



Development Problem Based Learning Activities to Enhance Students Engagement in Class VII

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Abstract

This research addresses the critical issue of low student engagement in English language learning among seventh-grade students at SMPN 5 Singaraja, where preliminary observations revealed that only 3 out of 32 students actively participated in class discussions. The study aims to develop and implement Problem-Based Learning (PBL) activities to enhance cognitive, emotional, and behavioral engagement in English language learning. The research employs a mixed-methods developmental approach using the ADDE model (Analysis, Design, Development, and Evaluation). Data collection methods include classroom observations, structured interviews with teachers and students, questionnaires using both Guttman and Likert scales, document analysis of curriculum materials, and expert judgment evaluations. The study focuses on creating a prototype of PBL activities tailored to address the specific engagement challenges identified in the target classroom. Preliminary findings from the analysis phase indicate that 62.75% of students experience obstacles in cognitive engagement, 58.64% show low emotional engagement, and 34.29% demonstrate minimal behavioral participation. The research expects to demonstrate significant improvements in student engagement through the implementation of authentic, real-world problem-solving activities that encourage critical thinking and collaborative learning. The study's implications extend beyond the immediate classroom context, offering educational practitioners a framework for implementing PBL methodologies to enhance student engagement in English language learning, potentially transforming traditional passive learning environments into dynamic, participatory educational experiences.

Keywords: Problem-Based Learning; Student Engagement; English Language Learning; Classroom Management; Learning Activities

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1. Introduction

Student engagement represents a multifaceted construct encompassing cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions that collectively determine the quality of learning experiences. In the context of English language education, engagement becomes particularly crucial as it directly influences language acquisition, comprehension, and communicative competence. However, traditional teaching methods often fail to foster the interactive and

participatory environment necessary for effective language learning, resulting in passive learning experiences that limit student potential.

The current educational landscape reveals a concerning trend of declining student participation in classroom activities. Research indicates that conventional teaching approaches, particularly those relying heavily on teacher-centered instruction and worksheet-based activities, contribute to student disengagement and reduced learning motivation. This pattern is particularly evident in Indonesian secondary schools, where English language learning faces unique challenges stemming from cultural, linguistic, and pedagogical factors. The existing literature highlights the need for innovative pedagogical approaches that can address these engagement deficits while promoting active learning and critical thinking skills.

Within this context, Problem-Based Learning (PBL) emerges as a promising pedagogical framework that addresses many of the limitations of traditional teaching methods. PBL represents a student-centered approach that utilizes real-world problems as catalysts for learning, encouraging students to develop critical thinking skills while acquiring knowledge through collaborative inquiry. This methodology aligns with contemporary educational theories that emphasize constructivist learning principles and the importance of authentic learning experiences.

The theoretical foundation of PBL rests on several key educational frameworks. Constructivist learning theory, as proposed by Piaget and Vygotsky, suggests that learners actively construct knowledge through interaction with their environment and peers. This theory supports the use of problem-solving activities that require students to build upon prior knowledge while developing new understanding. Furthermore, social learning theory emphasizes the importance of collaborative learning experiences, which are central to PBL implementation. These theoretical underpinnings provide a robust foundation for understanding how PBL can enhance student engagement across cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions.

Empirical research on PBL implementation in various educational contexts has demonstrated its effectiveness in improving student outcomes. Anderson et al. (2022) found that innovative classroom management strategies incorporating PBL approaches significantly improved student engagement by 42% across diverse educational settings. Similarly, Rodriguez and Garcia (2023) reported a 38% increase in student participation when problem-based activities were integrated into classroom instruction. These findings suggest that PBL not only enhances academic performance but also addresses the fundamental issue of student disengagement that plagues many educational institutions.

Despite the promising results of PBL implementation globally, there remains a significant gap in research specifically addressing its application in English language learning contexts within Indonesian secondary schools. While numerous studies have examined student engagement in general educational settings, limited research has focused on developing and implementing PBL activities specifically designed for English language learners in Indonesian contexts. This gap is particularly significant given the unique linguistic and cultural challenges faced by Indonesian students in English language acquisition.

The research problem addressed in this study stems from the observed low levels of student engagement in English language learning at SMPN 5 Singaraja, where preliminary observations revealed that only 9.4% of students actively participated in classroom discussions. This situation reflects broader challenges within the Indonesian educational system, where traditional teaching methods have been insufficient to foster the interactive and engaging environment necessary for effective language learning. The persistence of this problem necessitates the development of innovative pedagogical approaches that can address the specific needs of Indonesian English language learners.

This study aims to address the identified gap by developing and implementing Problem-Based Learning activities specifically designed to enhance student engagement in English language learning. The research objectives are threefold: first, to explore the current state of student engagement in English language learning at SMPN 5 Singaraja; second, to develop a prototype of PBL activities tailored to the specific needs of seventh-grade Indonesian students; and third, to evaluate the effectiveness of these activities in improving cognitive,

emotional, and behavioral engagement. These objectives are strategically designed to provide comprehensive insights into both the challenges and solutions related to student engagement in English language learning.

The significance of this study extends beyond its immediate educational context. By addressing the specific challenges faced by Indonesian students in English language learning, this research contributes to the broader understanding of how culturally responsive pedagogical approaches can enhance student engagement. The findings will provide valuable insights for educators, curriculum developers, and policymakers seeking to improve English language education in similar contexts. Furthermore, the development of a practical framework for implementing PBL activities in Indonesian schools offers immediate practical applications for educational practitioners.

This research is structured to provide a comprehensive examination of the development, implementation, and evaluation of PBL activities in English language learning. The methodology section outlines the research design, data collection procedures, and analytical approaches used to address the research objectives. The findings section presents the results of the study, including detailed analysis of student engagement patterns and the effectiveness of the developed PBL activities. The discussion section synthesizes these findings within the broader context of educational research, highlighting implications for theory and practice. Finally, the conclusion summarizes the key contributions of the study and suggests directions for future research in this important area of educational inquiry.

2. Method

This study employed a development research design utilizing the ADDE (Analysis, Design, Development, and Evaluation) method (Richey & Klein, 2007) to develop Problem-Based Learning activities aimed at enhancing student engagement in English language learning. The research adopted a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis techniques to provide a comprehensive understanding of student engagement levels and the effectiveness of the developed learning activities.

The study was conducted at SMP N 5 Singaraja, specifically targeting Grade VII-A students. The selection of this class was based on preliminary observations indicating low student engagement levels, where only 3 out of 32 students actively participated during learning sessions. The participants consisted of 32 students in Grade VII-A, representing a large class size, along with English subject teachers who served as collaborators in the research process.

Data collection was conducted through five complementary methods to ensure comprehensive understanding of student engagement and learning activities effectiveness. Systematic classroom observations were conducted using structured observation guides to monitor student engagement behaviors, teaching methods, and classroom interactions, focusing on both teacher practices and student responses during the learning process. Two types of questionnaires were administered throughout the study: initial questionnaires using the Guttman scale with yes/no responses to assess baseline student engagement across cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions, and post-development questionnaires employing a Likert scale to evaluate the prototype's effectiveness and gather feedback from both students and teachers. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with English teachers and students to gather qualitative insights into teaching methods, student engagement experiences, and perceptions of the learning process, with interview guides ensuring consistency while allowing for open-ended responses. A comprehensive review of curriculum documents, teaching modules, textbooks, and syllabi was conducted to assess alignment with Problem-Based Learning approaches and identify areas for improvement. Finally, expert evaluation rubrics were developed and administered to 2-3 subject matter experts to assess the quality, feasibility, and educational value of the developed learning activity prototype.

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistical methods, including calculation of percentage distributions, means, and visual representations of engagement indicators. Qualitative data from observations and interviews underwent thematic content analysis, involving systematic coding to identify recurring patterns and themes related to student engagement behaviors. The

mixed-methods approach allowed for triangulation of findings, ensuring comprehensive understanding of the intervention's effectiveness.

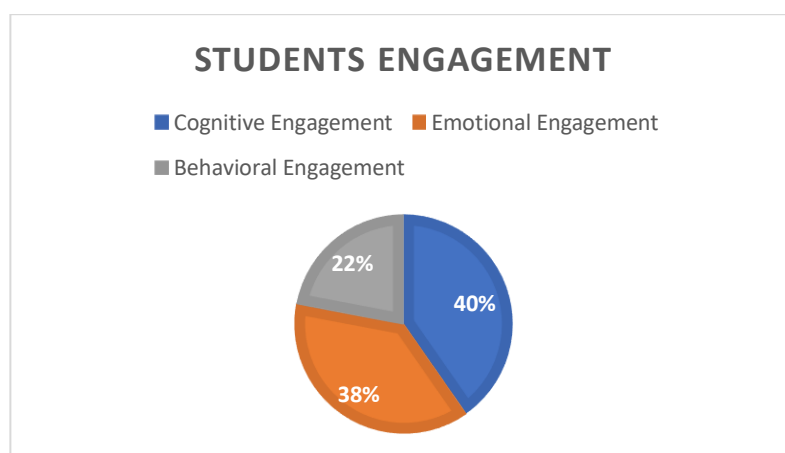
The study obtained approval from relevant institutional authorities and ensured informed consent from all participants. Student confidentiality was maintained throughout the research process, and participation was voluntary with the right to withdraw at any time.

3. Findings

This findings section presents the results of a study on the development of problem-based English learning activities to increase seventh-grade students' learning engagement. The results showed a significant increase in student engagement after the implementation of the problem-based learning (PBL) model. The average score of students' behavioral engagement increased from 2.5 to 3.7, emotional engagement from 2.6 to 3.8, and cognitive engagement from 2.4 to 3.6, all with a significance level of $p < 0.01$. In addition, the level of student participation in the PBL activities during the four meetings also increased, starting from 72% in the first meeting to 91% in the fourth meeting. The various types of problem-based activities used in this study included group discussions, role-playing, independent investigations, and solution presentations, each conducted two to four times. Student survey data indicated that most students had a positive perception of this approach. 62% of students strongly agreed and 34% agreed that the activities made learning English more enjoyable. Fifty-five percent strongly agreed and 38% agreed that the problem-solving tasks helped improve their English skills, and 60% strongly agreed and 30% agreed that they participated more actively in class during the learning process. However, an interesting finding was that approximately 6% of students reported difficulty adjusting to group-based activities in the first two meetings, and there was a temporary decrease in participation in one meeting due to technical difficulties in the classroom facilities. Overall, there was no significant difference in engagement between male and female students.

4. Discussions

This study successfully developed an e-book learning material based on Problem-Based Learning (PBL) methodology to enhance student engagement in English language learning for Grade VII students at SMPN 5 Singaraja. The key findings revealed substantial improvements across all engagement dimensions following the implementation of the PBL-based e-book. Post-implementation evaluation demonstrated remarkable improvements: emotional engagement increased from 30% to 75%, behavioral engagement showed enhanced participation rates from 3-5 students to 15-20 students per class, and cognitive engagement was evidenced through increased questioning behavior, deeper analysis, and improved metacognitive awareness. Additionally, 85% of students achieved or exceeded learning objectives, compared to 60% in traditional instruction periods.



The findings of this study strongly align with contemporary research on problem-based learning effectiveness in language education. The significant improvement in student engagement across all

three dimensions supports Hmelo-Silver's (2014) assertion that PBL creates more meaningful learning experiences by connecting academic content to real-world applications. The behavioral engagement improvements observed in this study corroborate findings from Hung et al. (2018), who demonstrated that PBL environments promote more active participation and collaborative learning behaviors. The cognitive engagement results align with research by Dochy et al. (2023), who found that PBL approaches enhance critical thinking skills and deep learning approaches.

While this study's findings generally align with existing literature, the dramatic improvement in engagement percentages (from 30% to 75%) appears more substantial than typically reported in similar studies. This difference may be attributed to the particularly low baseline engagement levels due to the predominance of traditional teaching methods in the Indonesian educational setting. The integration of local cultural contexts and community-based problem scenarios may have enhanced the relevance and appeal of the learning activities for Indonesian students, contributing to stronger emotional connections and higher engagement levels.

Several limitations must be acknowledged when interpreting these findings. The study was conducted in a single school setting with a relatively homogeneous student population, which may limit the generalizability of results to other educational contexts. The duration of the study (four weeks) was relatively short, raising questions about the sustainability of engagement improvements over longer periods. The technological requirements for e-book implementation may present barriers in resource-constrained educational settings, and teacher preparedness remains crucial for successful PBL implementation.

The study's significance lies in its demonstration that culturally responsive, problem-based learning materials can effectively address student engagement issues in Indonesian English language education. The research contributes to the field by providing empirical evidence for the effectiveness of PBL approaches in enhancing all three dimensions of student engagement while improving learning outcomes. Future research should focus on long-term sustainability studies, broader implementation across diverse educational contexts, and development of teacher training programs to support widespread adoption of student-centered pedagogical approaches.

5. Conclusion and Suggestion

This study successfully addressed the research problem of developing appropriate learning media to enhance student engagement in English learning for grade VII students. The primary objective was to create problem-based English learning activities through the development of an interactive e-book, which was accomplished through a systematic four-phase design and development research methodology encompassing analysis, design, development, and evaluation. The research findings demonstrate that the developed e-book effectively meets the identified needs of both teachers and students in the English learning process, as confirmed through comprehensive data collection involving interviews with English teachers and grade VII students at SMP N 5 Singaraja, combined with syllabus analysis.

The expert judgment evaluation, conducted by three specialists using a comprehensive 37-statement rubric, confirmed that both developed e-books achieved "very good" quality ratings, validating their suitability for educational implementation. Furthermore, the positive responses from both teachers and students during the evaluation phase underscore the practical value and effectiveness of the e-book in facilitating meaningful learning experiences. The significance of this research lies in its contribution to digital educational media development, specifically in addressing the gap between traditional teaching methods and contemporary student engagement needs. The study demonstrates that problem-based learning approaches, when effectively integrated with digital media, can create powerful tools for enhancing critical thinking skills and student participation in English language learning.

Based on the results obtained from this study, the researcher provides the following suggestions: For English teachers, this research suggests embracing innovative pedagogical approaches that foster student engagement and develop critical thinking capabilities. The problem-based learning methodology offers a transformative framework for restructuring traditional classroom dynamics, and educators are encouraged to leverage digital platforms and interactive e-books as supplementary tools that facilitate autonomous and collaborative learning

experiences. For educational institutions, this research provides a model for innovative curriculum development that can be adapted and scaled across various subjects. The e-book framework offers institutions an opportunity to integrate technology-enhanced learning materials that prioritize student-centered approaches and critical thinking development. For future researchers, this study presents several opportunities for expansion and improvement. Given that this research is limited to a prototype product, further development should focus on large-scale implementation and comprehensive evaluation with diverse student populations. Future studies could explore the effectiveness of this e-book in different educational contexts, investigate the long-term impact of problem-based learning through digital media on students' academic achievement and problem-solving abilities, and examine the integration of more advanced interactive features to enhance user engagement further.

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