

Improving Students' Creative Writing Skill through Project Based Learning Using Wattpad as Learning Media Technology

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Abstract: This study was conducted in English Grammar for Content and Creative Writing class. Project-based learning using Wattpad is implemented as a teaching model to improve students' writing skills. They will accomplish two creative writing projects. This study aims to identify the implementation of project-based learning using Wattpad and students' perceptions towards it. This research implemented a case study. The data were obtained from observation and questionnaires. Most students give positive attitudes toward the use of Wattpad and they liked to use Wattpad as a writing platform.

INTRODUCTION

Students at Politeknik Negeri Malang experience several problems related to writing. This problem arises for students who have difficulty developing writing ideas into good writing. Students need to improve their writing skills through projects and assignments given by lecturers. The media used for writing can vary, such as Wattpad, Facebook, and others. They can pour writing ideas to hone their skills.

Students experience writing difficulties usually due to several factors. The first factor, they are not encouraged to do regular writing activities (Serra, 2013). Then, Brown, Morrell & Rowlands (2011) explained that writing is a pleasure that must be raised, especially when students are learning the first meeting on campus. Classroom learning does not provide opportunities for students to express writing ideas according to their individual writing characteristics. Thus, students have less interest in learning to write.

Randolph (2011) states that students have three problems when writing. First, they write in a style they don't want. Second, the writing topics they work on are very foreign to them. Third, they have difficulty developing clear, coherent and well-organized writing ideas. Creative writing is a solution to solving three main

problems faced by students. With creative writing, students are able to practice writing skills in the form of creative writing through short stories based on their imagination. Furthermore, Cristopher (1996) explained that creative writing helps students to communicate effectively and develop cognitive abilities.

Lecturers have a very significant role in improving students' writing skills and students' motivation in writing. Every student has creativity that appears in every student. Research that raises the theme of student creativity in writing English is still rare. Research on this topic is very important to do because writing difficulties are an inhibiting factor for students to improve their writing skills.

The creative writing practice at Harvard University became exemplary in the early twentieth century (Myers, 1993; Bishop, 1994). Creative writing gives freedom for writers to express the use of language (Babae, 2015). The purpose of creative writing is to represent the author's unique, imaginative and poetic ideas. Lukiv (2006) argues that this type of creative writing is free from factual or logical provisions such as expository paragraphs. According to Bilton & Sivasubramaniam (2009), creative writing can help students to improve writing skills.

To overcome problems students might face in writing, students are encouraged to work together to increase their motivation towards their writing activities. Therefore, this creative writing activity could be conducted in a group as a project. They could work together and give each other feedback as well as discuss whenever they find difficulties. This activity could be considered as a project-based learning.

This type of learning project-based learning is a suitable learning model to improve students' writing skills (Bell, 2010; Han et al., 2015). This learning model helps students to think creatively in practicing their writing skills. Previous research examined the characteristics of project-based learning applied by lecturers in classroom learning (Han et al., 2015; Kokotsaki et al., 2016). By implementing this project-based learning, it is expected that the students could be more absorbed in the creative writing processes.

During the creative writing activities, students are required to work together. One thing that surely helps students to work faster and more efficiently is through the use of technology. One prominent platform which is well-known among creative writers is Wattpad. Wattpad is a writing platform that connects writers and readers from around the world (Rochester, 2012). There are many different genres to be read in this application. In this application, freelance writers can explore a variety of genres that fit their writing style. One of the media used for writing is Wattpad (Nel, 2016; Birch, 2016). Wattpad is a writing medium that is not bound by publishing terms so writers can be creative in writing Kardiansyah (2019).

With the help of technology, students can work with their smartphones and can utilize technology while starting to make their piece of writing as well as discussing with their friends. This is beneficial as students could feel motivated and encouraged by their peers. When they face problems or get some writing blocks, they could ask for their friends' help to assist them in finishing the task. Based on the explanation, this study is aimed at the implementation of Project-based Learning using Wattpad and students' perception toward the use of Wattpad.

METHOD

The design of this study is a case study. It is a qualitative research. Schoch (2022) stated that Case study research is research that examines certain events or incidents in society. It means that case study helps the researchers to explore and identify the phenomena in detail. It will help the researcher to obtain a deeper analysis.

The aims of this recent study are (1) to identify the implementation of PBL using Wattpad and (2) students' perception toward on it. Thus, case study was selected as the most suitable research design for the current study. It is because the researcher will do a deep analysis on the implementation. The researchers also can identify the students' perception in detail.

There are 24 students from D3-2A class of D-III English Department, State Polytechnic of Malang. Lecturer divides them into five groups. Each group consists of five students. Each group will do two kinds of writing short stories projects. The topic of short stories based on their group creativities. There are three research instruments that used in this study. The explanation is stated below:

1. Observation defines as an activity of watching certain phenomenon to get certain data or information. In this study, the observation will done identify the process of implementing Project-based Learning using Wattpad.
2. Closed Questionnaire will focus on students' perception. Participants will choose the best answer based on their perception.
3. Interview conducted to get deep analysis about students' perception on the use of Wattpad.

The data are taken from observations, questionnaires, and interviews. The first method is researchers will collect data from observation. The second method is the researcher will collect data from questionnaire of Likert-scale. All items of questionnaire are in relation to students' perception toward the implementation of PBL using Wattpad. Then, the third, the data also collected from interview.

The data analysis taken from the results of observation and questionnaire. Only ten students from two groups who will be analyzed based on the criteria. They get the highest score and the highest writing qualities for doing writing short stories projects. There were some steps in conducting this research, which are described as follows:

1. The lecturer will give the instruction about learning process. The instruction includes the explanation about project-based learning activities and the tools that used for that learning process.
2. This study will be in the D3-2A from D-III English Department, State Polytechnic of Malang. That class consists of 24 students. Therefore, the lecturer will divide the class into five groups. Each group will do two kinds of creative writing projects.
3. There are three stages of project-based learning, such as planning, implementation, and reporting. In this study, the researcher will do observation toward it.
4. The results of that questionnaire are used to identify the student perception toward the implementation of PBL using Wattpad. Then, it also obtains interview results.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

During this research, the researchers conducted two writing projects. The first writing project was conducted on May 17, 2022 and the second writing project was conducted on June 22, 2022. The topic provided by the researchers for the first writing project was friendship. This project was a semi-structured project which involved lecturer giving them instructions to complete the project. Students must complete this project in a group of four students. Furthermore, the structure of the writing product that the students have to develop was the structure of a short story. What made it different from the conventional writing process was that students write by using Wattpad.

The students were expected to draft their writing and discuss the content of their writing in their group. They discussed the story that they would like to develop based on topics given with their groups. All of them must try to operate the Wattpad platform so that they would experience using the platform. The link to the short story that they would write was one because only one account was made. However, all group members have the access to the account. Before completing the writing process, the lecturer asked the students to determine several important things related to Wattpad.

Students must determine one interesting title of their short story. After that, students must prepare the description of the short story to be posted in the story. This was intended for readers so that they could have description of what story was about. Next is tag. Tags helped the story to reach the top search and this could make the short story popular. When the story got more popular, the students could reach more readers or audiences. Moreover, students must determine the language that they use during the writing process. Of course, students must use English during the writing process. Finally, students must determine the rating of the story. Since the topic brought was about friendship, the lecturer instructed the students to have 13+ rating for the short story that they created. More thorough explanation regarding the project was illustrated in the table entitled observation checklist 1 below.

Table 1. **Observation Checklist 1**

Lecturer	: Ririn Pratiwi Suharto				
Observer	: Fitrotul Maulidiyah				
Class	: 3B				
Skill	: Writing				
Topic	: Friendship				
Date of Observation	: May 17, 2022				
Time of Observation	: 07.00-09.00				
No	Classifications	Kinds of Projects	Yes	No	Description
1	Organizing projects	Structured		√	Students were given a project with and instructions to follow. The topic was also provided by the lecturer. Students were asked to produce one example of short story.
		Semi-structured	√		

Lecturer	: Ririn Pratiwi Suharto				
Observer	: Fitrotul Maulidiyah				
Class	: 3B				
Skill	: Writing				
Topic	: Friendship				
Date of Observation	: May 17, 2022				
Time of Observation	: 07.00-09.00				
No	Classifications	Kinds of Projects	Yes	No	Description
		Unstructured		√	
2	time of doing the project	Simple	√		This is a simple project because the students were asked to finish the projects in a small group. This is a single project which must be completed at once.
		Short-term		√	
		Medium-term		√	
		Long-term		√	
3	Learners' involvement	Individual		√	There are 24 students in one class and they were divided into 6 groups. Each group consisted of 4 students and they have to finish the writing assignment in the assigned group.
		Group projects	√		
		Whole-class		√	
		Whole-school		√	
		Extensive		√	

After students finished their first writing project, the lecturer discussed with them related to difficulties that they faced during the project completion. After having the discussion, the lecturer evaluated the students' writing products one by one based on the writing rubrics that the teacher has created. The evaluation results were then presented to the students so that in the future, the student will not repeat the same mistakes. The rubric elements were related to the ability to catch attention, story originality, maintenance of interest, clarity and mechanics. More thorough explanation regarding the writing procedures were illustrated below.

Table 2. Writing Procedure 1

No	Procedures	Criteria	Yes	No	Description
1	Stages of Preparation	The lecturer explains topics	√		Topics given to students in this meeting was "friendship".

No	Procedures	Criteria	Yes	No	Description
		The lecturer gives students brainstorming questions.	√		Lecturer asked students whether or not they were familiar with Wattpad.
2	Design the project plan	Students share their ideas	√		They were working in a group and they were exchanging ideas with their group members regarding the project.
		The lecturer explains rules of the project development	√		Before carrying out projects, the lecturer explained about rules of the project completion and submission.
		The lecturer informs the materials and tools for students' projects	√		The lecturer explained the structure of a good short story, about the features in Wattpad and the rubric of assessment.
3	Scheduling	Time allocation for finishing projects	√		The submission was explained more thoroughly here including the time allotment.
		The lecturer and students make a time deadline.	√		Lecturer asked students whether they agreed to the due date or the students would like to negotiate.
4	Conducting project	The lecturer as facilitator to help students	√		During the learning process, students were given chances to ask the lecturer whenever they face difficulties
		The lecturer helps students if there are problem with projects	√		Lecturer tried to provide solution when student have difficulties especially technical difficulties in operating Wattpad.

No	Procedures	Criteria	Yes	No	Description
5	Scoring the result	The lecturer conducts scoring projects	√		Lecturer gives score the students' based on the writing rubrics prepared.
		The lecturer gives feedbacks	√		Lecturer provided feedback to the students' writing products.
6	Evaluation	The lecturer and students evaluate the learning process.	√		Both lecturer and students had a discussion regarding the mini projects which they had accomplished.
		The lecturer checked all questions and answers toward projects	√		Lecturer made sure that students were able finish the project.
		The lecturer and students share their project experiences	√		They share their opinions about the project and give suggestion

Students were required to draft their writing and discuss the content of their writing in their group. They discussed the story that they would like to develop based on topic given with their group members. All groups must take turn in operating the Wattpad platform so that they would have similar experiences in using the platform. The link to the second short story that they would write was one because only one account was made. However, all group members have the access to the account. Before completing the writing process, the lecturer asked the students to determine several important things related to Wattpad.

Students must determine one interesting title of their short story. After that, students must prepare the description of the short story to be posted in the story. This was intended for readers so that they could have description of what story was about. Next, the students must prepare for the story tags. These tags helped the story to reach the top search and this could make the short story popular. When the story got more popular, the students could reach more readers or audiences. Moreover, students must determine the language that they use during the writing process. Of course, students must use English during the writing process. Finally, students must determine the rating of the story. Since the second topic brought was about mystery, the lecturer instructed the students to have 13+ rating for the short story that they created. More thorough explanation regarding the project was illustrated in the table entitled observation checklist 2 below.

Table 3. Observation Checklist 2

Lecturer	: Ririn Pratiwi Suharto				
Observer	: Fitrotul Maulidiyah				
Class	: 3B				
Skill	: Writing				
Topic	: Mystery				
Date of Observation	: May 22, 2022				
Time of Observation	: 07.00-09.00				
No	Classifications	Kinds of Projects	Yes	No	Description
1	Organizing projects	Structured		√	
		Semi-structured	√		Students were given a project with and instructions to follow. The second topic was also provided by the lecturer.
		Unstructured		√	
2	Time allocation	Simple	√		Students were asked to finish the projects in a small group. This is a single project which must be completed at once.
		Short-term		√	
		Medium-term		√	
		Long-term		√	
3	Learners' involvement	Individual		√	
		Group	√		There are 24 students in one class and they were divided into 6 groups. Each group consisted of 4 students and they have to finish the writing assignment in the assigned group.
		Whole-class		√	
		Whole-school		√	
		Extensive		√	

After the students finished their second writing project, the lecturer discussed with them related to difficulties that they faced during the project completion. After having the discussion, the lecturer evaluated the students' writing products one by one based on the writing rubrics that the teacher has created. The evaluation results were then presented to the students so that in the future, the

student will not repeat the same mistakes. The rubric elements were related to the ability to catch attention, story originality, maintenance of interest, clarity and mechanics. More thorough explanation regarding the writing procedures were illustrated below.

Table 4. Writing Procedure 2

No	Procedures	Criteria	Yes	No	Description
1	Stages of Preparation	The lecturer explains topics	√		Topics given to students in this meeting was “friendship”.
		The lecturer gives students brainstorming questions.	√		Lecturer asked students whether or not they were familiar with Wattpad.
2	Design the project plan	Students share their ideas	√		They were working in a group and they were exchanging ideas with their group members regarding the project.
		The lecturer explain rules of the project development	√		Before carrying out projects, the lecturer explained about rules of the project completion and submission.
		The lecturer informs the materials and tools for students’ projects	√		The lecturer explained the structure of a good short story, about the features in Wattpad and the rubric of assessment.
3	Scheduling	Time allocation for finishing projects	√		The submission was explained more thoroughly here including the time allotment.
		The lecturer and students make a time deadline.	√		Lecturer asked students whether they agreed to the due date or the students would like to negotiate.
4	Conducting project	The lecturer as facilitator to help students	√		During the learning process, students were given chances

No	Procedures	Criteria	Yes	No	Description
					to ask the lecturer whenever they face difficulties
		The lecturer helps students if there are problem with projects	√		Lecturer tried to provide solution when student have difficulties especially technical difficulties in operating Wattpad.
5	Scoring the result	The lecturer conducts scoring projects	√		Lecturer gives score the students' based on the writing rubrics prepared.
		The lecturer gives feedbacks	√		Lecturer provided feedback to the students' writing products.
6	Evaluation	The lecturer and students evaluate the learning process.	√		Both lecturer and students had a discussion regarding the mini projects which they had accomplished.
		The lecturer checked all questions and answers toward projects	√		Lecturer made sure that students were able finish the project.
		The lecturer and students share their project experiences	√		They share their opinions about the project and give suggestion

Furthermore, questionnaire result reveal that most students agree that using Wattpad to produce their creative writing products is fun and enjoyable. It could be inferred from the questionnaires that most of them agreed and even strongly agreed that Wattpad could improve their writing motivation especially given the topics by the lecturer.

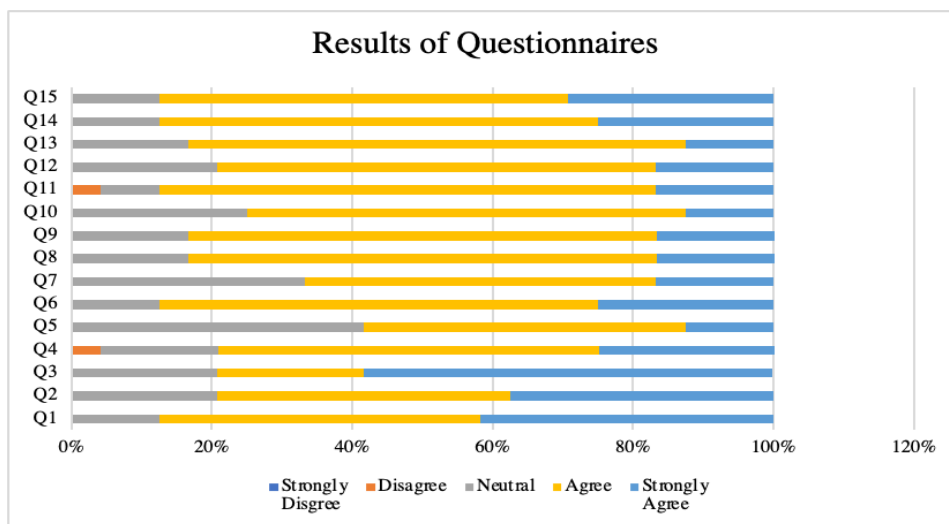


Figure 1. Results of Questionnaires

As illustrated by the figure, there are 15 items in the questionnaires. From the 15 items, most students responded positively (agree and strongly agree). However, there are two items where there are two students responded disagree (one student for each item). The average score for students responding positively could be observed more thoroughly in Figure 2 below.

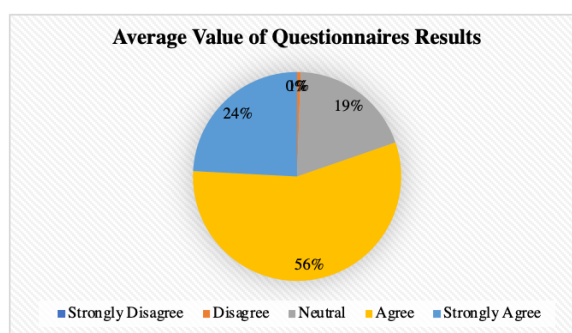


Figure 2. Average Value of the Questionnaire Results

As illustrated by Figure 2 above, 56% of the respondents agree that Wattpad and the implementation of PBL could improve their motivation and their writing skills. Furthermore, 24% of the respondents strongly agree with the statement or questions that overall, the use of technology specifically Wattpad could help them write better with the topics given by the lecturer. Results are presented by Table 5 below.

Table 5. Results of Questionnaires

No.	Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	Wattpad is the best online platforms for doing creative writing	-	-	3 (12.5%)	11 (45.8%)	10 (41.7%)
2.	Features on Wattpad help student to	-	-	5 (20.8%)	10 (41.7%)	9 (37.5%)

No.	Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
	practice creative writing					
3.	Many stories in Wattpad are interesting	-	-	5 (20.8%)	5 (20.8%)	14 (58.3%)
4.	Many stories in Wattpad are inspiring to readers	-	1 (4.2%)	4 (16.7%)	13 (54.2%)	6 (25%)
5.	Student likes to write creative writing in Wattpad	-	-	10 (41.7%)	11 (45.8%)	3 (12.5%)
6.	The use of Wattpad enables student to edit and write short stories easily	-	-	3 (12.5%)	15 (62.5%)	6 (25%)
7.	The use of Wattpad saved student's a lot of times	-	-	8 (33.3%)	12 (50%)	4 (16.7%)
8.	The use of Wattpad in PBL activities helped student to organize students' ideas for creative writing	-	-	4 (16.7%)	16 (66.7%)	4 (16.7%)
9.	Student develops creative writing skill through project-based learning activities by using Wattpad	-	-	4 (16.7%)	16 (66.7%)	4 (16.7%)
10.	Student more motivated to write by using Wattpad in project-based learning activities	-	-	6 (25%)	15 (62.5%)	3 (12.5%)
11.	Student makes meaningful interaction with teamwork when they use Wattpad in PBL activities	-	1 (4.2%)	2 (8.3%)	17 (70.8%)	4 (16.7%)
12.	Students will consider to use Wattpad for reading activities in the future	-	-	5 (20.8%)	15 (62.5%)	4 (16.7%)
13.	The use of Wattpad allows students to be more skill full with ICT	-	-	4 (16.7%)	17 (70.8%)	3 (12.5%)

No.	Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
14.	The use of Wattpad helps student to build better self-esteem and confidence in doing creative writing with teamwork	-	-	3 (12.5%)	15 (62.5%)	6 (25%)
15.	The use of Wattpad enables student to write short stories in teamwork	-	-	3 (12.5%)	14 (58.3%)	7 (29.2%)
Average Score		0%	1%	19%	56%	24%

It could be inferred from the table above that students most likely have positive attitudes towards the implementation of Wattpad to complete creative writing assignments. They also have positive attitudes towards the implementation of PBL during their writings as they enjoy working and discussing with their partners.

Interview results can be concluded that most of the students said that activities could improve their vocabulary. Furthermore, students felt that their writing ability related to organization and content also improved. This was proven by the students who said that after taking this course, their understanding related to writing components also improved quite well. Most of the students said that by blogging, they became more creative because the features available were attractive, dynamic and flexible. Moreover, the features are easy to use and they could search for inspiration by looking at other people's blogs or writings.

It was revealed from the interview that the reasons that the students like to write in blogs are because blogging is simple, easy, flexible, fun and accessible anywhere and anytime. They love blogging because it has so many features and most importantly, they could browse for other people's blogs to get inspiration and to improve their creativity. In short, they could develop their writing ideas whenever they got writing blocks. They also said that by writing in blogs, they could find many recommendations to develop their ideas. They also loved blogging because they could also post pictures related to their stories to make it more fun.

Regarding their preference towards working in a team or individually, most of the students prefer to work in a team. They enjoyed sharing ideas with friends because sharing ideas could prevent them to have writer's blocks. They also said that doing the projects in a team will help them easily find the solution of their problems. They could share their thoughts and problems so they could understand each other. Besides, working in a team will teach them how to understand each other's opinion and solve the problem together. Furthermore, working in a team could increase their productivity and it is more efficient compared to working alone.

However, some of the students think that working individually could make their work more organized. Therefore, some of the students thought that sometimes they needed to work alone. Mostly, the students thought that working alone was challenging so some of them chose the combination of both, working alone and in

a team. This could be the gap which must be fulfilled by the researchers so that in the future, the projects should be more efficient and more manageable.

CONCLUSION

Project-based learning becomes one teaching method to promote students' automated learning. The implementation of project-based learning would generate more effective results if conducted in productive skills, for example writing. There are many types of writing which could be found nowadays and creative writing is one type of writing which reaches its peak currently. This is because of the availability of writing platform and applications which improve the number of creative writing readers. Hence, bringing together the sophisticated technology and one automated learning method along with the its implementation in the suitable teaching method would generate impressive results. It could be concluded from this study that students most likely have positive attitudes towards the implementation of Wattpad to complete creative writing assignments. They also have positive attitudes towards the implementation of project-based learning during the process of writing as they enjoy working and discussing with their partners.

It was also revealed from the interview that the reasons that the students like to write in blogs are because blogging is simple, easy, flexible, fun and accessible anywhere and anytime. They love blogging because it has so many features and most importantly, they could browse for other people's blogs to get inspiration and to improve their creativity. In short, they could develop their writing ideas whenever they got writing blocks. They also said that by writing in blogs, they could find many recommendations to develop their ideas. They also loved blogging because they could also post pictures related to their stories to make it more fun.

SUGGESTION

There are several suggestions which were promoted by the researchers. First is for the English lecturers. English lecturers are encouraged to implement project-based learning in the class. They could try implementing this method in other subjects. Moreover, lecturers could also try to use other types of technology other than Wattpad so that students are interested in the class and engaged in the learning activities. Second is for the future researchers. Future researchers are encouraged to also conduct research with the similar method namely project-based learning but in other research fields.

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