

Creativity in Learning Based on Project-Based Learning Strategies in Higher Education

Dina Gasong¹, Selvi Rajuaty Tandiseru², Milka¹

¹Department of Indonesian Language Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Kristen Indonesia Toraja, Indonesia

²Department of Mathematics Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Kristen Indonesia Toraja, Indonesia

Email: dinagasong2964@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT:

This study aims to describe project-based learning (PjBL) strategies from a humanistic perspective at the higher education level. The low ability of students to interpret poetry during the learning process is the main reason for conducting this study. Therefore, learning activities were designed in the form of humanistic-based projects. This study used data obtained from observations conducted during the learning process in 2022–2023. The data were analyzed using an exploratory approach based on the interpretation of meaning or content analysis. The findings revealed that the humanistic approach could increase students' learning motivation, considering that most students initially lacked motivation to study poetry. Furthermore, the study found that project-based learning (PjBL) could enhance students' learning activities, as demonstrated by their increased participation in asking questions and completing assigned tasks during the learning process. Finally, PjBL helped students understand the meaning or themes of poetry, as evidenced by their learning outcomes, which demonstrated their ability to correctly identify and explain poetic themes. The findings of this study can also be applied to literature learning in general.

Keywords: Project-Based Learning, Higher Education, Humanistic Learning, Poetry

Introduction. Learning in higher education requires instructional strategies that encourage students to actively construct knowledge, develop critical thinking skills, and apply their understanding to meaningful situations. The effectiveness of learning is not solely determined by the delivery of instructional materials but also by the extent to which students participate in learning activities and develop the ability to understand and interpret knowledge independently. One approach that supports these objectives is Project-Based Learning (PjBL), a student-centered instructional strategy that provides opportunities for students to engage in meaningful projects involving investigation, problem-solving, collaboration, and the

development of tangible outcomes. Through this approach, students are encouraged to assume responsibility for their learning, while lecturers act as facilitators who provide guidance without excessively intervening in the learning process. From a constructivist perspective, students develop a deeper understanding of academic subjects when they actively construct knowledge through engagement with ideas and practical experiences (Saleem et al., 2021). Furthermore, PjBL promotes meaningful learning through small-group interactions, project-related activities, and knowledge sharing among students (Duke et al., 2021). Smith et al. (2022) also emphasized the importance of contextual investigation, in which students formulate

questions and explore relevant information to develop an understanding of particular topics. These characteristics make PjBL a relevant instructional strategy for developing students' independence, creativity, and intellectual engagement in higher education.

Project-Based Learning provides students with opportunities to experience learning as an active and purposeful process rather than merely receiving information from lecturers. Students participate in planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating projects that require them to apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations. Hanklang and Sivasan (2021) explained that project-based learning supports the development of knowledge, thinking processes, and problem-solving abilities by engaging students in relevant learning experiences. Similarly, Sakamaki et al. (2022) highlighted the importance of collaborative activities that encourage students to understand problems, formulate strategies, and develop appropriate solutions. Through collaborative learning, students are exposed to different perspectives and encouraged to negotiate ideas, exchange information, and develop shared understandings. These experiences contribute to the development of responsibility, communication skills, and the ability to make independent decisions. Consequently, PjBL emphasizes not only the final products generated by students but also the learning processes through which knowledge, skills, and understanding are developed.

Another important characteristic of PjBL is its emphasis on student autonomy in organizing and completing learning activities. Students are encouraged to establish project objectives, develop frameworks for completing tasks, manage their time effectively, and evaluate the progress of their work. This approach provides opportunities for students to exercise creativity and determine appropriate strategies according to their abilities and interests. Gillies (2019) discussed collaborative learning processes in

which students work together to understand problems and develop solutions through shared learning experiences. Furthermore, Ayoub Moubareck (2022) emphasized that project-based learning supports cooperation, practical engagement, decision-making, and problem-solving by encouraging students to work independently over extended periods with limited direct supervision. By allowing students to organize their own learning activities, PjBL creates opportunities for the development of self-confidence, responsibility, and independent thinking. More importantly, projects that are connected to everyday experiences can help students recognize the relevance of academic knowledge to their personal and social lives, making learning more meaningful and engaging.

The principles underlying PjBL are closely related to humanistic learning theory, which emphasizes the development of individuals as autonomous, responsible, and creative human beings. Humanistic education is based on the principle of respecting human dignity and recognizing the unique potential of every learner. From this perspective, learning should not be limited to transferring knowledge but should also encourage students to develop personal meaning, recognize their abilities, and achieve self-actualization. Humanistic philosophy seeks to understand human existence holistically by considering meaning, morality, freedom, values, creativity, spirituality, and other dimensions of human development (Renger & Macaskill, 2021). Similarly, Tamrat (2020) described humanism as an approach concerned with the development of the whole person, including intellectual abilities, practical skills, moral values, and psychological well-being. Accordingly, the humanistic perspective emphasizes that effective learning should address both cognitive and affective dimensions, allowing students to develop knowledge while simultaneously strengthening their motivation, confidence, creativity, and sense of responsibility.

The relationship between Project-Based Learning and humanistic learning theory is reflected in their shared emphasis on meaningful experiences, learner autonomy, active participation, and personal development. PjBL allows students to become directly involved in determining learning activities, exploring problems, and developing solutions, while humanistic education provides a philosophical foundation that recognizes students as individuals capable of managing their learning experiences. In this context, the lecturer's role shifts from being the primary source of knowledge to becoming a facilitator who supports students in developing their potential. Almulla (2020) discussed the collaborative dimensions of project-based learning, particularly the importance of interaction and shared experiences in supporting learning activities. Jackson and Halert (2021) further highlighted the contribution of project-based learning to connecting academic concepts with real-world applications. In addition, Birdman et al. (2022) associated student-driven project-based learning with innovative instructional approaches that support the development of skills relevant to contemporary educational demands. These perspectives suggest that PjBL and humanistic learning theory share complementary educational principles. Their integration provides opportunities for students to learn independently while maintaining meaningful interactions with lecturers, peers, and their learning environments.

Humanistic learning theory is also closely associated with the educational perspectives of Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers, who emphasized the importance of individual experiences, personal freedom, and self-actualization. According to Maslow's perspective, learning is a process through which individuals recognize their abilities, understand their personal needs, and develop their potential toward self-actualization. Individuals are encouraged to understand themselves and identify opportunities for personal growth through meaningful experiences. Rogers,

meanwhile, emphasized that learning should be centered on learners' experiences and their natural capacity for personal development. Students are viewed as individuals who possess distinctive characteristics, perceptions, and abilities that influence how they understand and respond to learning situations. These perspectives suggest that meaningful learning occurs when students are actively involved in educational experiences that correspond to their interests, needs, and personal development. Humanistic education therefore emphasizes the importance of creating learning environments that support freedom of expression, creativity, self-confidence, and individual responsibility. This perspective differs from more rigid forms of instruction associated with behavioristic approaches, which may place greater emphasis on externally directed behavioral responses. Within a humanistic learning environment, students are encouraged to participate actively in constructing knowledge rather than functioning merely as passive recipients of instructional materials.

The integration of humanistic principles into PjBL is particularly relevant to the teaching and learning of literature, especially poetry. Literature provides opportunities for students to understand human experiences, explore social realities, and interpret meanings expressed through language. Poetry, as one of the major forms of literary expression, communicates ideas, feelings, experiences, and perspectives through carefully selected words and aesthetic structures. Unlike ordinary language, poetic language frequently contains figurative expressions, symbolic meanings, connotations, and multiple interpretations. Understanding poetry therefore requires students to develop the ability to identify linguistic elements and interpret meanings that are not always expressed directly. In Indonesian Language and Literature Education, the Poetry Studies course is designed to develop students' ability to appreciate and analyze poetry through an understanding of its physical and inner elements. The physical elements of poetry include diction, rhyme, rhythm, and typography, while its

inner elements encompass themes, tone, feelings, and messages. These elements are interconnected and contribute to the overall meaning conveyed by the poet. Consequently, interpreting poetry requires careful reading, reflection, analytical thinking, and the ability to connect literary expressions with broader human experiences.

Understanding the theme of a poem constitutes an essential objective of poetry analysis because the theme represents the central idea or meaning communicated by the poet. Identifying poetic themes requires students to examine the relationships between words, figurative expressions, linguistic structures, and the emotions represented in a literary work. Students must also recognize that poetic language frequently contains connotative meanings that differ from the literal meanings of individual words. The interpretation process therefore involves investigating the physical elements of poetry before developing an understanding of its inner meanings. Without sufficient understanding of these elements, students may experience difficulties identifying the messages conveyed through poems. This situation highlights the importance of instructional strategies that allow students to explore poetic texts independently, discuss alternative interpretations, and develop conclusions through systematic analysis. PjBL offers opportunities for students to complete poetry analysis projects that involve investigating poetic structures, identifying significant expressions, interpreting themes, and presenting the results of their analyses. When supported by humanistic learning principles, these activities can provide meaningful experiences by allowing students to connect poetic expressions with their own emotions, knowledge, and everyday experiences.

Despite the importance of poetry interpretation in Indonesian Language and Literature Education, preliminary classroom observations revealed that students experienced substantial difficulties in recognizing and understanding the elements of poetry. The Poetry Studies course is

a prerequisite-based subject that students may enroll in after completing Literary Theory and Literary History. These earlier courses are expected to provide students with foundational knowledge of literary concepts, including the physical and inner elements of poetry. However, observations conducted at the beginning of the Poetry Studies course indicated that many students were unable to identify these elements adequately. One observation involving 35 students indicated that only five students were able to recognize and explain the elements of poetry. Similarly, another account of the preliminary classroom observations involving 30 students indicated that 25 students were unable to identify the physical elements of poetry, while only five students demonstrated the expected initial understanding. These observations suggest a gap between the theoretical knowledge students were expected to acquire in prerequisite courses and their ability to apply that knowledge to actual poetry analysis. The difficulties may have been influenced by previous learning experiences, including the implementation of online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, although this possible relationship requires further investigation.

The limited ability of students to recognize poetic elements represents an important educational concern because it may affect their understanding of literary works and their readiness to teach literature in the future. Students enrolled in Indonesian Language and Literature Education programs are expected to become educators who possess sufficient knowledge and skills to guide learners in understanding, appreciating, and interpreting literary texts. When prospective teachers experience difficulties interpreting poetry, their ability to communicate literary knowledge effectively may also be affected. Therefore, improving students' understanding of poetry is essential not only for their academic achievement but also for their professional preparation as future teachers. Furthermore, difficulties in understanding poetry may contribute to students' limited interest and

motivation to participate in poetry learning activities. Students who perceive poetry as difficult or unrelated to their experiences may become less actively involved in classroom discussions and independent analysis. This condition indicates the need for instructional strategies that address students' cognitive difficulties while simultaneously encouraging their motivation, creativity, and active participation.

The implementation of humanistic-based PjBL provides a potential instructional response to these challenges by allowing students to engage in poetry analysis through structured but flexible learning activities. In this approach, students are encouraged to investigate selected poems, identify their physical and inner elements, interpret linguistic expressions, and formulate conclusions about the themes conveyed by the poets. The learning process begins with the identification of essential questions related to poetic meanings, followed by project planning, the development of learning schedules, independent or collaborative investigation, and the presentation of project outcomes. Lecturers provide guidance and feedback throughout the process while allowing students sufficient freedom to determine how their projects are completed. This instructional arrangement reflects humanistic principles by recognizing students' abilities, respecting individual learning processes, and providing opportunities for personal expression. Through these activities, students are expected to develop greater confidence in understanding literary texts, become more actively involved in classroom learning, and recognize the relevance of poetry to human experiences.

The humanistic dimension of PjBL is particularly important in poetry education because literary interpretation involves both intellectual understanding and emotional engagement. Poetry frequently addresses fundamental human experiences, including love, happiness, suffering, faith, social relationships, justice, and personal

reflection. These themes provide opportunities for students to connect literary texts with their own experiences and perspectives. When poetry is presented as a meaningful expression of human life rather than merely an academic object requiring technical analysis, students may develop greater interest in interpreting its messages. Humanistic-based PjBL supports this process by allowing students to explore poetic meanings according to their understanding while remaining guided by the structural elements of the texts. Through individual reflection, collaborative discussion, and project completion, students can develop their ability to interpret poetry while strengthening their participation, responsibility, and creativity. Thus, the integration of PjBL and humanistic learning theory offers a learning approach that emphasizes the development of both literary understanding and students' personal potential.

Although previous studies have discussed the benefits of Project-Based Learning in promoting student participation, collaboration, independent learning, and problem-solving, the application of this strategy from a humanistic perspective in poetry learning remains an important area for further examination. The issue addressed in this study concerns the limited ability of students to identify poetic elements and interpret the themes of poems despite having completed prerequisite literary courses. This study therefore examines the implementation of humanistic-based PjBL as an instructional strategy intended to provide meaningful learning experiences and support students in understanding poetry. Unlike approaches that primarily emphasize the acquisition of theoretical literary knowledge, the strategy investigated in this study integrates independent investigation, personal reflection, collaborative learning, and the interpretation of poetic meanings. Accordingly, this study aims to describe the implementation of Project-Based Learning from a humanistic perspective in higher education, particularly in the Poetry Studies course, and to explore its contribution to students' learning motivation, active

participation, and ability to understand the meanings and themes of poetry. The study adopts a descriptive qualitative approach to examine the implementation of learning activities and students' experiences during the learning process. The findings are expected to provide insights into the application of humanistic-based PjBL in poetry education and its potential relevance to literature learning in higher education.

The theoretical foundations of this approach can be further understood through the organization and characteristics of project-based courses, which are generally structured around a central project or problem that students are expected to address through systematic investigation and practical engagement (Shpeizer, 2019). These learning activities typically result in tangible products that demonstrate students' understanding and application of knowledge (Horn, 2018). In most cases, Project-Based Learning (PjBL) follows a social constructivist approach, emphasizing the development of knowledge through active participation, collaboration, and interaction with the learning environment. This approach equips students with sustainable and transferable skills that support self-directed and collaborative learning within specific fields of knowledge. Compared with traditional instructional approaches, PjBL offers several advantages, particularly its emphasis on practical applications and its resemblance to real-world professional environments.

In conventional instructional settings, students are often exposed to theoretical knowledge without sufficient opportunities to apply it to practical situations. For example, traditional design courses may emphasize mathematics, basic sciences, and engineering principles without establishing clear connections to their applications in engineering practice. In contrast, project-based design courses, such as KaLeP, EGPR, and GPD, provide students with opportunities to develop products within distributed and multidisciplinary learning environments involving industrial partners.

Through these courses, students acquire practical knowledge of different stages of product development, including identifying user needs, planning, concept development, detailed design, and prototyping. These experiences distinguish PjBL from conventional instruction because they emphasize learner-centered activities and practical learning outcomes (Sukacké et al., 2022).

Furthermore, PjBL supports the development of students' communication, collaboration, and decision-making abilities throughout various stages of project completion. Students are encouraged to improve their planning, reporting, and knowledge-sharing skills, which can strengthen their readiness to participate in real-world professional environments. To facilitate the implementation of project-based courses, educational institutions have also developed and adapted electronic learning tools that support collaboration, communication, and project management. These technological developments provide additional opportunities for implementing PjBL in diverse educational contexts.

Beyond these specific characteristics of PjBL, it is also important to understand learning as a broader educational process. Learning can be understood as a process through which individuals acquire knowledge, develop skills, construct understanding, and experience changes in attitudes and behavior. It involves interactions between learners, educators, learning resources, and the educational environment. Through these interactions, educators facilitate the acquisition of knowledge, the development of practical abilities, and the formation of attitudes, values, and beliefs. In this sense, learning is not merely the transmission of information from educators to students but a systematic process designed to support students in developing their intellectual, emotional, and practical capacities.

Gagné described instruction as a set of external events designed to support internal learning processes. According to this perspective, effective instruction requires the systematic

organization of learning conditions that activate, support, and maintain the cognitive processes necessary for acquiring knowledge and developing understanding. Therefore, educational activities should be designed to encourage learners to participate actively in the learning process. In higher education, learning represents a fundamental component of educational activities because students' achievement of academic objectives depends significantly on the effectiveness of instructional practices.

Learning can also be understood as a process that produces changes in knowledge, understanding, attitudes, behavior, skills, abilities, and other individual capacities. Ilonen & Heinonen (2018) explained that learning outcomes may be reflected in various forms of individual development, including changes in cognitive understanding, attitudes, and practical competencies. Accordingly, learning involves two closely related concepts: learning as a process experienced by individuals and teaching as an activity designed to facilitate that process. From a cognitive perspective, learning involves changes in perception and understanding resulting from the acquisition and organization of knowledge.

Several scholars have emphasized the relationship between learning and practical experiences. Kleden associated learning with the application and understanding of knowledge, while Cronbach described learning as behavioral change resulting from experience. Similarly, Harold Spears emphasized activities such as observing, reading, imitating, experimenting, listening, and following directions as components of learning. Geoch also associated learning with changes in performance resulting from practice. These perspectives suggest that learning is closely connected to experience, participation, and the practical application of knowledge. Consequently, effective learning environments should provide opportunities for students to engage actively in educational activities rather than simply receiving information.

These perspectives on learning provide a foundation for understanding the relevance of humanistic learning theory in developing meaningful educational experiences. Humanistic learning theory emphasizes the development of individuals as autonomous, responsible, and capable human beings. Humanistic philosophy seeks to understand human existence comprehensively by considering intellectual, emotional, moral, and personal dimensions (Renger & Macaskill, 2021). From this perspective, learning should provide opportunities for individuals to recognize their abilities, understand their experiences, and develop their potential. Humanistic learning principles can be applied in both formal and informal educational contexts, reflecting their relevance to different learning environments.

Humanistic learning theory recognizes two important dimensions of education: cognitive and affective development. Cognitive development involves the acquisition of knowledge, understanding, and intellectual abilities, while affective development concerns attitudes, emotions, values, motivation, and personal awareness. An educational process that focuses exclusively on cognitive achievement may not adequately support students' broader personal development. Therefore, humanistic education emphasizes the integration of cognitive and affective experiences to facilitate meaningful learning.

The implementation of humanistic learning principles offers several potential educational benefits. It encourages positive changes in students' attitudes and behavior, promotes democratic participation, supports respect for individual differences, and strengthens freedom of expression. Humanistic education also encourages students to communicate their ideas, appreciate different perspectives, and develop greater motivation to participate in learning activities. These principles emphasize that every individual possesses the natural capacity to learn and that learning becomes more meaningful

when the subject matter is relevant to personal interests, experiences, and objectives.

Humanistic learning also recognizes that educational experiences can influence individuals' perceptions of themselves and their surroundings. Learning becomes particularly meaningful when students actively participate in constructing knowledge through personal experiences. Therefore, students should be encouraged to develop confidence, recognize their potential, and reflect on the significance of their educational activities. In addition, learning involves social interactions through which individuals develop awareness of their responsibilities toward themselves and others.

The fundamental objective of humanistic education is to support individuals in achieving self-actualization. This involves helping students understand themselves, recognize their abilities, and develop their potential through meaningful educational experiences. Within this framework, lecturers serve as facilitators who provide guidance while respecting students' freedom to manage their learning processes. Excessive intervention may limit students' opportunities to explore ideas and develop independence. Consequently, lecturers should create supportive learning environments that encourage participation, creativity, personal responsibility, and reflection.

The application of humanistic learning theory requires systematic instructional planning. Lecturers should first establish appropriate learning objectives and develop instructional materials that correspond to those objectives. They should also identify students' abilities, assess their learning needs, and analyze the relevance of instructional topics to students' experiences. Furthermore, lecturers are responsible for preparing learning facilities and providing opportunities for active participation. Throughout the learning process, students should receive guidance that encourages them to recognize the meaning of their experiences, develop conceptual understanding, and apply

acquired knowledge to everyday situations. Finally, evaluation should be conducted to determine the extent to which learning objectives have been achieved and to identify opportunities for improving instructional practices.

The application of these principles becomes particularly relevant within the broader context of higher education, which is characterized by educational structures, learning objectives, and curriculum arrangements that differ from those implemented in primary and secondary education. University curricula may be understood through three interconnected dimensions: formal, hidden, and informal curricula. The formal curriculum specifies the knowledge, skills, and competencies that students are expected to acquire through structured academic courses. The hidden curriculum includes implicit values, behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes that students develop through interactions with lecturers, peers, and institutional environments. Meanwhile, the informal curriculum involves the exchange of knowledge and experiences through unstructured interactions outside formal instructional activities (Miller et al., 2017).

Learning in higher education generally provides students with greater autonomy in determining their academic activities. Students have opportunities to select courses, organize their study schedules, participate in learning activities, and independently explore additional resources to strengthen their understanding of academic materials. Ferrer et al. (2022) highlighted the relatively high degree of autonomy associated with higher education, particularly students' opportunities to make decisions concerning their learning activities and academic engagement. This autonomy requires students to develop responsibility, independence, and the ability to regulate their learning processes.

Higher education institutions have increasingly adopted innovative instructional approaches to respond to changes in educational needs and technological developments. Simulation-based

learning, for example, has been implemented in various academic fields, including science, technology, engineering, mathematics, medicine, teacher education, economics, and psychological counseling. Such approaches provide opportunities for students to experience practical situations and apply theoretical knowledge within simulated learning environments.

Technological developments have also transformed teaching and learning practices in higher education. Many institutions have shifted from exclusively conventional instruction toward electronic learning approaches that use digital technologies to facilitate interactions between lecturers and students. E-learning generally involves the use of the internet and computer-based networks to distribute instructional materials, support communication, and provide access to educational resources (Wu & Plakhtii, 2021). Learning Management Systems (LMS) have further supported the implementation of online and blended learning by providing digital platforms for managing instructional activities, distributing learning materials, and monitoring student participation.

The importance of digital learning environments became particularly evident during the COVID-19 pandemic, when higher education institutions experienced disruptions to conventional classroom instruction. Virtual classrooms provided alternative opportunities for maintaining teaching and learning activities during institutional closures and other exceptional circumstances (Kummitha et al., 2021). These experiences demonstrated the importance of instructional flexibility and the capacity of educational institutions to adapt learning strategies to changing conditions.

Various digital instructional resources have also been introduced to strengthen students' understanding of academic materials. Infographics, for example, can present complex information in concise visual formats that support comprehension and retention. Similarly, peer feedback has become an increasingly

important component of higher education because it allows students to evaluate the quality of their peers' work and provide constructive responses. Peer feedback involves a process through which individuals assess the quality, value, and effectiveness of learning products developed by others with comparable academic status.

Technology-supported learning may also involve blogs, discussion forums, collaborative websites, social networking platforms, cloud-based services, augmented reality, virtual reality, and robotic technologies. These resources can facilitate communication, collaboration, and access to learning materials while providing opportunities for innovative instructional practices. In addition, experiential education has become increasingly integrated into higher education because it allows students to develop practical competencies through direct engagement with authentic situations. LaCroix (2022) emphasized the importance of experiential education in supporting students' learning experiences and career development.

These developments indicate that higher education increasingly emphasizes learning experiences that combine theoretical knowledge, practical engagement, technological support, and student autonomy. Within this educational context, Project-Based Learning provides a relevant approach because it encourages students to participate actively in meaningful learning activities while developing competencies that can be transferred to professional and everyday situations.

In response to these educational needs, Project-Based Learning (PjBL) offers an instructional approach that provides opportunities for students to deepen their understanding of academic subjects while developing problem-solving and investigative abilities. It is organized around authentic learning activities and meaningful projects that encourage students to explore problems related to real-life situations. Through collaborative engagement, students are

expected to examine problems, identify relevant information, formulate solutions, and produce outcomes that demonstrate their understanding of the subject matter.

Unlike conventional instructional approaches that may emphasize the delivery of information and the completion of standardized assessments, PjBL focuses on the processes through which students investigate problems and construct knowledge. The final product remains an important component of learning, but the activities involved in developing that product are equally significant. Students gain valuable experiences through active participation in project planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. These experiences provide opportunities for students to develop practical skills, independent thinking, creativity, and responsibility.

Projects implemented through PjBL should address meaningful questions or problems that are relevant to students' experiences and real-world situations. By connecting academic knowledge with practical applications, students can better understand the significance of what they learn. Accordingly, PjBL encourages students to determine appropriate problem-solving strategies, identify the products they intend to develop, and establish procedures for completing their projects. This flexibility allows students to take greater responsibility for their learning while developing confidence in their ability to make decisions.

Reflection is another essential characteristic of Project-Based Learning. Throughout the project, students are encouraged to evaluate their experiences, recognize the challenges they encounter, and identify the knowledge and skills developed during the learning process. Reflective activities enable students to understand the significance of their experiences and formulate conclusions about what they have learned. In addition, PjBL encourages students to provide and receive constructive feedback regarding project activities and outcomes. Through this

process, students learn not only from lecturers but also from interactions with their peers.

At the conclusion of a project, students are expected to present their findings or products to classmates, lecturers, or wider audiences when appropriate. Presentations provide opportunities for students to communicate their understanding, explain their decisions, and respond to questions or feedback. These activities contribute to the development of communication abilities and encourage students to reflect on the relationship between their project outcomes and the original learning objectives.

The implementation of PjBL is characterized by several important principles. Students are encouraged to make decisions and develop their own project frameworks. Learning activities are organized around problems or questions that require investigation and resolution. Students assume responsibility for collecting and managing information, planning activities, and completing assigned tasks. Continuous evaluation and reflection are integrated into the learning process, while the final outcomes are assessed according to established criteria. Furthermore, the learning environment should remain flexible and supportive, allowing students to explore different approaches and learn from mistakes without excessive fear of failure.

The implementation of Project-Based Learning generally involves six interconnected stages. The first stage is identifying an essential question that reflects a meaningful problem requiring investigation. This question should be relevant to real-world situations and encourage students to explore information in sufficient depth. The second stage involves developing a project plan through collaboration between lecturers and students. Planning includes identifying learning objectives, determining appropriate activities, establishing project procedures, and selecting the resources necessary for project completion.

The third stage involves developing a project schedule. Lecturers and students collaboratively

establish the sequence of activities and determine appropriate deadlines. Students are encouraged to manage their time independently while receiving guidance to ensure that project activities remain aligned with the intended objectives. The fourth stage involves monitoring project implementation. Although students are given opportunities to determine their approaches, lecturers remain responsible for monitoring progress, providing assistance, and ensuring that learning activities remain focused on the project objectives.

The fifth stage involves assessing the products generated through project activities. Assessment is conducted to determine the extent to which students have achieved the established learning objectives and to evaluate the quality of their work. Lecturers may provide feedback concerning students' progress and identify aspects requiring further development. Project presentations may also be used to assess students' understanding and their ability to explain the outcomes of their investigations. The sixth stage involves evaluating and reflecting on the overall learning process. Lecturers and students examine the experiences gained during project completion, identify difficulties and achievements, and discuss improvements that may be applied to future learning activities. Reflection may be conducted individually or collaboratively, allowing students to express their experiences, perceptions, and feelings throughout the project.

These stages demonstrate that Project-Based Learning emphasizes a systematic yet flexible learning process. Students are provided with opportunities to develop knowledge through investigation, apply their understanding to meaningful tasks, and evaluate their learning experiences. Within a humanistic educational framework, PjBL can also support the development of autonomy, creativity, collaboration, and personal responsibility by recognizing students as active participants in the learning process.

The relevance of these learning principles can be further understood through their application to poetry studies. Poetry is one of the oldest forms of literary expression and represents an important medium through which individuals communicate ideas, emotions, experiences, and interpretations of human life. Literary works are often developed through the interaction between imagination, personal experiences, and social realities. Through literature, writers and poets express their thoughts and feelings while reflecting on the conditions, values, and experiences of individuals and communities. Literary works may therefore provide opportunities for readers to understand human experiences and interpret meanings that are not always communicated explicitly. In general, literary works can be classified into three major forms: poetry, drama, and prose.

Poetry is distinguished from other literary forms by its concentrated use of language, aesthetic qualities, and capacity to communicate complex meanings through relatively limited expressions. Poetic language often differs from everyday communication because it relies on carefully selected words, figurative expressions, rhythm, rhyme, and imagery to create particular emotional and intellectual effects. The use of diction in poetry is especially important because individual words may contain multiple meanings and interpretations. Consequently, understanding poetry requires readers to examine not only the literal meanings of words but also the connotations and symbolic associations that contribute to the overall meaning of a poem.

Poetry can be analyzed from various perspectives, including its structural elements, literary characteristics, historical background, and aesthetic qualities. The physical elements of poetry, such as diction, rhyme, rhythm, imagery, and typography, contribute to the organization and expression of poetic language. Meanwhile, its inner elements, including themes, tone, feelings, and messages, represent the meanings and ideas conveyed through the literary work. These elements are interconnected, and understanding

their relationships is essential for developing a comprehensive interpretation of poetry.

The aesthetic characteristics of poetic language emerge through the organization of sounds, figurative expressions, imagery, rhetorical devices, and linguistic structures. These elements contribute to the creation of indirect meanings and allow poets to communicate messages through symbolic or suggestive expressions. Although poetic language may appear complex or ambiguous, its meanings can be explored through systematic analysis of its linguistic and literary elements. Readers may begin by examining the words and expressions used in the poem before considering how those elements contribute to its broader meanings.

Understanding poetry frequently requires repeated reading and careful interpretation. Some readers may immediately recognize the central message conveyed by a poem, while others may experience difficulties understanding its language and symbolic expressions. Such difficulties often arise because poetic language contains ambiguity, connotation, and figurative meanings that cannot always be interpreted through literal definitions. To develop an understanding of a poem, readers may need to examine its structural elements, consider the relationships between words and images, and apply appropriate approaches to literary interpretation.

Poets may also employ unconventional linguistic expressions to achieve particular aesthetic effects. The creative use of language allows poets to communicate complex experiences and ideas beyond the limitations of ordinary expressions. As a result, poetic interpretation requires readers to recognize the relationship between linguistic creativity and the meanings intended or suggested by the literary work. The use of nonstandard expressions, figurative language, and symbolic representations should therefore be understood within the aesthetic and thematic context of the poem.

Poetry also contains values that reflect various dimensions of human life, including moral, social, cultural, and personal values. Moral values, for example, may be communicated directly through explicit messages or indirectly through symbolic representations and literary imagery. Poetry may address issues such as love, suffering, justice, personal responsibility, human relationships, and social conditions. Through these themes, poets provide readers with opportunities to reflect on human experiences and develop an understanding of different perspectives.

Literary works can therefore be understood as creative expressions that represent human experiences through imagination, emotion, intellectual reflection, and aesthetic language. Poetry, in particular, combines linguistic beauty with meaningful expressions that invite readers to explore different interpretations. Its aesthetic qualities emerge through the interaction of diction, rhyme, rhythm, figurative language, and other poetic elements, while its meanings are influenced by the relationships among these elements. Although poetry frequently uses concise language, it can communicate complex and diverse meanings. In educational contexts, poetry analysis provides opportunities for students to develop interpretive abilities, critical thinking, creativity, and sensitivity to human experiences. Through systematic examination of poetic elements, students can develop a deeper understanding of the themes and messages conveyed by poets. The integration of Project-Based Learning and humanistic learning principles into poetry studies can support this process by encouraging students to investigate poetic texts independently, collaborate with peers, reflect on their interpretations, and communicate their understanding through meaningful learning activities.

Based on these theoretical and educational considerations, the conceptual framework of this study describes the relationship between students' poetry literacy abilities, Project-Based Learning strategies, humanistic learning theory,

and the expected learning outcomes. Students' initial poetry literacy abilities serve as the basis for identifying learning difficulties, while PjBL provides a structured approach through which students engage in investigation, interpretation, and project completion. Humanistic learning theory provides the philosophical foundation for implementing learning activities that recognize students' abilities, interests, experiences, and individual potential. Within this framework, the implementation of humanistic-based Project-Based Learning is expected to support three principal learning outcomes: students' learning motivation, active participation in classroom activities, and cognitive understanding of poetic meanings. The relationship between these components emphasizes the importance of integrating meaningful learning experiences with opportunities for independent investigation and personal development.

Methods

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research approach to examine the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) based on humanistic learning principles in higher education. The research focused on the learning process conducted during one academic semester, specifically the second semester of the 2021/2022 academic year. The qualitative approach was used to describe how humanistic-based PjBL was designed, implemented, and evaluated in poetry learning activities. The study emphasized students' participation, learning experiences, and ability to understand the physical and inner elements of poetry. The learning process was organized into three main stages: initial preparation, implementation of project-based learning activities, and final evaluation.

The research participants were university students enrolled in the Poetry Studies course (Kajian Puisi). The study was conducted within the context of regular classroom learning, where students participated in instructional activities designed according to the principles of

humanistic education and Project-Based Learning. The learning activities emphasized students' independence, creativity, and active involvement in interpreting poetry. The lecturer served as a facilitator who provided guidance and assistance while allowing students sufficient freedom to develop their own understanding and complete the assigned projects. The research examined how these instructional activities supported students in recognizing poetic elements and interpreting the meanings conveyed through literary works.

The initial stage involved designing learning activities based on the principles of humanistic-based PjBL. The lecturer prepared the instructional objectives, learning materials, project assignments, and procedures for evaluating students' work. Each learning session began with an introduction by the lecturer, followed by a brief presentation from a student reviewing previously discussed materials and introducing the topic to be studied. The lecturer then explained the learning objectives, the activities students were expected to complete, and the time allocated for their projects. Students were introduced to the physical and inner elements of poetry and guided in understanding how these elements contribute to the interpretation of poetic meanings. Particular attention was given to identifying the physical elements of poetry as a foundation for understanding its themes and messages.

The implementation of PjBL consisted of six interconnected stages. The first stage involved formulating an essential question that required students to investigate a problem and develop a meaningful outcome. The selected questions or themes were expected to relate to real-world experiences and encourage in-depth investigation. In the Poetry Studies course, these activities focused on understanding poetic elements and interpreting the meanings conveyed through poetry. The second stage involved developing a project plan. The lecturer and students discussed the procedures, learning

activities, and resources required to complete the assignments. Students were encouraged to identify appropriate strategies for investigating the assigned poems and organizing their interpretations. The third stage involved establishing a project schedule. The lecturer and students collaboratively determined the sequence of activities and the deadlines for completing the projects. Students were given opportunities to manage their time independently and explore different approaches while remaining focused on the learning objectives.

The fourth stage involved monitoring project implementation. Students completed their assignments within the allocated time, while the lecturer observed their progress and provided guidance when necessary. When students encountered difficulties, the lecturer approached them individually and offered explanations or suggestions to help them continue their work. This process reflected the humanistic principle of providing educational support while respecting students' independence. The fifth stage involved assessing the completed projects. Students submitted their assignments at the designated time, after which one or two projects were randomly selected for classroom discussion. Students whose work was selected were asked to read the poems they had analyzed and explain their interpretations. The lecturer and other students then discussed the accuracy of the interpretations, identified aspects requiring improvement, and examined whether the meanings presented were consistent with the poetic elements. The sixth stage involved evaluating and reflecting on the learning activities. The lecturer and students reviewed the project implementation process, discussed the outcomes, and reflected on the experiences gained during the activities. This evaluation provided opportunities to identify students' progress and areas requiring further improvement.

Data were obtained through observations of the learning process, students' participation in

classroom activities, and the outcomes of their poetry analysis projects. The observations focused on students' involvement in completing assignments, their responses to instructional guidance, and their ability to identify poetic elements and interpret themes. Students' completed projects and classroom presentations provided additional information regarding their understanding of the assigned poems. The data were analyzed descriptively and qualitatively by examining the learning process and interpreting the information obtained during classroom activities. The analysis focused on the implementation of humanistic-based PjBL, students' participation, and their demonstrated understanding of poetic meanings. The evaluation of completed projects and classroom discussions was used to describe the learning outcomes associated with the instructional activities.

Results

Implementation of Project-Based Learning in Poetry Studies

The implementation of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) based on humanistic learning principles in the Poetry Studies course began with an examination of students' initial attitudes and interests toward poetry. At the beginning of the learning process, the lecturer asked students whether they enjoyed reading poetry. Their responses reflected varying levels of interest and understanding. Some students expressed a lack of interest because they found poetry difficult to understand, while others considered poetry learning uninteresting. One student indicated that they would not have enrolled in the Poetry Studies course if it had been optional, but because the course was compulsory, they were required to attend. These responses demonstrated that students' initial motivation to engage in poetry learning was relatively low.

Classroom observations also revealed that several students arrived late for lectures. When the lecturer asked them to explain the reasons for

their lateness, some indicated that the course was not sufficiently interesting and that they considered poetry learning monotonous. These observations suggested that the learning process needed to be designed in a way that could encourage greater student engagement and provide meaningful experiences. Consequently, the lecturer developed learning activities based on humanistic principles and PjBL to improve students' participation and understanding of poetry.

The instructional design emphasized student-centered learning, independent investigation, and opportunities to connect literary materials with real-life experiences. Unlike conventional approaches that primarily rely on direct instruction, PjBL encourages students to become actively involved in planning and completing learning activities. The differences between conventional learning and Project-Based Learning are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Differences Between Conventional Learning and Project-Based Learning

Aspect	Conventional Learning	Project-Based Learning
Curriculum	Follows a standardized curriculum, covers extensive materials, and emphasizes memorization of factual knowledge.	Involves long-term, interdisciplinary learning activities centered on students' interests in real-world issues, supported by in-depth investigation and research.
Classroom	Students are arranged in structured rows and columns. Learning activities generally follow the same pace and level of difficulty, while students work individually to achieve learning objectives.	Students participate in flexible classroom arrangements, collaborate in teams, and engage in learning activities adapted to different levels and topics. Heterogeneous teamwork is encouraged to achieve common objectives.
Students	Depend primarily on	Assume responsibility for

	the lecturer's instructions to complete learning activities.	their learning, organize their tasks, and collaborate with team members to achieve specific objectives within an established period.
Lecturers	Serve primarily as instructors, lecturers, resource persons, and subject specialists.	Act as facilitators who provide guidance, learning resources, and support throughout the learning process.
Technology	Learning activities may emphasize rewards for task completion and penalties for failure to master particular concepts.	Technology is integrated into classroom activities to support problem-solving, communication, investigation, and information collection.

Source: Purnawan (2007).

Based on these considerations, the lecturer designed poetry learning activities using a humanistic approach integrated with PjBL. The learning process began with motivational explanations emphasizing that poetry could be enjoyable and meaningful. Students were introduced to poetry as a medium through which poets express thoughts, emotions, personal experiences, and criticism of social inequalities. The lecturer explained that poetry allows individuals to communicate criticism of social conditions without necessarily participating in direct public demonstrations. Poetry can also preserve ideas and perspectives across generations.

The works of Chairil Anwar were introduced as examples of the enduring relevance of poetry. Although the poet had passed away many years earlier, his poems continued to be read and appreciated. Similarly, the works of other poets remained relevant because they communicated ideas and human experiences that could still be understood by contemporary readers. Through these explanations, students were encouraged to recognize poetry as a meaningful form of expression rather than merely an academic subject.

Following the implementation of humanistic-based PjBL, students demonstrated greater interest in poetry learning and became increasingly involved in completing their

projects. The classroom activities encouraged students to analyze poetic elements, interpret meanings, and develop their own literary expressions. The learning process also provided opportunities for students to create original poems. These works were subsequently collected into a poetry anthology and stored in the study program library. This outcome illustrated that the learning activities supported not only students' understanding of poetry but also their participation in creative literary production.

Students' Learning Motivation During the Poetry Studies Course

Students' learning motivation was another important aspect observed during the implementation of humanistic-based PjBL. At

the beginning of the course, students generally demonstrated limited motivation to participate in poetry-related activities. Some students showed little interest in asking questions or discussing poetic elements. However, following the lecturer's explanations and the introduction of meaningful project activities, changes in students' participation and motivation were observed.

The development of students' learning motivation was reflected in their willingness to ask questions, recognize the physical elements of poetry, and participate in creative activities. Table 2 presents the motivational categories, indicators, and conditions identified at the beginning and end of the learning process.

Table 2. Students' Learning Motivation

Students' Learning Motivation	Indicators	Initial Condition	Final Condition
Low	Lack of interest in asking questions	Low	Low
Moderate	Beginning to ask questions	Moderate	High
High	Beginning to recognize the physical elements of poetry	High	Creating poetry

Source: Research findings.

As presented in Table 2, students' motivation during the Poetry Studies course showed positive developments throughout the learning process. Initially, students demonstrated relatively low motivation, particularly in relation to their willingness to participate in discussions and ask questions. Following the lecturer's explanations and the implementation of project activities, students began showing greater interest in the subject. Their motivation was reflected in increased participation, greater willingness to explore poetic elements, and the ability to produce original poems.

These findings indicate the relevance of humanistic learning principles, particularly the importance of meaningful learning experiences. When students recognize the personal significance of learning activities, they may

become more motivated to participate and complete assigned projects. Poetry provides opportunities for students to explore themes related to human experiences, including emotions, personal relationships, social conditions, and other aspects of everyday life. When these themes are connected to students' experiences, poetry learning becomes more meaningful and accessible.

The lecturer's role was therefore important in establishing learning conditions that encouraged students to understand the relevance of poetry to their lives. Rather than emphasizing theoretical explanations alone, the lecturer provided opportunities for students to explore poetic meanings and develop their own literary expressions. This approach was consistent with humanistic learning principles, which emphasize

the importance of meaningful experiences in supporting students' motivation and personal development.

Students' Success in Completing Poetry Analysis Projects

The implementation of humanistic-based PjBL also provided information regarding students' ability to complete assigned projects and understand poetic meanings. At the beginning of the learning process, some students were reluctant to complete poetry-related assignments because they experienced difficulties

understanding the materials. However, as the learning activities progressed, students became more willing to engage in project completion.

The lecturer provided guidance when students experienced difficulties while allowing them sufficient freedom to organize their work. Students were encouraged to identify poetic elements, interpret meanings, and complete their assignments within the allocated period. Their progress was observed through their participation in project activities and their ability to submit completed work.

Table 3. Students' Success in Understanding Poetic Meanings and Themes

Project Completion	Indicators	Initial Condition	Final Condition
Did not undertake the project	Project was not undertaken	Low	Low
Did not complete the project	Project remained unfinished	Low	Moderate
Completed the project	Project successfully completed	Moderate	High

Source: Research findings.

Table 3 illustrates the categories used to describe students' project completion and their understanding of poetry. The findings indicated that students initially experienced difficulties completing their assignments, but their engagement improved during the implementation of humanistic-based PjBL. Students who were previously reluctant to complete projects became more willing to participate in learning activities and submit their work.

The learning process encouraged students to assume greater responsibility for their assignments while developing their ability to understand the themes and meanings of poetry. These observations suggested that project-based activities provided opportunities for students to

apply their knowledge and develop greater confidence in completing literary analysis tasks.

Students' Understanding of Poetry Themes

An important outcome of the learning activities was students' ability to identify and explain the themes of poems analyzed through their projects. Poetry themes represent the central ideas conveyed by poets through linguistic expressions, imagery, and symbolic meanings. These themes frequently address fundamental aspects of human life, including love, fear, happiness, suffering, justice, truth, spirituality, social criticism, and protest. Themes may also be developed into more specific subthemes or central ideas that contribute to the overall meaning of a literary work.

Students were assigned to analyze four poems: Hujan Bulan Juni by Sapardi Djoko Damono, Doa by Chairil Anwar, Dengan Puisi, Aku by Taufiq Ismail, and Perempuan-Perempuan Perkasa by Hartoyo Andangjaya. These literary works provided opportunities for students to explore different poetic expressions and identify relationships between physical poetic elements and thematic meanings.

Hujan Bulan Juni (Sapardi Djoko Damono)

The poem explores emotions communicated through imagery, symbolism, and natural phenomena. The original study identifies loneliness as its principal theme.

Doa (Chairil Anwar)

The poem communicates a spiritual relationship between the individual and God, reflecting

themes of faith, dependence, personal struggle, and devotion.

The third poem, Dengan Puisi, Aku, by Taufiq Ismail, presents poetry as a medium for expressing human experiences, emotions, criticism, remembrance, and spiritual reflection. The fourth poem, Perempuan-Perempuan Perkasa, by Hartoyo Andangjaya, depicts the experiences of hardworking women who struggle to support their families and communities. The poem reflects resilience, responsibility, and the social realities experienced by women.

The thematic analysis focused on identifying the relationships between physical and inner elements of poetry. Students examined diction, rhyme, rhythm, and concrete words before developing interpretations of themes, tone, feelings, and messages. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Themes of the Poems Analyzed by Students

Poem Title	Physical Elements	Inner Elements	Theme
Hujan Bulan Juni	Diction	Theme	Loneliness
Doa	Rhyme	Tone	Divinity
Dengan Puisi, Aku	Rhythm	Feelings	Not specified in the original table
Perempuan-Perempuan Perkasa	Concrete words	Message	Not specified in the original table

Source: Research findings.

The physical and inner elements follow their original row placement; the two unreported themes remain unspecified.

The findings indicated that students were able to discuss the themes of the assigned poems by

examining their physical elements. Through project-based analysis, students explored how language, imagery, and poetic structures contributed to the meanings conveyed by the poets. These learning activities provided opportunities for students to develop their

interpretive abilities and communicate their understanding through classroom discussions and project presentations.

The original manuscript includes the full texts of the four analyzed poems. For the final journal manuscript, these texts should be retained only where appropriate permission or a valid quotation exception applies. The titles, authors, analytical focus, and reported themes have been preserved here.

DISCUSSION

The Application of Humanistic Learning Theory and Project-Based Learning

The findings of this study highlight the relationship between the implementation of humanistic learning theory and students' development during the Poetry Studies course. Humanistic learning theory emphasizes the importance of recognizing students as individuals with distinctive abilities, experiences, interests, and potential. Learning should provide opportunities for students to develop their knowledge, attitudes, creativity, and independence through meaningful experiences.

The implementation of humanistic principles was reflected in changes in students' attitudes and participation. Students demonstrated greater enthusiasm for learning poetry, as indicated by their willingness to ask questions about the poems they were analyzing. They also showed more positive attitudes toward classroom activities because the lecturer provided concise explanations and allowed them more time to complete their projects independently. These observations suggest that students benefited from learning activities that emphasized personal responsibility and active participation.

Within humanistic learning theory, lecturers are expected to act as facilitators who guide students without excessively controlling their learning processes. This principle was applied by allowing students to determine how their projects were completed while providing assistance when necessary. Students were encouraged to explore

their potential, develop confidence, and recognize the significance of their learning experiences. The learning process therefore emphasized both the development of knowledge and changes in students' attitudes and behavior.

The observed changes in students' motivation were also reflected in their ability to create original poems. At the beginning of the course, students demonstrated limited motivation to study poetry. However, toward the end of the learning process, students were able to produce their own literary works. Two examples were presented in the original research: *Pertolongan Tuhan* by Junita Kondolele and *Toraja* by Rifkayani Salempang.

The poem *Pertolongan Tuhan* expresses gratitude, spiritual dependence, and recognition of divine support in personal life. Meanwhile, *Toraja* describes the poet's birthplace, emphasizing its natural beauty, cultural identity, traditions, social relationships, and community values. These examples illustrate how students used poetry to communicate their personal experiences and perspectives.

The application of PjBL provided students with opportunities to deepen their understanding through assigned projects. Students focused on completing their tasks, investigating poetic elements, and producing outcomes that reflected their understanding. PjBL emphasizes both the process of learning and the production of meaningful outcomes. Through these activities, students were encouraged to recognize connections between academic knowledge and real-life experiences.

Furthermore, students were expected to reflect on the experiences gained during project completion, identify the knowledge they had developed, and communicate their findings to classmates. These activities encouraged them to assume responsibility for managing information, organizing learning tasks, and evaluating their progress. A supportive classroom environment also allowed students to explore different

approaches without excessive fear of making mistakes.

Students' Motivation in Project-Based Learning

Learning motivation is an important factor influencing students' participation and academic engagement. Motivation may originate from external influences or internal interests, and external encouragement can contribute to the development of internal motivation. The findings indicated that the implementation of PjBL was associated with positive changes in students' motivation to participate in poetry learning activities.

The humanistic-based PjBL approach provided students with opportunities to determine strategies for completing problems, decide how their projects would be developed, and take responsibility for the learning process. These opportunities encouraged students to become more actively involved in classroom activities and develop greater confidence in their abilities.

Another important aspect of PjBL was the opportunity for students to provide and receive feedback regarding their projects. Through classroom discussions, students could exchange interpretations, evaluate different perspectives, and recognize aspects of their work requiring improvement. At the end of the project activities, students were encouraged to present their findings and explain the outcomes of their investigations.

The lecturer continued to play an important role in monitoring students' progress and ensuring that their activities remained aligned with the learning objectives. However, guidance was provided without unnecessarily restricting students' independence. This balance between educational support and student autonomy reflected the humanistic principles underlying the instructional strategy.

Students' Success in Completing Projects and Producing Learning Outcomes

The findings also indicated that students developed greater responsibility for completing assigned projects. Students who initially experienced difficulties and demonstrated reluctance toward poetry learning became more willing to complete their assignments after receiving guidance and encouragement from the lecturer.

The projects were designed to address meaningful questions relevant to students' experiences and encourage them to apply theoretical knowledge to practical activities. Through these assignments, students were able to connect their understanding of poetry with its relevance to human life and personal expression.

The PjBL approach encouraged students to determine appropriate problem-solving strategies, organize their learning activities, and reflect on the knowledge gained during project completion. Students were also given opportunities to discuss their findings and receive feedback from lecturers and classmates. These interactions supported collaborative learning and enabled students to develop understanding through shared experiences.

In addition, students were expected to take responsibility for collecting information, managing project activities, completing assigned tasks, and evaluating their learning outcomes. The final products provided evidence of their participation in project activities and demonstrated their ability to apply poetic concepts in practice.

The classroom environment was designed to accommodate different learning approaches and encourage students to develop confidence in expressing their ideas. This supportive learning environment was particularly important because students were initially reluctant to participate in poetry-related activities.

Students' Understanding of Poetry Themes

The findings indicated that students were able to identify and explain the themes of poems after examining their physical elements through

project-based learning activities. Understanding poetic themes requires students to recognize how diction, imagery, rhyme, rhythm, and other structural elements contribute to the overall meaning of a poem.

Poetic themes frequently reflect fundamental human experiences, including love, fear, happiness, sadness, suffering, justice, truth, spirituality, social criticism, and protest. These themes can be explored through detailed analysis of poetic language and the relationships between physical and inner elements.

The four poems analyzed in this study were *Hujan Bulan Juni* by Sapardi Djoko Damono, *Doa* by Chairil Anwar, *Dengan Puisi*, *Aku* by Taufiq Ismail, and *Perempuan-Perempuan Perkasa* by Hartoyo Andangjaya. Through their analysis of these poems, students were encouraged to identify central ideas and explain the relationships between textual elements and thematic meanings.

The results suggest that humanistic-based PjBL provided meaningful opportunities for students to develop their understanding of poetry through independent investigation and active participation. Rather than relying exclusively on explanations from the lecturer, students explored poetic texts, examined their structural elements, and formulated interpretations based on their analysis.

These findings illustrate the potential relevance of integrating Project-Based Learning and humanistic learning principles in poetry education. By combining meaningful learning experiences with opportunities for investigation, collaboration, reflection, and creative expression, the instructional approach supported students' engagement with poetic texts and their ability to communicate literary interpretations.

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion presented in this study, it can be concluded that humanistic-based learning through the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in the Poetry

Studies course can motivate students to engage actively in learning and complete their assigned projects. One of the primary benefits of PjBL is its ability to enhance students' learning motivation by providing enjoyable and meaningful assignments that are relevant to real-life experiences. Through these activities, students develop a clearer understanding of the purpose of learning and recognize their active roles in completing projects that produce meaningful outcomes. Increased motivation also encourages curiosity, strengthens students' commitment to learning, and contributes to better project outcomes. Furthermore, PjBL integrates theoretical knowledge with practical experiences, allowing students to participate actively in learning activities and apply their understanding through meaningful projects. This approach plays an important role in developing students' creativity, independence, and active engagement in the learning process.

Project-Based Learning also provides an effective instructional strategy for improving students' understanding through meaningful and experiential learning. By participating in project activities, students develop greater responsibility for their assignments and become better prepared to address real-world challenges. In addition, PjBL supports the development of social skills through collaboration, communication, and teamwork. Students learn to exchange ideas, cooperate with others, appreciate different perspectives, and recognize the contributions of their peers. These competencies are essential in contemporary professional environments, where collaboration and effective communication are increasingly important. PjBL also strengthens students' problem-solving abilities by exposing them to complex and authentic challenges that require critical and creative thinking. Through this process, students become more independent, adaptable, and open to alternative approaches to solving problems. Moreover, the freedom to design and implement projects provides opportunities for students to explore ideas,

develop creativity, and strengthen their innovative capacities.

Nevertheless, the implementation of PjBL presents several challenges that require careful consideration. Lecturers must adopt a facilitative role by providing appropriate guidance and support rather than relying primarily on conventional instructional practices. This requires a shift toward student-centered learning, where students actively participate in constructing knowledge and managing their learning experiences. Evaluation must also consider not only the quality of the final project but also the learning processes, participation, and experiences gained throughout project completion. A comprehensive and holistic evaluation approach is therefore necessary to

assess the educational contributions of PjBL. Overall, Project-Based Learning represents an innovative, effective, and relevant approach to developing active, creative, and responsible learners in modern higher education. By integrating academic knowledge with authentic challenges, PjBL enables students to acquire meaningful understanding, practical competencies, and positive attitudes necessary for responding to changing educational, professional, and global demands. Therefore, continued institutional support and further research are needed to promote the wider implementation of PjBL across educational institutions and strengthen its contribution to meaningful, in-depth, and relevant learning experiences.

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