English Teachers' Perception of Project-Based Learning in Teaching English: A Case Study at SMPN 1 Jonggat

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Abstract: In the era of global competition, enhancing English language skills is critical, and project-based learning (PjBL) presents a potential model to improve student engagement and language competence. This qualitative case study, conducted at SMPN 1 Jonggat in Central Lombok, Nusa Tenggara Barat, examines English teachers' perceptions of PjBL, focusing on its effectiveness, challenges, and implementation strategies. Using a purposive sample of three English teachers who employ PjBL in their classrooms, data were collected through semi-structured interviews and close-ended questionnaires to capture detailed insights into teachers' attitudes and experiences with PjBL. Semi-structured interviews allowed for in-depth exploration of teachers' subjective experiences, while questionnaires provided structured data on specific aspects of PjBL's implementation. Data were analyzed following Miles and Huberman's three-step process—data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification—to systematically interpret findings. This study contributes valuable insights for educators seeking to enhance English language teaching through PjBL, offering a framework for understanding both the benefits and challenges of PjBL from teachers' perspectives in a secondary school context. Findings are expected to support improved teaching strategies and contribute to more effective English education practices.

Keywords: Project-based learning, teacher perception, English language teaching, case study

INTRODUCTION

The current era of global competition requires quality learning to empower students to develop their skills, abilities, and talents to face the challenges of capital life globally. All individuals must possess the ability to communicate both orally and in writing in English in order to obtain news and information related to all facets of life (Adawiyah et al., 2023). Anticipating these demands, education is designed in such a way as an effort to increase high-quality performance through the learning process at school. Therefore, various teaching models are used to improve the quality of learning because the success of education depends on the teaching model used.

Teachers need to increase their understanding of developments and changes that occur in the world of education (Darling-Hammond et al., 2023). Teachers have the freedom to choose various teaching tools so that learning can be tailored to the learning needs and interests of students because the learning process is designed to support students so they can be active in learning activities. According to Bell and Kahrhoff (2006), active learning is the process by which students actively work to develop their knowledge of concepts, ideas, and abilities by completing assignments and activities guided by the instructor. It can be any activity that engages students in the process of learning.

According to Irwan et al., (2023), language teachers are increasingly concerned about the mistakes that their students make when learning a language in the classroom. However, creative teachers make the teaching and learning process more enjoyable so that students can understand the material presented well, that is one-way teachers can optimize the teaching process. Choosing an appropriate, interesting, and efficient learning model aims to help students become involved in learning activities so that the material presented can be understood well.

One of the teaching models that can help students get involved in learning activities is project-based learning. According to Bell (2010: 41), project-based learning is an instructional approach that enables students "to drive their learning through inquiry, as well as work collaboratively to research and create projects that reflect their knowledge". Project-based learning can maximize student involvement in learning, increase creativity, improve students' critical thinking and scientific performance, and encourage students to develop long-term learning skills. Project-based learning has a great potential to create more interesting and meaningful learning. It can improve students' scientific knowledge in learning so that the teacher's role as a guide and mediator can be realized well. Here, the instructor serves as a facilitator, helping the students as they work on their assignments (King & Smith, 2020).

Teacher's perception is very influential on student learning. The teacher can see a process that starts from insight to the response that is formed in the student so that the student is aware of everything in their environment through their senses. Implementing the project-based learning model in English classes is often a challenge for teachers because PjBL is not always easy for English teachers to implement.

Therefore, investigating teacher perception is very important because teachers play an important role in selecting learning materials, and designing the learning process, including the activities and models used. According to Choi et al., (2019), teachers' perception is the notion that they have faith in their ability to be successful educators. Positive perceptions from educators have an important role in determining learning success, along with their control over the selection of teaching materials and learning models. A deep and positive understanding of the benefits of the project-based learning model is the main key to effective implementation. A structured learning plan is an important

basis, not only as a guide for teachers but also as a solid foundation.

Based on the background above, this research aimed to investigate the perception of English teachers regarding project-based learning in English language teaching at SMPN 1 Jonggat. This research explored how English teachers at SMPN 1 Jonggat view project-based learning, its effectiveness in improving English language skills, the obstacles encountered during the implementation, and how to overcome them. Therefore, the researcher conducted research entitled "English Teachers' Perception of Project-Based Learning in Teaching English: A Case Study at SMPN 1 Jonggat.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research design with a case study approach, conducted at SMPN 1 Jonggat. The focus of this research was to understand English teachers' perceptions of project-based learning (PBL) through in-depth interviews and documentation review. A qualitative case study was chosen because it was suitable for exploring complex social processes within real-life settings. Qualitative research is an approach to social action that focuses on how people perceive and make sense of their experiences to comprehend each person's social reality. It gathered, examined, and interpreted data using content analysis of textual and visual sources, oral histories, interviews, journals, diaries, and classroom observations and immersions, in addition to open-ended questionnaires (Zohrabi, 2013). According to Ahmad et al. (2019), qualitative research provided comprehensive insights into human behaviors, experiences, attitudes, intentions, and motives by observing and interpreting individuals' perspectives.

This study aimed to investigate teachers' personal views and experiences with PBL, enabling the researcher to understand the subjective and social dimensions of their teaching practices. The study utilized a combination of semi-structured interviews and close-ended questionnaires. Interviews were a method used by researchers to gain insights based on someone's subjective experiences through their expressed opinions (Busetto et al., 2020). The questionnaires offered standardized, easily comparable responses that revealed general trends in teachers' attitudes toward PBL. Meanwhile, the semi-structured interviews allowed for a deeper exploration of each teacher's unique experiences and perspectives. This approach enabled the researcher to gather both broad and detailed data, resulting in a well-rounded analysis of teacher perceptions. Research design and method were clearly defined.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher investigated English teachers' perceptions of project-based learning (PBL) by administering questionnaires and conducting semi-structured interviews. The study involved three English teachers who actively use PBL in their teaching. Each teacher took 10-15 minutes to complete the interviews, providing in-depth insights into their experiences. The questionnaire, administered on-site, consisted of ten closed-ended questions and took 5-10 minutes for each teacher to complete. Through these methods, the researcher gathered both quantitative and qualitative data on the teachers' attitudes and thoughts toward implementing PBL in English language instruction.

Based on Questionnaires

The researcher administered a questionnaire to three English teachers at SMPN 1 Jonggat over three sessions. Teacher ZP completed the questionnaire on Saturday, June 8, 2024; teacher AM on Monday, June 10, 2024; and teacher N on Thursday, June 13, 2024. Each teacher responded to ten statements, rating their level of agreement on a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). This approach allowed the researcher to systematically capture each teacher's views on project-based learning.

Table 1. Interpretation of the teachers' perception of Project-Based Learning Model

No.	Statements	Frequency and Percentage				
		SD(%)	D(%)	N(%)	A(%)	SA(%)
1	I am in favor of integrating PBL into the English curriculum.	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
2	Project-based learning contributes to students' independence	0%	0%	0%	33.3%	66.7%
3	Project-based learning makes learning more innovative and trains critical thinking skills	0%	0%	0%	33.3%	66.7%
4	Implementing project-based learning as a teaching model can make students active	0%	0%	0%	33.3%	66.7%
5	Project-based learning provides opportunities for students to collaborate and develop teamwork.	0%	0%	0%	66.7%	33.3%
6	Project-based learning has a positive impact on students' motivation to learn English.	0%	0%	0%	66.7%	33.3%
7	PBL allows for better application of real-world English language skills.	0%	0%	0%	66.7%	33.3%
8	Project-based learning is an effective teaching model for teaching English	0%	0%	0%	66.7%	33.3%
9	With project-based learning, learning becomes more interesting and fun.	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
10	Project-based learning is a great tool for student learning.	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%

Based on Interview

The researcher conducted interviews with three English teachers at SMPN 1 Jonggat over three sessions. Teacher ZP was interviewed on Saturday, June 8, 2024; teacher AM on Monday, June 10, 2024; and teacher N on Thursday, June 13, 2024. Each interview included six main questions aimed at gathering in-depth insights into the teachers' perspectives on project-based learning.

Teacher Perception of the Project-based Learning Model in Teaching English

The researcher found that English teachers at SMPN 1 Jonggat hold positive perceptions of project-based learning (PBL). Through interviews, the teachers expressed that PBL is a beneficial approach that encourages student collaboration, creativity, and problem-solving. Teacher 1 described PBL as a method that enables students to gain knowledge through group work focused on finding solutions. Teacher 2 highlighted its engaging nature, noting that it fosters

innovation among students. Similarly, Teacher 3 emphasized PBL's ability to make learning more interactive and creative by allowing students to work collaboratively in groups.

The Project that Teachers Have Done

To implement project-based learning (PBL), English teachers at SMPN 1 Jonggat have introduced various projects to strengthen students' language skills. The researcher identified key projects used by teachers, including descriptive, procedural, narrative, argumentative, and discussion texts. Teacher 1 has assigned projects in descriptive and procedural texts. Teacher 2 has focused on narrative and procedural texts, such as retelling folk stories and creating recipes or woven items as procedural tasks. Teacher 3 has also included procedural, argumentative, and discussion texts, guiding students to engage in activities such as recipe creation for procedural learning.

Project-Based Learning for Teaching English

Teachers at SMPN 1 Jonggat view project-based learning (PBL) as an effective model for teaching English, as it immerses students in real-world tasks that foster language acquisition, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity. Teacher 1 supports PBL for making language skills more applicable and engaging. Teacher 2 noted that PBL's suitability depends on the material, explaining that text-based topics, like greeting cards, lend themselves well to projects. Teacher 3 emphasized that PBL not only improves language proficiency but also develops essential life skills like teamwork, problem-solving, and communication, making it a valuable approach for English learning.

Strengths and Weakness of Project-Based Learning

Teachers at SMPN 1 Jonggat recognize both the advantages and challenges of project-based learning (PBL). They noted that PBL connects theory to real-world applications, enhances critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration, and boosts student motivation. Teacher 1 highlighted that PBL makes learning engaging, although some students may struggle with its student-centered approach. Teacher 2 added that PBL fosters discovery and problem-solving skills but requires constant teacher guidance. Similarly, Teacher 3 emphasized that while PBL improves motivation and problem-solving, some students rely heavily on teacher instructions, making ongoing support essential for success.

The Challenges Face by Teachers When Implementing Project-Based Learning Model in Teaching English.

Teachers implementing project-based learning (PBL) at SMPN 1 Jonggat face several challenges in the classroom. The researcher identified issues such as limited time to complete materials and the need for teachers to actively engage all students in group activities to prevent passivity. Teacher 1 noted that varying student abilities pose a challenge, particularly for those with weaker English skills, which can make project work more difficult. Teacher 2 highlighted time management as a significant concern, emphasizing the need to allocate sufficient time for all groups to present their findings. Additionally, a lack of facilities and necessary materials can hinder students' creativity and impact their ability to meet learning objectives. Teacher 3 also pointed out that effective time allocation is crucial, as projects require multiple meetings to complete, necessitating careful management to ensure that other teaching materials are also covered.

How the Teachers Overcome the Problems in Implementing Project-Based Learning in Teaching English.

Despite facing challenges in implementing project-based learning (PBL), teachers at SMPN 1 Jonggat employ various strategies to overcome them. To address time constraints, they prioritize essential content and provide clear instructions to minimize confusion. Teacher 1 conducts initial assessments to gauge students' English skills and groups them by ability, pairing advanced students with those who need more support to foster collaboration and enhance learning. Teacher 2 focuses on key materials and offers explicit guidance to prevent misunderstandings. In response to limited facilities, Teacher 2 encourages creativity by involving students in finding solutions and exploring available resources, as well as seeking collaboration with parents and the community for additional support. Teacher 3 develops a structured schedule with deadlines for each project phase, ensuring effective time management for planning, research, and presentations. Together, these approaches create a more effective and engaging learning environment for all students.

Discussion

Teachers' Perception of the Project-based Learning Model in Teaching English.

The study found no significant difference in teachers' perceptions of the implementation of the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model in English instruction at SMPN 1 Jonggat, with overall positive feedback from both questionnaire data and interviews. Teachers agreed that Project-based learning (PjBL) plays a vital role in fostering students' independence by emphasizing student-driven production and presentation rather than relying solely on teacher-led instruction. This approach empowers students to take control of their learning process, allowing them to work independently and creatively. According to Klein et al. (2009), Project-based learning is driven by students' independent production and presentation, rather than the teacher's delivery of information

Teachers also noted that PjBL fosters innovation and critical thinking, enabling students to investigate issues, draw conclusions, and produce creative content. By connecting learning to real-world contexts, PjBL enhances the relevance of English language skills, increasing student motivation and interest. As noted by Klein et al. (2009), Project-based learning requires creative thinking, critical thinking, and information skills to investigate, draw conclusions, and create content.

Furthermore, the teachers emphasized that PjBL involves students working collaboratively in groups to solve problems. According to Coleman (1992), students involved in projects often experience increased social and collaboration skills, as well as a feeling of togetherness in the group.

The Challenges Faced by Teachers When Implementing Project-Based Learning Model in Teaching English.

Based on the results of the questionnaire and interviews, English teachers at SMPN 1 Jonggat face several challenges when implementing this model in the classroom. These challenges include difficulties in providing adequate

learning facilities and infrastructure, which are important factors in supporting project activities, and also challenges in time management. In addition, teachers are also faced with challenges in dealing with varying student abilities, which can affect student participation and contribution to group projects.

1. Variation in Student Abilities:
    Teachers encounter difficulties due to the diverse backgrounds, skill levels, and learning styles of students, which can lead to unequal participation in group projects. According to Krajcik and Blumenfeld (2006), the variation in student abilities can be a barrier to achieving the goals of PjBL. The imbalance not only affects group dynamics, but can also hinder the achievement of the main goal of PjBL, which is to encourage all students to engage and learn through collaborative project experiences actively.

2. Time Management:
    Time management is one of the biggest challenges faced by teachers when implementing Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in English language teaching. PjBL, unlike traditional teaching methods, requires a much larger allocation of time to plan, implement, and evaluate projects. According to Thomas (2000), the time needed to implement PjBL is often a major obstacle, especially when teachers have to integrate PjBL into a dense curriculum. With the demands of covering all the materials that must be taught in one academic year, finding enough time to develop and implement meaningful projects can be very challenging.

3. Lack of Teaching Facilities
    One of the challenges faced by teachers in implementing Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in teaching English is the lack of adequate teaching facilities. PjBL, which emphasizes learning through practical and collaborative projects, requires various facilities and resources to support the learning process. Chiang and Lee (2016), stated that PjBL requires students to have high self-motivation and is highly dependent on the availability of adequate facilities. Adequate facilities allow students to conduct research, collaborate, and complete projects effectively.

Overcome the Challenges in the Implementation of the Project-based Learning Model.

While project-based learning (PjBL) offers numerous advantages for students at SMPN 1 Jonggat, teachers face several challenges in its implementation. These challenges include addressing varying student abilities, managing time effectively, and dealing with a lack of teaching facilities.

Challenges and Solutions:

1. Varying Student Abilities: Teachers encounter differences in students' English language skills, which can impact group dynamics and participation. To address this, teachers conduct initial assessments to gauge students' proficiency and group them accordingly. Moreover, Gibbons (2002), stated that emphasizes the importance of scaffolding in language learning, where more knowledgeable peers or teachers provide support to help students perform tasks, they would not be able to do independently. The strategies of grouping students according to their language proficiency and encouraging

peer support is a practical application of this scaffolding technique in a PjBL context.

2. Time Management: Effective time management is critical for the success of PjBL. Teachers recommend creating structured schedules with clear deadlines for each project stage. Providing detailed instructions helps minimize confusion, allowing students to work independently and reducing the need for constant teacher intervention. Regular check-ins are also crucial for monitoring progress and addressing issues efficiently, ensuring that projects remain on track and that valuable class time is used efficiently.

3. Lack of Teaching Facilities: Inadequate facilities pose a significant challenge to implementing PjBL. Teachers address this by creatively using existing resources and involving students in problem-solving. They encourage students to use materials readily available in their surroundings and explore simple technologies. Collaboration with parents and the community can also provide additional resources. Flexibility and adaptability are key, as these strategies not only help overcome limitations but also enrich students' learning experiences by teaching them to navigate real-world constraints effectively. According to Larmer (2010), one of the keys to success in PjBL is flexibility and adaptability to challenges. Teachers can encourage students to think critically and creatively to solve problems that arise due to limited resources. This not only fosters greater creativity among students but also enriches their learning experience by teaching them to navigate real-world constraints effectively.

Overall, by implementing targeted strategies to tackle these challenges, teachers can enhance the effectiveness of project-based learning, promote collaboration, and support student engagement and skill development.

CONCLUSION

Through the exploration of teachers' perceptions of Project-based learning (PjBL) in teaching English at SMPN 1 Jonggat, several key findings emerged. Based on the research findings, PjBL positively impacted English teaching, as indicated by positive responses from both questionnaires and interviews. Teachers revealed that PjBL promoted student independence, active participation, and critical thinking. It also made learning more engaging and innovative, offering opportunities for collaboration, teamwork, and the application of real-world English skills, which increased student motivation.

However, teachers faced several challenges when implementing PjBL. The first challenge was managing students with varying English proficiency levels, which hindered equal participation. The second challenge related to time management, as PjBL required more time than traditional methods due to its focus on project development. Lastly, inadequate teaching facilities limited the scope and quality of projects. To overcome these challenges, teachers assessed students' proficiency for effective grouping, set structured schedules with clear deadlines, and encouraged the creative use of available resources. Despite these challenges,

teachers supported PjBL for its positive impact on English learning outcomes.

Future studies could explore the long-term effects of Project-based Learning (PjBL) on students' English proficiency, particularly focusing on how it influences their communication skills and ability to apply language in real-world scenarios. Researchers might investigate the impact of different types of projects or the integration of technology in PjBL on student engagement and motivation. Additionally, it would be beneficial to examine how teachers' professional development and training in PjBL methods affect its successful implementation in diverse classroom settings. Comparative studies across different schools or regions could provide further insights into overcoming the challenges faced during PjBL implementation, such as managing varying proficiency levels and addressing resource limitations.

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