

# Enhancing Grammar Proficiency Through PjBL: A Study on Student-Generated Questions for Tense Mastery and Communication Skills

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## KEYWORDS

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## ABSTRACT

Project-Based Learning is an approach that enhances students' skills in areas such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and practical application. This study aims to describe how student-generated grammar questions within a Project-Based Learning framework can be systematically implemented in the classroom to build familiarity with English tenses and to improve overall grammatical accuracy, and to describe how student can get more confident in speaking in front of the class. This research used a qualitative method employing observation and documentation as approaching tools focusing on their decision of tenses and presentation. The result shows that student-generated grammar questions in a PjBL framework provide a systematic approach to mastering English tenses and improving overall grammatical accuracy, and hesitation and pause occurred in the presentation of each group suggests that the test is not only focused on grammar knowledge but also on the ability to handle language in real-time, as learners would in actual conversations where pauses and hesitation are natural.

Keywords: Project-Based Learning, Student-generated questions, Tenses, Grammar

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## Introduction

Project-Based Learning (PjBL) offers a way in which to increase student's abilities such as academic achievement, thinking levels, critical thinking, problem solving skills, creativity and self-actualization and it provides opportunities for putting things in a better perspective (Ayu et al., 2024). The PjBL model is applicable to improving the contribution of students in solving problems and fostering children creativity and skills, especially as means for enhancing student's quality with regard to communication skill, collaboration skill, problem-solving ability, and preparation for real work problem as categorized from steps of PjBL implementation: starting from various basic questions like what problem it solves or who actually solves a type of research on this; with thinking they would do a project in the form of questioning so that their English will be fluent (Almazroui, 2023; Ayu et al., 2024).

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Students are struggling to use English grammar accurately, even after years of studying rules in textbooks and doing traditional exercises in school. Grammar, especially verb tenses, often remains abstract and ignored in a communication, so students can sometimes recognize it is a grammar they used to know, but still make frequent mistakes when writing or speaking. To address this gap, grammar teaching needs to move beyond passive explanation and give learners more active roles in understanding the formula, drawing their own ideas, and reflecting on their own language use.

One practical way to make grammar learning more active is to ask students to create their own grammar questions that are mostly about tenses. When learners design questions instead of only answering them, they must think carefully about time reference, word order, and correct tense forms, which helps them see how grammar works in real contexts. Thus, the question-generation is a stepping stone for enhancing their own writing. As one of the four essential language skills, writing is considered as a fundamental competency that students need to develop when studying English.

Knowing grammar and sentence structure is very important when it comes to communication, and a great way to enhance these skills is the art of self-generating questions (Andriani et al., 2021). It is good to ask the right grammatical questions since they can understand how a sentence made correctly. For example, asking if the verb tense is correct or whether punctuation has been used in the right place helps writers identify and fix errors that might otherwise distract or confuse readers. The best part of it is that it comes in a practical form and it is easy for students to understand.

This kind of exercise is also best for analyzing errors in grammar. But students opt to make their own error and correct them in order to make a good question. Indirectly, they learn on doing an error analysis by determining what error they choose to be in their questions they make. Error analysis is the study of errors made by second and foreign language learners. It can be shown to (a) evaluate a learner's language proficiency, (b) gain insight into the process of language acquisition, and (c) recognize common challenges in language learning to support teaching or the development of instructional materials (Pasaribu, 2021). Regarding the practical application in this article, identifying errors can assist learners in the teaching and learning process.

This exercise comes with advantage that students may get more awareness in grammatical errors by making the error themselves. It is because an error is produced by learners who do not yet fully grasp the rules of the language system and when the learner has less awareness or understanding of the correct grammar whilst there is no intention to commit the error (Surya & Wau, 2022).

Student's exercise on question-generation has function as an active learning technique that help students to change from passive reception of rules to purposeful construction of knowledge. By deciding what to ask and how to frame an item, students engage in deeper processing of linguistic form and meaning, identify relevant features of target structures (such as tense, feature,

and word order), and externalize their understanding in a way that is directly observable. The practice also serves a formative assessment function: the quality, accuracy, and focus of student-generated questions provide immediate evidence of conceptual grasp and misconceptions, enabling timely instructional feedback. In addition, a student-generated questions organizes classroom discourse, sustaining attention, prompting peer interaction, and support metacognitive behaviors such as monitoring, evaluating, and revising one's own work in the class.

Adopting question-generation as a regular routine confers cognitive, linguistic, and motivational benefits (Ussein et al., 2018). Cognitively, generating questions helps higher-order thinking—analysis, evaluation, and synthesis—leading to stronger retention and transfer of grammar knowledge from recognition to production. Linguistically, the act of composing well-formed questions compels precise choices of auxiliaries, tense/aspect, subject–auxiliary inversion, and information structure, which improves accuracy in both writing and speaking. Motivationally, learner-produced materials increase autonomy and ownership; students perceive a clear purpose for grammar study, participate more actively, and develop confidence as their questions are used for peer tasks, review activities, and low-stakes assessments. Together, these advantages make question-generation in this context student-generated questions a versatile, low-cost strategy to build durable grammatical competence while cultivating reflective and engaged learners.

The previous studies related to this research are many. First related research entitled *How Can EFL Teachers Make Their Questions More Interactive with Students? Interpersonal Patterns of Teacher Questions* (Yang, 2021), the research was about how teachers make questions that helps students understand and more active in the class. This also becomes tool kit for EFL teachers to improve their questioning practices in classrooms. The relation to the study is about the question-generation practice and the students become the subject of the making, not the teacher. From the study, question-generation put more interaction to the students, yet this can be applied to peer-to-peer learning process as students make questions to be answered by other students.

Second research with title *Peningkatan Hasil Belajar Siswa Dengan Model Think Pair Share (TPS) Berbantuan Mystery Pics* (Wahyu Wardana et al., 2023). The research was about an action planning implemented in a class carried out using mystery pics media related to the learning process. The implementation involves preparing a Lesson Plan (RPP) with the following steps 1) preparing learning materials—designing questions aimed at improving student learning outcomes, 2) selecting appropriate images that will be used as prompts for students to write their questions, 3) guiding students to write questions based on the provided images to enhance their understanding and performance, and 4) conducting a reflection session to evaluate the effectiveness of mystery pics media in boosting learning outcomes through question-writing activities. The result of the study showed the percentage of question-generation is higher because the understanding of the subject from the picture provided. Thus, the relation to the research is the guiding students to make questions

based on the project, yet the research enhances the question-generation focuses on English grammatical structure.

Third, a study that aims to find out the increase in English learning achievement through the PjBL entitled *Upaya Meningkatkan Prestasi Belajar Bahasa Inggris Melalui Pendekatan PjBL (Project-Based Learning)* focuses on how a project can improve and enhance students' English skill (Istirahyuni, 2019). In this learning model, students are given the opportunity to be more independent in discovering and acquiring new information, thus PjBL as a method creates constructivist learning where students construct their own knowledge. The relation to the research is the project based on English subject. Research questions emerged from the description above are 1) how student-generated questions function as PjBL can develop tense mastery and better grammar accuracy? and 2) what makes students gain confidence in presenting their student-generated question?

From the research questions above, this research aims to describe how student-generated grammar questions as a PjBL can be used systematically (as assignment) in the classroom to build familiarity with English tenses and to improve overall grammatical accuracy, and to describe how student can get more confident in speaking in front of the class.

## Method

Qualitative research was used to aim the purpose of this research by explaining how the research was by using words pragmatically in navigating it. This guide aims to clarify qualitative research by providing a thorough outline and practical methods to handle its diverse aspects (Lim, 2025). Observation is an activity of collecting data. The data collection technique has specific characteristics compared to another technique. By observing, we can learn about behavior and the meaning behind the behavior (Sugiyono, 2018). This method was conducted to observe the progress of the students in the assignment of question-generation. On how they delivered the questions to other students in the class, how they explained the answers, and how deep the understanding of their own questions made.

The highlights on the observation were the decision of the tenses or grammars questions used, the amount of the question tenses or grammars variations, and how the presentation conducted from the subject participant. The documentation was taken when students present their questions to the other students as audiences and together answering questions their friends made. The documentation was note taking the way they delivered the questions and discussed the explanation with the audience. The subject to this research were 16 students of Mechanical Engineering study program from third semester whom enrolled in *English for International Testing* class where the researcher was assigned as their lecturer for the class subject. They divided into 5 groups with 3 to 4 students each group to do the assignment and presented their

generated questions in front of the class. This project was held during mid-semester as part of mid-semester test.

The data collected were 20 questions presented in the class. Each group questions consisted of grammars and tenses related questions. 5 groups were assigned, since each group generated 20 questions, the total of the questions generated by students were 100. The observation on the presentation was how students paused and hesitated when presenting their project. The collected data then analyzed by focusing on the type of questions, and variation of the tenses and grammars question they made. In the communication level, pause and hesitation were the criteria to assess how well their presentation was.

The data presented as follow:

Groups	Number of questions	Types of questions	Questions about	Presentation
Group 1	20	FB, WC	T, SVA, ...	H, P
...	...	...	...	...

Code:

FB	: Fill in the Blank	Adj	: Adjectives
WC	: Word Choice	Conj	: Conjunctions
T	: Tenses	H	: Hesitation
SVA	: Subject-Verb Agreement	P	: Pause
N	: Nouns		

The steps to conduct the research were:

- Dividing students into 5 groups
- Asking students to make 20 English questions focusing in grammar error (typical TOEFL test questions).
- After making sure there are no exact same questions from those groups, the instructor proceeds to the presentation
- Presenting the questions in front of the class and the audience had to answer the questions.
- Presenting students start a discussion to the right answer with the class after the presentation.
- Note taking was taken to point the improvisation made during the activity.

## Results and Discussion

Since students were not restricted in their access to digital tools to help them finish the assignment, but their use was limited by the nature of the task. Instead of focusing on simple grammar, spelling (sentence-level errors), the question-generation assignment required students to apply digital literacy at a textual level. The digital tools were used after the group discussion process in

generating questions. They need to correct their wrong or inaccurate questions before presenting. The audience also required to answer the questions presented by the presenting group to measure their understanding growth toward tenses and grammars compared to other groups' questions.

Questions were checked by 2 checkers from the same field in linguistics. The checks were about the number of questions completed, the type of questions, and the topics. The presentation observation was done by 1 checker who had a role as the class lecturer. However, the result from each group is in the table as follows:

**Table 1. Results**

Groups	Number of questions	Types of questions		Questions about	Presentation
		FB	WC		
Group 1	20	10	10	T, SVA, Conj	P
Group 2	20	10	10	T, SVA	P, H
Group 3	20	20		T, N	P, H
Group 4	20	20		T, N, Adj	P, H
Group 5	20	20		T, N, Adj	P, H

From the result above, designing 20 grammar and structure questions forces students away from rote memorization to critical thinking. Through a process that makes them develop clear problems and correct answers, this PjBL model changes students from passive users of knowledge become active producers of evaluations.

It is in this way that PjBL encourages students to go beyond memorization by actively search (even for grammar) and making judgments individually. Instead of just getting errors pointed out to them, they take ownership of their learning objectives, and providing judgment of their own work for that matter. In doing so, they develop an even stronger understanding of linguistics while gaining further insight into how to create meaningful assessments.

This leads to better logical reasoning and problem solving, which are critical in both academic and real-world context. If students push themselves to produce rather to just respond, then the standard grammar lesson becomes a remarkable act of intellectual growth and independence.

### **Discovering questions related to grammar**

Students had given the opportunity to

Group 1 offers a fairly balanced mix of Fill-in-the-Blank (FB) and Word Choice (WC) questions. The main focus is on Tenses (T), Subject-Verb Agreement (SVA), and Conjunctions (Conj). These are all foundational grammar topics that help build a solid language base.

Group 2 still balances FB and WC questions, while group 3 shifts entirely to FB questions, focusing on T and N. There are no WC questions here, which means the main goal is to test learners' ability to recall and apply grammatical rules accurately.

In Group 4, the focus on FB questions continues, but the scope now broadens to include Adjectives (Adj) along with T and N. This shows that the test is now asking learners to work with more complex language structures.

Group 5 is similar to Group 4, focusing entirely on FB questions, but continues to cover a more complex range of topics, including T, N, and Adj. This suggests a final push toward mastering these key grammar points.

**Table 2 Examples of the questions**

	The teacher _ the lesson very clearly yesterday.			
	a. explains	b. explained	c. explaining	d. to explain
1	<p><b>Answer: b</b></p> <p>Kata <i>yesterday</i> menunjukkan waktu lampau → harus menggunakan simple past tense.</p> <p>Verb explains (present) dan bentuk non-finite (explaining, to explain) tidak tepat.</p>			
2	<p>Before the plane landed, all passengers _ their seatbelts.</p> <p>a. fastened</p> <p><b>Answer: c</b></p> <p>Dua kejadian di masa lalu → yang lebih dulu terjadi memakai past perfect.</p>			
3	<p>The professor, along with the students, _ attending the seminar.</p> <p>a. are</p> <p><b>Answer: c</b></p> <p>Subjek utama = the professor. Frasa along with the students tidak memengaruhi verb.</p>			
4	<p>He didn't knew the answer to the question.</p> <p>a. He</p> <p><b>Answer: b</b></p> <p>Setelah "didn't" harus menggunakan verb dasar.</p>			

The progression highlights a clear shift from testing basic grammar knowledge to more complex, nuanced language use. In the earlier groups, the focus is on understanding and applying basic grammar rules like tenses and subject-verb agreement. As we move into Groups 3, 4, and 5, the complexity of

the content increases to include nouns, adjectives, and more detailed grammatical structures.

The Fill-in-the-Blank (FB) format dominates the later groups, likely because it tests learners' ability to recall and apply grammar under more pressure, with fewer cues than the Word Choice (WC) questions in Group 1 and 2. Overall, this approach is designed to test both accuracy and fluency in language use. The later groups challenge learners to apply their knowledge more spontaneously, which reflects how we use language in daily life. By the end of the sequence, the goal seems to be not only mastering grammar but also using it confidently and fluently.

### **Speaking skills improved**

Introducing Hesitation (H) alongside the Pause (P). This combination seems to push learners to think more like they would in real conversations, where they might pause or hesitate while speaking. The inclusion of P and H in the presentation of each group suggests that the test is not only focused on grammar knowledge but also on the ability to handle language in real-time, as learners would in actual conversations where pauses and hesitation are natural.

The courage to read questions in English, despite frequent pronunciation errors, significantly enhances students' speaking skills. As observed in the group performances, many students initially lacked confidence, such as **Groups 2, 3, and 5**, who struggled with reading questions aloud. However, the act of attempting to articulate English words—even imperfectly—demonstrates their determination to push their limits.

This practice fosters familiarity with English gradually improving fluency. For instance, **Group 1**, which delivered presentations about tenses, subject-verb agreement, and conjunction questions, likely benefited from repeated exposure to spoken English. The willingness to engage with the language, despite mistakes, builds resilience and lays the foundation for future proficiency. Moreover, the assignment highlights how students' efforts to speak English, however hesitant, contribute to skill development. **Group 4**'s standout student, who read questions fluently, serves as an example of progress achievable through persistent practice. The others in the group, though less confident, still gained valuable experience by attempting fill-in-the-blank, tenses, and noun-adjective questions.

Incorrect pronunciations are stepping stones, as they encourage active participation and reduce fear of errors. Over time, such exercises can transform timid speakers into more assertive communicators. The collective effort across all groups underscores the importance of courage in language learning, proving that progress often begins with imperfect but earnest attempts.

### **Conclusion**

This article highlights how student-generated grammar questions in a PjBL framework provide a systematic approach to mastering English tenses and

improving overall grammatical accuracy. By designing and working with various question types—including tense identification, subject-verb agreement, and fill-in-the-blank exercises—students actively engage with grammar rather than passively memorizing them. This method not only strengthens their understanding of linguistic structures but also directly enhances their writing skills, as they learn to apply these rules contextually.

The observed classroom performances reveal that this approach also significantly benefits speaking skills, despite initial pronunciation challenges. While some students demonstrated marked fluency (like Group 4's standout participant), even hesitant learners made progress by pushing beyond their comfort zones. The collaborative, student-driven nature of PjBL fosters confidence and practical communication skills, proving that structured yet creative grammar assignments can bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world English use. Ultimately, this strategy transforms grammar learning into an interactive, empowering process that cultivates both accuracy and expressive ability.

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