



Project-Based Learning Model: A Strategy to Improved Reading Comprehension

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Abstract

There are several problems in reading comprehension faced by students at SMP Negeri 14 Palu. The main issue is that when students read, they still have difficulty understanding the text due to limited vocabulary. Additionally, they also have difficulty with complex text structures and have a low interest in reading. Therefore, this research aims to prove that the Project-Based Learning method can improve reading comprehension of students in grade VIII of SMP Negeri 14 Palu. Researchers answer the problems above using a quasi-experimental research design, with cluster random sampling to select samples. There are 22 students in class VIII Slamet Triyadi and 22 students in class VIII Imam Bonjol. To collect data, researchers use narrative tests with 20 multiple-choice questions and 5 essay questions. In the essay section, students are required to create short narrative texts based on story elements. Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded that the use of the Project-Based Learning method is effective in improving the reading comprehension of grade VIII students at SMP Negeri 14 Palu. These findings can help teachers to get new methods designed to make students to think creatively. Through the project, students can delve deeper into the text, understand the context, and connect information with the real world.

Keywords: *Comprehension, Project-Based Learning, Improve, Reading.*

Introduction

Reading comprehension skills are essential in a variety of contexts, both academic and every day, as they allow one to obtain information, learn new things, and understand the world around them. The reading process involves recognizing, understanding, and interpreting text. One of them is reading comprehension in the context of a project-based learning model. The project-based learning model is an approach that focuses on learning through real projects that require

students to actively read, understand, and apply information.

The project-based learning model is one of the student-centered learning models and provides meaningful learning experiences for students (Heldisari, 2023). The project-based learning model motivates students to actively participate in the learning process to achieve good learning outcomes (Abidin et al., 2021). The project-based learning model also allows students to expand their knowledge on a particular topic, so that the knowledge they gain becomes more relevant and learning activities become more interesting (Rahayu et al., 2024). Therefore, a project-based learning model is very important in helping students improve their reading comprehension.

Most students still have difficulty understanding words that they are not familiar with due to their lack of interest in reading and remembering the vocabulary of some verbs. They find it difficult to understand vocabulary in sentence structure, so students have difficulty understanding the meaning of words. They also have difficulty knowing the main idea, but they still have difficulty determining which paragraph in a particular text contains the main idea. can be overcome by the use of project-based learning models, where students can understand the meaning of the text without having to translate every word.

The project-based learning model is a learning model in which students engage in the exploration of in-depth and practical knowledge through projects that are challenging and relevant to real life. In a project-based learning model, students work collaboratively to complete complex projects that relate to real-world situations, providing a relevant and engaging context for learning.

Method

The researchers used the quasi-experimental research design proposed by SPSS 29. There must be two groups: an experimental group and a control group. The experimental group was given a pre-test, treatment through project-based learning, and a post-test, while the control group was given a pretest and a post-test without treatment from the researchers. Moreover, the post-test was given at the beginning of the treatment. In addition, the post-test was given at the end of the treatment. The assessment rubric system has been used to help researchers assess reading comprehension with a focus on developing reading comprehension, more specifically literal understanding in narrative texts.

The population of the study included all eighth-grade students in SMP Negeri 14 Palu of the academic year 2023/2024; the populations are 137 students. Meanwhile, the researchers took a sample V1r1r1r Slamet Riryadir became the control group class and V1r1r1r Irmam Bornjorl became the experimental group class. The number of the students in control class was 22 and in experimental was also 22. The total of the sample was 44 students

Results

The researchers' conducted a pre-test to measure the students' reading comprehension through the use of Project-Based Learning Model. The mean computation was as follows:

Table 1. The Mean Score of Students' in Pre-test Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean
Pre-test Experiment	22	7	60	888	40.36
Pre-test Control	22	7	75	926	42.09
Valid N (Listwise)	22				

Table 1. Provides details about students' scores in the pre-test. There are 22 students the minimum score in the experimental pre-test class was 7 and the maximum score in the experimental pre-test class was 60, the sum score was 888, the average student score is 40.36.

Table 2. Experiment Classification Scores in Pre-test Scoring Range Pre-test Experimental Group

Classification	Frequency	Percent
Very good	-	0
Good	-	0
Fair	-	0
Very poor	11	50.0
Poor	11	50.0
Total	22	100.0

Table 2. The distribution of student categorization in the experimental class. There are 11 students' who get a classification very poor score (50,00%) and 11 students get a classification poor score (50,00%).

Table 3. Experiment Classification Scores in Pre-test Scoring Range Pre-test Control Group

Classification	Frequency	Percent
Very good	-	0
Good	-	0
Fair	3	13.6
Very poor	7	31.8
Poor	12	54.5

Total	22	100.0
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Table 3. The distribution of students' categorization in the control group. There are 3 students who get a classification fair score (13,6%) and 7 students get a classification very poor score (31,8%) and 12 students get a poor classification score (54,5%).

Table 4. The Mean Score of Students' in Post-test Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean
Post-test Experiment	22	75	93	1847	83.95
Post-test Control	22	54	89	1647	74.86
Valid N (Listwise)	22				

Table 4. After doing the treatment in the post-test of the experimental class, the minimum score is 75, the maximum was 93, the sum of 1847, the average student score was 83.95. It can be concluded that the average score of the post-test is higher compared to the average score on the pre-test after using the Project-Based Learning Model.

Table 5. Experiment Classification Scores in Post-test Scoring Range Post-test Experimental Group

Classification	Frequency	Percent
Very good	6	27.3
Good	9	40.9
Fair	7	31.8
Very poor	-	0
Poor	-	0
Total	22	100.0

Table 5. Presented the distribution of students' score in the post-test of control group. There are 6 students who get a classification very good score (27,3%) and 9 students get a classification good score (40,9%) and 7 students get a fair classification score (31,8%).

Table 6. Control Classification Scores in Post-test Scoring Range Post-test Control Group

Classification	Frequency	Percent
Very good	-	0
Good	7	31.8
Fair	10	45.5
Very poor	5	22.7
Poor	-	0
Total	22	100.0

Table 6. Presented the distribution of students' score in the post-test of control group. There are 7 students who get a classification good score (31,8%) and 10 students get a classification very poor score (45,5%) and 5 students get a poor classification score (22,7%).

Table 7. Test of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	Df	Sig.	Statistic	Df	Sig.
Pre-test Experiment	.229	22	.004	.850	22	.003
Post-test Experiment	.165	22	.123	.903	22	.033
Pre-test Control	.168	22	.105	.920	22	.074
Post-test Control	.143	22	.200	.953	22	.368

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 7. The result of pre-test and post-test of experimental class, used Kolmogorov-Smirnov is not normally distributed. The significance value of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test of the Asymp. Sig (2-tailed) value is less than 0,05 which means that the pre-test value is $0.003 < 0.05$. Then the Wilcoxon test is used for normal data.

Table 8. Wilcoxon Test

	Post-test Experiment Pre-test Experiment	Post-test Control Pre-test Control
Z	-4.108 ^b	-4.108 ^c
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	<,001	<,001

Table 8. Based on the Wilcoxon test, the sig value. (2-tailed) is $0.001 < 0.05$. Indicating that the Project-Based learning Model method has an effect on reading comprehension.

Table 9. Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences						Sig. (2-tailed)	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		T		
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 Pre-test experiment Post -test Control	-34.500	20.407	4.351	-43.548	-25.452	-7.930	21	<.001
Pair 2 Post-test experiment Pre-test control	-41.86	24.141	5.147	31.160	52.567	8.134	21	<.001

Based on table 9. The testing technique used is the paired sample t-test with a significance level 0,05. Based on the results of data processing with SPSS version 29, a sig (2-tailed) value of $0.001 < 0.05$ was obtained, so it can be concluded that there is a difference in the pre-test and post-test data. So, it can be concluded on the Project-based learning method. So H_0 is accepted and H_1 is accepted.

Discussion

Based on the research results, the researchers discussed the research. To determine students' reading comprehension skills, the researcher gave them a pre-test at the first meeting. The data shows that the average score of students is relatively low with the majority at the "very poor" level. The main causes of students having difficulty identifying detailed information in the text, not being able to find implied meaning in the text, and not knowing how to determine the main idea, unfamiliar vocabulary and lack of vocabulary mastery of students, so they have difficulty working on the text given.

This finding is in line with previous research (Astuti, 2022) regarding the impact experienced by students in determining the main idea of a paragraph in a narrative text. They have not mastered the main idea material of the paragraph, have little interest in reading, are less active during learning, so they do not understand the main idea material, have difficulty concentrating during learning, and do not understand the layout of the main idea paragraph in each reading text.

Some students understand what is meant by the main idea of the paragraph but do not understand the main idea material, have difficulty concentrating during learning, and do not understand the layout of the main idea paragraph in each reading text.

Similarly, (Hasibuan et al., 2021) students have difficulty recognizing words; students also have difficulty understanding the meaning of the text being read, which can hinder students' reading comprehension and memory. and it is also difficult to remember information from reading. Thus, the researchers applied the project-based learning model to find out students' obstacles to improving their' reading comprehension.

Through the use of this project-based learning model, it trains students to better understand the reading text. This project-based learning model involves student activities in making projects based on the material taught, such as narrative text material, which makes it easier for students to understand the meaning of the text. Furthermore, the researchers implemented the use of a project-based learning model for a short time during the treatment. The trick is that students do not need to create and read a long narrative story text, but simply create and read a short narrative story text that matches the question.

For example, in the Malin Kundang story, there is a time setting. In ancient times, around the 18th century, in a fertile farming village at the foot of Mount Merapi, Central Java, there lived two half-brothers, Bawang Putih and Bawang Merah. The village was surrounded by lush green rice fields and dense forests. The villagers live a simple life, relying on rice farming and small livestock. The story depicts a clear time setting, which is in the 18th century. Therefore, the researchers should prepare specific questions for students regarding the project task of creating a short narrative story, with the provision that the story must have story elements such as time setting, place, atmosphere, character, and a moral message such as "create a short narrative story that has a time setting!".

From these questions, students can imagine and understand the elements of the story and the storyline. Similarly, (Faridah et al., 2022), the project-based learning model is very good at developing various basic student skills such as thinking skills, making decisions, creativity, solving problems, self-management, and increasing student confidence. (Wiranto, 2022) stated that in the project-based learning model, the learning process is changed from teacher centered to student centered. So, the learning process will involve the active participation of students, especially in reading activities.

Thus, the use of a project-based learning model is effective in improving students' reading comprehension abilities through narrative text. In addition, the data proved the majority of students achieved a score of "very good" in the post-test of the experimental group. Because students' vocabulary has increased so that they can understand the meaning of words or sentences from the given

text so that they can answer questions correctly, namely, students are able to find detailed information in the text by answering questions that require students to read the entire content of the text slowly and carefully, students can also determine the main idea from the information obtained, and students can know the elements of the story and the storyline.

This finding is supported by previous research conducted by Fitriyani and Fadloeli (2019), which supports the finding that students' reading comprehension of narrative text using project-based learning (PBL) has increased. As for previous research that is in line with these results, similarly, Friska (2018), it can be seen that students' reading comprehension in narrative text has increased, which also helps teachers find the right method for teaching reading, especially narrative text.

Finally, in this study, we can conclude that the use of a project-based learning model can improve students' reading comprehension. Thus, the researchers recommended the use of a project-based learning model as one of the best ways to improve students' reading comprehension because it creates a dynamic and vibrant learning atmosphere in the classroom and fosters good communication between students and researchers so as to provide positive results and make it easier for students to complete.

Conclusion

The researchers concluded that the use of project-based learning can improve students' reading comprehension. This was proven by seeing a significant increase in achievement or test scores on students' reading comprehension in the experimental group. In this way, the researchers found that the hypothesis was accepted. The use of project-based learning model can develop students' reading skills by applying more interesting uses of project-based learning model such as the use of project-based learning model. The researchers hereby recommend the use of project-based learning model for teaching, especially in teaching students' reading comprehension.

The research shows that the used of project-based learning model can improve students' achievement in reading comprehension. Based on the above conclusions, the researchers need to provide suggestions to teachers, students and readers. Suggestions are stated as follows: The used of project-based learning model aims to improve students' ability in project problem solving and increase students' motivation in learning to create narrative texts. students' prior knowledge to help them understand the texts they read, so it is recommended that English teachers use it to make the teaching and learning process more interesting and dynamic, especially when reading narrative texts.

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