

ANALYSIS OF PROJECT-BASED LEARNING (PBL) IN TEACHING WRITING SKILLS OF ISLAMIC TEXTS TO AFL UNDERGRADUATE LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to develop and assess the efficacy of Project-Based Learning (PBL) in teaching Islamic Texts of Translation-II Practical (Arabic-English) Project (Code: 20BAMP603) and imparting Islamic Texts writing skills at the Postgraduate and Research Department of Arabic Literature and Language, within The New College, affiliated with the University of Madras, Chennai, India. Conducted by Prof. K. M. A. Ahamed Zubair, Associate Professor of Arabic in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India, this study followed a Research and Development (R&D) design outlined by Borg and Gall. Data collection employed interviews, observations, questionnaires, and tests, analyzed through descriptive qualitative data analysis and descriptive statistics. This study aims to evaluate the impact of the project-based learning model on the acquisition of Arabic writing skills of Islamic Texts by focusing on research objectives, design, population, methodologies, and data analysis. Researchers adopted the analysis approach through a thorough review of existing literature.

Keywords: Project-Based Learning; Islamic Competence; Text Compilation; Translation; Academia.

INTRODUCTION

The outcome of this research involved creating a textbook, analysis models, and exercises spread across three lessons. Experts in Islamic Texts writing, Arabic language, and textbook design validated the quality of these lessons. Both experts and student feedback indicated a positive impact on learning competence and academic performance. The implementation of these teaching materials for project-based learning in Islamic Texts writing displayed promising results, evident in the significant improvement in posttest scores compared to pretest scores. By concentrating systematically into existing literature, this study provides comprehensive insights into the effectiveness of project-based learning in improving Arabic writing skills for Islamic Texts.

Teaching Arabic writing skills to non-native speakers presents a persistent challenge for instructors of other languages. The focus remains on assisting learners in developing proficient paragraph writing in Arabic, which necessitates various instructional approaches. This study investigates the efficacy of project-based classroom activities in enhancing Arabic writing skills, assessing the impact on learners' confidence and motivation in composing Islamic Texts in Arabic.

METHOD

In this study, we use a descriptive comparative analysis method and a framework to delve into, explain, and systematically compare different viewpoints. Through a thorough review of literature, our team will closely examine earlier studies on how the project-based learning approach impacts the enhancement of Arabic writing skills. Our analysis will cover various aspects such as research goals, design, participants, methods of collecting data, analysis techniques, and results.

This study involves five stages:

1. Selection of the research topic centered on the application of Project-Based Learning (PBL) in improving Arabic writing skills.
2. Gathering literature from diverse research journals relevant to the chosen topic.
3. Reviewing and validating information, establishing connections between content and issues by analyzing research journals.
4. Analyzing acquired data and presenting the findings.
5. Evaluating the observed research application based on methodologies and analyses employed to draw scientific conclusions.

Research Question: How can classroom-based activities aid in improving learners' Arabic writing skills of Islamic Texts?

Participants: 25 learners, with 10 actively engaged in the bilingual (English and Arabic) works, enrolled in the third year of B.A. in Arabic at The New College.

Experimental Group: Comprised 15 learners who underwent project-based training and were assessed twice over ten days, engaging in three diverse lessons/activities.

Procedure:

Initial Assessment: Pre-test conducted to gauge Arabic writing proficiency before initiating the study.

Activity Development: Based on initial assessments, tailored activities were designed to address learners' writing needs.

Study Introduction: Participants were informed about the study's objectives and tasks.

Learning Phases: Learners engaged in exercises to enhance writing abilities and completed quantitative/qualitative questionnaires, using Google Classroom for communication and clarification of doubts.

Evaluation:

Data Handling: Pre-test and post-test results treated as numerical data for statistical analysis.

Qualitative Component: Semi-structured interviews conducted to gather learner opinions and experiences, transcribed and analyzed thematically for recurring patterns.

This study utilized a mixed-method approach that combined both quantitative and qualitative data analysis to assess how effective project-based learning is in enhancing learners' Arabic writing skills.

List of writings related to PBL on Arabic writing skills:

1. Arabic Dairy Caption Project: Reactualisation of Project Based Learning for Instagram Based Arabic Writing Skills (Alfalah et al., 2023b).

2. Taṭwīru Ṭarzi Al-Masyrū'i Al-Asāsiyyi At-Ta'allumiyyi bi Mabdai-l Ahliyyah At-Tiknūlūjiyyah li Taḥsīni Kafā'ati Kitābati-l Lughah Al 'Arabiyyah Wa Ibdā'i-l Fikri (Haniefah; Lutfiyatun, 2023).

3. Arabic Dairy Caption Project: Reactualisation of Project Based Learning for Instagram-Based Arabic Writing Skills (Alfalah *et al.*, 2023a).

4. Arabic for Communication: Sentences, Paragraphs and Event Posters (Zubair, K.M.A; Ahamed, 2022).

5. Communicative Passages: Arabic-English (Zubair, K.M.A; Ahamed, 2022).
6. Cultural Posters: Arabic-English (Zubair, K.M.A; Ahamed, 2022).

Basic Steps of BPL involved in this study concentrate on

1. Evaluating the effectiveness of the Project-Based Learning (PBL):
2. Analyzing Research Objectives:
3. Understanding Research Designs:
4. Analyzing the Research Sample:
5. Exploring Data Collection Methods:

RESEARCH DATA ANALYSIS

Indeed, data analysis methods in research encompass descriptive, qualitative, and quantitative approaches. Qualitative descriptive analysis often prevails in many studies, particularly in language research, as it facilitates easier application of theory and research analysis without intricate calculations. This method allows researchers to explain their findings more comprehensively without relying heavily on numerical computations. Conversely, quantitative experimental data analysis involves calculations and tends to be less favored among language researchers due to its less direct relevance to linguistic studies and the requirement for numerical calculations, which might not align with the nature of language-focused inquiries.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To instruct specific learners in writing, this study embraced Badger and White's (2000) process-genre approach. This method centers on recursive writing processes, including prewriting, drafting, revision, and editing. The study applied two distinct classroom activities aligned with this approach:

Three Arabic Writing Modules of Islamic Texts are covered namely

1. Companion of Holy Prophet - Mus'ab bin Umair
2. Companion of Holy Prophet - Abu Dharr al- Ghiffari
3. Eminent Personalities of Islam



Picture 1. Pre-Test (learners' writing skills in Islamic Texts)



Picture 2. Post-Test (learners' writing skills in Islamic Texts)

The assessment of learners' writing skills in Islamic Texts was conducted through a pre-test and a post-test after the completion of two activities. The post-test results demonstrated notable progress in their Islamic Texts writing skills compared to their initial pre-test scores. These assessments, marked out of 10, were administered before and after the project activities. Scores for both tests were recorded and analyzed statistically.

Table 1 Students' Score in PBL In Arabic Writing of Islamic Texts

RESPONDENTS	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST
S1	4	6
S2	4	7
S3	6	8
S4	3	6
S5	2	6
S6	6	8
S7	4	7
S8	3	7
S9	4	7
S10	5	9

Table-1 presents the pre-test and post-test scores, showing a range of scores from 2 to 6 in the pre-test and 6 to 9 in the post-test. Most participants showed improved post-test scores compared to their initial ones, reflecting the positive impact of the Project-Based Learning (PBL) approach on their Islamic Texts writing skills. Statistical analysis reflects the success of the PBL strategy. Feedback from learners at The New College regarding this PBL was predominantly positive. This positive experience boosted their confidence in crafting Islamic Texts effectively.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussions, the following conclusions emerge:

1. The analysis of research objectives primarily emphasizes evaluating the application and effectiveness of Project-Based Learning (PBL) by gathering data from detailed observations and interviews.
2. Research design analysis predominantly leans towards utilizing classroom action research and Research and Development (R&D) approaches, aligning with the stipulated research aims.
3. The examination of the study population ensures a balanced representation of students, offering comprehensive insights into the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PBL).
4. Data collection methods predominantly favor observational techniques, owing to the demand for practical and effective research outcomes.

5. Data analysis predominantly opts for qualitative descriptive methods, emphasizing the importance of applying theories and outcomes for structured and comprehensive discussions.

The process-genre approach stands as an effective and epistemologically robust pedagogy, notably suitable for teaching adult , the selected Project-Based Learning (PBL) approach offers versatility for teaching various genres, including Islamic Texts writing.

Feedback from learners indicates a marked improvement in their ability to effectively write Islamic Texts following this study. At the undergraduate (UG) level, acquiring Arabic language proficiency demands consistent dedication from both educators and learners, emphasizing the necessity for continual practice. Arabic, being a foreign language with limited societal exposure, presents challenges for writing and sharing in the language. Hence, the college plays a pivotal role in creating a conducive linguistic learning environment within a social context.

Despite the suboptimal current environment for learning Arabic, the study's model, involving two works, aims to foster a conducive Arabic language learning setting. This setting intends to stimulate students' enthusiasm and motivation to proficiently write Islamic Texts in Arabic. The collected survey data demonstrates a notable improvement in their Islamic Texts writing skills from the pre-test to the post-test, signifying the efficacy of the applied approach.

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