

INCREASING STUDENTS' CREATIVITY AND WRITING SKILL THROUGH PjBL

by

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Abstract

The objective of this research was to find out whether there was an increase on students' and teacher's activity, students' creativity, and students' writing skill through the implementation of project based learning (PjBL). The research design was a classroom action research. The subjects were the first graders of class *Tata Kecantikan Kulit (TKK)* or Skin and Beauty Treatment at Vocational High School State 3 Metro, known as *SMKN 3 Metro*, in the second semester, academic year 2015/2016. This action research was done by doing: 1) planning; 2) implementation; 3) observation and data collection; and 4) reflection. Meanwhile, the PjBL was done through six steps, i.e.: 1) determining the project; 2) planning the steps of doing the project; 3) scheduling the project implementation; 4) completing project with guide and supervision from the teacher; 5) making report and presenting project result; 6) evaluating process and project result. The instruments of this research were students and teacher observation, creativity assessment, and writing skill assessment. The findings showed that the students' and teacher's activity gradually increased in each cycle. PjBL implementation also seemed to be effective in increasing the students' creativity and writing skill. It indicated that by applying PjBL, the aspects of students' and teacher's activity in learning process, students' creativity and writing skill could be directly influenced by the treatment.

Key words: PjBL, activity, creativity, writing skill.

INTRODUCTION

Learning is a conscious individual effort for a change in behaviour. Gagne, Briggs, & Wager (1993:3 quoted by Prawiladilaga, 2009,p.24) states that a change as a result of one's learning can be influenced by either internal, the learner's himself, or external factor that is the setting of learning condition.

While instruction is defined as an interaction process between learners and their learning sources. The objective of an instruction is to achieve learning results namely leaning effectiveness, learning efficiency, and learning interest, (Sanjaya, 2008,p. 215). Instruction is also a process of curriculum implementation. Sanjaya (2008,p. 224-228) cites that there are nine principles in implementing curriculum, those are: 1) purpose based orientation; 2) activity existence; 3) developing individu; 4) developing students' personality integratedly; 5) setting learning environment interactively; 6) inspiring students to do/create something; 7) interesting; 8) challenging students to develop/improve themselves; 9) motivating students to learn.

However, the English instruction process and result of the tenth graders of Skin and Beauty Treatment or *Tata Kecantikan Kulit* (TKK) was still found less optimal. It could be seen that the students' participation, motivation, interest, and learning results were still low. Based on the documentary study done in the first semester, it was found that only 58 % of the students could reach the passing grade score, that is 75. As the follow up, an interview was conducted to some sample students to find out some possible causes to this problem. The results showed that: 1) the students felt that English was difficult subject and not interesting; 2) the students were difficult in translating some words; 3) the students didn't master some vocabularies (spelling and meaning) discussed in the lessons; 4) the students found that there was opportunity to cheat in completing the tasks; 5) the students had difficulty to express ideas in writing.

The results of interview above indicated that there was a need to treat the students Engling lesson, especially in the students' writing skill. Treatment can facilitate the students to get better change in their learning result. Therefore, to overcome such problems, there was a need to implement such model which can activate, motivate, and lead the students to be more independent and responsible learners. The answer to this problem is by implementing project-based learning (PjBL).

Project-Based Learning (PjBL) is a comprehensive instruction which can activate the students continuously through cooperative investigation (Bransford&Stein, 1993 in Rahayu&Nuryata, 2011). Rahayu&Nuryata (2011) add the ideas that the aplication of PjBL is expected to lead the students to deeper learning process in which they can use technology and inquiry and to be more active in issues or questions related to their real life.

In the training modul of 2013 Curriculum (*Kemdikbud*, 2014,p.38), PjBL is one of the recommended learning models. It has some characteristics as following: 1) learners make decision about a project framework; 2) there is a challenge or problem issued to be solved by the learners; 3) learners design solution to the challenge or problem; 4) learners collaboratively are responsible to access or organize information to solve the problems; 5) learners evaluate the process continuously; 6) learners gradually do reflection toward their activity; 7) final product of the learners is evaluated qualitatively; 8) learning situation is really tolerant toward the learners' errors and changes.

Meanwhile, PjBL can be implemented in the class through the six steps, i.e.: 1) determining the project; 2) planning the steps of doing the project; 3) scheduling the project

implementation; 4) completing project with the guide and supervision from the teacher; 5) making report and presenting the project result; 6) evaluation of the process and project result (*Kemdikbud*, 2014,p.39).

Through the implementation of PjBL, the learners are demanded to complete a task or project which is arranged systematically either individually or in groups. They are also asked to perform their work at a maximum and to be responsible to present the project result in front of audience, that is, their teacher and their classmates. Based on some references of PjBL above, it is assumed that PjBL is a student oriented learning model which is able to make the students more active, participated, creative, and challenging in learning. Through PjBL, the students can get stimuli to learn independently and creatively in completing the project given. The role of the teacher will be broaden from the only learning source to be a facilitator and motivator. Therefore, it was a belief that by implementing this model in class X TKK, their activity, creativity, and their learning result especially in writing skill could be increased. This classroom action research was conducted by leading reseach questions as follow:

1. How is the student activity in the implementation of PjBL?
2. How is the teacher activity in the implementation of PjBL?
3. How is the students' creativity in completing the projects?
4. How is the students' learning result in writing skill through the implementation of PjBL?

METHODOLOGY

The research design was a classroom action research. This research was done in three cycles following steps of action research proposed by Kemmis and Mc Taggart in Kunandar (2010,p. 70-75), i.e.: 1) planning; 2) implementation; 3) observation and data collection; and 4) reflection. The subjects of the research were the students of class X TKK SMKN 3 Metro in academic year 2015/2016. There were 29 female students who were relatively less motivated, less active in the learning process, and often late in submitting the assignments, especially in English subject. In term of their writing skill, it was found in the beginning that they often made mistakes in the spelling of words, grammar, and the vocabulary preference.

The research was done in the second semester academic year 2015/2016. There were 2 meetings in every week. A cycle was completed in 2 weeks started from January to February 2016. The detail schedule is presented in table below:

Table 1. The research schedule

| Cycle | January | | February | | | |
|-------|---------|--------|----------|--------|--------|--------|
| | week 3 | week 4 | week 1 | week 2 | week 3 | week 4 |
| 1 | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | |

Meanwhile, each cycle of the PjBL was conducted by doing the learning syntax as follow: 1) determining the project; 2) planning the steps of doing the project; 3) scheduling the project implementation; 4) completing project with the guide and supervision from the teacher; 5) making report and presenting the project result; 6) evaluation of the process and project result. The project given were related to the sixth basic competence “understanding memo, menu, signs and symbols”. Specifically, the first project was “making menu for my own restaurant”. The second and third projects were related to the seventh basic competence, “understanding simple expressions and terms”. Specifically, the second project was “making dreams/hopes for my future” and the last one was “making invitation card”.

The instruments of this research were: 1) observation of students’ activity; 2) observation of teacher’s activity; 3) assessment of students’ creativity in making products; and 4) assessment of students’ writing skill. The students’ and teacher’s activities were based on the six steps in implementing PjBL. They were developed into twelve sub variables which functioned to describe the process done either by the students or teacher. Meanwhile, students’ creativity in completing the projects was seen from the ideas of Torrance (in Munandar 1999,p.45) who cites that the ability to think creative is divided into three things, i.e.: 1) fluency; 2) originality; and 3) elaboration. While the aspects of writing skill assessment are based on: 1) fluency; 2) content; 3) conventions; 4) syntax; and 5) vocabulary (isaacson, 1996).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The research findings showed that based on the observation of the teaching learning process through the implementation of PjBL, students’ activity gain score in cycle one was

35 which was categorized as “less active”. It was then 43 in cycle two and categorized as “quite active”. At last, the gain score became 51 in cycle three or categorized as “active”. Meanwhile, the observation result for teacher’s activity showed that the gain score was 47 in the first cycle and categorized as “quite active”. It increased to be 50 in the second cycle and categorized as “active” and it became 56 in the last cycle which was categorized as “active” too.

The implementation of PjBL was also analyzed from the side of students’ creativity in completing the project. The criteria of creativity were fluency, originality, and elaboration. The score was ranged from 0 to 100. The result in the cycle one reported that the score was 2089 and categorized as “quite creative”. The score then became 2224 in cycle two which was also included as “quite creative”. The increase then could be seen in the result of the cycle three. It became 2328 which was categorized as “creative”.

The last problem formulation was about the effect of PjBL implementation toward the students’ writing skill. When giving the writing score, the raters ignored all aspects of creativity and activity done by the students. On the other hand, it only focused on analyzing students’ writing skill based on the aspects of writing, i.e.: fluency, content, conventions, syntax, and vocabulary. The result showed that the students’ writing score was 2058 in the first cycle, categorized as “fair”. The average score was 71,0 and the achievement percentage was 58,6%. It means that there were only 19 students who passed the minimum achievement standard (*KKM*) out of 29 students in *TKK* class.

Meanwhile, the result of writing skill in the second cycle showed that the final total score was 2146. The average score was 74,0. The achievement percentage was 65,5% which means that there were 19 out of 29 students could pass the *KKM*. This result could be interpreted as a “fair” writing skill result.

The last cycle reported a significant increase on the students’ writing skill. The total score was 2325 and the average was 80,2. Meanwhile, the achievement gain became 96,6 % which was categorized into “good”. It was only one student who could not pass the minimum achievement standard.

By looking at the result presented above, it can be inferred that the implementation of PjBL has contributed such differences in the teaching learning process in class *TKK*. Seen from the side of students’ activity, the students were trained to manage a learning project related to the materials discussed. In the first meeting of the new project or new cycle, they faced the situation in which they had to plan and decide general design of their project. In this

case, they were guided to be an imaginative, innovative, and creative person. They had to broaden their knowledge and think abstractly. It was out of the common context of learning which is usually provided more by the teacher.

This condition was in line with the ideas from Gagne, Briggs,&Wager (1993: 3 quoted by Prawiradilaga, 2009,p. 24) which states that the change on students' behaviour can be influenced by external factors. In this case, the different instructional strategy, that is PjBL, the strategy which is oriented on the activity of the students. By having the students to create a project is also supporting the implementation of Sanjaya's Principles in implementing Curriculum, they are specifically stated in point six "inspiring students to do/create something" and point eight "challenging students to develop/improve themselves". The less satisfaction result in cycle one was in case of students' ability to design detailed project. It might happen due to the students' confusion in planning the materials, spesific design, decoration, and others in the beginning of the project planning. It needed more time for them to think what they would do in completing the project by looking at some references, available materials, budget, and other possible factors to do the project. In the same line, the problem also happened in case of communication of such hinders happened during the project completion. The teacher found that there were only a few students who discussed the problems happened during the project done. It might be caused that they were still ashamed or afraid to convey their problems to the teacher. As the result, at the end of the cycle, some students were not able to complete the project well or still could not pass the *KKM*. This situation continued in the second cycle, although the teacher had been more active in asking the students' problem, still there were some students who could not achieve the passing grade.

However, the increase could be seen in some activities during the PjBL implementation. As an example, the students performed good progress in finishing the project on time. It increased gradually from the first, second, and third cycle. The improvement was also found in the project presentation. The students were able to present their result project better from one cycle to another. Above all, it can be said that the implementation of PjBL has been able to improve students' ability in planning, managing, actuating, and evaluating their learning activities.

The result of PjBL implementation was also seen from the side of teacher's activities. In line with the students' activities, the aspects observed were based on the six steps of PjBL implementation. In the first cycle, the research reported that the teacher was quite active in

leading the learning process. The positive results were in case of the teacher's ability to tell the objectives of PjBL, lead what the students had to do in completing the project, check students' work on the date line, guide how to present the projects in front of class, and evaluate mistakes found during presentation and language use.

The third variable analyzed in this present action research was students' creativity. The creativity was seen from three aspects: fluency, originality, and elaboration. The result showed that in the first cycle, students' creativity in term of elaboration was higher than in fluency and originality. It might be due to the characteristics of the students who were all female taking skin and beauty treatment major. They were very careful in designing the projects and making decoration of the project in a very detailed ways, such as colors, materials, shapes, etc. However, from the originality aspect, it was found that many of them made similar designs. It was because the discussion process they did in making the design. They were also found to have difficulties in fluency aspect. It could be seen that majority, they only produced less than ten ideas for each category of the first project.

However, in the second project, the fluency aspect was higher than others. It seemed to be easier for them to express ideas what they hoped for their future. Majority, they could give more than ten ideas on their project. Still, the teacher found many similar project designs among the students. It means that in term of originality, they still modelled their project design from their classmates, but in case of elaboration, they were able to design the detailed project well. In general, the students creativity in the first and second cycle was categorized as "quite creative". Fortunately, the students' creativity in the third cycle was getting better. They became getting used to make the projects in English learning and had been able to understand how they were evaluated; therefore, they could present their project in "creative" ways.

The last variable assessed was students' writing skill. The writing aspects being evaluated were proposed by Isaacson (1996), i.e.: fluency, content, conventions, syntax, and vocabulary. The result of the first cycle reported that students' writing skill was still fair. The average score was 71,0. It indicated that they still needed to improve their writing skills in all aspects. The lowest gain was in term of conventions. The result showed that they had problems in using punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and producing legible writing. The other problem was in case of syntax. The students seemed to have difficulty in arranging phrases and sentences. They were also unable to select variation of vocabularies well.

However, in terms of fluency, content, and vocabulary aspects, they had performed “fair” enough.

Meanwhile, the students’ writing skill in the second cycle seemed to be better. Even though it was still in “fair” category, the gain was increasing. The fluency aspect reported the highest result than the others. It proved that PjBL had stimulated the students to describe their ideas by writing them on the project. They also became more skillful in organizing the content to become cohesive and coherent. The problem happened in syntax aspect. In this case, the students found it difficult to make complex and compound sentences when they wanted to express their hope/dreams for their future in longer sentences. Somehow, the students’ writing skill was getting better in this stage.

The last cycle showed different result in term of writing skill. Here, it could be seen that their writing skill had been “good”. Based on the result of the previous cycle, the teacher had come to the decision to let the students draft their writing and check it. This reflection made a very significant result in the writing assessment. Not to mention that the students had to fully duplicate what writing they had consulted. It functioned only to give them more exercise before they did writing on their project.

As the reflection, in the first cycle, there was still found some students who did not submit the project on time; therefore, the teacher tried to monitor the students’ progress better by giving more attention to those who still had difficulties in doing the projects. The teacher also found that some students were confused to make the original design project. In this case, for the second project, the teacher showed some pictures as examples. As the result, at the end of the second cycle, the number of students who did not finish their projects on time decreased.

Somehow, there were still some aspects needed improvement like in communicating such hinders in doing the projects and the language used related to the topic given. Based on teacher’s reflection, students writing ability was not significantly better. To solve this problem, the teacher asked the students to consult the writing draft in advance before writing down in the projects. As the result, the students’ writing skill assessment in the third cycle showed satisfying scores.

This present action research reported similar finding as the previous study held by Munawaroh, et al (2013). They did experiment research by implementing PjBL for the eighth graders of Junior High School. The similar positive result was that PjBL implementation had been successful in increasing students’ learning result. The difference was that it was applied

in English subject while the previous one was in science subject. This present study result also supported another research finding held by Muderawan, et al. (2013). It reported that PjBL implementation had worked well in improving students' critical thinking ability in chemistry subject. At the end of the research, the students could show the result in chemistry learning better. The difference was that this study focused on improving students' creativity, not the critical thinking ability. Needless to say, PjBL has been able to improve the learning process and the learning outcome better in some extent.

CONCLUSION

The research findings lead to the conclusion as follows:

The students' activity was less active in the first cycle. It then became quite active in the second cycle and active in the third cycle. It can be concluded that the students' activity was improving from one cycle to another.

The result for teacher's activity showed that the first cycle was quite active. It increased to be categorized as active in the second cycle. The gain score increased in the third cycle although the category was still the same. This findings showed us that the teacher had been able to play her role as a learning facilitator.

Seen from the side of students' creativity in completing the project, the result in the cycle one and cycle two was categorized as "quite creative". It then became "creative" in the last cycle. It can be said that the implementation of PjBL has met its purpose in term of improving students' creativity.

Related to the students' writing skill, it was resulted in "fair" writing ability in the first and second cycle. By evaluating some aspects in reflection step, it increased to be "good" in the third cycle. It indicated that by implementing PjBL, the students' writing skill has improved.

However, the research findings also realized us to improve some aspects for the coming implementation of PjBL, they are:

To make the students more involved in activity, teacher should monitor the process of PjBL implementation by using more systematic instrument in order to capture students' hinders during the learning process.

The teacher should increase communication with the students and observer to control the students' progress in each cycle.

The teacher should give more detailed scoring criteria to make the students understand how they will be assessed, provide more examples, and more alternative designs as students' models.

The teacher should provide more exercise on writing skill and hold a specific writing test, not only by assessing the writing skill on the project.

BIOPROFILE

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