

English Teachers' Perception of Implementing Project-Based Learning in Secondary Schools

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ABSTRACT

This study is aimed to investigate English teachers' perceptions about the implementation of Project-Based Learning and to analyze the challenges faced by English teachers in implementing Project-Based Learning in Secondary Schools of Bengkulu City. The subjects of the research were 14 Senior High School English teachers and 16 Junior High School English teachers. All teachers who have implemented Project-Based Learning in their classes participated in this study. This research employed an explanatory sequential mixed method research. This research used a Questionnaire in the first phase for gathering quantitative data. Then, the researcher interviewed six English teachers in collecting qualitative data. It was to analyze the challenges of implementing Project-Based Learning in English classrooms. The results show that the English teachers' had a positive perception of the implementation of Project-Based Learning. If teachers have a positive perception, they are willing to implement Project-Based Learning easily. Still, it requires the teachers' readiness to plan and control the time so that English learning can be done well and students can achieve English competency knowledge. For the challenges,

English teachers' suggested that 1) the teachers' lack of knowledge of Project-Based Learning implementation, 2) inadequate time in using Project-Based Learning, and 3) the situation of the pandemic has caused the implementation of Project-Based Learning to be ineffective. Further studies are expected to seek possible solutions regarding the challenges faced by English teachers in implementing Project-Based Learning.

Keywords: *Perception, Project-Based Learning, Secondary Schools*

INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, English instruction in Primary and Secondary Schools is based on the 2013 Curriculum, which is sponsored by the government and emphasizes students' character and skills. It demands active participation in acquiring and mastering four language abilities, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing, which are all interwoven in language learning. Curriculum 2013 strives to build an effective and meaningful teaching and learning process, necessitating consideration of several criteria and particular aspects. It stresses teachers' strategies and learning approaches initially. Second, education should be democratic, open, coherent, and student-centered, emphasizing participation. Third, the teaching and learning procedures are student-centered and contextualized to promote the development of the three qualities specified for each grade level (Kemendikbud, 2012).

To promote student learning in the 2013 curriculum, teachers should implement learning strategies such as Discovery Learning, Problem-Based Learning, and Project-Based Learning. Considering the current state and growth of society, as well as the characteristics of students, these learning models are deemed appropriate and successful for implementing Curriculum 2013. These models were also taught to teachers at Diklat Kurikulum 2013 in a systematic manner (Mulyasa, 2014).

Curriculum 2013 suggests Project-Based Learning as one of several learning approaches. This concept was initially promoted by John Dewey, who advocated "learning by doing." Patton (2012) described Project-Based Learning as an instructional technique that enables students to plan, design, and conduct activities to create, publish, and exhibit a product. Project-Based Learning aims to make English acquisition comparable to learning so that learning is more natural and

engaging and students are motivated to acquire English (Sutomo, Sarosa, & Asrori, 2016). It is a learning strategy centered on complex projects involving activities based on challenging issues or obstacles. Students participate in exploration, interpretation, and synthesis to achieve the learning objectives in the PjBL-based teaching and learning process. Using Project-Based Learning, also known as integrative learning, the English teacher blends the four English skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing) and develops indicators for each skill (Nurkamto, 2012).

Moreover, teacher participation in Project-Based Learning is essential. They are required to assume the position of facilitator. Teachers should be able to advise or assist students in deciding what they already know, what they need to learn, and where they may obtain crucial information so that students understand what and why they need to study (Bilgin, 2009). Teachers can evaluate the teaching and learning process facilitated by Project-Based Learning by gaining knowledge of their perceptions regarding its execution. The relevance of instructors' perspectives was highlighted by Rosyida, Stkip, and Pringsewu (2016). She stated that teachers are among the most important educational people because they are on the front lines of education, are extensively involved in various teaching and learning activities, and are the major implementers of educational concepts and theories. Additionally, instructors' classroom activities are influenced by their views. The method by which teachers provide corrective feedback on students' English ability is significantly influenced by their perspectives, knowledge, attitudes, and teaching experience (Sujarwati, Saleh, Rukmini, & Fitriati, 2019).

However, in real practice, teachers had problems using Project-Based Learning in EFL classrooms. Teachers found difficulties during implementation, such as the fact that PjBL takes a long time, while others worried to interrupt the learning process. In terms of assessment, teachers often have difficulty conducting authentic assessments of the learning process and results. While, Project-Based Learning can help students develop their ability to integrate the attainment of competence in the areas of attitude, knowledge, and skills, it requires teachers to be prepared to plan and manage their time effectively so that

learning can occur effectively and students can acquire knowledge and understanding competency (Trisdiono, 2014).

Several previous studies have shown that project-based learning positively affects the teaching and learning process. However, many educators consider that adopting PjBL still faces several challenges. Among these is a study by Guntur and Retnawati (2020). This study revealed that respondents have positive perceptions of project-based learning; however, most of them lack knowledge and experience with it; consequently, they will encounter obstacles in implementing it, and there is a need for additional research on the topic. Second, Novitasari, Wiyanarti, and Jupri (2021) found that the PjBL method may assist students in developing a greater feeling of responsibility, such as being serious, engaged, and enthusiastic about the learning process. Ahsin (2020) demonstrated that students taught using PBL-Based Vlogs had higher speaking ability scores than those taught using conventional techniques.

Meanwhile, Cintang, Setiowati, and Handayani (2018) discovered that most teachers, even professional ones, would face challenges and impediments when trying to integrate project-based learning. However, competent teachers have other ways of overcoming the difficulties, enabling project-based learning to continue. Aldabbuss (2018) observed that many schools lacked the essential infrastructure and could not employ PjBL due to various challenges, including a lack of time, noise, and financial support.

Based on the background and problems, the researcher concluded that Project-Based Learning is the most appropriate teaching method suggested in Curriculum 2013. It consists of effective methods and integrated processes that assist secondary school students in overcoming their English-learning difficulties. However, teachers continue to face obstacles while using these strategies. Teachers may evaluate the teaching and learning process facilitated by Project-Based Learning by gaining knowledge of their perceptions about its implementation. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate teachers' perceptions and challenges in implementing Project-Based Learning, particularly in the English subject.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Teachers' Perception

Perception is essential to our lives because it enables us to comprehend the many activities in our environment. According to Robbins (2003), perception is the process through which people organize and interpret sensory experiences to give meaning to their environment. In addition, according to Slameto (2003), the human perception process continuously transmits signals or data to the human brain. Following this, Mulyana (2007) said that perception is an internal process that helps us to choose, organize, and interpret external information, which may influence our behavior. *Perception* is how people acquire and evaluate environmental information that might influence their behavior.

Walgito (2011) has defined three perceptual phases; the first is the Physical Process, in which the individual receives various external stimuli. However, not all of them are analyzed or elicit a response. Second, the physiological process through which people choose or filter incoming inputs (selection). Some elements, such as experience, motivation, IQ, etc., influence the Psychological Process by which the individual organizes the information to make meaning. He is thus aware and responsive to the input.

Two factors impact stimulus selection, which influences a person's perception. The first is due to internal psychological factors. It involves background, experience, personality, general attitude and belief, and self-acceptance. The second stimulus is an external factor. They are considered major stimuli selection influences. These components include intensity, size, contrast, movement, repetition, familiarity, and novelty.

Project-Based Learning

John Dewey introduced PBL in the early 1900s, promoting the essential premise of "Learning by Doing," which embodied constructivism's learning theory. *Constructivism* is an ideology that believes students may create their understanding and knowledge by addressing real-world issues based on their life experiences. (Suhendi & Purwarno, 2018) Thus, experience is the foundation for the development of knowledge. Therefore, when students find something new throughout the learning process, they should relate it to their earlier concepts and experiences to create a more meaningful experience. Project-Based Learning

(PjBL) is a student-centered approach in which students acquire information by participating in problem-solving activities throughout their studies (Jumaat et al., 2017). Students collaborate and accept their responsibilities as team members when PBL is used in the classroom. Moreover, children connect what they are learning and events outside school. The objectives of PjBL are to help students build adaptive knowledge, effective problem-solving abilities, self-directed learning, successful collaboration, and self-efficacy. Project-Based Learning may assist students in building critical thinking abilities and boost their self-confidence while learning English as a foreign language.

Project-Based Learning has three strengths, according to Kethrine, Gonzalez, Molina, and Cardona (2017): motivation, communicative competence, and oral communication. It may motivate students to study English. PBL is fun for students and teachers since it enhances motivation and participation in the learning process for all parties involved. Markham (2003) provides the following reasons for the advantages of using PBL in teaching and learning activities: (1) Improving academic performance. Project-Based Learning gives students practical experience with the subject matter they are studying. Students may make connections between the project's deep knowledge and the subject of their study. (2) Increasing independent learning. As Project-Based Learning allows students to study at their own pace, it also allows them to choose and establish their own learning goals. They develop knowledge of the issue by completing self-directed goals and assuming more responsibility for the learning process. (3) Acquiring essential life skills Through a project, students engage in various tasks that may include fieldwork, speaking directly with an expert, completing different observations, and gathering materials for the project. (4) Promoting higher-order thinking. Students have the chance to evaluate and interpret data and engage in other cognitive processes that lead to profound knowledge, which is one of the primary advantages of PBL. (5) Enhancing motivation As students choose their projects and establish their own goals, they will see that their effort is essential to answering the issue, resolving the problem, or benefiting the community. They are directly engaged in the project and are exposed to hard work activity.

Teachers' Perception of Project-Based Learning Implementation

Teachers have different understandings of Project-Based Learning due to differences in experience, teaching subjects, and other factors. According to empirical investigations of teachers' perceptions of PjBL, teachers have positive pedagogical perspectives toward Project-Based Learning (Tamim & Grant, 2013). Teachers consider PBL a student-centered strategy that promotes independent study (Baysura, Altun & Toy, 2016). PBL demands self-regulation, enabling students to decide on the subject, identify their materials, and work independently at their speed, considering their interests and needs (Ravitz, Hixson, English, & Mergendoller, 2012). Teachers also understand their role as facilitators or supervisors, guiding and scaffolding students via teacher-student interactions, leading questions, peer counseling, and practice worksheets (Grant, 2002; Thomas & Mergendoller, 2000). According to Project-Based Learning instructors, the issue of classroom management varies greatly from other conventional teaching methods such as lectures, discussion, and seatwork. Teachers do not apply teacher-centered techniques, convey material, or perform activities during project-based learning. Students work in small groups by themselves most of the time. Some teachers claim to feel more like their peers than classroom supervisors.

Teachers also perceive project-Based Learning as an authentic learning technique that requires students to make real end products (artifacts, presentations, or models) (Grant, 2002). According to Baysura et al. (2016) and Tamim and Grant (2013), the main motivator in PBL is the creation of the final product, which compels students to acquire skills and a better grasp of the subject matter to create the artifact. When their projects are complete, students and professionals can present them to real audiences (Yam & Rossini, 2010). Moreover, according to Beneke and Ostrosky (2009), teachers perceive PBL as a chance for students to produce something big and valuable for the world.

Teachers distinguish PBL from other teaching methodologies in terms of assessment. PBL encourages teachers to use continuous assessment, considered an ongoing process of evaluation from the beginning to the completion of PBL, to show the high quality of the final result (Hugerat, 2016). Teachers adopting a Project-Based Learning monitoring strategy oversee student progress throughout all project stages and provide timely, pertinent feedback (Thomas & Mergendoller, 2000). In addition, teachers use criteria-based evaluation, which is suitable for PBL since it enables them to provide students with clear goals

and expectations about project needs (Grant, 2011, as cited in Tamim & Grant, 2013). PBL also incorporates self-evaluation and peer evaluation.

In conclusion, a variety of foreign literature on PBL demonstrated the diversity of teachers' opinions. The study indicated teachers often see it as student-centered learning in which they function as facilitators rather than lecturers. In addition, it is regarded as a valuable tool for encouraging students to solve real-world problems and interact in groups, sharing ideas, and providing support. Throughout the implementation phase, PBL is regarded as a good approach for evaluating students.

The Challenges of Implementing Project-Based Learning

The transfer from conventional learning to PjBL is challenging despite these potential benefits. Related to the implementation, the PjBL research may be confusing and "limited" (Murray & Savin-Baden in Tally, 2015). As a result, many teachers and students who adopt project-based learning often need help with its implementation. Marx et al., as cited in Thomas (2000), indicated that instructors' technical obstacles are (1) Time. Typically, projects take longer than anticipated. In addition, the time necessary to implement complex techniques such as Project-Based Learning exacerbates teachers' difficulties when trying to incorporate PBL into class requirements. (2) Classroom management. When the number of kids in a teacher's class approaches 60 or 70, and she is assigned two or three courses, it is easy to envision the sheer amount of work she must finish. Assuming that each team comprises five students, there will be a minimum of twelve teams in each class and thirty-six teams throughout the three sessions. The teacher must then consider 36 different subjects. Given the teacher's work to organize, supervise, and direct each team so they may finish their assignments effectively, (3) The dominant class For Project-Based Learning to be effective, learner autonomy must be strongly encouraged. Several teachers fear they are losing control over the pupils as a result of this. Teachers often feel the need to control the flow of information, despite their view that Project-Based Learning requires students to develop their knowledge. (4) Facilitating the learning of students. Teachers need help scaffolding students' efforts, allowing them too much

or too little freedom, respectively, and inadequate modeling and feedback. (5) Technology utilization in the classroom, especially as a cognitive aid, is difficult for educators. In addition, they indicated that certain students periodically lacked access to the necessary technologies for information-seeking; and (6) The students' evaluation. Teachers need help designing assessments that require pupils to demonstrate understanding. They think their marks need to represent the amount of work they put into the project. They continued to believe that the course evaluation should contain components from the project (to push students to be concerned about the project). The teacher realizes the unfairness and acts accordingly.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

An explanatory sequential mixed-method design was used in this study. A sequential explanatory mixed-method design is a mixed-method research methodology that gathers quantitative data during the first phase and qualitative data during the second phase. 16 English teachers in Senior High Schools and 14 in Junior High Schools in the city of Bengkulu who have adopted Project-Based Learning are the subjects of this study. The English teachers were selected based on their knowledge and expertise in implementing Project-Based Learning in the classroom. The researcher used two methods to gather data: a questionnaire and an interview. In this study, the following four-point Likert scales are employed: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) (SD). This study will exclude the Uncertain (U) option to prevent teacher reluctance. In addition, including four alternative responses is meant to determine if respondents are likely to agree or disagree. The questionnaire included questions derived from Wongdaeng and Hajihama (2018). The researcher provided the sample with a Google Form questionnaire with 17 closed-ended questions to ease the distribution procedure since meeting each individual in this pandemic situation is difficult. The researcher also interviewed English teachers who implemented Project-Based Learning as a teaching approach to determine the problems of adopting Project-Based Learning and clarify the questionnaire responses. After obtaining teachers' total percentage of perception scores, the researcher categorized

them into intervals. It was utilized to determine the answer's interpretation. The categorization of intervals for the response was calculated using the Humburg method described in (Yunita, 2004). Following is a description of the interval and categorization of respondents' scores.

Table 1
The Interval of Respondents' Score

Interval	Classification
97,6 – 120	Strongly Positive
76 – 97,5	Positive
52,6 – 75	Negative
30 – 52,5	Strongly Negative

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The questionnaire on teachers' perceptions consisted of 17 statements. They were divided into two factors, internal factors (8 items), external factors (5 items), and the teachers' challenges (4 items). The questionnaire was analyzed with 30 English teachers as the respondents of the research. The total score and the percentage of teachers' perception of teaching English using Project-Based Learning are shown as follows:

Table 2
Teachers' Perception of Project-Based Learning Implementation

Items	Teachers' Perception				Total Resp	Total Score	Possible Max. Score	Category
	SD A (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)				
Internal Factors (8 items)	1	32	141	66	240	752	960	Positive
External Factors (5 items)	0	11	100	39	150	478	600	Positive
Average Score		95			360	1230	1560	Positive

Table 5 presents most of the teachers had a positive perception of teaching English using Project-Based Learning, with a total score of 1230. The average score was 95. It was in a positive category. The positive category was gained from the teachers' perceptions of teaching English using Project-Based Learning from internal and external factors. The overall score for internal factors was 752, with the frequency of the strongly agreed choice was 141 of eight items. Moreover, the frequency of strongly agree was 66. This category was positive. In addition, the external factors' total score was 478. The frequency of Strongly Agree choice was 100 of five items. The category was positive. These prove that the use of Project-Based Learning is a learning method that can be used for learning English in EFL secondary classrooms. A detailed description of the factors will be explained in the following sections.

English Teachers' Perception of Implementing Project-Based Learning in Secondary School

From table 2, the first data showed a positive perception of implementing Project-Based Learning in Secondary Schools from the internal factors. The statements consisted of 8 statements. Most English teachers positively perceived the statement, with a total score of 752. The different perceptions came from one statement. Statement number two, *"The steps in Project-Based Learning are very easy to implement in teaching English,"* about 23 students, or 46 in the total score had chosen to disagree about that statement. It meant that the English teachers did not find it easier to implement the fundamental steps in Project-Based Learning.

The second data described the English teachers' perception of external factors. It consisted of 5 statements, so the total score was getting 478. The score was in a positive category. It meant that the English teachers responded positively to the teachers' perceptions of the external factors.

From all the data calculated, it is interpreted that English teachers' perceptions of implementing Project-Based Learning from the internal and external factors had a positive response. It was related to the previous research conducted by Susanti, Trisusana, and Retnaningdyah (2019), which stated that teaching English through Project-Based Learning obtains positive experience since the teacher can motivate the students to learn English. It can be used for teaching and learning English as a foreign language (EFL classroom) to make learning English more

effective and meaningful. A positive perception leads to happiness that influences someone's desire and action, including teachers' desire and action in learning and teaching activities (Soemanto, 2006). It means that when the teachers have a good perception, they will easily implement the Project-Based Learning technique because their mind is happy while applying it. Perceptions and beliefs not only directly affect their teaching practices and classroom behavior but are also related to the success of their students (Anderson, 1991). Because perception has an essential role in education, teachers have to accommodate the positive perception to the students to improve their happiness which leads to the student's desire and action in learning.

English Teachers' Challenges in Implementing Project-Based Learning in Secondary Schools

In the questionnaires, this indicator consisted of 4 statements. It was shown that there were different categories. The statements "*I have enough time to implement the steps in Project-Based Learning during English lessons*" and "*Coordination of tasks and students when using Project-Based Learning does not take up much learning time*" were in the negative category. The score was 70 and 63. Meanwhile, the statement "*I have sufficient knowledge about Project-Based Learning*" with a total score of 85. The statement "*The use of technology in Project-Based Learning makes it easier for me to achieve learning goals*" with a total score of 88. Both of them were in a positive category. But, the total score of the statement about the English teachers' challenges in implementing Project-Based Learning in Secondary Schools showed 306 scores with was in a positive category. It can be concluded that the English teachers had a positive perception of challenges in implementing Project-Based Learning in Secondary Schools.

However, the English teachers had some problems teaching English using Project-Based Learning. The interview result showed that the English teachers had insufficient knowledge in implementing the whole steps of Project-Based Learning. First, the teachers had difficulty finding a fundamental question or brainstorming that enhance students' interests and was also appropriate to the topic to be conveyed. A fundamental question in Project-Based Learning is the most important first step. If the teachers do not get an interesting topic, then students' attention will also be distracted. As stated by Alves et al. (2016),

some teachers find it difficult to link the course material with the project topic because they are too concerned with the course material and believe that if they do not teach, students would not learn. It occurs because they are unwilling to relinquish their conventional position as a teacher and are unaware that they do not need to know everything or resolve all student questions.

In addition, teachers also lack modules or information access to easily gain knowledge about Project-Based Learning. As claimed by Baghoussi and Ouchdi (2019) in their research revealed that despite the information offered in the pedagogical literature, teachers neither understand nor use Project-Based Learning effectively in the classroom. These obstacles exist due to a lack of professional training and a limited theoretical understanding of the many techniques, methods, and strategies associated with Project-Based Learning.

Second, the teacher also has limited time to implement all the steps in Project-Based Learning where each step must be a sequential, but the teachers have limited time in implementing all the steps of Project-Based Learning in one meeting. Therefore, sometimes some steps are missed to be implemented. This is in line with the results of the research conducted by Cintang, Setiowati, and Handayani (2018) which stated that teachers also experience several obstacles, especially in terms of time management. Time constraints are a key reason why teachers do not utilize Project-Based Learning. The research findings indicated that all teachers agree that this is the most significant factor contributing to the failure of Project-Based Learning implementation. Furthermore, there are several materials and lessons for students to study.

Third, another difficulty experienced by teachers is that during the COVID-19 pandemic, it was very difficult to implement Project-Based Learning. This is because it is difficult to collect students in groups and it will require a longer time preparation. If the teacher does it online, sometimes there are problems with the students' internet network. . Teachers unfamiliar with online Project-Based Learning may difficult to motivate students to generate collaborative questions (Tally, 2015). It may also be difficult for teachers to successfully monitor the progress of their students' work if they are unable to see them directly. Without a physical connection between

students and teachers, it is impossible to analyze, reflect on, and monitor the students' development.

In terms of technology, the internet connection was insufficient to allow online Project-Based Learning. Facilities are an essential aspect of good learning (Hamalik, 2008). Previously, Irawan (2020) noted that internet connectivity was one of the disadvantages of online instruction. The internet network, the instability of the internet network, and the lack of internet credit were obstacles to online education in Indonesia. Moreover, when teachers are unfamiliar with the online Project-Based Learning process as a whole, students and teachers lack knowledge of the available resources for the Project-Based Learning process. In this case, both students and teachers are affected since it is the teacher who introduces students to the accessible software.

In addition, the determination of KD that was simplified during the pandemic also made it difficult for teachers to implement Project-Based Learning. This situation is related to the results of the research by Trisdiono (2014) which stated that the disadvantages of Project-Based Learning implementation are the difficulty to implement Project-Based Learning of going and bring in students learning outside the classroom which is located not fused and also the difficulty of selecting the materials and determination of KD.

CONCLUSION

This research aimed to determine English teachers' perceptions and to analyze the challenges in implementing Project-Based Learning in Secondary Schools. In this study, the researcher only discussed the teacher's perception and teachers challenges in the implementation of Project-Based Learning in English learning in general. The teachers have a positive perception of Project-Based Learning implementation. The researcher found 3 challenges in implementing Project-Based Learning; 1) inadequate time for English lessons in class, 2) the lack of sources of knowledge about Project-Based Learning, 3) the situations during the pandemic has also become an obstacle in implementing Project-Based Learning due to internet network constraints and difficulty gathering students in groups. The research findings have several important implications for future educational practices in implementing Project-Based Learning. The following suggestion can be made in need of further

investigation of the possible solutions to overcome these challenges of Project-Based Learning implementation.

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