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THE APPLICATION OF *PROJECT-BASED LEARNING* (PjBL) TO ENHANCE STUDENTS' CREATIVITY IN POETRY WRITING

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the effect of implementing the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model on students' creativity in writing poetry. The method used was a quasi-experimental study with a Nonequivalent Control Group Design. This study was conducted at MTsN 2 Aceh Utara. The study population comprised all eighth-grade students, with a sample of 25 students in the experimental class and 25 students in the control class selected through purposive sampling. The experimental class received instruction using the PjBL model, while the control class used conventional teaching methods. Data collection was conducted using a poetry writing creativity assessment rubric covering the aspects of originality, structure, language, and theme. Data were analyzed using an independent t-test with a significance level of 0.05. The analysis results indicated a significant difference in students' poetry writing creativity between the two classes (t_(calculated) = 6.459, greater than t_(table) = 2.011; p = 0.000, less than 0.05). The average posttest score in the experimental class was 83.24, higher than that of the control class, which scored an average of 71.48. Thus, it can be concluded that the application of the PjBL model is effective in enhancing students' creativity in writing poetry.

Keywords: Project-Based Learning; creativity; poetry writing; quasi-experiment.

INTRODUCTION

Language learning plays an important role in developing students' communication skills, creativity, and critical thinking. At the secondary level, poetry writing represents a fundamental literary activity that encourages students to articulate ideas, emotions, and personal experiences through imaginative language use. Poetry composition transcends mechanical language use; it demands originality, aesthetic sensitivity, and creative expression. Poetry instruction develops both linguistic competence and sophisticated creative thinking.

However, many students struggle to express creativity through poetry composition. Students often replicate existing poetic conventions, demonstrate limited vocabulary exploration, and lack confidence in generating original ideas. Poetry instruction in many classrooms remains dominated by teacher-centered approaches including lectures, note-taking, and individual assignments. This approach produces passive learners with limited opportunity for imaginative exploration.

Based on preliminary observations conducted at MTsN 2 Aceh Utara, students' creativity and achievement in poetry writing were still relatively low. Of 25 observed students, only five met the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM = 70), while twenty fell below the expected standard. Students struggled particularly with idea development, diction selection, structural organization, and thematic expression. Additionally, poems produced were often monotonous and unoriginal, reflecting the predominance of conventional teaching methods. These findings underscore the need for engaging, student-centered approaches capable of stimulating creativity and enhancing poetry-writing performance.

Addressing this challenge requires innovative, student-centered approaches that foster meaningful literary learning experiences. Project-Based Learning (PjBL) represents one such approach gaining considerable pedagogical attention. PjBL engages students in collaborative, purposeful projects emphasizing inquiry, problem-solving, and authentic product creation. Project-based activities encourage active knowledge construction, independent exploration, and authentic learning outcomes. Applied to poetry instruction, PjBL facilitates creative engagement through thematic exploration, collaborative discussion, iterative revision, and public presentation.

Several previous studies have demonstrated the positive effects of PjBL on students' learning outcomes and creativity. Studies by Aprilia and Rahmawati (2024) and Suryani and Darmawan (2021), for example, reported that PjBL improved students' motivation, creative thinking, and writing performance in language learning contexts. Other studies also found that project-based activities could enhance students' engagement and collaboration skills during literary learning. However, existing research primarily addresses general creative writing, motivation, or language achievement at the secondary level.

Despite the growing body of research on PjBL, there is still limited research specifically investigating its effect on students' creativity in poetry writing within the context of Islamic junior secondary schools (Madrasah Tsanawiyah). Moreover, few studies examine creativity comprehensively across multiple dimensions including originality, structure, language use, and thematic development. This represents a significant research gap: how PjBL specifically develops poetry-writing creativity among MTs students, particularly in North Aceh.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the effectiveness of Project-Based Learning in enhancing students' creativity in poetry writing at MTsN 2 Aceh Utara. Distinct from prior research focusing on general writing performance or creativity, this investigation addresses poetry-writing creativity across multiple dimensions—originality, structure, language use, and thematic development. The findings of this study are expected to contribute theoretically to the development of creative literary learning and practically to provide Indonesian language teachers with an effective alternative learning model for fostering students' creativity in poetry writing.

The research questions in this study are: (1) How does the creativity in poetry writing among students in the experimental class compare before and after the implementation of the PjBL model? (2) How does the creativity in poetry writing among students in the control class compare before and after conventional instruction? (3) Is there a significant difference in the creativity of poetry writing between students in the experimental and control classes after the intervention?

The objectives of this study are to analyze students' creativity in poetry writing before and after the implementation of PjBL and to determine the effectiveness of Project-Based Learning in improving students' poetry-writing creativity at MTsN 2 Aceh Utara.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design

This study is a quantitative study with a quasi-experimental research design. It is an experimental research design with two groups, namely an experimental group and a control group, without random assignment. This design was chosen because the researcher could not reorganize the classes that had already been established at the school. The following is a description of the study design:

Tabel 1. Description of the Study Design

Group	Pre-test	Treatment	Posttest	n
Experiment	O_1	X	O_2	25
Control	O_3	-	O_4	25

Notes: X = PjBL treatment; O_1, O_3 = pretest; O_2, O_4 = posttest;

Population and Sample

The population in this study consists of all eighth-grade students at MTsN 2 Aceh Utara for the 2025–2026 academic year, comprising nine study groups with a total of 156 students. The sample was selected using *purposive sampling,* taking into account the initial conditions of the two equivalent classes. Based on these considerations, Class VIII A, with 25 students, was designated as the experimental class, and Class VIII B, with 25 students, was designated as the control class.

Research Variables

The implementation of the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model in the experimental class is the independent variable in this study. The dependent variable is students' creativity in writing poetry, which is assessed using four evaluation criteria: originality, structure, language, and theme. Control factors in this study include the same core competencies, the same teacher, learning resources for writing poetry, and learning time.

Research Procedure

The research procedure was carried out in three stages. The first was the preparation stage. During this stage, the research instruments were developed and validated, PjBL-based and conventional lesson plans were prepared, and a pretest was administered to both classes. Second, the implementation stage. In this stage, the researcher began teaching in the classroom using the PjBL approach in the experimental class for 6 sessions (12 x 40 minutes) with the following sequence: (a) identifying fundamental questions about poetry and students' life experiences; (b) planning the poetry anthology project; (c) establishing a writing schedule; (d) the writing process and teacher monitoring; (e) assessment and presentation of the poetry anthology; and (f) evaluation and reflection. The control group used conventional teaching techniques involving lectures, question-and-answer sessions, and assignments. The third stage involved administering the posttest. In this stage, the researcher collected data, conducted analysis, and drew conclusions.

Data Collection Instruments and Techniques

Criteria for evaluating creativity in poetry writing, based on the ideas of Guilford and Munandar (2021), were used in the data collection instrument. A total score ranging from 4 to 16 was derived from four rubric assessment components, each scored on a scale of 1 to 4. This score was then converted to a scale ranging from 0 to 100. Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was used to assess the instrument's reliability. Pretests and posttests for creating poems on similar themes were employed as part of the data collection method.

Data Analysis Techniques

The data in this study were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. The mean, median, mode, and standard deviation of the pretest and posttest data from both classes were described using descriptive statistics. The mean poetry writing scores of the experimental and control groups in the posttest were compared using an independent samples t-test in inferential statistics. Prerequisite tests, such as the homogeneity test using Levene's test and the normality test using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, were conducted prior to the t-test. SPSS version 26 was used for all analyses, with a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$. Hake's formula (1999) was used to determine the N-Gain value, and Cohen's d was used to obtain the effect size value to assess the effectiveness of the treatment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Description of Pretest Data

To determine the students' initial level of creativity, a pretest on poetry writing was administered to both classes before the treatment. The pretest results are presented in the following table:

Table 2. Statistical Description of the Pretest Scores for the Experimental and Control Classes

Statistics	Aspect	Experimental Class	Control Class
Mean	Pre-test	62.40	63.12
Highest Score	Pre-test	75.00	76.00
Lowest Score	Pre-test	50.00	50.0
Standard Deviation	Pre-test	6.83	6.95
Median	Pre-test	62.50	62.50

Table 2 shows that the average pretest score for the experimental class was 62.40, while that for the control class was 63.12. Before receiving different treatments, all classes had relatively identical initial abilities, as seen from the very small variation in average pretest scores (0.72).

Prerequisite Tests for Analysis

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to test for normality. A significance value of 0.200 > 0.05 was found in the normality test results for the experimental class's posttest data, while a significance value of 0.165 > 0.05 was found for the control class. This indicates that the data from both classes are normally distributed. The homogeneity test using Levene's Test yielded a significance value of 0.312 > 0.05, indicating that the variances of both classes are homogeneous. With both prerequisites met, an independent t-test can be conducted.

Description of Posttest Data

After the treatment was administered, both classes took a posttest on poetry writing. The posttest results are presented in the following table:

Table 3. Posttest Descriptive Statistics for the Experimental and Control Classes

Statistics	Aspect	Experimental Class	Control Class
Mean	Posttest	83.24	71.48
Highest Score	Posttest	95.00	83.00
Lowest Score	Posttest	68.75	58.75
Standard Deviation	Posttest	6.12	6.74
Median	Posttest	83.75	71.25
N-Gain	-	0.55 (Medium)	0.23 (Low)

Table 3 shows that the experimental class had a mean posttest score of 83.24, which is 11.76 points higher than the control class's score of 71.48. The experimental class's N-Gain score of 0.55 (moderate category) is higher than the control class's score of 0.23 (low category), indicating that the increase in creativity in the experimental class was significantly greater.

Hypothesis Test Results

An independent samples t-test with a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$ was used for hypothesis testing. The following hypotheses were tested: H_0 states that there is no discernible difference between the poetry-writing creativity of the experimental class and the control class; H_1 states that there is a discernible difference.

Table 3. Results of the Independent t-Test for the Posttest of the Experimental and Control Classes

Group	Mean	t_calculated	t-table	Sig. (2-tailed)	Note
Experiment	83.24	6.459	2.011	0.000	H_0 is rejected
Control	71.48	-	-	-	-

Based on Table 3, the calculated t-value is 6.459 > critical t-value = 2.011 with a significance level of 0.000 < 0.05. This means that H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted. Thus, students in the experimental class taught using the PjBL model and students in the control class taught using

traditional methods differed significantly in their creative poetry writing. The resulting Cohen's d value of 1.83, which falls into the large effect size category, indicates that the adoption of PjBL has a significant impact on enhancing students' originality in writing poetry.

Description by Aspect of Creativity

Analysis by aspect of creativity in writing poetry showed that the experimental class excelled in all assessment aspects. In the originality aspect, the experimental class averaged 84.50 compared to 70.25 in the control class. In the structure aspect, the experimental class scored an average of 82.75 compared to 72.00 in the control class. In the linguistic aspect, the experimental class scored 83.00 compared to 71.50 for the control class. In the theme aspect, the experimental class achieved an average of 82.75 compared to 72.00 for the control class. The highest improvement occurred in the originality aspect, indicating that PjBL is highly effective in encouraging students to produce more original and unique poems.

Discussion

The research findings indicate that the originality of MTsN 2 Aceh Utara students in writing poetry increased significantly with the use of the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model. These results are consistent with several previous studies demonstrating the success of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in teaching language and literature

The PjBL learning mechanism itself can explain the significant variation in creativity enhancement between the experimental and control groups. In the PjBL process, students are given the freedom to choose poetry themes based on their experiences and sensitivity to their surroundings. This expressive freedom is a key factor in the development of creativity. As stated by Sani (2022), creativity develops optimally in an environment that provides autonomy, intrinsic motivation, and freedom to explore. PjBL provides all three of these conditions in an integrated manner.

During the stage of formulating fundamental questions, students are encouraged to think critically about life themes that are meaningful to them. This process activates students' personal experiences as a source of inspiration for authentic poetry writing. Prihatin and Suyanto (2023) emphasize that sources of inspiration closely tied to students' lives result in poetry works that are richer in diction, imagery, and meaning. This explains why the aspect of originality showed the highest improvement in the experimental class.

The planning and implementation stages of the project in PjBL encourage students to collaborate, share ideas, and provide feedback to one another. Social interaction in this creative process has been shown to enrich students' perspectives on a theme, thereby fostering an increase in the aspect of flexible thinking. Suryani and Darmawan (2021) state that collaboration in creative projects stimulates *divergent thinking*, which is the foundation of creativity. Unlike conventional learning, which is more individualistic and one-directional, PjBL creates a creative ecosystem where ideas can develop organically through student interactions.

The aspect of elaboration, which also showed a significant improvement in the experimental class, can be attributed to the project's monitoring and revision stages within PjBL. Students do not simply write a poem in one go but undergo a process of repeated revisions based on feedback from teachers and peers. Through this iterative process, students are trained to build upon, refine, and enhance their initial concepts into more sophisticated and aesthetically pleasing works. According to Fathurrahman (2022), the PjBL revision process is a key feature that distinguishes it from other learning models because it motivates students to continuously improve their work.

Meanwhile, the low increase in creativity in the control class can be attributed to the dominance of lecture methods and assignments that are passive-receptive in nature. Students merely receive theoretical knowledge about poetry without being given sufficient space to explore and express their creativity. Munandar (2021) criticizes poetry writing instruction that remains fixated on memorizing poetic elements without providing meaningful and authentic writing experiences.

The fact that the N-Gain score for the experimental class (0.55, moderate category) is higher than that of the control class (0.23, low category) indicates that PjBL not only improves creativity scores but also yields pedagogically more relevant gains. With a Cohen's d value of 1.83, which falls into the large effect category, the difference between the two classes is not only statistically significant but also has highly important practical implications for learning.

The distinctive nature of project-based learning, which comprehensively integrates cognitive, affective, and psychomotor elements, also contributes to PjBL's success in enhancing creativity in poetry writing. Students strengthened their artistic sensitivity, teamwork, and communication skills

as well as their creative thinking while working on the poetry anthology. Compared to traditional learning that focuses only on the cognitive dimension, the use of this learning method resulted in a more holistic and meaningful learning experience (Hosnan, 2021).

This study shows that it is crucial for Indonesian language teachers at MTs to begin implementing the PjBL model in their poetry writing classes. Compared to traditional teaching methods, implementing PjBL requires more extensive planning and more complex classroom management, but the results are far superior in terms of fostering student creativity. The implementation of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) requires support from the school principal in the form of adequate facilities and sufficient time.

CONCLUSION

The following conclusions can be drawn based on the findings and comments of the research above. First, students in the experimental class at MTsN 2 Aceh Utara who were taught using the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model differed significantly from students in the control class who were taught using traditional methods in terms of their creativity when writing poetry. The calculated t-value of 6.459 > the critical t-value of 2.011, with a significance level of 0.000 < 0.05, indicates this. Second, compared to traditional teaching, the PjBL paradigm has proven more successful in fostering students' creativity when writing poetry. The experimental class's posttest average score (83.24) was significantly higher than that of the control class (71.48). The experimental class's N-Gain score (0.55) falls into the moderate category, while the control class's (0.23) falls into the low category. Third, all measured elements of creativity including originality, structure, language, and theme showed improvement, with originality demonstrating the greatest increase. This indicates how effectively PjBL works to inspire students to write more creative poetry.

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