > 0.70. Most students still found it difficult to understand the use of prepositional phrase to show the time, such as *one day, once upon a time,* decide the right past tense or verb 2 and the subject usage, etc. Their writings were also incoherent with confusing storyline between one paragraph and others.

Cycle 2

Meeting 1

In this meeting, as usual, the researcher and collaborator entered the class to start learning. The researcher greeted, asked one student to lead others to pray together, asked students' condition and explained the learning goal of this meeting in which the students were able to understand concept of Narrative Text, use grammar correctly and know the meaning of vocabularies used in project based learning that would be used for constructing the text. Students also made a list of the language features existed in the text such as the prepositional phrase *(One day, once upon a time, Long time ago)* which were identical with Narrative Text, the use of noun phrase, and action verbs.

Meeting 2

In this opening section of the meeting, the researcher did usual activities. Then, we started learning in the Planning stage. The group consisted of four of five students. They were asked to discuss the vocabularies by finding the meaning of those. The aim of this activity was to make the framework for constructing the text in a group. In this meeting, the researcher also had been able to manage the class to the more conducive one even though some students still had their own activity till the researcher came to their desks. Further, the time management had been proper since the students had less difficulty than the previous one.

Meeting 3

In this meeting, the researcher also did the same activity in the beginning of the learning. The learning goal of this meeting was the students were able to construct their writing correctly and creatively with less guidance and help from the researcher. The researcher distributed many titles of narrative text legend. The students were with their group's members started writing narrative text (legend) and they had understood. Therefore, the researcher's guidance here was minimum and they would ask if there was something difficult to do and to understand. The researcher monitored, evaluated and corrected students' works as well as asked them to revise soon. The role of peer reviewing also existed here simply.

In the stage of Revising, students had understood how to revise and they asked me less than in the previous cycle. So, the researcher just waited them to finish writing then asked them to submit their works. Reflection was aimed at meeting the democratic and dialogic validity. Besides, from the reflection, the researcher and collaborator could draw the conclusion whether or not there should be the next cycle. The reflection was done from the data gathered such as observation checklist, interview guidelines and students' work. In this cycle, the students' improvement achieved all stages of PJBL. Moreover, their improvement existed in process and product. At least they had a new experience how to construct the text through some processes they had to do, like a writer. They could learn the knowledge of social context and also the linguistics a skill they brought to writing ability. In this cycle, the focus of the researcher was making students accustomed to having writing practice more, improving their grammar and vocabulary mastery, and also increasing their motivation in joining the class.

Reflection of Cycle 2

1. Students had understood the concept of Narrative Text.
2. Students had understood how to make a writing skill's project using CANVA through PjBL for writing Narrative Text.
3. Students' writings were coherent and the contents were clear enough.
4. Students' grammar and vocabulary mastery had improved.
5. The use of media was optimal.
6. Researcher's instruction was clear enough.

7. Researcher could manage the class and time well by collaborators and some students' help.
8. Through the observation carried out by the collaborator, students were more enthusiastic and interested in joining the class since they could watch the video and use CANVA creatively in constructing their writings.
9. The students' scores had improved significantly.

Conclusions

After implementing the actions using Project Based Learning (PJBL) to enhance the learning of writing skill of the eleventh graders of SMK Politeknik YP3i Banyumas started on August - October 2024, it could be concluded that there was significant improvement. This research was carried out in two cycles and it was effective to improve students' writing skill with the focus topic was Narrative Text (Legend). The actions consisted of the stages of PJBL activities (Project Step Planning, Making Schedule, Monitoring, Report Preparation and Presentation, Project Evaluation).

Some effective ways were also found after implementing this action research in order to enhance students' writing instructional process using PJBL. *First,* students' motivation increased showed by their activeness in answering researcher's questions. *Second,* the use of PJBL made students' better in writing a text in which they could generate and develop their ideas, they could understand the knowledge of linguistic and texts' social function. *Third*, students were more active in answering or responding researcher's questions. By the fun learning process, students felt comfortable to convey what was in their minds and decreased their silence. *Forth*, students' involvement in group working increased as time went by. After conducting the research, the researcher proposed several suggestions. The suggestions covered all the important aspects of this research, such as: For English teacher, especially English teacher of SMK Politeknik YP3i Banyumas, it is important to consider to use the learning media when teaching Narrative genre writing. The use of PJBL could be an alternative way to teach Narrative genre writing because it offered attractive media to help students generate and develop their ideas and promote students' involvement based on the principles of learning in Curriculum Merdeka, that is cooperative learning. After conducting this research, the researcher has new perspective towards the instructional process, especially in the heterogeneity of students. Students have different intelligences, learning style and learning strategy. How they grasp the learning material is also different one another. It is beneficial for the researcher to figure out many things and since it is the first time the researcher conducts the classroom action research. However, improvements will remain as we make changes. For other researcher, the limitation of this research was related to the time limitation. Those who are interested in researching the same field are recommended to implement the actions in a longer time and modify the better version of this media and approach to get much more optimal result.

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