

THE EFFECT OF PROJECT-BASED LEARNING MODEL ON STUDENTS' WRITING IN DESCRIPTIVE TEXT ASSISTED WITH COMIC STRIPS AT GRADE XI OF SMA NEGERI 3 TANJUNGBALAI ACADEMIC YEAR 2025/2026

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui pengaruh model Pembelajaran Berbasis Proyek (PjBL) yang dibantu komik terhadap kemampuan menulis teks deskriptif siswa. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kuantitatif dengan desain kuasi-eksperimental. Sampel terdiri dari dua kelas siswa kelas sebelas di SMA Negeri 3 Tanjung Balai tahun ajaran 2025/2026, yaitu kelas eksperimen dan kelas kontrol. Data dikumpulkan melalui pre-test dan post-test. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa nilai rata-rata kelas eksperimen pada pre-test adalah 62,2, sedangkan kelas kontrol adalah 57,6. Setelah perlakuan, kelas eksperimen meningkat sebesar 31% menjadi 81,5, sedangkan kelas kontrol meningkat sebesar 16% menjadi 66,8. Selanjutnya, hasil uji-t menunjukkan bahwa nilai t-observasi lebih tinggi daripada nilai t-tabel pada tingkat signifikansi 0,05. Ini berarti hipotesis alternatif (H_a) diterima dan hipotesis nol (H_o) ditolak. Kesimpulannya, model Pembelajaran Berbasis Proyek (PjBL) yang dibantu dengan komik memiliki pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap kemampuan menulis siswa dalam teks deskriptif.

Kata Kunci: Pembelajaran Berbasis Proyek (PjBL), Teks Deskriptif, Komik.

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the effect of the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model assisted by comic strips on students' writing ability in descriptive text. This research employed a quantitative method with a quasi-experimental design. The sample consisted of two classes of eleventh-grade students at SMA Negeri 3 Tanjung Balai in the 2025/2026 academic year, namely the experimental class and the control class. The data were collected through pre-test and post-test. The findings showed that the mean score of the experimental class in the pre-test was 62.2, while the control class was 57.6. After the treatment, the experimental class increased by 31% to 81.5, whereas the control class improved by 16% to 66.8. Furthermore, the result of the t-test indicated that the t-observed value was higher than the t-table value at the significance level of 0.05. This means that the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted and the null hypothesis (H_o) was rejected. In conclusion, the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model assisted by comic strips has a significant effect on students' writing ability in descriptive text.

Keywords: Project-Based Learning (PjBL), Descriptive Text, Comic Strips.

INTRODUCTION

English has become one of the most influential international languages in the era of globalization. It is used in various fields such as education, communication, economics, technology, tourism, science, and international relations. The rapid development of information and communication technology has increased the importance of English as a global language. People who master English have wider opportunities to access information, continue higher education, interact internationally, and compete in the global workforce. Therefore, English is considered an essential subject that should be mastered by students from an early age.

In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language and has become one of the compulsory subjects at junior and senior high school levels. The Indonesian curriculum emphasizes the importance of developing communicative competence through the mastery of four language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These four language skills are interconnected and support one another in language learning. Students are expected to master these skills in order to communicate effectively both orally and in written form.

Among the four language skills, writing is often considered the most complex and difficult skill for students to master. Writing is a productive skill that requires students not only to express ideas but also to organize them into meaningful and coherent texts. In writing activities, students need to apply grammatical rules correctly, choose appropriate vocabulary, arrange ideas systematically, and use punctuation properly. Consequently, writing requires both linguistic competence and cognitive ability.

Writing is also an important academic skill because students frequently use writing in educational activities. Students are required to write assignments, reports, essays, examinations, and research papers. Through writing, students can express ideas, feelings, experiences, and opinions. Writing also helps students improve creativity, critical thinking, analytical ability, and communication skills. Therefore, students need to develop good writing ability to support their academic success.

However, many students still face difficulties in writing English texts. Based on observations conducted by the researcher at SMA Negeri 3 Tanjungbalai, students experienced several problems related to writing activities. One of the main problems was limited vocabulary mastery. Many students found it difficult to choose appropriate words to express their ideas. As a result, they often used repetitive vocabulary and simple sentence patterns. This condition made their writing less interesting and less descriptive.

Another problem faced by students was grammar mastery. Students still made many grammatical errors, especially in the use of tenses, sentence structures, subject-verb agreement, and word order. These grammatical errors often affected the clarity and meaning of their writing. In addition, students also had difficulties in constructing effective sentences and combining ideas into coherent paragraphs.

Students' difficulty in organizing ideas became another significant issue. Some students were unable to develop supporting details systematically. Their paragraphs often lacked unity and coherence because the ideas were not connected logically. As a result, readers found it difficult to understand the intended message.

Moreover, students' motivation in writing activities was still low. Many students considered writing as a difficult, boring, and stressful activity. This situation was influenced by the teaching methods commonly used in the classroom. The learning process was still dominated by teacher-centered instruction where the teacher explained the material while students listened passively. Students were rarely involved in interactive or collaborative learning activities.

Besides that, the use of instructional media in teaching writing was still limited. Teachers rarely used visual media or interactive learning tools that could stimulate students' imagination and creativity. Consequently, students often lacked inspiration when starting to write. They found it difficult to generate ideas because they had no visual representation or contextual understanding related to the topic.

To solve these problems, teachers need to apply innovative teaching strategies and interesting learning media that can motivate students and actively involve them in learning activities. One of the teaching models considered suitable for improving students' writing ability is Project-Based Learning (PjBL). Project-Based Learning is a student-centered learning model that allows students to learn through meaningful projects and collaborative

activities. This learning model emphasizes active participation, problem-solving, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking. Through Project-Based Learning, students are encouraged to investigate problems, discuss ideas, work collaboratively, and create products related to the learning objectives. This learning model creates meaningful learning experiences because students learn by doing real activities. Students become more active and responsible for their own learning process.

Project-Based Learning also has several advantages in English language teaching. First, it promotes collaborative learning because students work together in groups. Second, it develops students' creativity and critical thinking skills. Third, it increases students' motivation because they are directly involved in interesting activities. Fourth, it improves students' communication skills through discussion and presentation activities.

In addition to using effective teaching models, teachers also need interesting learning media that can help students get more easily. One of the visual media that can be used in teaching writing is Comic Strips. Comic Strips are sequences of pictures combined with dialogues or narratives that tell stories visually. Comic Strips are attractive learning media because they contain colorful illustrations and contextual information. The use of Comic Strips in teaching writing provides many benefits for students. First, Comic Strips attract students' attention and increase their interest in learning. Second, Comic Strips help students understand contexts, characters, settings, and situations visually. Third, Comic Strips stimulate students' imagination and creativity. Fourth, Comic Strips reduce students' anxiety because visual media make writing activities more enjoyable and less difficult. Comic Strips are especially suitable for teaching descriptive text because students can observe visual details directly from the pictures. Students can describe people, objects, animals, or places based on the illustrations presented in the Comic Strips. Visual representation helps students get descriptive vocabulary and supporting details more effectively.

The combination of Project-Based Learning and Comic Strips is expected to create a more active, enjoyable, and meaningful learning environment. Through collaborative project activities assisted with visual media, students can discuss ideas, solve problems, and develop descriptive texts creatively. Students can also improve communication skills, teamwork, and confidence during the learning process. Several previous studies have shown the effectiveness of Project-Based Learning and Comic Strips in improving students' writing ability. (Almrisal, 2022) found that Comic Strips significantly improved students' writing skills because visual illustrations helped students express ideas more clearly and creatively. (Ratnawati, 2020) revealed that Project-Based Learning improved students' writing achievement and collaborative skills through project activities. (Yunani, 2024) also found that Project-Based Learning effectively improved students' descriptive writing ability. Other studies also supported the implementation of visual media and collaborative learning in language teaching. (Kurnial, 2015) explained that Comic Strips increased students' motivation and helped students understand story contexts more easily. Based on the problems identified during the preliminary observation and supported by previous studies, the researcher was interested in conducting a study entitled "The Effect of Project-Based Learning Model on Students' Writing in Descriptive Text Assisted with Comic Strips at Grade XI of SMAN Negeri 3 Tanjungballi Kecamatan Yelari 2025/2026."

English plays an important role in the modern world because it is widely used as an international language for communication, education, technology, science,

and business. In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language from elementary school until university level. The teaching of English aims to develop students' communicative competence through four language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These four skills are interconnected and support students in mastering English effectively. However, among the four language skills, writing is often considered the most difficult skill to learn and master.

Writing is a productive skill that requires students to express ideas, opinions, experiences, and information in written form. Writing also involves several language components such as grammar, vocabulary, organization, punctuation, spelling, and mechanics. Students are expected to produce meaningful texts with clear organization and appropriate language use. In addition, writing requires critical thinking because students need to organize ideas logically and communicate them effectively. Therefore, writing is not only a linguistic activity but also a cognitive process.

Writing ability is very important for students because it supports academic achievement and communication skills. Through writing, students can convey messages, share knowledge, express creativity, and develop analytical thinking. In academic contexts, writing is needed to complete assignments, answer examinations, and produce reports or essays. Consequently, students need to develop good writing ability to support their learning process.

Despite the importance of writing, many students still face difficulties in learning writing, especially in writing English texts. Based on preliminary observation conducted at SMAN Negeri 3 Tanjungballahi, many students experience problems in developing ideas into paragraphs. Some students lack vocabulary mastery, making it difficult for them to express ideas appropriately. They often repeat simple words and use limited vocabulary. In addition, students also make grammatical errors, especially in sentence structure, verb forms, and subject-verb agreement. Another problem found during the observation was students' difficulty in organizing ideas coherently. Some students could not arrange sentences into well-structured paragraphs. Their writing lacked unity and coherence because they were unable to connect supporting ideas logically. Moreover, students often ignore punctuation and spelling, which reduced the quality of their writing. The low motivation of students in learning writing is also considered a serious problem. Many students considered writing as a difficult and boring activity because the teaching process was still dominated by conventional methods. Teachers often explained the material using lectures, asked students to write individually, and provided limited opportunities for interaction or collaboration. As a result, students considered passive and less interested in participating during writing activities.

Another factor influencing students' writing achievement was the lack of instructional media used by teachers. Teachers rarely used interesting visual media to stimulate students' imagination and creativity. Consequently, students found it difficult to generate ideas because they lacked visual support and contextual understanding.

To overcome these problems, teachers need to implement innovative teaching strategies and attractive learning media that can actively involve students in the learning process. One of the teaching models considered appropriate for improving students' writing ability is Project-Based Learning (PjBL).

Project-Balsed Learning is a student-centered learning model that emphasizes learning through projects and collaborative activities. In Project-Balsed Learning, students are encouraged to investigate problems, discuss ideas, work collaboratively, and create meaningful products. Project-Balsed Learning has several advantages in language learning. First, it promotes active learning by encouraging students to participate directly in learning activities. Second, it encourages collaboration among students through group discussions and teamwork. Third, it improves students' creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. Fourth, it creates meaningful learning experiences by encouraging students to learn by doing real activities. Besides using an effective learning model, teachers also need suitable learning media to support students in understanding ideas and understanding writing contexts. One of the interesting media that can be used in teaching writing is Comic Strips. Comic Strips are visual media consisting of pictures, dialogues, and short stories arranged sequentially. Comic Strips provide visual representations that can help students understand characters, settings, situations, and events more easily.

The use of Comic Strips in teaching writing offers several benefits. First, Comic Strips attract students' attention because they contain colorful and interesting illustrations. Second, Comic Strips help students understand ideas by using the pictures provided in the text clues. Third, Comic Strips stimulate students' imagination and creativity. Fourth, Comic Strips reduce students' anxiety in writing by using visual support to make writing activities easier and more enjoyable.

The combination of Project-Balsed Learning and Comic Strips is expected to create a more effective and enjoyable learning environment. Through collaborative project activities assisted with visual media, students can actively participate in discussions, exchange ideas, and develop descriptive texts creatively. Students can also improve their writing skills while increasing motivation and confidence. Several previous studies have supported the effectiveness of Project-Balsed Learning and Comic Strips in teaching writing. (Almrisal, 2022) found that Comic Strips significantly improved students' writing ability by using visual illustrations to help students express ideas more clearly. (Rahmawati, 2020) revealed that Project-Balsed Learning improved students' writing achievement and creativity through collaborative learning activities. (Yunani, 2024) also reported that Project-Balsed Learning effectively improved students' descriptive writing ability.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher was interested in conducting a study entitled "The Effect of Project-Balsed Learning Model on Students' Writing in Descriptive Text Assisted with Comic Strips at Grade XI of SMAN Negeri 3 Tanjungballahi Alcademic Year 2025/2026."

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental design to investigate the effect of the Project-Balsed Learning model assisted with Comic Strips on students' writing ability in descriptive text. The design used in this study was a pre-test and post-test control group design involving two groups, namely the experimental group and the control group. Both groups were given a pre-test before the treatment to determine students' initial writing ability. After the pre-test, the experimental group received treatment through the implementation of Project-Balsed Learning assisted with Comic Strips, while the

control group was taught by using a conventional teaching method. At the end of the treatment, both groups were given a post-test to measure students' improvement in writing descriptive text and to determine the effectiveness of the treatment.

The research was conducted at SMAL Negeri 3 Tanjung Balli during the academic year 2025/2026. The population of this study consisted of all eleventh-grade students of SMAL Negeri 3 Tanjung Balli. The sample of this research was divided into two classes. Class XI-1 consisting of 24 students was selected as the experimental group, while class XI-7 consisting of 28 students was selected as the control group. The sampling technique used in this study was purposive sampling because the researcher selected the classes based on certain considerations related to students' English learning ability and classroom conditions.

The instrument used in this research was a writing test in the form of descriptive text writing tasks administered as pre-test and post-test. In both tests, students were instructed to write a descriptive text based on the topics provided by the researcher. The students' writing products were assessed by using an analytic scoring rubric covering five aspects of writing, namely content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. These aspects were used to evaluate students' writing performance comprehensively. The procedures of data collection in this study were conducted in several stages. First, the researcher administered the pre-test to both experimental and control groups in order to measure students' initial writing ability before the treatment. Second, the researcher conducted the treatment in the experimental class by implementing Project-Based Learning assisted with Comic Strips. During the treatment, students worked collaboratively in groups to observe Comic Strips, discuss ideas, organize information, and create descriptive writing projects based on the visual media provided. Meanwhile, the control class was taught using a conventional teaching method where the teacher explained the material directly and students completed writing tasks individually without project-based activities or Comic Strips assistance. Third, after the treatment sessions were completed, the researcher administered the post-test to both groups to determine students' improvement in writing descriptive text. The data collected from the writing tests were analyzed quantitatively by using statistical analysis. The researcher calculated the students' mean scores, standard deviation, and percentage of improvement in both groups. Furthermore, the t-test formula was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the experimental group and the control group at the significance level of 0.05. If the t-obtained value was higher than the t-table value, the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted, indicating that Project-Based Learning assisted with Comic Strips had a significant effect on students' writing ability in descriptive text.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This research used a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental design. The design applied in this study was pre-test and post-test control group design. The study involved two groups: an experimental group and a control group. The research was conducted at SMAL Negeri 3 Tanjung Balli in the academic year 2025/2026. The population of the study consisted of all eleventh-grade students. The sample was selected using purposive sampling technique. The experimental class consisted of 24 students, while the control class consisted of 28

students.

The experimental group was taught by using Project-Based Learning assisted with Comic Strips, while the control group was taught by using conventional teaching methods. Both groups were given pre-test and post-test.

The instrument used in this research was a writing test. Students were asked to write descriptive texts based on the topics provided.

The data of this study were obtained from the students' pre-test and post-test scores in both experimental and control groups. The pre-test was conducted before the treatment to identify students' initial writing ability, while the post-test was conducted after the treatment to measure students' improvement. The results showed that the students in the experimental class experienced significant improvement after being taught by using Project-Based Learning assisted with Comic Strips. The mean score of the experimental class increased from 60.12 in the pre-test to 82.08 in the post-test. Meanwhile, the control class improved from 58.75 to 69.21.

The improvement in the experimental class indicates that Project-Based Learning assisted with Comic Strips effectively improved students' descriptive writing ability. Students became more active, motivated, and creative during the learning process. They were able to generate ideas more easily because Comic Strips provided visual support and contextual understanding.

Furthermore, students in the experimental class showed better performance in all aspects of writing. In terms of content, students could develop ideas more clearly and completely. In organization, students arranged paragraphs more coherently. In vocabulary, students used more varied and appropriate words. In grammar, students made fewer errors in sentence construction. In mechanics, students showed improvement in punctuation and spelling. The statistical analysis using t-test showed that the t-obtained value was higher than the t-table value at the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted and the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected. This means that Project-Based Learning assisted with Comic Strips had a significant effect on students' writing ability in descriptive text.

The findings of this study are consistent with previous studies. (Almizall, 2022) found that Comic Strips improved students' writing ability because visual media helped students express ideas more effectively. (Rahmalwati, 2020) entitled also reported that Project-Based Learning improved students' creativity and writing performance through collaborative project activities.

The success of Project-Based Learning assisted with Comic Strips can be explained through several factors. First, Project-Based Learning creates active learning environments where students participate directly in learning activities. Students are encouraged to discuss, collaborate, investigate, and solve problems together.

Second, Comic Strips provide visual representation that helps students understand contexts and stimulate imagination. Visual media makes it easier for students to describe objects, characters, and situations.

Third, collaborative learning activities improve students' confidence and communication skills. Students can exchange ideas, receive feedback, and support each other during the learning process. In addition, Project-Based Learning develops students' higher-order thinking skills such as critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving. These skills are important in writing activities because

students need to organize ideas logically and express them effectively.

Although the implementation of Project-Based Learning assisted with Comic Strips showed positive results, some challenges were also found during the research. Some students initially had difficulty adapting to collaborative learning because they were accustomed to teacher-centered instruction. In addition, project activities required more time and classroom management. However, these challenges could be overcome through teacher guidance and effective classroom organization. Overall, the implementation of Project-Based Learning assisted with Comic Strips created a more meaningful, enjoyable, and student-centered learning environment.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion, it can be concluded that the implementation of Project-Based Learning assisted with Comic Strips had a significant effect on students' writing ability in descriptive text at Grade XI of SMAN Negeri 3 Tanjung Ballala in the academic year 2025/2026. The experimental class taught using Project-Based Learning assisted with Comic Strips showed higher improvement compared to the control class taught using conventional methods. The statistical analysis confirmed that the t-obtained value was higher than the t-table value at the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis was accepted. Project-Based Learning assisted with Comic Strips proved to be an effective teaching strategy because it increased students' motivation, creativity, participation, and collaboration. Comic Strips also helped students understand ideas and understand contexts more easily through visual representation. Therefore, English teachers are recommended to use Project-Based Learning assisted with Comic Strips as an alternative strategy in teaching writing, especially descriptive text. This learning model can create more interactive and meaningful learning experiences for students.

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