

Instructional Design Framework for EFL Students in Cultivating Project-Based Language Learning

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Abstract

Project-Based Language Learning (PBL) offers a transformative learning experience to involve language learners in real-world issues of the target language achieved by creating products that serve a genuine purpose. Therefore, instructional design framework of PBL for English as A Foreign Language (EFL) students in higher education is crucial. In addition, they must also acknowledge PBL as it is a mandatory based on OECD (2016). As a results, this study aims to investigate the implementation of PBL for EFL students for the instructional design framework of PBL use enhancement. To accomplish this aim, a systematic literature review (SLR) was employed by extracting from the SCOPUS database as publications on international practices. In total, 24 documents from the last five years (2018–2023) were included by PRISMA Analysis for the data selection, Mendeley reference manager for the data extraction and VosViewer software application for the data analysis. The findings indicate that PBL comprises Discovery Learning (DL), Cooperative Learning (CL), and Reflective Learning (RL). It includes the benefits of training, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration (in groups), and student motivation in learning, which are attributes that are shared by several of the learning models that are applied in ELF learning. Specifically, ELF learning utilizes cooperative learning, cooperative problem solving, cooperative problem solving in groups, and cooperative problem solving individually. Additional research is required to effectively develop learning designs based on this framework. It contributes to the existing literature by providing an understanding of the evolution of PBL research topics in EFL.

Keywords: Instructional Design; EFL Students; Project-Based Language Learning (PBL)

Introduction

Students of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) are increasing their skills through project based learning (PjBL) (Guo et al., 2020), particularly Project-Based Language Learning (PBL) (Khoiriyah & Widiati, 2020), to meet the demands of Industrial 4.0. Nevertheless, the execution of PBL frequently offers only a single opportunity (Guo et al., 2020; OECD, 2016; OECD Trento Centre for Local Development, 2018; UNESCO, 2021), thereby missing chances to engage EFL students in real-world issues of the target language (Lee et al., 2021). This engagement can be achieved by creating products that serve a genuine purpose and facilitate transformative learning experiences. An instructional design framework of PBL is crucial in higher education to effectively engage EFL students, as mandated by OECD (2016). PBL provides EFL students with the chance to integrate their learning experiences to real-world issues in the target language which is English. This is accomplished by creating products that have a genuine purpose and engage EFL students in meaningful ways.

Further research has been conducted on PBL in higher education, specifically among EFL students. This research has focused on the development of various instruments to measure PBL, such as online learning community by CALL perspective (Nur et al., 2022), instructional strategies in Vocational English for Professional Purposes (EPP) classrooms (X. Huang & Huang, 2023), Forum Group Discussion (FGD) (Slabodar, 2023), self-directed learning, and self-control learning through synchronous and asynchronous learning systems, social practice learning, real-world experience, critical thinking stimuli (Barbas-Rhoden et al., 2021). These instruments assess aspects such as awareness, learning strategies, learning activities, evaluation, and interpersonal skills (Lanteigne et al., 2021). The PBL instruments encompass dimensions of learning motivation, strategic planning and execution, self-regulation, and interpersonal communication (Barbas-Rhoden et al., 2021). Research on PBL serves as a benchmark for other studies in higher education, particularly for EFL students.

Previous studies on PBL for EFL students in higher education (Wang, 2020; Kurt & Beck, 2023; Learning et al., 2023; Garib, 2023; Gaspar & Warner, 2021) have been limited, but there is still potential for further research and the development of an instructional design framework. A systematic literature review (SLR) is needed to identify research trends and new opportunities for instructional design framework in cultivating PBL. It aims to establish a basis for future research on PBL in higher education contexts. Research on PBL in EFL education has explored various topics (Villalba, 2022; Zheng, 2022; Sun & Zhu, 2023; Wind, 2020; Le Van & Hai Tien, 2021), but no rigorous study has examined the efficacy of the SLA research method in developing PBL among students. This study is crucial for evaluating foreign language education practices and examining PBL's role in pedagogical studies.

This study aims to investigate the implementation of PBL for EFL students for the instructional design framework of PBL use enhancement, specific goals of this research include determining (a) the general trend of EFL learning publication production and citations, (b) the distribution of publications by geographical area, (c) the articles with the most impacting authors, countries, sources, and affiliates; (d) the articles with the highest number of citations corresponding to objectives in the literature; (e) the most commonly employed article study approaches and participants; (f) the most researched topics and subjects; and (g) the most frequently occurring themes in an overview of conceptual advancements. It is expected that a framework in cultivating PBL for EFL students can be developed from the evaluation of this research by the SLR.

Methods

The literature review process was applied in this study, which methodically examines and assesses relevant previous studies on the topic or topic of study (Snyder, 2019). The methodology for conducting a literature review involves a systematic approach to ensure a comprehensive and coherent synthesis of existing knowledge on a given topic. Furthermore, in secondary data analysis, the body of current literature containing theories and empirical research findings in a specific topic and scope is gathered, evaluated, and integrated with the aim of identifying significant discoveries, gaps, tensions, inconsistencies, or suggesting future study direction (Hulland, 2020). This study reviewed several articles related to the challenges of English language teaching in multilingual classrooms.

This research examines academic articles regarding PBL in EFL learning that are available on SCOPUS database as publications on international practices from 2018 to 2023 (5 years). Scopus indexes the vast majority of English-language (Vera-Baceta et al., 2019), covers peer-reviewed scientific articles (Baas et al., 2020) and includes a wider range of journals than most other research databases (Martín-Martín et al., 2018). Other indexers, including Web of Science and Dimensions, index most Scopus-indexed journals as well. The five-year (2018-2023) publishing data for PBL in EFL learning from Scopus is presented and discussed. The SLR approach (Figure 1) was used for analysis by PRISMA Analysis for the data selection, Mendeley reference manager for the data extraction and VosViewer Application for the data analysis. The findings of the SLR analysis established the course of development and the scope of future research, particularly in the topic of PBL in EFL learning.

Inclusion and Exclusion for Data Eligibility

The systematic literature review (SLR) technique employs five primary phases for the selection of literature. Initially, only journal articles are chosen as the published data, excluding book reviews, theses, and conferences. Next, the chosen journal articles specifically concentrate on papers released within the past five years (2018-2023) and revolve around topics identified by the researchers including

Project-Based Language Learning (PBL), foreign language learning, EFL learning, and EFL students in higher education. Moreover, throughout the process of selecting journal articles, researchers only rely on internationally recognized databases such as Scopus. Furthermore, researchers utilized the Mendeley reference manager tool to accurately extract the specific data within a certain time period and from a specific database, prior to importing the selected data into the VosViewer application software. Consequently, researchers choose to utilize the English language when conducting their search for journal articles. This decision was made in order to gather comprehensive international data pertaining to the primary topics of PBL in EFL education, with the aim of constructing an instructional design framework.

Eligibility Criteria

To conduct the eligibility criteria in this study, some procedures were set up and implemented. The authors started by searching for "Project-Based Language Learning (PBL)" (in quotation marks) alongside "foreign language learning" and "EFL learning" in the Scopus database. To limit the search for focusing the study, the authors implied exclusion criteria by the quotation marks "EFL students' learning in higher education" during 2018-2023 by indicating some criteria, including in relation with Project-Based Language Learning (PBL), reports on research articles (not a review article, book review, book chapter, book publication, newspapers, magazine, instead of research journal article.), investigation on foreign language learning and EFL learning, articles processed by peer-reviewed processes, one occurrence on both databases, Scopus indexed-journal publications for International practices.

Eligibility Filtering

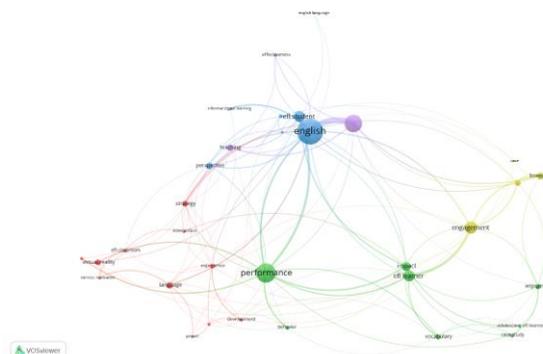
The eligibility filtering evaluation in the process of searching for journal articles is tailored to the keywords (themes) that have been chosen by the user. The search starts on November 1, 2023, yielding the subsequent outcomes:

Table 1: Results by Eligibility Criteria during 2018-2023 Source from Scopus

Criteria	Count
Project-Based Language Learning (PBL)	10
Foreign language learning	200
EFL learning	149
EFL students' learning in higher education	51
Total	410

According to data retrieved from the Scopus database, a total of 410 records were found. The researchers conducted filtering and identification based on the predetermined topics and keywords. A total of 33 journal articles were identified that corresponded to the specified themes, keywords, and complete research articles. Subsequently, the researcher gathered the data using the Mendeley system, a references manager, and entered it in the "RIS" format. Following this, the researchers exported the data to the VosViewer, as seen in the figure below:

Figure 1. Network Visualization of Data Results. Source Vosviewer

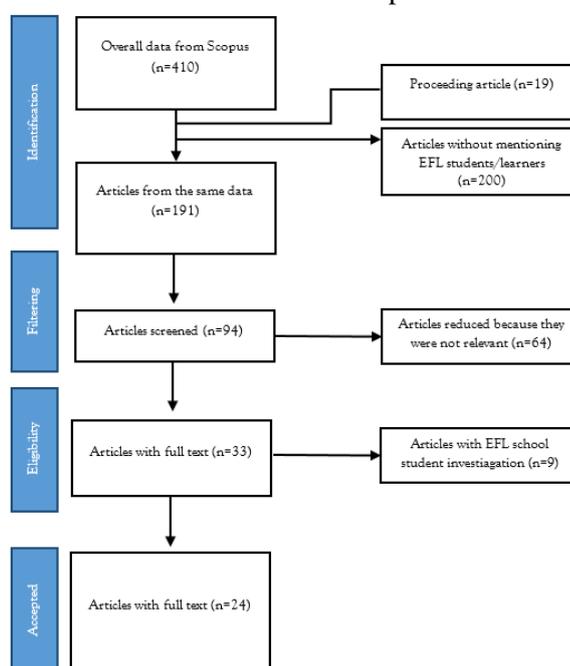


Based on the image provided, it can be inferred that the primary focus of research in English language studies is strongly connected to students learning English as a foreign language (EFL). In addition to its application in higher education settings as a foreign language, English language is also associated with the acquisition of skills for constructing instructional design framework which meets with OECD (2016). Therefore, from the figure above, Project-Based Language Learning (PBL) is an interesting study in EFL learning process as it covers performance development, informal digital learning, learning effectiveness, well students experience, and direct impact to the students.

PRISMA Analysis

Based on data as distributed in the image above (figure 1). Therefore, the PRISMA analysis process goes as follows:

Table 1: Results by PRISMA Analysis during 2018-2023
Source from Scopus



The analysis findings are derived from Scopus. During the initial search, conducted using keywords and limited to the period of 2013-2023, we obtained a total of 410 results. These results included detailed data from various sources such as journal articles, book reviews, conference proceedings, and student theses and dissertations. Out of the 410 results, we identified 200 Articles without mentioning EFL students/learners and 19 proceeding conference. Additionally, after applying data filtering, we found 191 articles that met the specified criteria. Following that investigation, the subsequent step involved filtering and reducing the data. Out of the initial pool of articles, 94 were filtered, and 64 of them were subsequently eliminated due to their lack of relevance. During the eligibility stage, we collected a total of 33 papers including article data, after excluding 9 articles that focused on the investigation of EFL school students. Ultimately, we have approved a total of 24 full papers that were submitted. Subsequently, the subsequent step involved converting the RIS format from Mendeley and presenting it through VOSViewer for additional examination.

Result and Discussion

The analysis using PRISMA yielded 24 pertinent and comprehensive journal articles. These articles provide detailed information such as the name, method, journal name, volume, issue, month and year of publication, as well as the country from which the data was obtained. The articles were published between 2018 and 2023.

Table 1: PRISMA results during 2018-2023 Source from Scopus

No	Authors	Method	Journal	Country
1.	York, J	Quantitative	Education and Information Technologies, 26(4), Jul 2021	Taiwan
2.	Wang, Z	Mixed (Quantitative and Qualitative)	Library Hi Tech, 40(1), February 2022	China
3.	Wang, Y C	Mixed (Quantitative and Qualitative)	ACM Ditigal Library, 5(3), February 2021	China
4.	Villalba, S M	Quantitative	CALL-EJ, 23(1), February 2022	Spain
5.	Tseng, S S	Mixed (Quantitative and Qualitative)	Educational Technology & Society, 22(1), January 2019	Taiwan
6.	Susanto	Qualitative	Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics, 8(1), March (2022)	Indonesia
7.	Suksawas, W	Qualitative	International Journal of Business and Society, 19(2), 2018	Thailand
8.	Stork, M	Quantitative	TechTrends, 62(3), November 2018	China
9.	Sari, D M M	Mixed (Quantitative and Qualitative)	Studies in English Language and Education, 8(2), May 2021	Indonesia
10.	Santillán-Iñiguez, J J	Quantitative	Revista Electrónica Educare, 26(1), April 2022	Ecuador
11.	Polyakova, S	Qualitative	International Perm Forum on Science and Global Challenges of the 21st Century, 342(1), 2022	Russia
12.	Park, P	Quantitative	The impact of an arts project-based language program to enhance EFL learning, 16(4), December 2019	Korea
13.	Neves, Maralice De Souza	Qualitative	Revista de Estudos da Linguagem, 28(3), May 2020	Brazil
14.	Morgado, M and Vesala-Varttala, T	Mixed (Quantitative and Qualitative)	Educational Technology & Society, 17(4), May 2023	Portugal and Finland
15.	Maruanaya, H	Mixed (Quantitative and Qualitative)	Asian EFL Journal, 26(62), 2019	Japan
16.	Lisa, A., Faridi, A., Saleh, M	Mixed (Quantitative and Qualitative)	International Journal of Interactive Mobile Technologies (IJIM), 15(17), September 2021	Indonesia
17.	Lin, Y J and Wang, H	Quantitative	Education and Information Technologies, 26(4), Juli 2021	China

18.	Keezhatta, M S	Mixed (Quantitative and Qualitative)	Asian EFL Journal, 27(42), 2020	Saudi Arabia
19.	Huang, H	Mixed (Quantitative and Qualitative)	Australasian Journal of Educational Technology, 37(6), July 2021	China
20.	Chi, D N	Qualitative	Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Studies, 10(3), July 2023	Vietnam
21.	Artini, L P	Mixed (Quantitative and Qualitative)	Dutch Journal of Applied Linguistics, 7(1), August 2018	Indonesia
22.	Aristizábal-Jiménez, Y	Quantitative	Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development, 22(2), April 2022	Colombia
23.	An, Z., Gan, Z and Wang, C	Quantitative	PLoS ONE, 15(10), October 2020	China
24.	Al-Wadi, H M	Mixed (Quantitative and Qualitative)	Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 14(2), March 2023	Bahrain

Project-Based Language Learning (PBL) Model

The learning model serves as a pedagogical instrument for teachers to impart information comprehensively to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students (York, 2018). This topic centers around understanding the principles of foreign language learning and subsequently using them in everyday situations, in accordance with the PBL approach (Z. Wang, 2022). A way to delivering PBL materials that considers the viewpoint of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students in higher education (Y. C. Wang, 2021). Several research have highlighted the importance of choosing PBL (Project-Based Language Learning) models that are dynamic, innovative, and foster the development of critical thinking abilities (S M Villalba, 2022). Several EFL learning paradigms prioritize student-centered approaches. The PJBL paradigm is an educational strategy that focuses on student-centered learning, particularly in the context of learning a foreign language, namely English as a Foreign Language (EFL) (Tseng, 2019). PBL is an educational approach that is distinguished by a prolonged period of time for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) study (Susanto, 2022). English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students are motivated to tackle obstacles that are based on real evidence in their specific areas of study, promoting a focused approach to the learning process. PBL encompasses a language teaching approach that empowers students to proficiently convey information and ideas, while fostering the development of analytical thinking abilities within the framework of mastering English as a foreign language.

Project-Based Language Learning (PBL) Framework

PBL is an educational methodology that places emphasis on student involvement and promotes the cultivation of analytical reasoning abilities by tackling problems presented by EFL students (Suksawas, 2018). The employment of PBL is a suitable pedagogical method for the instruction of EFL learning of higher education students (Stork, 2018). This condition is based on the assumption that PBL may improve students' cognitive abilities and empower them to regularly find solutions to obstacles in the field of EFL learning in higher education (Shen, 2022). This may be achieved via the implementation of several instructional strategies, such as Discovery Learning (DL), Cooperative Learning (CL), and Reflective Learning (RL).

Discovery Learning (DL)

The choice of a learning model that corresponds to students' interests is a crucial factor in determining the outcomes of EFL learning (Sari, 2021). The study investigations have yielded findings

on the selection of the discovery learning (DL) model. EFL learning in higher education may be assessed using three criteria: By selecting the discovery learning approach (Santillán-Iñiguez, 2022), EFL students may engage in research, make discoveries, and gather tangible evidence to enhance their learning process and achieve their learning objectives.

Cooperative Learning (CL)

The Cooperative Learning (CL) approach prioritizes the active participation of students in EFL learning. This is achieved by engaging EFL students in learning activities that are structured as projects (Polyakova, 2022). The cooperative learning methodology was stimulated by PBL due to its proven efficacy in improving EFL student learning results (Park, 2019). This approach offers students a wide range of innovative and up-to-date learning opportunities within the framework of ELF education in higher academic settings. By using the appropriate cooperative learning model in EFL learning through PBL (Artini, 2018; Aristizábal-Jiménez, 2020; An et al., 2020; Al-Wadi, 2023), the learning process becomes more dynamic, inventive, imaginative, and enjoyable. Consequently, this approach enhances student academic achievements in the field of EFL learning in higher education (Neves, 2020; Morgado & Vesala-Varttala, 2023; Maruanaya, 2019).

Reflective Learning (RL)

PBL promotes a reflective learning approach that prioritizes the learning process (Lisa et al., 2021; Lin & Wang, 2021; Keezhatta, 2020). The reflective model is a suitable learning approach to employ in higher education for EFL students (H. W. Huang, 2021; Chi, 2023). The PBL reflective learning paradigm prioritizes the attainment of class mastery through the enhancement of learning planning, teaching and learning activity processes, and evaluation. Diverse instructional approaches in the classroom are essential for teachers to effectively control the learning environment and enhance student academic performance.

Discussions

Project-based language learning (PBL) is proposed as an approach that enhances students' learning. This study aims to investigate the implementation of PBL for EFL students for the instructional design framework of PBL use enhancement. The study findings suggest that project-based language learning (PBL) consists of three components: discovery learning (DL), cooperative learning (CL), and reflective learning (RL). The elements of training, critical thinking, creativity, cooperation (in groups), and student motivation in learning are encompassed under ELF learning paradigms. ELF learning specifically employs cooperative learning strategies, which involve collaborative problem-solving activities conducted both in groups and individually. Furthermore, through mutual help in attaining the educational objectives of EFL students in higher education, the students cultivated their dependability and shared accountability proficiencies. The results of the current investigation suggest that PBL has the potential to foster educational practices that translate into enduring lifestyle habits. In the following discussion, we examine how PBL contributes to the development of students' interpersonal skills.

The students cooperatively executed the project duties (Tang, 2023). During these instances, they collaborated as teams and engaged in communication to accomplish the goal of solving the task and presenting the findings to the other groups, therefore impacting the students' cooperative abilities (Garib, 2023; Le Van & Hai Tien, 2021; Yuliani & Lengkanawati, 2017). When the teacher assigned tasks to be autonomously resolved, the students took accountability for their language acquisition, transforming her function into that of an advisor and supervisor. The students' assumption of responsibility is an integral component of PBL (Park, 2019). Engaging in project-based learning empowers EFL students to assume accountability for their own learning, fostering a mindset of continuous learning throughout their lives. This assertion highlights the correlation between PBL and the cultivation of interpersonal skills, which are essential for continuous learning throughout one's life. Furthermore, assuming responsibility may imply the cultivation of other interpersonal skills, such as self-control. The capacity for self-regulation and teamwork enhances one's aptitude for decision-making. Furthermore, assuming responsibility can have a beneficial impact on students' individual aptitudes, self-control, dependability, and capacity for collective accountability.

PBLL stimulates the many intelligences of students by providing differentiated assignments that involve project-based learning (Gibbes & Carson, 2014). Teachers tailored the exercises to suit the varying skills of the pupils, rather than basing them solely on their degrees of success. The students in groups showed a high regard for the diverse talents of their classmates, recognizing the significance of both hand-drawn illustrations and the utilization of advanced technical software (Yuliani & Lengkanawati, 2017). The group members synergistically augmented each other's intellectual capacities to advance the project, therefore fostering individual and collaborative aptitudes, as well as self-directed abilities, along with dependability and shared accountability. Furthermore, PBLL aids EFL students in higher education in cultivating their many intelligences, therefore integrating learning into their daily lives rather than only preparing for it. These findings suggest that implementing PBLL using various intelligences can enhance learners' interpersonal abilities. Furthermore, PBLL evaluation has the potential to create an environment that caters to many intelligences, leading to successful internalization of linguistic concepts and profound language acquisition.

A pedagogical framework for EFL students in fostering PBLL is demonstrated in this instance. It illustrates how professors in higher education began with the curricula provided in the textbook and transformed it into an authentic problem, challenging their students to find a solution. This scenario parallels a real-world situation when a person or a collective faces an issue that requires resolution (Artini, 2018; Kang & Bruna, 2013; T. Y. Lin, 2020). The challenge is resolved by employing several interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary resources. Consequently, PBLL presented students with challenges that required them to employ various resources and engage in communication with the community in order to find solutions. Furthermore, the inclusion of an audience consisting of both school and community members enhanced the authenticity of the stated project, mirroring real-life scenarios. EFL students in higher education engaged in sustainable education, acquiring knowledge and skills to effectively engage with both oneself and the society (X. Huang & Huang, 2023). Furthermore, collaborating with the community established a form of partnership with it. This collaboration offers students enhanced academic and non-academic opportunities that have a beneficial impact on their learning and the development of their knowledge, abilities, and aptitudes. This relationship enhances the interpersonal abilities of EFL students in higher education.

The current study demonstrated that implementing an instructional design framework for EFL students in higher education can effectively foster PBLL. This framework creates a conducive environment that encourages students to collaborate, communicate, show mutual respect, and identify their individual strengths and abilities, thereby enhancing their interpersonal skills (Hamidah et al., 2020). A pedagogical framework for teaching EFL to higher education students, aimed at promoting PBLL, also facilitates the recognition of individual differences. This recognition has a good effect on students' engagement and motivation, and enables them to work together in a collaborative manner. The prior potentialities of PBLL not only facilitated the development of students' interpersonal skills, but also ensured that their education was sustainable and prepared them for effective life functioning. In addition, the implementation of a pedagogy known as PBLL in higher education may be facilitated by an instructional design framework. This framework enables teachers to provide support to EFL students through activities such as clarifying goals, facilitating learning, and providing advice (Barbas-Rhoden et al., 2021). This scaffolding provides assistance to the pupils in both direct and indirect manners. In the current study, the teacher's scaffolding of one group facilitated the other groups' awareness of their own strengths and flaws. This emphasizes the significance of a teacher's scaffolding, which is crucial not just in a traditional classroom setting but also in a project-based learning environment (Guo et al., 2020). Therefore, teachers are advised to monitor the groups' activities without increasing the level of supervision, in order to guarantee that the group's activity promotes the cultivation of autonomy, particularly in terms of self-directed abilities. Teachers of EFL students in higher education must evaluate the gap between their current abilities and knowledge and the ones they require to effectively execute a project. They should then use this evaluation to guide their instructional support.

Conclusion

According to the findings of a number of studies that were conducted on the learning strategies that are frequently applied by students who are engaged in the process of studying English as a Foreign Language in higher education, Project-Based Language Learning (PBLL) comprises Discovery Learning (DL), Cooperative Learning (CL), and Reflective Learning (RL). It includes the benefits of

training, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration (in groups), and student motivation in learning, which are attributes that are shared by several of the learning models that are applied in ELF learning. Specifically, ELF learning utilizes cooperative learning, cooperative problem solving, cooperative problem solving in groups, and cooperative problem solving individually.

This study demonstrates that an instructional design framework for teaching PBL to EFL students may engage students in ways that are appropriate for EFL pedagogical resources. So that the process of learning English as a foreign language may function best in accordance with the requirements of the students, we implement discovery learning, cooperative learning, and reflective learning. The expectations of OECD (2016) are that learning must go hand in hand with autonomous learning encompassing project-based and be able to increase EFL student learning outcomes in educational learning. In the meantime, future research needs to include an in-depth assessment of the effect of PBL learning models. In addition to this, specialized study is required to improve teachers' understanding of how to adopt PBL learning models that are relevant to the appropriate learning materials for EFL students in the cultivation of PBL.

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