

**IMPROVING HORTATORY EXPOSITION TEXT READING SKILLS THROUGH PROJECT-BASED
LEARNING MODELS FOR GRADE XI STUDENTS AT SMAN 3 PALU**

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Abstract	Article History
This classroom action research aims to improve the reading skills of hortatory exposition texts of grade XI students at SMAN 3 Palu through the application of the Project Based Learning (PjBL) model. The problems faced by students are difficulties in identifying text structures (thesis, arguments, and recommendations) and understanding the arguments presented. The results of the study indicate an increase in the average score from 50 on the pre-test to 75 on the post-test. The percentage of student mastery also rose from 30% to 85%, with the proportion of low achievers (<60) decreasing sharply. In addition, classroom observations show greater student engagement, especially in analyzing texts, designing group posters, and presenting their work. Thus, it can be concluded that the application of Project Based Learning is effective in improving both students' comprehension and active participation in reading hortatory exposition texts. Keywords: Project-Based Learning, Hortatory Exposition, Reading Skills, Classroom Action Research	Received: October 2025 Reviewed: October 2025 Published: October 2025 Plagiarism Checker No 540 Prefix DOI: Prefix DOI: 10.8734/sindoro.v1i2.360 Copyright: Author Publish by: SINDORO  This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License.

I. INTRODUCTION

Reading is an important skill in high school English language learning. Hortatory exposition texts, which aim to convince readers through argumentation, are one of the important materials for 11th grade students. However, initial observations in the 11th grade at SMAN 3 Palu showed that students had low reading skills in identifying text structures and understanding the author's ideas. Several studies have shown the effectiveness of Project Based Learning (PjBL) in improving literacy skills. Wafiq Azizah et al. (2024) reported a significant increase in junior high school students' reading scores using PjBL. In addition, Sari & Prasetyo (2022) found that PjBL in critical reading courses was able to increase students' motivation (88.9%) and critical thinking (73%). However, most previous studies have focused on narrative/descriptive texts or writing skills, with few examining the PjBL paradigm for improving hortatory exposition reading. Therefore, this study aims to improve the reading ability of hortatory exposition texts among 11th-grade students through the application of Project-Based Learning.

II. METHOD

1. Research Design

This study employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) design based on Kemmis and McTaggart's (1988) model, consisting of two cycles with planning, action, observation, and reflection. The study focused on improving students' reading comprehension of hortatory exposition texts through Project Based Learning (PjBL).

2. Participants and Setting

The participants were 30 grade XI students of a public senior high school in Palu, Central Sulawesi, during the second semester of the 2024/2025 academic year. Students had diverse proficiency levels and limited experience in analyzing hortatory exposition texts.

3. Instruments and Data Collection

Data were collected through (a) pre-test and post-test of reading comprehension, (b) student worksheets (LKPD), (c) classroom observation checklists, and (d) documentation such as posters and teacher notes.

4. Procedure

In Cycle 1, students were introduced to hortatory exposition texts, analyzed sample texts through worksheets, designed group posters, and presented them in class, followed by a post-test. Challenges included vocabulary difficulties and uneven group participation. In Cycle 2, vocabulary support and guiding questions were provided, peer feedback was facilitated, and students revised their posters. The post-test showed improvement in reading comprehension and engagement.

5. Data Analysis

Quantitative data from pre- and post-tests were analyzed descriptively (mean scores, mastery percentage, and improvement). Qualitative data from observation and reflections were analyzed to describe student participation and the effectiveness of PjBL.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this Classroom Action Research demonstrate that the implementation of Project Based Learning (PjBL) successfully improved students' reading comprehension of hortatory exposition texts in grade XI at SMAN 3 Palu.

1. Reading Test Result

Tabel 1. Comparison of Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores

Rentang Skor	Pre-Test (%)	Post-Test (%)
80-100	5%	40%
60-79	25%	45%
<60	70%	15%

The results of the pre-test showed that a majority of students (70%) scored below 60, indicating serious difficulties in reading hortatory exposition texts. Only 5% of students could achieve scores above 80, which suggests that higher-order comprehension skills, such as identifying the writer's stance and evaluating arguments, were rarely mastered. After the treatment using PjBL, the proportion of students scoring in the mastery category (≥ 70) increased dramatically to 85%, with 40% reaching scores above 80. The mean score also improved from 50 to 75. This shows not only quantitative improvement but also qualitative growth in students' ability to analyze thesis, arguments, and recommendations within texts. Similar results were reported by Azizah, Nur, and Jumiati (2024), who found significant gains in students' reading comprehension when PjBL was applied in junior high school contexts.

2. Student Engagement and Activities

In Cycle I, classroom observations revealed that students were hesitant to participate in group work. Some groups relied heavily on one or two active members, while others were passive, often confused by new vocabulary or complex arguments in the texts. The posters produced in Cycle I also lacked coherence, with arguments often presented as fragmented statements without clear linkage to recommendations.

By Cycle II, changes in instructional strategies—such as providing vocabulary lists, modeling guiding questions, and encouraging peer feedback—resulted in marked improvements. Students became more confident in discussing the structure of hortatory exposition texts, and group posters displayed clearer thesis statements, stronger arguments, and logical recommendations. Presentations also showed a shift: previously reluctant students began contributing to group discussions and oral presentations. These observations align with Blumenfeld et al. (1991), who emphasized that scaffolding and collaboration sustain motivation and deepen learning in project-based settings.

3. Relation to Previous Studies

The improvements observed in this study are consistent with a growing body of research supporting the effectiveness of PjBL for literacy development. Sari and Prasetyo (2022) showed that PjBL enhanced motivation and critical thinking in critical reading courses, suggesting that project tasks encourage learners to process texts more deeply rather than superficially. At the senior high school level, Fitriani, Rofiqoh, Dewi, and Mukrim (2023) also reported significant improvements in reading comprehension when students engaged in project-based tasks, demonstrating that the model can be effectively applied in Indonesian classrooms. The present findings extend these works by applying PjBL to hortatory exposition texts, a genre that requires students to engage in evaluative and critical reading—an area still underexplored in PjBL studies. Similar to Rizkilla, Suriaman, Patmasari, and Marhum (2023), who found that PjBL significantly improved reading comprehension at the tertiary level, this study confirms that the model can be effectively adapted to high school contexts.

4. Curriculum Relevance

The results of this study also align with the vision of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* launched by Kemendikbudristek (2022). The curriculum emphasizes student-centered learning, critical literacy, and collaboration through the development of the *Profil Pelajar Pancasila*. By engaging students in poster design and oral presentations, PjBL provided opportunities to transform written arguments into multimodal learning products. This not only strengthened comprehension but also built communication skills, creativity, and responsibility—competencies emphasized in the national curriculum reform. Thus, the implementation of PjBL in reading hortatory exposition texts directly supports both academic achievement and character development.

5. Research Reflection

Overall, the combination of project-based tasks such as poster design and presentation not only improved students' reading scores but also developed confidence, responsibility, and critical awareness. This suggests that PjBL is an effective model for integrating both cognitive and affective dimensions of reading comprehension in the Indonesian high school context.

IV. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

1. Conclusion

This Classroom Action Research proved that the implementation of Project Based Learning (PjBL) improved students' reading comprehension of hortatory exposition texts in grade XI at SMAN 3 Palu. Students showed significant progress from the pre-test to the post-test, with mastery level increasing from 30% to 85%. The project activities, such as analyzing texts through worksheets, creating posters, and presenting them, encouraged active participation and collaboration. PjBL not only enhanced students' comprehension of text structure and arguments but also fostered critical thinking, confidence, and responsibility in learning.

2. Suggestion

Based on the findings, teachers are encouraged to apply PjBL as an alternative strategy to improve reading comprehension, especially in hortatory exposition texts. It is recommended to provide scaffolding such as vocabulary support and guiding questions to help students analyze texts more effectively. Future researchers may extend this study to other skills or genres, such as writing or discussion of argumentative texts, in order to explore the broader impact of PjBL in English language learning.

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