

# **EFL Students' Perspectives of Applying CALL through Project-Based Learning**

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Technology is everywhere in education. Schools, universities, and other educational institutions have provided computers for learners to run their learning activities. Most students enthusiastically welcome such an extraordinary technology. Moreover, the growth of technology encourages teachers to apply it in teaching learning process and involves learners in order to achieve the goals. Due to these issues, this study was conducted to determine students' perspective on the implementation of Project Based Learning (PBL) activities in an application of Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL). This study involved 40 participants who were learning writing at the fifth semester. To obtain the data, the writer distributed the paper-based Linkert scale survey, and the students handed the reflective notes in to answer two questions related to the implementation of PBL: What are the advantages of the PBL activities done in the CALL application? and What are the challenges of the PBL activities done in the CALL classroom?. The data analysis revealed that the students had positive responses on CALL and PBL in teaching and learning process although they found some obstacles to integrate CALL. The implication of CALL in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) can be used for further research.

*Keywords:* Computer Assisted and Language Learning, Project Based Learning, English Foreign Language

*Teknologi sudah digunakan di dalam institusi pendidikan. Sekolah, universitas, dan institusi pendidikan lainnya telah menyediakan komputer bagi peserta didik untuk menjalankan kegiatan belajar mereka. Sebagian besar siswa dengan antusias menyambut sebuah teknologi yang luar biasa. Apalagi, pertumbuhan teknologi mendorong guru untuk menerapkan penggunaan komputer dalam proses belajar mengajar dan melibatkan peserta didik untuk mencapai tujuan pembelajaran. Karena masalah ini, penelitian ini dilakukan untuk mengetahui perspektif siswa tentang pelaksanaan kegiatan Pembelajaran Berbasis Proyek dalam penerapan Pembelajaran Berbasis Komputer (CALL). Penelitian ini melibatkan 40 peserta yang sedang belajar menulis di semester lima. Untuk mendapatkan data tersebut, penulis mendistribusikan survei skala Linkert berbasis kertas, dan para siswa memberikan catatan reflektif untuk menjawab dua pertanyaan terkait pelaksanaan PBL: Apa keuntungan dari kegiatan PBL yang dilakukan dalam aplikasi CALL? dan Apa tantangan dari kegiatan PBL yang dilakukan di kelas CALL ?. Analisis data menunjukkan bahwa siswa mendapat tanggapan positif pada CALL dan PBL dalam proses belajar mengajar walaupun mereka menemukan beberapa hambatan untuk mengintegrasikan CALL. Implikasi CALL dalam belajar bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing (EFL) dapat digunakan untuk penelitian lebih lanjut.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Nowadays, technology has been growing rapidly; it assists teachers and learners to obtain their goals. Technology and education have great relationship, and education will run smoothly if

educators and learners generate them properly. Computers can be used to assist students' work although without having teacher's presence. In this era, computers have already been provided in many schools, universities, and other educational institutions. They can be smaller, faster, and easier to use. It facilitates the students and teachers to finish their tasks, and it is a suitable tool to assist students who have different learning styles. Students generally have their own styles to learn; some are visual, auditory, kinesthetic, extrovert, or introvert learners. The use of computer really helps introvert and kinesthetic learners since they can focus on doing their tasks.

The use of computer in teaching and learning processes is called Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL). CALL is a broad term, and it is not a magic tool in language learning that can help learners do many things, but it is only a tool to assist learners and teachers in order to run teaching and learning process. It can be the use of internet application like email, www, chat, video, e-learning, and others. CALL can be shared out from the use of computer, online learning materials, word processor, and other things related to computer (Chapelle & Jamieson 2008). It is applied on internet application such as world-wide website (www), email and chat application (Torat, 2000). Teachers are able to implement or run teaching process through those media. Email allows learners to have direct and indirect communication around the world. Learners may learn a lot through email like improving their writing skill. Students can make sample of business letters. FTP allows teachers and learners download document, videos, animations. WWW allows them to search many things they want related to educational topics. Chat is a proper media to have real time communication with other teachers and students. E-learning is a tool to help learners have integrated skills since teachers upload the materials and assignments, and students download materials and answer questions given. The effectiveness and simplicity of CALL can be used to achieve the educational goals in learning English as a foreign language. To conclude, through the use of CALL, English foreign language learners will be more motivated and innovative in running learning process.

As the above explanation, one of the current issues in some educational institutions is the use of e-learning. It has been applying in some universities. Many universities have good interaction on e-learning process; however, in some universities, students have low interaction on e-learning due to it serves the poor connection; therefore, many students find obstacles to run it in learning process. Academic institutions which have great interaction on e-learning will affect positively on students; performance; on the other hand, those who do not have good interaction on e-learning will have poor students' performance (Rodgers, 2006). The universities that apply e-learning inside and outside classroom may have good improvement on students' academic achievement (Thabet & Kalyankar, 2014). The students who participated the e-learning would have better grade than the conventional ways to run learning process (Holley, 2012). Generally, the existence of technology including e-learning is able to enhance English students' improvement.

Moreover, e-learning has been popular among learners and teachers since it provides beneficial features for them. Teachers are able to upload the learning material and access students' work at home or at any places, and students are able to download and do their task at anywhere they want. They do not need to learn at classroom and have face to face learning

process. In another word, e-learning lessens the processes of teaching and learning processes. Meanwhile, e-learning is not a perfect tool; it also has some weaknesses. The main factor of e-learning system is the internet connection to the server. Poor connection will interrupt the run of students' and teachers' activities, it will decrease students' motivation in joining e-learning. As a result, it impacts on the lack of students' comprehension of learning material and poor grade. In another version of e-learning, it provides learners four English skills to learn inside and outside classroom. Learners learn four integrated skills and grammar, and they also get score immediately when they finish and submit their task. Integrated skills are achieved when students are using e-learning since students read online material; it enhances students' comprehension to the topic given. Besides, students may have listening section on it; it increases listening comprehension, and they should type down the answers on available space; it repeatedly advance students' writing skill, and at the last process, teachers may ask students about their task orally; it also improve their speaking ability. To conclude, e-learning contributes not only the simplicity to run learning process but also the integrated skills for users.

To maximize the use of CALL in learning process, Project Based Learning can be one of alternative ways. PBL can be used to gain integrated activities done by students. Students may have collaborative learning process in which they can collaborate with their peers to find out the problems and know how to solve them. They can also use their cognitive and metacognitive ways to seek the solution and finish their task. PBL deals with the various learning like collaborative learning, problem-based learning and learning how to be independent learners (Mali 2016). Independent learners may direct themselves to know what they should do; they analyze problems with other peers by asking and discussing and use their own strategies to finish their task; it can be done by using one appropriate way. As a result, they can create precious product. Besides, they learn how to have more responsibility on doing their task. They do not depend on themselves with other people, but they struggle to finish their work by asking many questions to teachers and partners, and they know their target when they finish and submit their task. In a small group, each student knows his or her duty and assimilate their opinions to gain the answers.

PBL can be a proper solution to improve students' integrated skills. Students are able to socialize with other students to discuss their task, share their difficulties, help each other, work together to solve problems, and learn a lot of crucial knowledge from others. In PBL activities, students can be more active in their small groups and help introvert students to interact with other students, and their self-confidence will improve significantly. The activities of using PBL help learners to be more active in order to work out their problems in a group (Felder, 2015). They collaborate their ideas to solve and finish their task and no hesitancy to share information they have got before. Another important thing is students gain better comprehension of material and grade (Bell, 2010). Sometimes, teachers' explanation is not sufficient for learners to gain a lot of information, but the implementation of PBL assists learners to gain more significant comprehension since they may read more and more until they discover what they are looking for.

English department students of *Universitas Pamulang* have been familiar with the use of computer since it is one of the subjects that should be mastered by them. In fact, the role of computer is very beneficial in their learning processes: preparing ppt, finishing their papers, and other activities. Furthermore, many scholars have investigated the relationship between computer and students' achievement, and they found that it affected significantly (Simmon, 2013; Annamalai, 2015; Ping 2015, Kizil & Arslan, 2012). Although it really assists students' activities, the students have faced different problems related to having computer experiences: they have low motivation in joining e-learning; it can be seen from their responses "yes, "No", "I agree", "You're right", or "Thanks"; they did not state much explanation on it. Unpredictably, they just copied paste their friends' responses, and they left it; it is so terrible since they are not able to use it properly to enhance their learning process, they hesitate to visit the e-learning website since they are lack of reading habit, it is difficult for them to comprehend online materials, it needs time to get the feedback from the lecturers, and they used to have lecturing method. Therefore, when they face a new strategy to learn something; they need extra time to run and comprehend it. Moreover, many students prefer using modern media to conventional media; meanwhile, they have poor motivation about how to collaborate the media to their learning process.

It is obvious that applying CALL through project based learning would provide many merits and challenges for students. Therefore, this study was aimed to find out the English foreign learners' perspectives applying CALL through project based learning in English Department of *Universitas Pamulang*. It focused on finding out the advantages and challenges in implementing CALL. Moreover, this study was conducted to answer the following questions:

1. What are the advantages of the PBL activities done in the CALL application in English Department of *Universitas Pamulang*?
2. What are the challenges of the PBL activities done in the CALL classroom English Department of *Universitas Pamulang*?

## **METHODS**

This study was carried out in English Department of *Universitas Pamulang* South Tangerang from April to July 2016. It has promoted the use of e-learning program for some years. They have also promoted to all lectures by having training program; therefore, it is a proper place to conduct the study. The qualitative study was used in order to dig the students' perspective on the advantages and challenges of the implementation of CALL through PBL activities. The populations were about 130 students who were in the fourth semester and taking writing 4. However, for the participants, this study involved 40 regular B students. The participants had learned how to construct a good essay and been familiar with a project they would do.

The learning process was done not only in the classroom but also outside the class; it means the writer gave the students freedom to finish their projects. However, the writer welcomed the students to have face to face consultation if they want to share their difficulties in doing their project, and it could be the proper time to report and identify the students' progress. In addition, the learning process involved one main project which the use of PBL

activities. The project was writing an essay consisting of three pages discussing one of the guided topics. They also connected their project with the use of CALL related to e-learning websites. Moreover, the writer used a questionnaire to find out the students' perspective which was adapted from Wahib (2011) and Mali (2017). The questionnaire was paper-based Linkert scale survey (0-4). There were 20 questions answered by the students to find out their perfectives in applying Computer assisted Language Learning. Besides, the students also gave their opinions about advantages and challenges they faced during learning process, and they noted down their personal response which is not stated on the questionnaire. Their personal responses helped the writer know more detailed information about advantages and challenges. It can be also evidence to match the students' responses in conventional questionnaire and their notes.

The study involved some procedures: firstly, the writer clarified what project the students should do, divided them into ten groups which consists of 2 students in one group. Then, the writer explained the students regarding the use of CALL related to e-learning websites: [www.e-learning.unpam.ac.id](http://www.e-learning.unpam.ac.id) and <http://myenglish.perason-intl.com> and asked the students to have the writing process on one of the websites. After having had some meetings, she distributed the questionnaire. It was distributed in order to recognize the students' perspective in applying CALL. The students answered 20 questions which each item was accompanied with a 5-point: 0 (no response) 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (agree), and 4 (strongly disagree). The last, she gained the data and analyzed the students' difficulties and simplicities by giving the percentage of each advantage and challenge. Table 1 lists some of the e-learning websites the groups are able to use in order to ease them in doing their project based learning.

*Table 1. E-learning websites in PBL*

<b>Online Technology</b>	<b>Websites</b>	<b>Potentials</b>	<b>Group</b>
E-learning unpam	<a href="http://www.e-learning.unpam.ac.id">www.e-learning.unpam.ac.id</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share learning materials</li> <li>• Provide many English subjects (Skill and non-skills)</li> <li>• The existence of discussion forum</li> <li>• Provide a large space to write</li> </ul>	1, 3, 5,7, and 9
myenglishlab	<a href="http://myenglish.perason-intl.com">http://myenglish.perason-intl.com</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide many English subjects (Skill and non-skills)</li> <li>• Share learning materials</li> <li>• Provide a large space to write</li> </ul>	2,4,6,8, and 10

E-learning UNPAM website has been known by the students since 2015. The website allows the students to create their ideas properly since they are able to minimize students' errors

in writing and maximize their writing performance, and the students are able to discuss and share their difficulties, simplicities, and experiences in doing their project. It also allows the students to download the online material; by having the online materials, the students have a lot of sources to read: online and printed sources. In addition, myenglishlab website provides some English skills to learn. The students are able to have online materials relating to English skills.

The data on the students' perspective on the issue of the implementation of PBL in CALL were collected using questionnaire. The questionnaire was completed after the students had several meetings in using CALL. They completed the questionnaire by giving the checklist in the given column. Then, they should also give the checklist in the form of advantages and challenges. This part assisted the writer to know the particular students' perspective in using CALL through project based learning. Also, she allowed the students to note extra information relating to advantages and challenges on the extra column. Their notes were very beneficial for the writer to analyze the advantages and challenges particularly. To analyze the students' responses, the writer gathered and calculated how many students who responded each item stated in questionnaire and gave the percentage on each item. Besides, the writer collected some advantages and challenges faced by the students and gave also the percentage on each item.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents two major findings in the study: the advantages of PBL activities through the use of e-learning websites and the challenges of the PBL activities through the use of e-learning websites.

### Advantages of the PBL Activities through E-Learning Websites (CALL)

Table 2. Advantages of the PBL activities through E-learning websites (CALL)

Statements	F	%
Learn from each other	17	42,5
Promote autonomous learning	19	47,5
Practice a cooperative skill	6	15
Share a responsibility to complete a project	19	47,5
Learn more about many kinds of technology	16	40
Practice to be an open-minded person	1	2,5
Promote an interesting situation in a group	4	10
Assist to reduce some mistakes in doing the project	4	10
Be aware on the writing mechanism	20	50
Practice more in another English skill (reading)	2	5

Based on the above table, the results reveal several major advantages of applying CALL through project based learning: learning from others, promoting autonomous learning, sharing a responsibility to complete a project, learn more about many kind of technology, and being

aware on the writing mechanism. Besides, Table 2 notes other advantages of applying CALL through project based learning. The writer found the students agreed that applying CALL in finishing their project would promote the autonomous learners. The students were able to finish their writing project in a small group without having much explanation from the lecturer. On the other side, the lecturer allowed the students to ask several questions while they were in the class, or while they were accessing the e-learning by clicking the discussion forum. This feature allows the students ask various questions. Moreover, they knew how to solve their problems in doing the writing project and what media they could use to assist them. Some students expressed their perspectives:

*“Initially, I did not understand what autonomous learning was when the lecturer explained about it, but when I did my project with my friend, discussed and solved the problems together and did it solemnly, I realized that the learning process trained us to be more independent to find the problems and how we solved it. When we faced a problem, we could ask out lecturer to help us, but we still became dominant roles in finishing our writing project. We learned a lot from this.”(Student 5)*

CALL not only made the students became autonomous learners but also they learned many things from their partner in their team or other students. In learning process, they collaborated their ideas, learned about writing mechanism together, found out the new and difficult words, and discussed the grammatical sentences from other students. The learning activity showed one group asked to other groups; it seemed crowded, but they discussed a lot. Furthermore, the students had an ability to share their responsibilities since they knew what they should do and when they should submit their writing project.

CALL allows the students to learn may kinds of technology. The students were able to access two kinds of e-learning websites. These two media really upgraded the students' knowledge about useful website to enhance their English skills. One student shared his perspectives:

*“I usually wrote my ideas in English on some social media like Facebook, blog, and my Instagram, but I could also write my ideas through e-learning websites. Our campus provides e-learningunpam.ac.id to learn many subjects including English, but now I am able to write my ideas through another e-learning website. They are so useful media for me and my partner.” (Student 8)*

The last, the use of e-learning as media to finish the students' project consciously reduce their writing errors. In the conventional way, they subconsciously would create a lot mistakes; meanwhile, the use of computer assisted them to solve their problems in punctuation, capitalization, and grammatical sentences. Several students share their perspectives, and here are their statements:

*“The computer really helped me and my friends to finish our writing projects in some passages. Fir the first time, I thought, it would be complicated for me to finish it, but when my and I tried to apply one of the e-learning websites, it helped us to correct or mistakes in structural sentences, punctuations, capitalization, and we realized that it also helped us determine out English styles: British or US English by clicking the language. When we submitted out project to the lecturer, she did not need focused on the mechanism but the organization and content.” (Student 13, 1, 14).*

### **Challenges of the PBL Activities through E-Learning Websites (CALL)**

*Table 3. Challenges of the PBL Activities through E-Learning Websites (CALL)*

<b>Statements</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
Experience poor internet connection in the campus area	17	42,5
Experience poor server (If many students use it at the same time)	26	65
Arrange the schedule to discuss with group members	15	37,5
Lack of cooperation in a group	7	17,5
Require much quota to connect the websites	19	47,5
Lack of guidance from the teacher	6	15
Lack of responses from the teacher	5	12,5
Time consuming	1	2,5
Limit vocabulary to express	2	5
Accommodate many different perspectives in a group	2	5

From the above table, it can be concluded that many students shared their perspectives related to e-learning websites: experiencing unstable server, having problems in internet connection, requiring much personal quota, and arranging the schedules. Besides, there were some minor challenges of the students when they applied CALL through project based learning stated on Table 3. *Universitas Pamulang* has sufficient facilities to support the students’ needs; the facility is related to the Wi-Fi; however, it sometimes has unstable server since the university has crowded students. The problem probably occurs when the student access the e-learning website at the same time. Furthermore, it tries to provide e-learning process for the students to promote technology, train to be independent learners, and cover the incidental events. However, since the establishment, it is not able to cover the internet connection. Moreover, if the students have the same schedules with other faculties, they would have

unstable server; as a result, they took longer time to finish their project. Some students shared their negative perspectives:

*“E-learning server should be upgraded more and more in order to cover all students’ matters. When we finished our task, it showed maintenance, or it was loading for about 30 minutes, and when we went on to another material, it was loading for about 20 minutes although we had used our own quota. It made us frustrated since we should wait the loading process.” (Students 9, 33, and 38)*

Other students had similar statements:

*“In finishing our project, my friend and I felt hesitant to use e-learning because it always had poor server although we were at campus or not. Firstly, I thought when we finished our project at campus by using campus’ Wi-Fi, we would have good server and finished our project quickly; in fact, we had the same situation. Therefore, we decided to use our private quota to connect to run the e-learning process. It costed much money.” (Student, 20 and 28)*

In addition, the students faced difficulty in arranging the same schedule with group members. The students of this study were regular B class, so most of the participants who involved in this study were workers who have tight working days, and they also have some working shifts; therefore, it was difficult for them to arrange when they should meet to finish their schedule. Here are some students’ perspectives:

*“Finishing my project by collaborating with my classmate made me dilemma because it was difficult for me to rearrange my working schedule.” (Student 30, 2, 17, and 40)*

*“My partner is a worker who must work from Monday to Saturday, but I do not work. This problem caused us had lack of communication.” (Student 18, 25, 39)*

*“When I was free, but my partner should work and vice versa. It made confused when we should meet and discuss our project.” (Student 4, 5)*

*Table 4. The percentage of students’ perception of applying CALL through PBL*

No	The Statements	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
1.	The computer mediated helped me to reduce my writing mistakes in doing a project	77,5	0	22,5
2	During the computer mediated activities, the instructor provided me with technical assistance	80	0	15

3	During the use of guided e- learning activities (some websites), the instructor provided me with technical assistance	80	10	10
4.	The use of e- learning helped me to reduce mistakes in writing project	70	0	30
5.	The instructor provided clear instructions that facilitated work to be done.	57,5	10	32,5
6.	I learned a lot from the given websites	67,5	2,5	30
7.	My writing skill improved due to the activities I performed	50	2,5	47,5
8.	I feel that my other skills in reading, speaking, and listening have also improved.	57,5	2,5	40
9.	As time went on, I felt like I managed to work with the computer more quickly	62,5	2,5	35
10.	The activities drove me to search for more examples online information	72,5	0	27,5
11.	I feel that I could analyse my mistakes earlier.	52,5	5	42,5
12.	The learning experiences through computer made the writing more interesting	65	5	30
13,	The learning experiences (Doing Project) through e- learning were more interesting	62,5	0	37,5
14.	I enjoyed doing computer based writing assignments more than traditional way	70	2,5	27,5
15.	The whole experiences were enjoyable	52,5	5	42,5
16.	Interaction with my colleagues made me like writing more	60	10	30
17.	Taking the computer mediated class was detrimental to my writing project	50	10	40
18.	The learning experiences through online learning made the writing project more challenging	62,5	2,5	35
19.	Computer mediated helped me a lot to gather more ideas	70	2,5	27,5
20.	Guided instructions on e- learning helped me a lot to gather more ideas	67,5	5	27,5
	TOTAL	1287,5	77,5	630
		64.5%	4%	31.5%

Table 4 reveals the percentage of students' perception in applying CALL through PBL. It shows that 64.5% students agreed in applying CALL through PBL. The major agreements were in the points of no 1, 2, 3, and 4. The students agreed that applying CALL really assisted them in solving their problems so that the students only focused on the content and other

elements in finishing their writing project. The students could learn many things from online information. While they were doing their writing project, they could read online information to support their tasks, learn grammar points and many things. The students' particular reasons were similarly stated on the students' perspectives above. However, 31.5% students disagreed in applying CALL through PBL. The disagreements were dominated by deteriorating of the students' writing performance, and the learning activities were not enjoyable since they had regretful experiences in applying e-learning websites. They sometimes had trouble in accessing the e-learning websites, and they had to spend much their private quota. Actually, their disagreement was parallel with their perspectives in talking about unstable server.

It has been clear that the problems of unstable internet connection and server are the main problems of educational institutions which involve e-learning processes (Mali, 2016). However, this finding contradicts with a belief that learners and teachers from other countries have been using computer in their learning process. Actually, there will be solution to solve that problem; it is to upgrade the internet connection within educational institution areas. by having free high-speed internet Wi-Fi. This study also found that CALL helped learners to reduce their mistakes in finishing their writing project. CALL is one digital tool that can be used to transform learning; it provides computer that can be used as a visual way to help writing process (Sutherland et al. 2006). Another challenge was related to complexity of time management. The students faced this problem because they are workers who have tight schedule, and it is impossible for them to rearrange the schedule.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The research finding reveals that the implementation of CALL through project based learning activities has some advantages and challenges. The advantages are the students learned a lot from other students; among members in one team might ask questions to other groups to help them solve problems, project based learning make the students be independent learners; they could recognize problems and find strategies to solve them, they can share their responsibility, they can access and try many kinds of technology and they will be aware on the writing mechanism. On the other sides, the challenges are having unstable internet connection, spending students' private quota, and having the complexity in arranging the schedule among members in a group. The challenges made the students hesitate to join the e-learning websites.

It is suggested that further researchers should have various websites to finish students' projects, involve various data collections, involve more students who have diverse cultural backgrounds, so researchers are able to gain a lot of positive responses in applying CALL through project based learning. Moreover, the further researches can also discuss whether there is a significant effect or not; it will be interesting if other further researchers are able to find it out. The writer also expects that the use of CALL through project based learning can be beneficial media in teaching and learning process, and the students will be more familiar with the online materials.

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