

BASED LEARNING APPROACH TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' WRITING SKILL

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Abstract

This research was held during the internship at SMPK BPK PENABUR Cimahi by taking the material taught in English lesson for 8th grade students at first semester. The objective of this research is to find out the improvement of writing imperative sentence using Project-Based Learning approach. The use of Project Based Learning approach suited with the Kurikulum 2013, which has been used by this school since 2013. The method used Classroom Action Research (CAR), which held on two cycles for seven meetings. Each cycle covered the step of planning, acting, observing and reflecting. The data was collected from test and observation. The data from test showed that treatments are successful in improving writing imperative sentences skill for the students. The improvements covered two points, (1) improvement on their mean score. Mean score of pre-test was 54.967, mean score of post-test1 was 64.467 and mean score of post-test2 was 80.033. (2) Improvement of their behaviors. Their activeness individually and participation in the group indicated that the Project Based Learning approach was the right approach to be applied in the classroom teaching.

Keywords: CAR, Project-Based Learning Approach, Writing Skill

INTRODUCTION

Indonesian government through Education Ministry has developed the Kurikulum 2013 that is obligated for all schools in Indonesia. According to (Wakil Menteri Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan RI Bidang Pendidikan, 2014, p. 3), Kurikulum 2013 came from the consciousness of future challenges which are development of information technology, convergence of science and technology, quality investment and transformation on education field and many other things. So, in this case, the Indonesian citizens must have some standard competence in English for their communication skill, critical thinking skill, ability to solve problems, the readiness to make decisions, capability to be tolerant with different perspective, and ready to be the citizen of the global world and to collaborate with other people. All of these competence should be taught to the young generation at home in their family and at school by their teachers.

Those changes also take an effect to English as an obligatory subject mostly at secondary level. As a subset of the curriculum, Education Ministry of Indonesia mentioned at *Model Silabus Mata Pelajaran Bahasa Inggris untuk SMP* (Kementrian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2017, p. 1) that teaching English focuses on increasing the competence of students to be able to use the language in achieving communication goals in various contexts, both oral and written. A correct approach is needed to apply in teaching. Kurikulum 2013 prioritizes scientific approach (observe, asking questions, collect information, associating, and communicating) supported by several innovative approaches, such as problem-based learning, discovery learning, explorative learning, project-based learning etc. All of those approaches are in reference to the meaning of

“*natural, suit the innateness of human being*” : focused on students authentic, contextual, and meaningful for student in daily life.

In this research, researchers used project-based learning approach which is rooted in the progressive education movement, which advocated for more student centered and experiential approaches to education that support “deeper learning” through active exploration of real-world problems and challenges (Pellegrino and Hilton, 2012). The core of project-based learning approach is driving question to motivate learning. According to Krajcik and Mamlok-Naaman, (2006), “a driving question is a well-designed question that students and teachers elaborate, explore, and answer throughout a project”. In additional Krajcik and colleagues provided the following five criteria for high-quality driving questions: 1) feasible, 2) worthwhile, 3) contextualized, 4) meaningful, and 5) ethical. In the other hand, Naaman also argues that project based learning is a systematic teaching method that engages students in learning knowledge and skills through an extended inquiry process structured around complex, authentic questions and carefully designed products and tasks (Krajcik and Mamlok-Naaman, 2006).

SMPK BPK PENABUR Cimahi is one of the secondary schools at Cimahi has been using Kurikulum 2013 since 2013 and so it is a must for the teachers to conduct one of the approaches of Kurikulum 2013. The teacher should be able to formulate the materials into fun, collaborative and communicative learning. The problem is in the fact that there is a different level of skill of the students in the classroom. The students came from varied elementary school with varied skills in English. Some are good enough but some of them are less good. As we understand that most of public school in Indonesia do not have English subject in their curriculum for elementary level. So, obviously this situation is not easy and challenging for teacher to deliver the subject, because some of them might get bored while some of them would not understand at all.

According to Byrne (1998), writing involves the encoding of the message of some kind, that is, translate our thought into language. He also states that when writing something, should use grammatical rules and letters and the combinations of letters which relate to the sounds when speaking. Writing belongs to the productive skill that should be mastered by the students in order to communicative their ideas and feeling with others in written form. Brown (2004: 255) as cited in Yulianti, S., Nuraeni, S., & Parmawati (2019) state that “Writing is a process to create some ideas of students’ knowledge to be a written”.

In line with this statement, Reimes (1983, p. 76) states that writing is a skill in which we express the ideas, feelings, and thoughts arranged in words, sentences, and paragraph using eyes, brain and hand. It can be concluded that writing is complicated activities, since there are five aspects of writing that should be considered in the process of making a good writing composition, such as: content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanic.

Markham (Markham, Larmer & Ravitz, 2003, p. 4) argues that project based learning is a systematic teaching method that engages students in learning knowledge and skills through an extended inquiry process structured around complex, authentic questions and carefully designed products and tasks. Students work in a real situation and they produce a product in real life. PjBL enhances the quality of learning and leads to higher level cognitive development through students’ engagement of complex problems. PjBL also teaches students complex processes and procedures such as planning and communicating.

An imperative sentence is a type of sentence that gives instructions or advice, and expresses a command, an order, a direction, or a request. It is also known as a *jussive* or a *directive*. Depending upon its delivery, an imperative sentence may end with an exclamation mark or a

period. It is usually simple and short, but could be long and complex, depending upon its context.

According to Bender (2012, in Apsari 2019), in project-based learning, traditional teacher roles can be challenged as students make choices on how to approach a problem, present findings or identify what the driving question or questions will be.

There are six steps in project based learning in the practice at the classroom . There are:

1. Start with the essential question
2. Design a plan for the project
3. Create a schedule
4. Monitors the students and the progress of the project
5. Assess the outcomes
6. Evaluate the experience

Markham (Markham, Larmer & Ravitz, 2003, p. 6) summerizes that the benefit of PjBL are as follow:

1. PjBL can overcome the dichotomy between knowledge and thinking, helping students to be active.
2. PjBL would support students in learning and practicing English skills. Students would be encouraged to solve their problems.
3. PjBL would develop the habits of using mind critically.
4. PjBL integrates curriculum areas, thematic instruction, and community issues.

METHOD

This research is using classroom action research (CAR) where a teacher acts as the researcher with the aim of making a better teaching learning process and more effective. Narmaditya, Winarning, & Wulandari (2017) state that classroom action research defined as one of the problem-solving strategies that utilize concrete actions and capacity building processes in detecting and resolving problems. There are four stages in this research, namely; planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting. This action research planned in two cycles.

There were seven meetings to do this research in two cycles. Three meetings were for the test, and the rest were for doing the treatments. The forces used in this research is observation and the tests. The observation was done when the researcher doing the treatments.

The instruments of this research in the form of test and observation. During the observation, the writer used field note as the main instrument. It is used in order to observe what is going on or what is happening in the observed context (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2008) as cited in Apsari and Yana (2015). The test is used to know the students' ability to use imperative sentences. There are pretest, post-test one and post-test two. The result of the test are used to know the improvement of the students' ability in writing imperative sentence. After analyzing the scores of the written text, we use statistical technique to find the mean score as proposed by Ngadiso (2007: 5-7) as cited in Mundriyah and Parmawati (2016).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The results from the research, conducted for seven meetings. The meetings were created in two cycles. Every cycle has the same process like in the steps of the CAR, namely *planning*, *acting*, *observing* and *reflecting*.

Cycle 1:

1. **Planning**, the researcher designed the lesson plan and the media for teaching and learning English.
2. **Action**, the project based learning applied in learning process. The first step in project is the essential questions about the project. The teacher would give some questions to the students about the materials. Students and teacher designed the project together. After that the schedule about the project was made.
3. **Observation**, the teacher monitored the improvement of students' project. And the last is the teacher assessed the students project and finally students and teacher evaluated the project.
4. **Reflecting**, the teacher would evaluate the process and the result of the implementation of project based learning in the teaching writing. The evaluation would researches to do the next cycle.

Table 1.Meeting in Cycle 1

Meeting	Topic	Activity
1	Pre test	The researcher gave the students test in 10 item
2	Treatment 1 Imperative Sentence	The researcher divides the students into small group of two to three persons. The students and teacher design the project to make imperative sentence in the right ways. The project is about instruction and prohibition in the school. The students and the researcher make the schedule to create the project. The researcher monitored the students' activities in making the project.
3	Treatment 2 Imperative Sentence	The researcher assesses and evaluates the students' projects. The researcher makes the reflection with the students, so students can make a better project next time.
4	Post test	The researcher give the post test

Based on the research, the result of teaching and learning English process in cycle one are as follows:

1. There are 19 students who are not able to do the test optimally, so their scores do not reach the criteria of KKM. The main score of pretest is 54,697. This score is low and under of the minimum criteria. The minimum score is 61,00.
 2. There are some students who are less active, and less enthusiastic in the learning English. During treatment most of the students are familiar with the topic. When the process of the treatment a few students are not active. They are confused what to do with the topic given.
- In the second cycles, the activities are the same with the first cycle, but the emphasis are based on the revised plan.

Table 2. Meeting in Cycle 2

Meeting	Topic	Activity
4	Treatment 3	<p>The researcher reviews the material before.</p> <p>The researcher give some question about the topic to the students, so they can remember the topic/</p> <p>The students are divided into some groups of two or three.</p> <p>The students and the researcher design the project to make the imperative sentences in the right ways. The topic is about the instruction in the public place.</p> <p>The students and the researcher make the schedule to create the project.</p> <p>The researcher monitors the students' activities in the making of the project.</p>
6	Treatment 4	<p>The researcher assess and evaluates the students project.</p> <p>The researcher makes the reflection to make the better way in the next project</p>
7	Post test	<p>The researcher did the the post test and the questions are similar with the post test</p>

Cycle 2

1. **Planning**, the researcher makes some revision of the lesson plan. In the revision, the researcher makes the material about the imperative sentences.
2. **Action**, the project based learning applied in learning English. The first step in the project is the essential question about the project. The teacher gives some questions to make the students remember about the topic, then make design about the project they will make. After that the researcher makes schedule about the project.
3. **Observations**, the researcher monitored the improvements of students' projects, assessed and evaluated the project together with all students.
4. **Reflecting**, The researcher evaluate the process and the result of the implementation of project based learning in teaching writing. The evaluation would help the teacher to decide what to do in the next cycle. If the students scores in the posttest cyle two was so, they do not need to do the next cycle.

There are some improvements in Cycle two, as follows:

1. The students' score of the posttest two is increased. From 64,647 in the post test one become 80,033 in the post test two. This scores showed that the students understand about the topic and they can apply this topic in their real life.
2. **During the lesson**, the students seem more interesting and enthusiastic in learning English. They can discuss with their groupthey start to communicate what they get at the end of the lesson. So, when the students did the project the reseracher observes the activity of the students

3. **In the reflecting**, the researcher and students reflect about this activity to get more experiences for the next projects.

Discussion

From the table above we can see the improvement after Treatment One at the first meeting. After teaching the students using project based learning approach, the students and researcher would discuss about the project they will make. In this cycle, researcher gave more instruction and students followed it, by their own interpretation with the simple instruction in the library.

During the treatments the researcher observed the activities of the students. The project was done in group so the researcher would observe the togetherness in the group. The researcher would make the small note about the activities of the students. The result would be seen from the students' work in their member group.

In the second cycle, students seem more active, because the students are aware of the material they are learning. The formation of students in groups would also increase the motivation and students' activity. The groups have varied skills and that skills would motivate students for their working groups. The atmosphere of the class is also profitable for working their projects. Students feel enthusiastic in completing their project works.

Table 3. Improvement on Students' Score of their Tests

	Pre-test 1	Post-test 1	Post-test2
Minimum score	40	50	65
Maximal score	70	80	95
Mean score	54.967	64.467	80.033

CONCLUSION

Through all analysis and observation during the activity in the classroom, teaching writing imperative texts using project-based approach at SMPK BPK PENABUR Cimahi had done well. The students which come from different elementary schools keep improving their English skills. This condition creates good effects to the English teachers who presents the English material teaching in the classroom.

The researcher is conducted two cycles with total 7 meetings, three meetings for the test and four meetings for treatments. The cycle covered the steps of *planning*, *acting*, *observing* and *reflecting*. From the data collected by the researchers, it can be concluded that the use of project based learning in the teaching writing imperative sentence could improve students scores and activeness of the students in learning English. The improvement cover two points, which are; (1) their score on post test is increased. From 54,97 for pretest, it becomes 64,47 at posttest one and for the posttest two become 80,03. (2) There are improvements in the quality of learning process that can be seen from the condition of students who learn more active and enthusiastic in learning English.

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