



IMPROVING STUDENT PARTICIPATION AT SDN22/X KUALA SIMBUR BY USING PROJECT BASED LEARNING IN ENGLISH SUBJECT

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the application of the Project Based Learning (PjBL) model to enhance active participation among elementary school students in English learning. Using a Classroom Action Research design with McTaggart's model, the study was conducted in one cycle consisting of six meetings. Data collection was performed through teacher observations and field notes to capture student engagement and participation throughout the learning process. The research aimed to address the low level of student activity and interest in traditional English learning methods. The findings reveal that the implementation of PjBL significantly improved student participation. Of the 21 students observed, 19 actively engaged in group discussions, project activities, and presentations. The remaining two students showed progress, though their involvement was less consistent. The PjBL model encouraged students to explore, collaborate, and produce creative outputs, such as a mini dictionary, which allowed them to apply English vocabulary in a meaningful context. The structured PjBL syntax fostered critical thinking, teamwork, and confidence among the students. This study concludes that PjBL is an effective approach for creating an engaging and inclusive learning environment. It provides educators with a practical framework for increasing student motivation and participation, offering a meaningful and interactive alternative to conventional teaching methods.

Keywords: : English Subject, Project Based Learning, Students Participation

A. INTRODUCTION

Elementary education is the main foundation in shaping the character and skills of students for the next level of education. At the elementary school level, students begin to be introduced to various subjects that aim to develop cognitive, affective, and psychomotor abilities. One of the subjects introduced is English. Learning English at the elementary school level is a challenge in itself, considering that students at this age are still in the stage of getting to know the basic concepts of language, both in their mother tongue and foreign languages. However, learning English is often colored by various obstacles, such as low active student participation and lack of interest in learning. This is caused by various factors, including monotonous teaching



methods and the lack of relevance of the material to students' daily lives. The main problem faced in learning English in elementary schools is the weak ability of students to understand and use the language. As a new subject, English is often considered difficult by students. Ignorance of basic vocabulary and simple sentence structures makes students feel pressured and reluctant to actively participate in learning. This situation is exacerbated by the traditional learning approach that is still often used, where the teacher is the center of learning and students are only passive listeners. As a result, the classroom atmosphere becomes boring, and students lose their motivation to learn. This certainly has an impact on low student learning outcomes and lack of communication skills in English.

To overcome this problem, a more innovative and interactive learning approach is needed. One learning model that is considered capable of increasing student participation is PjBL. Project Based Learning is a student-centered learning approach, where students are actively involved in the learning process through projects that are relevant to their lives. According to (Bytyqi 2021), PBL is a learning model that uses projects as the core of learning, where students learn through direct experience and problem solving. In PBL, students not only learn about the subject matter, but also develop critical thinking skills, creativity, collaboration, and communication.

The implementation of PBL in English learning in elementary schools can be a solution to increase active student participation (Astawa, Artini, and Nitiasih 2017). Through interesting and relevant projects, students can feel more motivated to learn. For example, teachers can invite students to make simple story books, short videos, or posters that use English vocabulary. This kind of project allows students to apply what they learn directly, so that learning becomes more meaningful. In addition, PBL also provides opportunities for students to work in groups, which can improve their social skills and build self-confidence.

The theory underlying PBL suggests that project-based learning is able to create a learning environment that is conducive to active participation. According to Blumenfeld et al. (1991) , PjBL encourages students to be actively involved in learning because they are given the freedom to explore and develop their ideas. In the context of English language learning, PjBL allows students to learn through real experiences, such as role-playing, interviews, or creating



artwork. Such activities not only improve students' understanding of the material but also help them develop language skills naturally.

In addition, PBL is also considered effective in increasing students' interest in learning because of its flexible and problem-based approach. When students are given challenges to complete certain projects, they tend to feel more motivated to learn. This is in accordance with the theory of motivation which states that challenges and rewards can increase students' intrinsic motivation. In PjBL, students not only learn to complete tasks, but also learn to be responsible for their own learning process and outcomes (Karyawati and Ashadi 2018). The teacher acts as a facilitator who provides guidance and support to students, so that students feel encouraged to achieve their learning goals.

In the context of elementary schools, the application of PBL can be adjusted to the level of cognitive and social development of students. For example, projects given to students can be simple activities such as making greeting cards, compiling mini dictionaries, or holding small exhibitions in class. These projects not only improve students' language skills but also help them understand the importance of English in everyday life. In addition, PBL also provides space for students to express their creativity, so that learning becomes more fun and not boring. The application of PjBL can also help overcome the problem of boredom in learning. Boredom often arises when students feel that learning is irrelevant or too difficult (Ruslan et al. 2022). Through PjBL, students are invited to learn through experiences that are relevant to their lives, so that they feel more connected to the material being taught. For example, in a storybook project, students can use the vocabulary and sentence structures they have learned to tell their own experiences. This kind of project not only improves students' understanding of the material but also gives them the opportunity to learn in a fun way.

In this study, the researcher focused on the application of PjBL to increase students' active participation in English learning in elementary schools. Active student participation is an important indicator of learning success, because it shows the extent to which students are physically, emotionally, and cognitively involved in the learning process. Through PjBL, it is expected that students will not only become more active in learning, but also more confident in using English. This study also aims to identify factors that support and hinder the



implementation of PjBL in elementary schools, so that it can provide recommendations for more effective implementation in the future. Overall, PjBL is a very relevant learning approach to address challenges in learning English in elementary schools. By providing students with opportunities to learn through interesting and relevant projects, PjBL can increase student active participation, reduce boredom, and improve learning outcomes. This study is expected to provide an important contribution to the development of English learning methods in elementary schools, as well as provide inspiration for teachers to adopt more innovative and effective learning approaches

B. METHOD

This study uses the Classroom Action Research design with the McTaggart model. This model was chosen because it focuses on the cycle of reflection and repeated action to improve learning practices (Rukminingsih, Adnan, and Latief 2020). In this study, the researcher carried out one cycle consisting of six meetings. Research data were collected through observations and field notes made by the teacher during the learning process. The main focus of the study is the application of the Project Based Learning (PjBL) learning model to increase students' active participation in learning English at the elementary school level.

According to Rukminingsih et al.(2020), in one research cycle, there are six stages of meetings arranged based on PjBL syntax, namely stages (1) determining basic questions, (2) designing project planning, (3) preparing a schedule, (4) implementing the project, (5) testing the results, and (6) evaluating the learning experience. Each stage is implemented in a different meeting to ensure that students get the maximum learning experience.

First Meeting: Determining Basic Questions

In the first meeting, the teacher begins by introducing the learning topic to students, namely basic English vocabulary related to everyday themes, such as family, food, and daily activities. The teacher then motivates students by asking basic questions, such as "How can we make an interesting mini dictionary for our friends?" This question is designed to trigger students' curiosity and arouse their interest in learning. Students are invited to discuss and share ideas about how this project can be implemented. The teacher records students' responses to be used as a basis for project planning.



Second Meeting: Designing a Project Plan

In the second meeting, students and the teacher design their project plan. The teacher guides students in determining the steps needed to create a mini dictionary, such as choosing vocabulary, determining the dictionary design, and dividing tasks among group members. Students work in small groups to discuss their respective roles and set time targets for each stage of the project. The teacher records the progress of the discussion and provides input to ensure that each group has a clear and realistic plan.

Third Meeting: Making a Schedule

In this meeting, students begin to make a work schedule for their project. The teacher helps students determine priorities and divide their time effectively. Students are taught how to create a simple schedule that includes deadlines for each task. The teacher also provides guidance on how to monitor the progress of their project. At this stage, the teacher observes the students' involvement in the schedule-making process and notes how well they are able to work together in groups.

Fourth Meeting: Implementing the Project

At the fourth meeting, students begin implementing their project. Each group works according to the plan they have made, such as collecting vocabulary, making illustrations, and compiling mini dictionary pages. The teacher acts as a facilitator who provides technical guidance and motivation to students. The teacher also makes observations to record students' active participation during the project process. At this stage, students demonstrate creativity and cooperation in completing their tasks.

Fifth Meeting: Testing Results

After the project is completed, students present their work to their classmates. Each group is given the opportunity to explain the process of creating their mini dictionary, including the challenges they faced and the solutions they found. The teacher provides constructive feedback to each group and appreciates the efforts they have made. In addition, other students are also invited to provide comments and questions, so that an interactive learning atmosphere is created.



Sixth Meeting: Evaluating Learning Experience

In the last meeting, the teacher invited students to reflect on their learning experiences during the project. Students were invited to share their opinions about what they learned, how they worked together in groups, and what they could improve in the future. The teacher recorded students' responses as evaluation material for the next cycle. In addition, the teacher also reflected on field notes and observations to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of PjBL in increasing students' active participation.

Research data were collected through two main methods, namely observation and field notes. Observations were carried out by the teacher during each meeting to record the level of student participation, their involvement in group discussions, and their responses to the tasks given. These observations used a previously prepared guide to ensure that the data collected was relevant to the research objectives. In addition, field notes were used to document important events during the learning process, including challenges faced by students and strategies used by teachers to overcome these problems.

Data obtained from observations and field notes were analyzed descriptively to identify patterns of student participation during the learning process. This analysis includes grouping data based on indicators of active participation, such as involvement in discussions, contributions to group assignments, and responses to feedback. The results of the analysis are used to evaluate the success of the implementation of PjBL in increasing active student participation and provide recommendations for the next cycle.

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate a significant increase in students' active participation during English learning in the classroom using the Project Based Learning (PjBL) model. Based on the teacher's field notes during six meetings, there were real changes in student involvement in the classroom. At the beginning of the study, most students showed a low level of participation. Students tended to be passive, less enthusiastic in following lessons, and rarely contributed to group discussions. However, after the implementation of PjBL, this condition changed significantly. This is related to research from (Sofiriyah et al. 2024).



During the learning process, students seemed more involved in every activity designed using the PjBL syntax. At the first meeting, although there were still some students who were shy and reluctant to participate, the teacher noted that their curiosity began to emerge when asked to discuss the project to be worked on. At the second to fifth meetings, students' enthusiasm increased. Students actively contributed to group discussions, divided tasks, and completed their projects with enthusiasm. The teacher also noted that students helped each other in completing tasks, showed good cooperation, and were proud of their work.

The results of observations at the sixth meeting, where students presented their projects, showed that 19 out of 21 students were actively involved in learning. These students not only showed physical involvement in the tasks given, but also emotional and cognitive involvement reflected in their enthusiasm when presenting the results of their group work. They were able to explain the process of making the project, answer questions from classmates, and provide input to other groups. The classroom atmosphere became more lively and interactive compared to the initial conditions before the implementation of PjBL.

Although most students showed significant improvements, the teacher's field notes also noted that there were still one to two students who seemed less active in several activities. These students tended to be quieter during group discussions and needed additional encouragement from the teacher to participate. The teacher noted that lack of confidence and shyness were the main factors that influenced their participation. However, compared to the initial conditions, their involvement also increased, although not as much as other students.

Overall, the implementation of PjBL proved effective in increasing student interest and participation in English learning (Maulany 2013). Through relevant and interesting projects, students felt more motivated to learn and contribute to the learning process. The teacher's field notes showed that this method succeeded in creating a fun, collaborative, and meaningful learning atmosphere for students. Thus, this study provides empirical evidence that PjBL can be an effective alternative to increase students' active participation in English learning at the elementary school level.



The increase in students' active participation in English learning after the implementation of the Project Based Learning (PjBL) model shows that this model is able to create a more interactive and interesting learning environment. PjBL provides meaningful learning experiences through projects that are relevant to students' lives, so that they feel emotionally and cognitively involved in the learning process. This model also provides space for students to collaborate, think critically, and practice their English language skills directly in real contexts.

Constructivist learning theory supports the effectiveness of PjBL in increasing students' active participation (Jumaat et al. 2017). In constructivism, learning occurs when students actively construct their own knowledge through direct experience and interaction with the environment. PjBL facilitates this by encouraging students to become active learners who are responsible for their own learning processes and outcomes. In the context of this study, students not only learn English passively through teacher lectures, but also through activities that involve exploration, discussion, and production of real work, such as making a mini dictionary.

PjBL also provides opportunities for students to develop non-academic skills, such as teamwork, communication, and time management. Through group work, students learn to share ideas, resolve conflicts, and work together toward common goals. These skills are not only important for academic success, but also for their lives outside of school. By engaging students in projects that require collaboration, PjBL helps build their confidence in contributing to the social environment.

One of the main advantages of PjBL is its flexibility in adapting to students' needs and interests (Mohamed 2023). Teachers can design projects that are relevant to students' local contexts and cultures, making learning more meaningful. In this study, the use of a mini-dictionary project allowed students to learn English vocabulary in a creative and fun way. The project also gave students the freedom to express their ideas, making them more motivated to participate.

However, although PjBL has been shown to be effective in increasing student participation, its implementation also faces several challenges. One of the main challenges is the need to provide additional support to students who are less confident or tend to be passive in learning. Teachers need to identify these students and provide more intensive guidance and motivation so that they



can engage in the learning process. In addition, teachers also need to ensure that every student has an equal opportunity to contribute to the group, so that no student feels left behind or neglected.

The implementation of PjBL also requires careful planning and effective time management. Teachers must ensure that each stage of the project can be completed on schedule without reducing the quality of learning. In this case, the role of the teacher as a facilitator is very important to maintain a balance between students' freedom to explore their ideas and the need to achieve learning goals.

The results of this study also highlight the importance of reflection in the learning process. Reflection allows students to evaluate their learning experiences, identify their strengths and weaknesses, and plan for future improvements. In PjBL, reflection can be done individually or in groups, so that students not only learn from their own experiences, but also from the experiences of their friends.

From the teacher's perspective, reflection through field notes and observations provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of the learning strategies used. Teachers can use these findings to improve their teaching practices and design more relevant and interesting projects in the future. Thus, PjBL not only provides direct benefits to students, but also encourages teachers to continue to develop and innovate in teaching.

Overall, the implementation of PjBL in English learning in elementary schools proves that this model can be an effective solution to increase students' active participation. By providing relevant, interactive, and meaningful learning experiences, PjBL helps students overcome boredom and lack of confidence that often occur in traditional learning. This study emphasizes the importance of a student-centered learning approach to create an inclusive and productive learning environment

D. CONCLUSION



This study shows that the implementation of the Project Based Learning (PjBL) model significantly increases students' active participation in English learning at the elementary school level. By using PjBL, students are involved in relevant, creative, and meaningful learning activities, which encourage them to be more active participants in the learning process. The mini-dictionary making project as the core of learning provides students with the opportunity to learn through direct experience, which not only improves their understanding of English vocabulary but also builds non-academic skills, such as cooperation, communication, and time management.

Through PjBL, students shift from passive roles to active learners who are responsible for their learning process and outcomes. This project is designed with a systematic syntax, starting from determining basic questions, designing project planning, making schedules, implementing projects, testing results, to evaluating learning experiences. Each stage is designed to encourage students to think critically, explore ideas, and work together in groups, so that they feel more involved and motivated in learning. Positive changes in student participation levels reflect the success of this model in creating an interactive and collaborative learning environment.

One of the important findings of this study is the increase in student engagement during learning. From the teacher's field notes, 19 out of 21 students were actively involved in the learning process after the implementation of PjBL. They not only contributed to group discussions and project work, but also showed enthusiasm in presenting their work in front of the class. This shows that PjBL is able to overcome the problem of boredom that often occurs in traditional learning, while increasing students' confidence in using English. Although there are still one to two students who are less active, their involvement also shows an increase compared to the initial conditions before the implementation of PjBL.

The success of PjBL in increasing student participation can be explained through the constructivism approach that is the basis of this model. PjBL encourages students to build their own knowledge through direct experience and collaboration with classmates. Relevant and interesting projects make students feel that learning is more meaningful, so they are more motivated to learn. In addition, the teacher acts as a facilitator who provides guidance and feedback, so that students feel supported in their learning process.



However, the implementation of PjBL also requires careful planning and good classroom management skills. Teachers need to ensure that every student has an equal opportunity to contribute to the project and benefit from learning. Additional support needs to be given to students who are less confident or tend to be passive, so that they can also be actively involved in learning. Reflection carried out by teachers after each meeting is also important to evaluate the effectiveness of this model and design improvements for the next learning cycle.

This study provides an important contribution to the development of more innovative and effective English learning methods at the elementary school level. By creating an interactive, relevant, and fun learning environment, PjBL can be a solution to increase student participation in learning. The results of this study also provide recommendations for teachers to adopt the PjBL approach in their learning, not only for English but also for other subjects. Thus, learning in elementary schools can be more inclusive and productive, providing students with a strong foundation for future education.

Overall, this study confirms that PjBL is an effective learning model to increase students' active participation in English learning. By providing students with opportunities to learn through direct experience, PjBL helps them develop academic and non-academic skills that are important for their future success. This study also highlights the importance of the role of teachers in creating a supportive and motivating learning environment, so that each student feels valued and encouraged to reach their full potential.

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