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Teachers' And Students' Perceptions of Using Project-Based Learning in English Teaching In Bone Regency

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Abstract

This study examines how teachers and students perceive Project-Based Learning (PBL) in English teaching at senior high schools in Bone Regency, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. Using a descriptive mixed-methods design, data were collected from 95 eleventh-grade students through a 15-item Likert-scale questionnaire covering three dimensions (knowledge, perceived effects, and challenges) and from four English teachers through semi-structured interviews in four schools. Students reported familiarity with PBL and viewed it positively: between 63% and 77% agreed with each effects item, with collaboration the most strongly endorsed. Challenges were reported less often, although many students gave neutral responses about time and over one third said they needed more teacher assistance. Teachers described PBL as engaging and as improving communication, but reported that implementation is constrained by limited lesson time, the absence of practical PBL-specific training, uneven participation in groups, and, in one boarding school, gender-separation rules. Teachers' and students' views converged on engagement and collaboration and only partly on challenges. Because the study captured perceptions rather than learning outcomes, the findings indicate perceived potential, not demonstrated effectiveness. The study contributes evidence from regional Indonesian secondary-school EFL settings and suggests that professional development should address project planning, time management, assessment, and the management of group participation.

1. Introduction

Proficiency in English has become essential in an era of globalization, not only for communication but also as a gateway to information, technology, and academic knowledge. In Indonesia, English is taught from elementary to senior high school, yet many students continue to struggle with motivation and engagement in English classrooms (Halim et al., 2023). The Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes contextual,

student-centered, and active learning, and Project-Based Learning (PBL) is among its most prominently recommended approaches.

PBL traces its philosophical roots to Dewey's (1916) idea of learning by doing. According to the Buck Institute for Education (2019), students in PBL gain knowledge and skills by working over an extended period to investigate and respond to authentic, engaging, and complex questions, problems, or challenges. The teacher's role shifts from being the main source of knowledge to that of a facilitator (Bell, 2010), while learners inquire, collaborate with peers, and produce project outcomes.

Previous studies report that PBL can enhance motivation (Wijnia et al., 2024), self-efficacy and achievement (Mahasneh & Alwan, 2018), engagement and critical thinking (Adrefiza et al., 2024), reflective thinking and independent inquiry (Matthews-DeNatale et al., 2024), and authentic language use in EFL contexts (Ly, 2019). However, much of this evidence concerns learning outcomes, often among university students, and PBL does not succeed automatically. Reported difficulties include limited time for guiding students through drafting, revision, and completion (Izzah & Diana, 2021), free-riding in groups (Sagita et al., 2023), and insufficient time allocation, inadequate teacher training, and limited resources (Kokotsaki et al., 2016).

Whether PBL works as intended in a given school depends partly on how the people involved perceive it. Perception is the process by which individuals organize and interpret sensory impressions to give meaning to their environment (Robbins & Judge, 2017). Student perception involves cognitive processes of detecting, interpreting, and retrieving information that shape attitudes toward learning (Darwis, 2020), and students' perceptions of teaching practices influence their motivation and willingness to participate (Vattøy & Smith, 2019). Teacher perception encompasses the beliefs, interpretations, and opinions educators hold about their instructional strategies, students, and learning environments, which in turn guide classroom decisions (Goodman et al., 2024; Hernández-Ocampo et al., 2025).

Following these definitions, this study examines perception through three dimensions that move from understanding, to evaluation, to feasibility: what teachers and students know about PBL (knowledge), what value they attribute to it (perceived effects), and what they find difficult about it (challenges). Together, the dimensions show whether PBL is understood, considered worthwhile, and judged workable in practice. A distinction is important here: perceived effects are not actual effects. Students and teachers may believe that PBL improves motivation, comprehension, or confidence, but such beliefs are not objective evidence of improvement.

These issues are particularly relevant in regional settings. In Bone Regency, the researchers' preliminary observations in the four participating schools suggested that PBL at the senior high school level had not been fully optimized: in the classes observed, English teachers often relied on traditional methods focused on grammar and memorization, and students often seemed to perceive English learning as difficult and time-consuming. Factors that appeared to contribute were a lack of PBL-specific training, limited learning resources, inadequate facilities for group work, and students' view that English has little relevance to daily life.

These observations were made through classroom observation, conducted once at each of the four schools about one year before data collection began. Such observations, limited to a single visit per school, are only indicative, but they point to a need for local

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evidence about how PBL is understood and experienced where lesson time, teacher training, and school conditions may differ from those in better-resourced urban settings.

Existing studies of perceptions of project-based language learning have mostly been conducted in higher education or online settings (Halim & Rohmah, 2020; Jaleniauskiene & Lisaitė, 2021), and Halim et al. (2023) observed that Indonesian PBL studies mainly focus on learning outcomes or implementation strategies rather than on comparing teachers' and students' perceptions. Comparing the two perspectives matters for a practical reason: teachers design and manage projects, whereas students experience them. If teachers believe students grasp the purpose of projects while students experience them only as tasks to complete, or if teachers regard time as the main barrier while students do not, decisions about scaffolding, scheduling, and training may address the wrong problems. Identifying where the two perspectives converge and diverge therefore shows where support is most needed.

This study addresses three research questions: (1) What are teachers' perceptions of using PBL in English teaching in Bone Regency in terms of knowledge, perceived effects, and challenges? (2) What are students' perceptions of using PBL in English teaching in Bone Regency in terms of the same three dimensions? (3) Where do teachers' and students' perceptions converge and diverge? The study contributes evidence from four senior high schools in a regional Indonesian setting, including an Islamic boarding school, and shows how favorable perceptions of PBL coexist with constraints of time, practical training, and group participation.

2. Method

2.1 Research design

This study used a descriptive mixed-methods design. Quantitative data from a student questionnaire describe the distribution of perceptions, and qualitative data from teacher interviews provide contextual explanations (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Both groups were asked about the same three dimensions (knowledge, perceived effects, and challenges) so that the two datasets could be compared. The study was conducted at four senior high schools in Bone Regency, South Sulawesi: SMAN 2 Bone, SMAN 3 Bone, SMKN 7 Bone, and SMA Athirah Islamic Boarding School Bone. The schools were selected through purposive sampling because they had implemented PBL in English lessons for at least one year under the Merdeka Curriculum. Data were collected during the research period permitted by the institution, 12 January to 12 February 2026.

2.2 Participants

The student participants were 95 eleventh-grade students selected through purposive sampling. The criteria were that the students (1) had different levels of English proficiency, (2) had learned English through PBL, and (3) had been involved in English PBL projects. The students came from one or two eleventh-grade classes in each school. Table 1 reports the distribution of students across schools.

Table 1. Distribution of student participants by school

School	Number of students	Percentage
SMAN 2 Bone	26	27.4%
SMAN 3 Bone	34	35.8%
SMKN 7 Bone	10	10.5%
SMA Athirah Islamic Boarding School Bone	25	26.3%
Total	95	100%

The four English teachers, one from each school, were also selected through purposive sampling. The selection criteria were that (1) they taught English at one of the four participating schools and (2) they had experience of using PBL in their English classes. Their reported use of PBL varied (Table 2; see also Section 3.2). The teachers were interviewed between 14 and 27 January 2026. All four teachers had more than 10 years of teaching experience and had begun implementing PBL about two years before the study, when it was incorporated into the national curriculum. Table 2 summarizes their profiles.

Table 2. Profiles of the teacher participants

Code	School	Interview date	Reported use of PBL
SS	SMAN 3 Bone	14 January 2026	About once a semester or once a year, combined with other approaches
AA	SMAN 2 Bone	14 January 2026	Rarely, depending on how responsive students are
BH	SMKN 7 Bone	22 January 2026	Used because the Merdeka Curriculum requires projects; mixes group and individual tasks
F	SMA Athirah Islamic Boarding School Bone	27 January 2026	Fixed sequence: theoretical introduction, problem presentation, group work, presentation

2.3 Instruments

Questionnaire. The student questionnaire consisted of 15 items on a five-point Likert scale from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5): knowledge of PBL (items 1–5), perceived effects of PBL (items 6–10), and challenges in learning through PBL (items 11–15). Items 11–15 are negatively worded, so disagreement indicates fewer perceived difficulties. The three dimensions were derived from the researcher's reading of earlier studies on perceptions of PBL and related practices (Halim & Rohmah, 2020; Izzah & Diana, 2021; Ash, 2021; Hernández-Ocampo et al., 2025; Halim et al., 2023), which reported on students' understanding of the approach, its perceived benefits for engagement, motivation, and collaboration, and difficulties such as time, group management, and limited training.

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The researcher wrote the items for each dimension following these studies. The questionnaire was administered in Bahasa Indonesia to ensure comprehension, completed by students in class through Google Form, and content-validated by two academic supervisors. No pilot test was conducted. Internal consistency was instead estimated from the main sample (N = 95) after data collection: Cronbach's alpha was .865 for knowledge (items 1–5), .879 for perceived effects (items 6–10), and .804 for challenges (items 11–15), all above the commonly used threshold of .70. Because these coefficients come from the study sample itself rather than from a separate pilot, and content validation by two supervisors is relatively limited evidence of instrument quality, instrument quality is acknowledged as a limitation (Section 4.7).

Interview protocol. The semi-structured interview guide contained 15 open-ended questions, five for each dimension, parallel to the questionnaire and based on the same studies. Interviews were conducted in Bahasa Indonesia, audio-recorded with the participants' agreement, transcribed verbatim, and translated into English. Each interview lasted approximately 10–15 minutes and took place in the teachers' room at each school.

2.4 Data analysis

Quantitative analysis. Responses were summarized as frequencies, percentages, and item means. Descriptive statistics were considered sufficient because this is an exploratory perception study that aims to describe how responses are distributed, not to test hypotheses or relationships between variables. For the same reason, no inferential tests were run and no composite scores were computed; every item was interpreted individually, which also avoids the need to reverse-code the negatively worded items. Agreement was defined as the combined percentage of Agree and Strongly Agree responses. Items with agreement of 60% or more were described as showing predominantly positive perception, and items with agreement of 50–59% as showing a majority but more moderate perception. For the challenge items, agreement indicates a perceived difficulty: below 20% was described as few students, 20–39% as a substantial minority, and 40% or more as many students. These cut-off values are interpretive criteria set by the researcher.

Qualitative analysis. Interview data were analyzed following Miles et al.'s (2014) three procedures: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Interview responses were first organized under the three dimensions, and sub-themes (for example, training, time constraints, and group participation) were then identified from the transcripts during data reduction. Coding was done manually, and the coded data were rechecked.

2.5 Integration of the data

Quantitative and qualitative findings were integrated at the interpretation stage using a joint display (Guetterman et al., 2015). For each dimension or theme, the questionnaire pattern was set beside the interview pattern, and the relationship was classified as convergence (same direction), partial convergence (similar direction with differences in emphasis), or divergence (different or conflicting patterns). The joint display is presented in Table 5.

2.6 Research ethics

Permission to conduct the research was obtained from the institution (IAIN Bone research permission letter of 16 December 2025) and from the Branch Office of the Education Department, Region III, South Sulawesi (research permit of 23 December 2025), and each of the four schools issued a statement confirming that the research had been carried out. Participation was voluntary, and interviews were audio-recorded with the participants' agreement. Before the interviews began and before the questionnaire was distributed, the researcher explained the purpose of the study to the teachers and students, and they agreed verbally to take part.

The questionnaire also opened with an invitation statement explaining the purpose of the study, the estimated completion time (5–10 minutes), that there were no right or wrong answers, that responses would be kept confidential and used only for academic research, and that participants' names would not appear in the published results. Students completed the questionnaire after reading this statement. Teachers are identified in this article only by initials. All data were used only for research purposes. Signed informed-consent forms were not collected; instead, consent was obtained verbally from the teachers and students and was not documented in writing. It was supported by the written invitation statement in the questionnaire and by the formal permissions from the institution and the Education Department described above.

3. Results

The results are presented in three parts: students' perceptions from the questionnaire (3.1), teachers' perceptions from the interviews (3.2), and a comparison of the two (3.3). Each is organized by knowledge, perceived effects, and challenges.

3.1 Students' perceptions

Table 3. Students' responses on knowledge and perceived effects (N = 95)

No.	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	% A+SA	Mean
1	I know what Project-Based Learning is.	1	8	19	46	21	70.5	3.82
2	My teacher explained this method clearly.	2	3	27	39	24	66.3	3.84
3	I understand how this method works.	2	3	34	42	14	58.9	3.66
4	I understand the learning objectives of this method.	0	6	34	37	18	57.9	3.71
5	This method differs from regular classroom learning.	3	4	30	39	19	61.1	3.71
No.	**Statement**	**SD**	**D**	**N**	**A**	**SA**	**% A+SA**	**Mean**
6	I am more enthusiastic about learning with this method.	2	3	30	34	26	63.2	3.83
7	This method helps me understand the lesson better.	2	3	26	45	19	67.4	3.80
8	I became more active while studying.	1	5	29	36	24	63.2	3.81

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No.	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	% A+SA	Mean
9	I learned to work with friends through this method.	3	3	16	49	24	76.8	3.93
10	I feel more confident in my studies.	3	1	31	41	19	63.2	3.76

Note. SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree. Items 1–5 measure knowledge; items 6–10 measure perceived effects. Cells show numbers of students.

Table 4. Students' responses on challenges (N = 95)

No.	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	% SD+D	% A+SA	Mean
11	I find this method difficult to understand.	16	39	30	6	4	57.9	10.5	2.40
12	I have difficulty working in a group.	11	40	35	6	3	53.7	9.5	2.47
13	I feel that there is not enough time to complete the tasks.	8	30	41	13	3	40.0	16.8	2.72
14	I am not used to learning this way.	9	41	38	5	2	52.6	7.4	2.47
15	I need more help from teachers when learning with this method.	7	18	35	24	11	26.3	36.8	3.15

Note. Items are negatively worded: higher disagreement indicates fewer perceived difficulties.

Knowledge. Across items 1–5, 58% to 71% of students agreed or strongly agreed, and 20% to 36% were neutral; only 5% to 10% disagreed. Agreement was predominantly positive for knowing what PBL is (item 1: 71%), for teachers' explanations (item 2: 66%), and for seeing PBL as different from regular lessons (item 5: 61%). It was slightly lower, though still a majority, for understanding how the method works (item 3: 59%) and its learning objectives (item 4: 58%). These responses show students' reported familiarity with PBL, not a test of their understanding.

Perceived effects. Agreement was between 63% and 77% on every effects item. Collaboration was the most strongly endorsed (item 9: 77%, with 49 students agreeing and 24 strongly agreeing), and it also had the smallest share of neutral answers (17%) of all 15 items. Other effects were rated similarly: better understanding of the lesson (item 7: 67%), greater enthusiasm (item 6: 63%), being more active (item 8: 63%), and greater confidence in their studies (item 10: 63%). Item 10 asked about confidence in studies generally, not about English specifically.

Challenges. Few students reported difficulty. Only 10.5% found PBL hard to understand (item 11), 9.5% had difficulty working in groups (item 12), and 7.4% were not used to this way of learning (item 14); in each case, over half disagreed. Time was less clear-cut (item 13): 17% agreed that time was insufficient, 40% disagreed, and 43% were neutral. The challenge with the highest agreement was the need for more teacher assistance (item 15: 37% agreed, 37% neutral, 26% disagreed).

Taken together, students' perceptions were predominantly positive about effects, moderately to predominantly positive about knowledge, and low on difficulty, with the need for continued teacher support the main exception. About 28% to 38% of answers

on the knowledge, effects, and challenge dimensions were neutral, so the positive pattern is a majority view, not a unanimous one.

3.2 Teachers' perceptions

Knowledge and practice. All four teachers described PBL as student-centered and collaborative, with a teacher who facilitates. SS emphasized that students work in groups, through stages, toward a product that is presented. F described PBL as learning in which students "learn collaboratively and independently to solve problems given by the teacher," and named student-centeredness, collaboration, critical thinking, and independence as its principles. BH stressed that projects must end in a result, which may be written rather than a physical product, and linked PBL to the Merdeka Curriculum. AA described it most generally, as assignments extending over several meetings with results appearing weeks later.

The teachers had met PBL through different routes: university lectures (SS, BH), repeated curriculum changes (AA), and school in-house training during the Merdeka Curriculum transition (F). Their training in PBL, however, was mostly general. SS reported that the school brings in a resource person whenever the curriculum changes, and BH said that the Merdeka Curriculum workshop covered PBL in depth even though there was no PBL workshop as such. F reported "no specific training or workshop related to this material," and AA's training was described as covering the material but without direct practice. No teacher reported hands-on, PBL-specific training.

Reported use of PBL also varied. SS used a project about once a semester or once a year, combined with other approaches. AA rarely used PBL, depending on how responsive the students were, and considered projects more typical of general subjects than of English. BH used it because the Merdeka Curriculum requires projects, mixing group and individual tasks. F followed a sequence of theoretical introduction, problem presentation, group work, and presentation.

Perceived effects. All four teachers reported positive effects. SS said that because students are "directly involved in the activity," even weaker students understand something from the process. AA said that step-by-step projects make material easier to understand. BH observed that students "can explore themselves more and it's more fun," and that projects made activities more varied and creative. F described classes as livelier and, after reflection sessions, reported that about 80% of students said the experience was fun, motivating, and meaningful, while a few preferred to work alone.

On collaboration, SS noted that groups work well only if the teacher mixes abilities; AA said members complement each other's skills; BH said that "the children can build better communication with their friends" and that the teacher can observe individual students more closely; and F described students learning to listen and to suppress their egos, with quiet students being "forced to join in" and eventually expressing ideas. All four teachers said their teaching changed: they now facilitate rather than give information, and F added that unexpected student findings challenge teachers to keep learning.

Challenges. Time was a major barrier for two teachers. BH called time "the main challenge of the project," often needing two meetings for one piece of work. F pointed out that English is taught in two 35-minute sessions, that a project needs a fuller cycle, and that dormitory activities limit work done outside class. The other two teachers saw

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it differently: SS argued that projects can be run over several meetings and that this is a matter of managing the stages, and AA considered the allocated hours sufficient although acknowledging time as an issue.

Other challenges concerned practice and participation. AA lacked practice, examples, and references; BH had to make sure all students are active and to assess the process, not only the end product, and noted that some students expect friends to do the work; SS noted that some students do not like project work; and F noted that quiet or introverted students find collaboration very difficult. At SMA Athirah, F added two school-specific constraints: dormitory activities limit project time, and gender-separation rules prevent students from working across genders, which F felt made same-gender groups inadequate for some tasks. This is the experience of one teacher at one school.

Support and suggestions. All four teachers felt supported by their schools to some degree: SS described freedom to be creative, AA and BH mentioned facilities, space, and some tools, and F described space for projects and collaboration with Science and Social Studies teachers. Their suggestions differed accordingly: joint planning among teachers and linking projects with co-curricular activities (SS); more practice and grouping by student characteristics (AA); more learning tools and materials (BH); and teacher collaboration before student collaboration, support from school leadership, and clear introduction of the project to students (F). As F put it, "the teacher must collaborate first."

3.3 Comparing teachers' and students' perceptions

Table 5. Joint display of student and teacher perceptions

Dimension / theme	Students (questionnaire)	Teachers (interviews)	Pattern
Knowledge	58–71% agreed with knowledge items; about 30% neutral. Reported familiarity.	All four described PBL as student-centered and collaborative; depth varied; none reported hands-on, PBL-specific training.	Partial convergence: familiarity reported by both, but teachers' accounts suggest uneven depth and practice.
Engagement and motivation	63–67% agreed they were more enthusiastic, understood better, and were more active.	All four reported livelier, more active classes; F: about 80% of students found it fun and motivating.	Strong convergence (perceived effects).
Collaboration	77% agreed they learned to work with peers; 9.5% reported difficulty in group work.	Better communication and mutual learning, but uneven participation (SS, BH, F).	Convergence on benefit; divergence on difficulty.
Teacher support	37% needed more teacher help; 37% neutral.	Facilitator role; need for practice, examples, and training.	Convergence: guidance remains necessary.
Time	17% agreed time was insufficient; 40% disagreed; 43% neutral.	Major barrier for BH and F; manageable for SS; sufficient for AA.	Partial convergence; perceived unevenly.

Dimension / theme	Students (questionnaire)	Teachers (interviews)	Pattern
School-specific conditions	Not measured.	Gender-separation rules and dormitory schedule at SMA Athirah (F).	Teacher-only; a contextual case.

Note. "Convergence" means both datasets point in the same direction; "divergence" means they differ.

Teachers and students converged most clearly on engagement, collaboration, and the continuing need for teacher guidance. They converged only partly on challenges: students reported few problems with group work, whereas three teachers described uneven participation, and time was a major barrier for only some teachers and few students.

4. Discussion

The central finding of this study is a tension: both teachers and students view PBL favorably, yet teachers describe practical constraints (time, training, participation, and school conditions) that affect how well it can be implemented. The following sections discuss this tension.

4.1 Positive perceptions, and what they do and do not show

Both groups viewed PBL favorably: students endorsed every effects item by a clear majority, and the teachers independently described livelier, more active classes and better communication. Because the two groups answered through different instruments, their agreement lends the pattern more credibility than either dataset would alone. This is consistent with evidence that PBL supports motivation and engagement (Wijnia et al., 2024; Ash, 2021) and spoken-language practice (Nuninsari et al., 2020; Ly, 2019), and with Halim and Rohmah's (2020) report of favorable perceptions among teachers and students. However, these are perceived effects. The study did not measure English proficiency, so the enthusiasm, confidence, and comprehension reported here cannot be read as demonstrated learning gains, and the potential of PBL suggested by these findings should be understood in that sense.

The knowledge findings should be read the same way. Majority agreement on the knowledge items, alongside a sizeable neutral group, reflects self-reported familiarity or perceived understanding rather than tested conceptual knowledge. The teachers' accounts suggest why familiarity may be uneven: SS and F described PBL principles in the most detail, whereas AA described it mainly as an assignment spanning several meetings. The questionnaire cannot show why many students chose neutral responses. Possible explanations, such as limited awareness of the full demands of a PBL cycle or projects scaled down to fit lesson hours, are interpretations that future research should test.

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4.2 Collaboration: perceived and effective

Collaboration was the most strongly endorsed effect and was echoed by teachers, who described better communication, mutual learning, and quiet students being drawn into group work. This reflects the social-constructivist view that learning is mediated by interaction (Vygotsky, 1978), which PBL builds into its group design. Perceived collaboration, however, is not necessarily effective collaboration. Teachers also described students who prefer not to join projects (SS), who expect friends to complete the work (BH), or who find collaboration hard because they are introverted (F). Very few students agreed that group work was difficult (item 12). One possible reading, which this study cannot test, is that students who contribute less are unlikely to report group work as a problem, or that the problem is more visible to teachers than to students.

The strategies teachers mentioned point to what effective collaboration requires: grouping students of different abilities (SS), dividing tasks by skills (AA), and observing and assessing the process rather than only the product (BH). These correspond to structured group roles, individual accountability, and peer evaluation, which respond to the free-riding problem reported by Sagita et al. (2023).

4.3 Student-centered learning still needs teacher scaffolding

Needing more teacher help was the challenge students endorsed most (item 15), and many more were neutral. Teachers described the same shift from the other side: they no longer act as a source of information but accompany groups, and F noted that unexpected student findings challenged teachers to respond. Student-centered learning therefore does not mean less teacher involvement. It requires a move from direct instruction to structured facilitation, including planning the project sequence, monitoring progress, and giving timely feedback (Izzah & Diana, 2021).

4.4 Time: a barrier that is perceived unevenly

Time was the clearest implementation constraint, but it was not perceived uniformly. BH and F identified it as the main challenge, with F describing two 35-minute sessions against the full cycle a project needs, and BH needing about two meetings for one piece of work. SS, in contrast, argued that projects can be spread over several meetings if the stages are well managed, and AA considered the allocated hours adequate. Students were divided as well, with the largest share neutral on whether time was insufficient (item 13). This pattern reflects the tension between the extended cycle of PBL and limited instructional time (Kokotsaki et al., 2016), and suggests that the tension is felt unevenly and probably depends on how projects are designed.

Practical responses are therefore available: narrowing project scope, sequencing a project across several lessons, integrating language objectives into each project stage so that project work doubles as language practice, and, as SS and F suggested, linking English projects with co-curricular activities or the projects of other subjects.

4.5 The gap between knowing PBL and implementing it

The interviews show that being able to describe PBL is different from being ready to run it. All four teachers could explain the approach, but none reported hands-on, PBL-specific training, and in practice some used PBL only rarely. The difficulties they named,

such as lack of practice and examples, keeping every student active, assessing process, and engaging quiet students, are practical skills rather than conceptual gaps. Knowing the stages of PBL does not by itself prepare a teacher to design a feasible project, manage the time it takes, or assess individual contributions within a group product. EFL teachers without targeted PBL training tend to implement simplified versions that do not realize its potential (Mouni, 2022). Professional development should therefore address project planning, time management, assessment of process and individual contribution, and management of group participation, and should include practice and worked examples.

4.6 Alignment and institutional support

All four teachers felt supported by their schools to some degree, yet each still asked for more, ranging from practice and materials to joint planning and support from school leaders. F's remark that the teacher must collaborate first indicates that PBL should not rest on individual teachers. Effective English teaching depends not only on individual creativity but also on school cultures that sustain innovation (Cremin, 2022). The findings suggest that successful PBL depends on alignment among teacher competence, curriculum time, school policy, assessment practices, student participation, and institutional support.

The gender-separation rules at SMA Athirah are a contextual case from one boarding school, reported by one teacher, and should not be taken to represent Bone Regency as a whole. The case does show that group design in PBL may need to be adapted to school-specific norms, for example when same-gender groups are required but felt to be inadequate for some tasks.

4.7 Limitations

Several limitations should be noted. First, the study measured perceptions, not learning outcomes, so it cannot show that PBL improved English proficiency, motivation, or achievement. Second, the questionnaire relied on self-report, and several items (for example, item 10 on confidence in studies) did not refer to English specifically. Third, the instrument was content-validated by two supervisors and showed acceptable internal consistency in this sample, but it was not pilot-tested, and its reliability was estimated from the same sample rather than from a separate pilot. Fourth, only four teachers, one per school, were interviewed, so teacher-level and school-level differences cannot be separated. Fifth, participants came from schools that already used PBL and were selected purposively, so the findings cannot be generalized to all schools in Bone Regency. Sixth, the student sample was uneven across schools (from 10 students at SMKN 7 Bone to 34 at SMAN 3 Bone), so the overall percentages give more weight to the larger schools, and differences between schools were not analyzed. Seventh, consent was obtained verbally and was not documented in writing, and signed informed-consent forms were not collected. Finally, the interviews were translated from Bahasa Indonesia into English, which may have affected nuance.

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5. Conclusion

This study investigated teachers' and students' perceptions of PBL in English teaching in four senior high schools in Bone Regency. Students reported familiarity with PBL and perceived positive effects, above all collaboration, while reporting few difficulties apart from a continuing need for teacher assistance and mixed views on time. Teachers described PBL as engaging and as improving communication, but reported constraints of time, practical training, group participation, and, at one boarding school, gender-separation rules. Teachers' and students' perceptions converged on engagement, collaboration, and the need for guidance, and converged only partly on challenges.

The main message is that positive perceptions of PBL are present among both teachers and students, but sustainable implementation depends on whether schools can provide sufficient time, practical teacher preparation, scaffolding, and institutional support. Positive perceptions alone do not guarantee high-quality PBL, and because this study measured perceptions only, the benefits reported here remain perceived rather than demonstrated.

Based on these findings, the study recommends the following for practice and policy:

- **Teacher training:** PBL-specific, hands-on professional development that covers project planning, time management, assessment of process and individual contribution, and management of group participation.
- **Time:** flexible scheduling or project designs that sequence a project across several lessons and integrate language objectives into each stage.
- **Group work:** structured group roles, individual accountability, and peer evaluation to address uneven participation.
- **Institutional support:** teacher collaboration, shared planning, and school leadership support, with context-sensitive adaptation where school rules (such as gender separation) shape group work.

Future research should use experimental or quasi-experimental designs to examine whether PBL improves measurable English outcomes, include larger and more varied samples of teachers, and use longitudinal designs to study the sustained effects of PBL.

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