

The Use of Project-Based Learning Strategies in Improving Students' English Writing Skills at STIKes RS Husada: The Implementation and Students' Opinion

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ABSTRACT

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Writing becomes the most challenging skill for the students as it needs more time to develop and tend to raise problem to students. Therefore, project-based learning is offered to solve the problems in writing. Some experts believe that project-based learning (PBL) can provoke the students to get new knowledge through their own project. This research reports on the implementation of project-based learning in teaching writing. The objectives of the research are to know the implementation of project-based learning in elevating the students' ability on writing and to know the students' opinion of the implementation of project-based learning in teaching writing. Qualitative was used as a research method and classroom action research as a research design. The participants of the research were third semester students in one interview. Then, data were analyzed based on triangulation. As result, it was found that the implementation during the implementation of this method as they gave positive opinion toward the method used; they project give engaged the students in solving a real problem and answering it. In other word, this project could develop the students' critical thinking and it could be a meaningful project for them.

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1. INTRODUCTION

English is an international language that has an important role in global communication and in various areas of life. In various countries, including Indonesia, English language skills have become a key competency for success in the academic, professional and social worlds. In the context of higher education, students are expected to have good English writing skills, because writing is one aspect of crucial language skills. Teaching English writing in universities is often faced with various challenges. Students may face difficulties in organizing ideas, grammar, and writing skills in accordance with academic demands. One approach that has emerged as an alternative for improving English writing skills is Project Based Learning (PBL).

Writing is one of productive skills that should be mastered by the students. Through writing, students can express feeling, describe something, discuss an idea, present a point of view, and share experience they have in the form of written product (Argawati & Suryani, 2017). Project Based Learning (PBL) is a learning method that focuses on projects or project-based tasks. In the context of language learning, PBL involves students in projects that are challenging and relevant to real life, requiring them to develop English writing skills through practical and collaborative experiences. PBL can help students improve critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving skills, while improving their writing skills.

This research aims to investigate the use of Project Based Learning strategies in improving English writing skills among students at STIKes RS Husada. Students need to write descriptive text

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by describing their friend. Researcher gives the opportunity to the students to write the descriptive text (pre-test) and then give the students the material about descriptive text and lastly students have to make another descriptive text (post-test). By better understanding the effectiveness of PBL in English language learning contexts, we can contribute to the development of more effective and innovative teaching methods.

2. METHOD

This research is an experimental study with a pre-test and post-test control group design. This design is used to compare learning outcomes between the group that received Project Based Learning (PBL) and the control group that received conventional learning. In this case, the control group will receive learning to write English without using PBL, while the experimental group will take part in PBL. The population of this research is undergraduate of Bachelor's degree of Nursing students at STIKes RS Husada. The research sample was taken using a purposive sampling technique. Researcher used 5 students as the sample for this qualitative research. The instruments used in this research include an initial test (pre-test) and a final test (post-test) to measure students' English writing skills. The test is designed based on the English language learning curriculum that applies at this college. Apart from that, we will also use a questionnaire to collect data from students about their perceptions of Project-Based Learning.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Student A

Before the descriptive text instruction, Student A expressed challenges in adding vivid details to their writing. They mentioned struggling to move beyond basic descriptions and felt limited in expressing nuanced characteristics.

Interview of Pre-Test

"Before the instruction on descriptive writing, I found it challenging to make my descriptions more vivid. I struggled to convey the essence of people and things in my writing, and it often felt too plain and straightforward."

The result of the student A's writing is highlighted as follows:

Student's Writing of Pre-Test

The nurse entered the room and attended to the patient. She was wearing a white uniform and had a friendly demeanor. She asked about the patient's symptoms and took notes. The nurse seemed experienced and efficient in her work, but there wasn't much detail in her appearance or actions.

After the instructional intervention on descriptive writing, Student A noted a significant improvement in their ability to incorporate details. They felt more confident in capturing the essence of a person, expressing appreciation for the newfound skill and its relevance to their future role as a nursing professional. The result of the interview is highlighted as follows:

Interview of Post-Test

"After the instructional sessions, I noticed a positive shift in my descriptive writing. I feel more capable of capturing the details that bring a person to life on paper. The guidance really helped me overcome the initial difficulties I had, and now I find describing people much more engaging and expressive."

Student A showed an improvement after receiving the material and explanation from a lecturer about how to write the descriptive text. The result of the student A's writing can be seen below as follows:

Student's Writing of Post-Test

As the nurse glided into the room, her pristine white uniform exuded professionalism and care. A gentle smile graced her face, instantly putting the patient at ease. Her eyes, filled with empathy, darted between the medical charts and the patient's face, demonstrating a keen focus on both the details of the case and the person in need.

Every movement seemed deliberate and purposeful; from the way she sanitized her hands with precision to the softness in her voice as she inquired about the patient's well-being. A neatly pinned nametag on her uniform identified her as Nurse Rodriguez, a beacon of reassurance in the healthcare setting.

Her hands, adorned with latex gloves, moved skillfully as she conducted a thorough examination. The tactile assurance and careful consideration she applied in each interaction highlighted not just technical proficiency but a genuine commitment to holistic patient care.

In this post-instruction text, the description of the nurse is more detailed, emphasizing not only her appearance but also her actions, demeanor, and the impact of her presence on the patient. This improved descriptive text aims to enhance the observational and descriptive skills of nursing students, providing a more holistic view of the person behind the profession.

Student B

Before the instruction, Student B struggled with adding depth to my descriptions. It was challenging to make the writing more vibrant and detailed, especially when describing people. Student B often felt like the descriptions lacked richness.

Interview of Pre-Test

Before the instruction, I found it challenging to bring my descriptions to life. I struggled with adding details that would make my writing more vivid, especially when describing people. It was a bit daunting

The result of the student A's writing is highlighted as follows:

Student's Writing of Pre-Test

Before the instructional intervention, the nursing student observed the healthcare professional with a clinical eye. The nurse, dressed in a standard uniform, executed her duties efficiently. There was a sense of professionalism in her demeanor, but the description lacked depth, focusing more on the functional aspects rather than the person behind the profession.

After the instruction, Student B noticed a significant improvement in his descriptive writing. Student B feel more confident in painting a detailed picture with words, especially when describing people. The guidance provided during the sessions has helped me overcome the initial difficulties he faced, making his writing more expressive and engaging.

Interview of Post-Test

"Before the instruction, I found it challenging to bring my descriptions to life. I struggled with adding details that would make my writing more vivid, especially when describing people. It was a bit daunting."

The result of the student A's writing is highlighted as follows:

Student's Writing of Post-Test

After the instructional sessions, the nursing student's observation of the healthcare professional transformed. The nurse, adorned in a pristine white uniform, exuded warmth and competence. A gentle smile played on her lips, immediately putting both colleagues and patients at ease. The student now noticed the subtle nuances in the nurse's expressions, the empathy in her eyes, and the way she interacted not just as a healthcare provider but as a caring individual. The

description extended beyond the surface, capturing the essence of the person behind the medical role.

Student C

Before the instruction, describing people, especially in a professional setting, felt challenging. I struggled to go beyond the surface details and capture the person behind the role. It was somewhat clinical and lacked a personal touch.

Interview of Pre-Test

"Before the instruction, I struggled with describing people, especially in a professional context. It was challenging to add depth and capture the essence of the person behind the role. I felt like my descriptions were somewhat superficial."

The result of the student A's writing is highlighted as follows:

Student's Writing of Pre-Test

Before receiving specific instructional guidance, the nursing student observed the healthcare professional with clinical precision. The nurse, clad in a standard uniform, efficiently carried out her duties. The focus of the description remained primarily on the procedural aspects, lacking the depth needed to convey the person behind the medical role.

After the instruction, I feel more equipped to describe people, particularly in the nursing context. The sessions helped me notice finer details, understand the importance of empathy in descriptions, and go beyond the professional facade. It's become more nuanced and meaningful.

Interview of Post-Test

"After the instruction, I've noticed a positive change. Describing people, particularly in a nursing setting, feels more natural. I've learned to focus on the nuances that make each person unique, and it's become easier to convey a more holistic picture in my writing."

The result of the student A's writing is highlighted as follows:

Student's Writing of Post-Test

After targeted instructional sessions, the nursing student's observation of the healthcare professional transformed. The nurse, dressed in a crisp white uniform, radiated both competence and compassion. A warm smile graced her face, immediately establishing a connection with both colleagues and patients. The student now paid attention to subtle expressions, noting the genuine empathy in the nurse's eyes and the way she interacted beyond the clinical tasks. The description extended beyond the surface, capturing not just the medical professional but the caring individual behind the scrubs.

Student D

Before the instruction, Student D could describe his friend a little bit but still found it difficult to express all the idea that he wanted to say. Based on the interview that had been conducted, Student D stated that writing descriptive text was a bit challenging due to lack of vocabularies.

Interview of Pre-Test

Actually, I could describe a little bit but I am still confused to make descriptive text because I don't have much vocabularies.

The result of the student D's writing is highlighted as follows:

Student's Writing of Pre-Test

I have my friend, her name is Amanda Tiara. She's my classmate. She is a beautiful and kind friend. I know her about two year ago. We have met since the first time we met at STIKes RS Husada. Tiara also likes to listen to music and the last she is have a boyfriend.

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From the text above that have been written by student D. It can be concluded that he could make the descriptive text. Overall, the text could benefit from clearer sentence structure and smoother transitions between ideas. Additionally, it would be helpful to provide more specific details or anecdotes to support the description of Amanda Tiara as a beautiful and kind friend. After the instruction, student D stated that it was a bit easy to write descriptive text because he wrote the introduction first, then description. By doing this way, he found it easy to write.

Interview of Post-Test

After understanding the material that has been given by the lecturer, I could express my idea a bit more. I wrote the introduction then description of my friend. By doing this way, I find it easy to write descriptive text.

The result of the student D's writing is highlighted as follows:

Student's Writing of Post-Test

I have a friend, and I want to describe my friend. Her name is Amanda Tiara Fatiha. She is my classmate and I know her for about two years. We met since the first time we enrolled to STIKes RS Husada. Tiara is a beautiful and kind friend. She also likes to listen to the music. She has a long black hair; she has a slim body and she was born in Jakarta. She wears a ring; she wears shoes every day. She has pointed nose; small eyes and she has a boyfriend.

Overall, the text has improved in terms of sentence structure and clarity. However, it could still benefit from providing more specific details or anecdotes to support the description of Amanda Tiara Fatiha as a beautiful and kind friend.

Student E

In understanding descriptive writing, students may face difficulties due to the abstract nature of the content. Descriptive writing often requires the reader to visualize and interpret sensory details, which can be challenging for some students. Additionally, expressing ideas can be difficult as students may struggle with finding the right words to accurately convey their thoughts and emotions. It's important for educators to provide support and guidance, encouraging students to practice descriptive writing and offering strategies to enhance their expression skills.

Interview of Pre-Test

Understanding descriptive writing has been challenging for me because it requires a deeper level of interpretation. Sometimes, the abstract nature of the content makes it difficult for me to fully grasp the intended meaning. Visualizing and engaging with the sensory details can be quite overwhelming.

The result of the student E's writing is highlighted as follows:

Student's Writing of Pre-Test

His name is Yuni Wulandari, you can call her Yuni, he likes cats. He doesn't like spicy food. He likes buying snacks. He lives in West Jakarta.

The student's understanding of descriptive text has significantly improved after receiving explanations from their teacher. They now have a clearer grasp of the purpose and structure of descriptive writing. With an enhanced ability to identify and analyze sensory details and vivid language, their reading comprehension skills have greatly improved. Additionally, the student now feels more confident in expressing their ideas and emotions through descriptive language, resulting in more engaging and vivid writing. Overall, the explanations provided by the teacher have had a profound impact on the student's progress in understanding and utilizing descriptive text effectively.

Interview of Post-Test

I have experienced significant progress in my understanding of descriptive texts since receiving explanations from my teacher. The explanations provided me with a clearer understanding of the purpose and structure of descriptive writing. I now have a better grasp of how to identify sensory details and vivid language used to paint a picture in the reader's mind.

The result of the student E's writing is highlighted as follows:

Student's Writing of Post-Test

I have a friend. He is my classmate. My friend's name is Yuni Putri Wulandari, you can call her Yuni. She lives in West Jakarta. She was born on June, 2003. She likes cats, she doesn't like spicy food, she is the third of 4 children. She is pretty, she has short and black hair, she has brown skin, she has a small body and she is wearing an orange jacket.

Discussion

Based on the findings from the interviews and document analysis, it is evident that the implementation of Project Based Learning (PBL) strategies has had a positive impact on improving the English writing skills of students at STIKes RS Husada. The interviews with students A, B, C, D, and E provide insights into their experiences and progress in understanding and expressing descriptive text. Before the instructional intervention, students A, B, C, and E expressed challenges in adding depth and vivid details to their writing. They struggled to move beyond basic descriptions and felt limited in expressing nuanced characteristics. However, after receiving explanations and guidance from their teacher, they noted significant improvements in their ability to incorporate details and capture the essence of a person or object. They felt more confident in their descriptive writing skills and appreciated the relevance of these skills to their future roles as healthcare professionals.

The pre-test writings of students A, B, C, and E lacked specific details and depth, focusing more on surface-level descriptions. However, their post-test writings demonstrated significant improvement. They were able to create more engaging and expressive descriptions by incorporating sensory details, vivid language, and personal observations. The post-test writings showcased a greater understanding of the importance of capturing the essence of a person or object, going beyond the superficial aspects. Student D, on the other hand, already had some ability to write descriptive text before the instruction. However, they faced difficulties in expressing all the ideas they wanted to convey due to a lack of vocabulary. After the instruction, student D found it easier to write descriptive text by following a structured approach of writing the introduction first and then the description. This approach helped them express their ideas more effectively.

Overall, the findings indicate that the instructional intervention on descriptive writing using PBL strategies has positively impacted the students' understanding and expression of descriptive text. The students have shown improvements in incorporating details, capturing the essence of a person or object, and using vivid language to create more engaging and expressive descriptions. The guidance provided by the teacher has played a crucial role in enhancing their descriptive writing skills and preparing them for their future professional roles. It is important for educators to continue providing support and guidance to students in practicing descriptive writing and enhancing their expression skills. By incorporating PBL strategies, educators can create a more immersive and engaging learning environment that fosters the development of descriptive writing skills.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings from the interviews and document analysis presented in Chapter IV, it is evident that the implementation of Project Based Learning (PBL) strategies has positively impacted the English writing skills of students at STIKes RS Husada. Before the instructional intervention using PBL, students A, B, C, and E faced difficulties in adding vivid details and depth to their descriptive writing. They struggled to move beyond basic descriptions and had trouble capturing the essence of people or objects. However, after receiving explanations and guidance from their teacher using PBL methods, the students noted significant improvements in their descriptive writing abilities. They were able to incorporate more sensory details, vivid language, and personal observations to

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create more engaging descriptions. The pre-test writings of these students lacked specificity and focus more on surface-level aspects. In contrast, their post-test writings demonstrated enhanced understanding of descriptive writing through capturing nuanced characteristics and essence. Student D also benefited from structured guidance in writing introductions and descriptions, helping express ideas more clearly. Overall, the findings indicate the PBL instruction has effectively improved the students' skills in understanding, analyzing, and expressing descriptive text. It has positively impacted their ability to incorporate details, use vivid language, and capture the holistic essence beyond superficial aspects. The teacher guidance provided through PBL has played a key role in enhancing the students' descriptive writing competence and preparing them for their future careers.

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