STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARD CHARACTER-BASED PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION IN PARAGRAPH WRITING CLASS

A Thesis

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By

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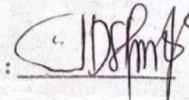Padang, Februari 2024

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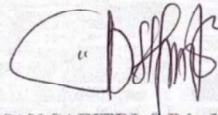3. Anggota : Dian Safitri, S.Pd., M.Pd. :

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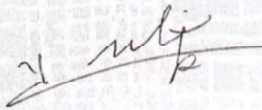
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ABSTRACT

Husnuzhan. (2024). *Students' Perception toward Character-Based Project Implementation in Paragraph Writing Class.* **Thesis. English Language and Literature Department of Faculty of Language and Arts, Universitas Negeri Padang**

The urgency of students' character nowadays increases. Preliminary study held by the researcher found that some students' show their impolite behaviour and inability to think critically. In order to solve that problem, the implementation of Character-Based Project has been applied in teaching Paragraph Writing. The aim of this research was to measure the students' perception toward Character-based project implementation in Paragraph Writing Class. This research employed descriptive quantitative approach. Questionnaire was used as the research instrument by using Likert scale $1-4$ to measure the students' perception. There were 27 close-ended questions used in this research which were filled by 125 respondents. Those samples were English Literature students at Universitas Negeri Padang which enrolled in Paragraph Writing Class in academic Year 2022/2023. Students were given a treatment by the lecturer in classroom by implementing Character-based Project, then the researcher find out the students' perceptions toward it, especially in students' character development and critical thinking ability. The result of this study showed that Character-based Project implementation successfully gained positive perception from students in developing their character and critical thinking ability.

Keywords: Character Education, Project-based Learning, honesty, politeness, critical thinking

ABSTRAK

Urgensi dari karakter mahasiswa saat ini semakin meningkat. Preliminary study yang dilakukan ole penulis menemukan bahwa mahasiswa menampilkan sikap yang tidak sopan dan juga ketidak mampuan mereka dalam berpikir kritis. Untuk mengatasi permasalahan tersebut, Pendidikan karakter berbasis proyek telah diterapkan dalam proses pembelajaran di kelas *Paragraph Writing*. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah mengukur persepsi mahasiswa terhadap implementasi pendidikan karakter berbais proyek di dalam kelas *Paragraph Writing*. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian dengan menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kuantitatif. Instrumen dari penelitian ini adalah kuisioner dengan menggunakan skala Likert 1 – 4 untuk mengukur persepsi mahasiswa. Sekitar 27 pertanyaan dengan jawaban tertutup digunakan dalam penelitian ini dan 125 responden telah mengisi pertanyaan-pertanyaan tersebut. Sampel dari penelitian ini adalah mahasiswa Sastra Inggris di Universitas Negeri Padang yang mengambil mata kuliah *Paragraph Writing* pada tahun akademin 2022/2023. Siswa diberikan perlakuan oleh dosen selama proses pembelajaran, lalu penulis melakukan penelitian terhadap persepsi mahasiswa, khususnya dalam pengembangan karakter dan kemampuan berpikir kritis. Hasil dari penelitian ini meunjukkan bahwa penerapan Pendidikan karakter berbasis proyek ini berhasil mendapatkan persepsi positif dari mahasiswa untuk meningkatnya karakter dan kemampuan mereka dalam berpikir kritis.

Kata Kunci: Pendidikan Karakter, Project-Based Learning, Kejujuran, Kesopanan, Berpikir Kritis

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The thesis entitled "Students' Perception toward Character-Based Project Implementation in Paragraph Writing Class". It has been written and presented to English Education Department, Faculty of Language and Arts, Universitas Negeri Padang in order to fulfill one of the requirements for degree of "Bachelor of Education".

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Padang, January 2023

The writer

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

14

LIST OF APPENDIXES

15

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND OF STUDY

The urgency of students' character lately become a big concern in educational field in Indonesia. Today's youngsters encounter a multitude of opportunities and risks that were unimaginable to previous generations, making the deliberate education of good character is more crucial (Pala, 2011). By implementing character education, young generation can behave goodly considering youth will be successor for a country (Ülger et al., 2014).

The word character itself commonly means as a behavior or how does someone act which line with local values. According to (Albertus, 2007), character is an individual's unique way of being as well as a quality, attribute, and personality that they have acquired through time as a result of their surroundings. Furthermore, Fahmy et al. (2015) stated that character is a heritage given to people from their surroundings shown by tendency behaviour. It was created out of honesty and devotion to moral principles, not from noble ideals or pure good intention (Josephson, 2013).

Another term involved is education which create character education. The idea behind character education is to help pupils become more morally aware (Lickona, 1999). Birhan et al (2021) stated that character education refers to an organized, methodical, and thorough approach to teach moral principles. Character education, in the words of

Lickona (2012), can be seen as an effort to mold a person's personality through instruction, with the hope that the outcome will manifest itself in a genuine action or good behavior, honesty, responsibility, respect for the rights of others, hard work, and so forth. In conclusion, character education is a movement to strengthen the students' moral in order to face the future.

The needs of character education can be seen through preliminary study which was held from September to December 2022. During that period, the researcher came to the classroom and observed the class. After doing the observation and discussing with the lecturer, the researcher found that students' characters were gradually depleted. In an onsite class, a student was chewing when their lecturer explained the materials in front of the class, a student was also playing a game when the lecturer asked them to do the discussion, and the others were playing phones and opening social media during the explanation. Those things are considered bad characteristics remembering that the classroom is a formal room where students have to behave politely as how it has to be.

Another thing that has been found by the researcher was the lack of critical thinking. During the lesson, the pupils were asked several simple questions which can be answered by relying on critical thinking. In fact, the pupils opened their smartphones and employ google to find the answer. Mertes (1991) defined critical thinking as a purposeful and aware method for interpreting or evaluating information and experiences using a

combination of reflective attitudes and abilities that lead to thoughtful ideas and actions. Critical thinking is often associated with a process that involves the personal appraisal of information acquired from outside sources, based on reflection and the knowledge held by the individual (Encabo-Fernández et al., 2023). Furthermore, the need of critical thinking was explained by Shakirova (2007) as cited by Snyder and Snyder (2008) that students need critical thinking abilities because they allow them to "handle successfully with social, scientific, and practical concerns".

Those problems happened in Paragraph Writing Class. Paragraph Writing is a subject that learn how to create a paragraph from the scratch (Popescu et al., 2015). Students will be taught how to write a paragraph start from creating the main idea, composing the topic sentence, crafting the supporting detail, and concluding the paragraph. It also assists students in knowing several kinds of paragraphs, understanding the concept for their writing, creating sentences from the idea, composing a paragraph from those sentences, reviewing and revising the paragraph to make an excellent paragraph (Zemach & Islam, 2005).

Likewise, Project-based Learning was used in this class. During that time, students were asked to make some projects in a group which focused on character development. Project-Based Learning which was defined by Krajcik and Blumenfeld (2005) in a book entitled The Cambridge Handbook of the Learning Sciences is a type of contextual

learning that is based on constructivist research that shows that students get a deeper comprehension of content when they actively create their understanding by working with and applying concepts.

The combination of those approaches created a new approach called Character-Based Project. Character-Based Project itself is a term refers to the learning process which students creating a project link with material which based on character development. Before the researcher completing the data, the students have been treated by the lecturer in the classroom by using Character-Based project model.

The implementation of Character-based Project can be seen through assignments given by the lecturer. Mrs. Dian Safitri, as the lecturer in Paragraph Writing Class, put students into some groups to complete some projects. Two main projects in this class were creating wall magazine in learning Descriptive Text and composing a story in learning Narrative Text. In creating wall magazine project, the students were asked to create a wall magazine which describe people they love and people they hate. They have to think about two people they love and two people they hate, then they have to make it into an interesting wall magazine. This project trained their ability to be honest about what they feel to someone. Meanwhile, in learning Narrative Text, the students were asked to create a story which honesty and politeness as the main theme. This project was hoped to help them realizing the importance of being honest and polite in all conditions and helped them to improve their critical thinking ability

since they were required to think the idea of the story and create the story from the scratch. During the implementation of Character-based project, the researcher got a chance to observe the process in the classroom accompanied by the lecturer who was in charge to handle this class.

Some researchers have conducted several studies related to the implementation of those terms. Research which was conducted by Kim (2015) entitled A Study on the Class of Education that Builds Students' Character through Films – Classes at the University of Liberal Arts assessed the effectiveness and satisfaction about character buildings among pupils in Korea. This study used an integrated model of character education, a film that is relevant to students, and a professor's interpretation. There were 260 first grade students of Baekseok University who became the participants of this research and they were separated into 8 classes of liberal arts which is called "Character Education Lesson". Kim examined these participants for around 15 weeks, 3 weeks for lecture only, 3weeks for the PPT and lecture only, 3 weeks for film only, 5 weeks for film and lecture only and one week for survey. The result showed that by utilizing film and lecturer only method, among 260 students, 173 students gain their satisfaction.

The second study was carried by Kettanun (2015) The title given to this study was Project-based Learning and Its Validity in a Thai EFL Classroom. The purpose of this study is to determine the extent to which project-based learning can be implemented in a real English language

classroom in a Thai setting. This study is a 12 weeks program which involved 21 third year students who were part of the 2013 Communication Arts Outstanding Students Program at Bangkok University. The results showed that the project-based EFL classroom not only produced good learning outcomes but also assisted the students in developing better interpersonal, work, and cognitive abilities.

As those approaches have been appeared, the researcher was given an opportunity to find out what are missing in the previous study which have been conducted before. Among many researches that have been published about PjBL, character education, and critical thinking, there were none of them combine those elements together. Furthermore, this research combined those elements to see the students' perceptions.

Based on explanations above, the implementation of Character Education through the integration of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in Paragraph Writing Class seems to give a novel way to fix the students' characters and improve their critical thinking.

B. IDENTIFICATION OF THE PROBLEM

Relating to problems that have been identified in the background of the problem, the researcher found several problems related to the topic, which are:

1. Students' impolite and dishonest behaviour.

2. Students' inability to think critically.

C. LIMITATION OF THE PROBLEM

Based on the identification of the problem above, the researcher decided to limit the research by focusing on the students' perceptions toward Character-based Project Implementation in term of instilling honesty, politeness and critical thinking skill.

D. FORMULATION OF THE PROBLEM

Related to the limitation of the problem above, the researcher formulated the problem into: "How is students' perception toward Character-Based Project implementation in Paragraph Writing Class?"

E. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The researcher formulated these research questions as guidance to run the research, as follows:

1. How is the students' perception toward the implementation of character-based projects in Paragraph Writing Class to instill honesty and politeness?

2. How is the students' perception to improve their critical thinking skill?

F. PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

Purpose of this research was to investigate the students' perception toward character-based project implementation in paragraph writing class in term of instilling character development and critical thinking skill.

G. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The results of this study showed the students' responds in learning process that integrating character education. Likewise, this study provided evaluation or reflection of the implementation of the learning integration which was character education integration into Paragraph Writing.

H. DEFINITION OF KEY TERM

The terminology's definition is provided below to ease this research development, which are:

1. Students' Perception : The students' opinions toward something.

2. Honesty : Telling the truth and act the truth.

3. Politeness : Acting based on moral value holds by the environment.

4. Critical Thinking : The ability to question everything and finding the reason behind something.

5. Character-Based Project : A project based on developed character and integrated to character education and Project-Based Learning. The goal is to develop students' character.

6. Character Education : Character education is a movement to strengthen students' character.

7. Project-Based Learning : A learning method when the students do a project.