

EFL Pre-service Teachers' Perspectives on Team-based Project in Developing English Lesson Plans in Primary Teacher Program

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Keywords: English lesson plan, primary teacher program, team-based project</p> <p>DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.21093/ijeltal.v9i2.1716</p> <p>How to cite: Apoko, T. W. (2024). EFL Pre-service Teachers' Perspectives on Team-based Project in Developing English Lesson Plans in Primary Teacher Program. <i>Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics</i>, 9(2), 305-320</p>	<p><i>Team-based project (TBP) has been implemented in some universities to encourage students to be creative and motivated to develop some projects. However, not all EFL teachers in higher education can effectively apply TBP in generating the projects, including English instructional tools for young learners developed by EFL pre-service teachers. This study examines the EFL pre-service teachers' perspectives on using TBP in the contexts of how English lesson plans are developed, their creativity, motivations, and learning opportunities in the primary school teacher education program (PSTEP). The participants of this study are EFL pre-service teachers of PSTEP in one of the reputable private universities in Jakarta, Indonesia, who attended an English Learning in Primary Schools course in the second semester. This study uses a mixed methods design for collecting data from the survey and data from interviews. The results showed that EFL pre-service teachers had positive perceptions of using TBP in developing English lesson plans. The results also demonstrated that EFL pre-service teachers' creativity, motivation, and learning opportunities, qualitatively increased. Thus, this study recommends that EFL pre-service teachers continually work in groups to discuss and share their critical ideas with their teammates to produce English lesson plans as projects.</i></p>

1. Introduction

Teaching English for young learners at schools is essential for students (Cremin, 2022) who are prepared to be teachers of English in primary schools. One of teachers' preparedness is a lesson plan which includes learning materials, media of instructions, students' worksheets, and learning assessments (Nurtanto et al., 2021). In the context of higher education, however, students are not adequately capable of developing lesson plans (Ndiokubwayo et al., 2020).

One innovative learning model which is believed to be effective in overcoming the students' difficulties in developing English lesson plans is a team-based project (Arries et al., 2021).

The integration of TBP into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education represents a paradigm shift in teaching methodologies, moving away from traditional teacher-centred approaches towards more collaborative (Peters et al., 2020), student-centred learning experiences. This shift is particularly relevant in the context of primary school teacher education programs (PSTEP), where the preparation of future teachers must align with the evolving demands of 21st-century classrooms. The focus on TBP within these programs underscores a commitment to fostering key competencies such as teamwork, creativity, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills (Aranzabal et al., 2022; Astawa et al., 2017; You, 2021) which are essential for both teachers and students in a globalized, multilingual world.

This study is rooted in the growing recognition of the importance of practical, experiential learning opportunities in teacher education. Traditional teacher preparation methods have often been criticized for their heavy reliance on theoretical knowledge, with insufficient emphasis on applying this knowledge in real-world teaching contexts. TBP offers a promising alternative by providing pre-service teachers with hands-on experiences in designing and implementing lesson plans collaboratively, thus overcoming any issues between theory and practice (Bailey et al., 2020). This approach not only enhances the relevance and applicability of teacher education but also mirrors the collaborative nature of modern and powerful educational environments (Sibley & Ostafichuk, 2023).

In examining EFL pre-service teachers' perspectives on using TBP, this study acknowledges the complex interplay between language learning and teaching methodologies. English lesson planning, when undertaken as part of a team-based project, requires pre-service teachers to negotiate meaning, make collective decisions, and reflect on the pedagogical implications of their choices. This process is believed to stimulate creativity (Chen et al., 2022), as students are encouraged to think outside the box and explore innovative approaches to language teaching. Moreover, working in teams can significantly boost motivation (Oh et al., 2020; Shin, 2018), as students support and inspire each other, sharing the challenges and rewards of the learning journey.

Furthermore, the study considers how TBP in EFL settings can enhance learning opportunities for pre-service teachers. By engaging in collaborative projects, students are exposed to diverse perspectives and teaching styles, which can enrich their understanding of effective language instruction (Boss & Krauss, 2022). This exposure is invaluable in preparing preservice teachers to meet the needs of diverse students, equipping them with the skills to create inclusive, engaging, and effective English lessons. The focus on TBP also reflects a broader educational goal: to develop educators who are proficient in teaching English and adept at fostering collaborative, engaging learning environments.

Despite the growing interest in collaborative learning methodologies within English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education, there remains a notable research gap in understanding the specific impacts of team-based projects (TBP) on EFL pre-service teachers, particularly within the context of PSTEP. Existing studies have broadly examined the benefits of collaborative learning approaches (Chan et al., 2020; Peters et al., 2020; Qureshi et al., 2023) in enhancing language proficiency and pedagogical skills, yet there is a scarcity of research focusing on EFL pre-service teachers' perspectives of using TBP in the English lesson planning

development in the aspects of creativity and motivation. This gap highlights the need for an in-depth exploration of EFL pre-service teachers' perspectives on TBP to elucidate how these collaborative projects contribute to their preparedness for teaching English in primary schools, thereby informing future curriculum development and teaching practices in teacher education programs.

Thus, this study is situated within a broader discourse on improving EFL pre-service teachers' capacity through experiential learning practices. By focusing on TBP in the EFL context, the research aims to uncover insights into how collaborative approaches to lesson plans can influence creativity, motivation, and the overall preparedness of preservice teachers for the challenges of English education in primary schools. Thus, this study addresses two research questions:

- (1) How do EFL pre-service teachers of the Primary School Teacher Education Program perceive the efficacy of TBP in developing English lesson plans over two months of learning engagement?
- (2) How does TBP promote students' creativity and motivation in English learning?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Team-based Project as Innovative Learning Model in the 21st Century

The literature on team-based projects (TBP) as an innovative learning model in the 21st century presents a convincing argument for incorporating collaborative learning strategies in modern instruction. As it is noted, TBP is defined as working in small teams or groups for a common goal that allows the development of cooperative skills and enhances motivation and interest in learning resulting in deep learning (Seidel & Godfrey, 2005). This review synthesizes key findings from a range of studies, highlighting the multifaceted benefits of TBP in nurturing creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills among students.

A major body of research underscores the significance of TBPs in enhancing student engagement and motivation. According to Johnson & Johnson (2005), collaborative learning environments, such as those created by TBPs, empower students to participate actively in their education, promoting deeper engagement with the material. This is mainly related to the context of the 21st-century skills framework, which emphasizes the importance of collaboration and communication in preparing students for the challenges of the modern workforce. Studies by Yang et al. (2022) further support this, demonstrating that students participating in the activities with team-based learning show higher levels of academic achievement and satisfaction compared to those in traditional learning environments.

The role of TBPs in developing problem-solving and critical-thinking skills is another area of focus in the literature. TBPs provide a practical platform for students to apply academic knowledge to real-world problems, thereby strengthening their ability to solve complex issues and think critically (Silberman et al., 2021). In addition, this experiential learning approach is believed to foster reflective thinking and active engagement with the material (Schmidt & Allsup, 2019).

Creativity is also a critical outcome of TBPs, as Sawyer (2019) highlighted, who posits that collaborative projects offer unique opportunities for students to express themselves creatively, explore alternative solutions, and innovate (Habbal et al., 2024). The diversity of

perspectives within a team can stimulate creative thinking, leading to more innovative outcomes than those generated in individual learning settings. This aspect of TBPs is particularly valuable in today's rapidly changing global context, where creativity and innovation are highly prized.

Moreover, the literature explores the social dimensions of TBPs, emphasizing the development of interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence as key outcomes of collaborative learning (Qureshi et al., 2023). Morse (2023) notes that TBPs require students to navigate group dynamics, communicate effectively, and manage conflicts, thereby fostering soft skills crucial for personal and professional success. The capability to work effectively in groups or teams is increasingly recognized as a critical competency in the global economy, making TBPs a relevant and necessary component of 21st-century education.

However, the literature also acknowledges challenges associated with implementing TBPs, including issues related to group dynamics, assessment of individual contributions, and the need for instructor support and guidance. Michaelsen et al. (2023) discuss the importance of carefully designed assessment strategies and the role of the instructor in facilitating effective team collaboration and addressing potential conflicts.

Thus, the literature review on team-based projects as an innovative learning model in the 21st century highlights their significant potential to enhance student learning outcomes across various domains, including engagement, critical thinking, creativity, and interpersonal skills. While challenges exist, the benefits of TBPs in preparing students for the complexities of the modern world are clear, underscoring the need for educational institutions to incorporate collaborative learning strategies into their curricula

2.2 Lesson Plans as English Teaching Practice for Preservice Teachers

The literature on lesson plans as an English teaching practice for preservice teachers offers valuable insights into the pivotal role of careful planning in the effectiveness of language instruction. This review draws from various studies and theoretical frameworks to elucidate how lesson plans serve as a foundational skill in teacher education, influencing both teacher preparedness (A. G. Sawyer et al., 2020) and student outcomes (Farrell & Ashcraft, 2024).

One of the primary themes in the literature is the significance of lesson plans in fostering preservice teachers' pedagogical content knowledge. Shulman (1987) developed the idea of pedagogical content knowledge, highlighting how crucial it is for teachers to comprehend both the subject matter and the strategies for teaching it effectively (Almeida et al., 2019). In the context of English language teaching, (Richards & Rodgers, 2014) emphasizes that lesson plans help preservice teachers integrate linguistic objectives with pedagogical techniques, thereby enhancing their ability to deliver content in ways that are accessible and engaging for learners.

The literature also addresses the role of lesson planning in promoting reflective practice among preservice teachers. The process of planning lessons encourages teachers to anticipate potential challenges and consider various instructional strategies and materials (König et al., 2020), which in turn leads to deeper reflection on their teaching beliefs and practices. This reflective process is crucial for professional growth and development, enabling preservice teachers to critically assess their approaches and adapt their practices to meet the diverse needs of learners (Alsuhaibani, 2019).

Additionally, studies have explored the impact of lesson planning on creativity and innovation in English language teaching. Sawyer (2019) suggests that effective lesson planning allows for incorporating creative teaching methods and materials, significantly enhancing student engagement and learning outcomes. By planning lessons that include interactive activities, multimedia resources, and authentic language tasks, pre-service teachers can build a dynamic learning atmosphere that stimulates the interest and motivation of students.

The development of assessment strategies within lesson plans is another area of focus in the literature. When formative assessment is integrated into lesson planning, it allows teachers to monitor and evaluate student progress and adjust instruction accordingly (Moss & Brookhart, 2019). For preservice teachers, understanding how to design and implement effective assessment methods is essential for evaluating learning outcomes and ensuring that instructional goals are met.

However, the literature also acknowledges challenges associated with lesson planning for preservice teachers, such as teacher competencies, learning tasks, and technology integration (Janssen et al., 2019; König et al., 2020). The need for teacher education programs, therefore, is to provide ample opportunities for practice and feedback on lesson planning, ensuring that preservice teachers develop the skills necessary to plan effectively for the complexities of student engagement of the learning process (Butt, 2008).

Therefore, the literature review on lesson plans as English teaching practice for preservice teachers underscores the critical importance of this skill in preparing effective language teachers. Through lesson plans, preservice teachers develop a deeper understanding of content and pedagogy, engage in reflective practice, explore creative teaching methods, and learn to integrate assessment strategies. Despite the challenges, the ability to plan lessons thoughtfully and strategically is essential for fostering successful language learning experiences, emphasizing the need for continued emphasis on this aspect of teacher education.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This research employed a mixed methods design where the quantitative and qualitative data were combined to investigate EFL pre-service teachers' perspectives on the implementation of team-based project (TBP) in English learning in numeric display and the experiences during their learning engagement (Creswell & David, 2018). This design initially uses a quantitative method followed by a qualitative strategy. Using this mixed methods design, this study aimed to provide an in-depth analysis of EFL pre-service teachers' perspectives on the TPB and the beneficial contribution to English teachers' capacity in English lesson planning development.

3.2 Participants

The study involved a total of 54 participants in the second semester of the primary school teacher education program (PSTEP) in one reputable university in Jakarta, Indonesia, encompassing a diverse group of individuals with varying demographics in terms of gender, age, home location, and prior English language learning experiences. The participants were selected based primarily on their willingness and availability to participate in the English

Learning in the Primary School Course. From the survey distributed for participant demographics, the gender distribution of the participants was predominantly female, with 45 female participants making up 83% of the total. In contrast, male participants accounted for 17%, totalling 9 individuals. This gender distribution indicates a significantly higher participation rate among females in the study. Regarding age, most participants were 19 years old, constituting 59% of the total with 32 individuals. This was followed by 20-year-old participants, who represented 26% of the group with 14 individuals, and 18-year-old participants, making up 13% with 7 individuals. Only a single participant was older than 20 years, indicating that the study primarily involved young adults in their late teens to early twenties, which is typical for undergraduate students in a primary school teacher education program.

The participants hailed from various locations around Jakarta, Indonesia, with a significant majority, 74% (40 participants), coming from the Great Jakarta area. This was followed by participants from Bekasi, who comprised 11% of the group with 6 individuals, Tangerang with 9% (5 participants), and Bogor with 6% (3 participants). This geographic distribution suggests that most participants were from urban areas, with a strong representation of the capital region. Regarding their previous experience with English language learning, 39% of the participants (21 individuals) reported having taken an English course prior to the study, while the majority, 61% (33 participants), had not. This indicates a varied background in formal English language education among the participants, suggesting a mix of proficiency levels and experiences with the English language.

3.3 Teaching Procedure

Before collecting the data, there were some seven-week learning activities with three credits (50 minutes per credit). The activities included five main materials such as classroom languages and the expressions of positive reinforcements, how to develop a lesson plan, learning materials, learning media, and learning assessments. Regarding this study, there was a teaching procedure in the course, with a model of team-based project (TBP) initiated by Michaelsen et al. (2023) included six steps: (1) dividing the students into 8 teams, and each team has four members; (2) providing some essential questions that students in teams responded; (3) asking the teams to design a plan for developing English instructional tools as the project; (4) discussing and making the project within a team based on the schedule while being monitored by the lecturer in the classroom and in WhatsApp Group; (5) submitting the project through learning management system (LMS) provided by the university as well as presenting their teaching performance done by each team within 35 minutes in accordance with the instructional tools including lesson plans, learning materials, learning media, and learning evaluation; and (6) having feedback from each team and the lecturer.

3.4 Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

There are two kinds of instruments to gather the data in this study. They are an online questionnaire and semi-structured interview. After the learning activities had been done, the online questionnaire was distributed to all the students. The questionnaire adapted from Picard et al., (2022) and Chan et al., (2020) comprises two sections: (1) participant identity covering gender, age, home location, and their participation in the English course and (2) the questions or statements consisting of three aspects: students' improvement in developing English instructional tools, their creativity in group instruction, and learning motivation. The

other instrument used in this study is semi-structured interview. Five questions are addressed to the ten selected participants for the interview, and they are coded with S11, S16, S19, S24, S30, S32, S42, S48, and S53. Each participant had 20-25 minutes for the interview conducted in face-to-face interactions.

The data gathered in this study is then analyzed into two parts. The first data on the survey of EFL in-service teachers' perspectives of Team-based Projects were analyzed with descriptive statistics for the percentages of each item, the mean, and the standard deviation. In the meantime, the qualitative data from the interview were analyzed in some phases: data reduction, data display, and data conclusion (Miles et al., 2014). The transcript of participants' responses was condensed to have some relevant ideas on the perceived TBP model and challenges. The condensed data were then displayed to see the different and similar perspectives on the TBP. Finally, the qualitative data were used to support the quantitative data findings.

4. Results

4.1. The Efficacy of TBP in Developing English Lesson Plans

Regarding the EFL pre-service teachers' perspective on the improvement of developing lesson plans, Table 1 indicates that all the EFL pre-service teachers (100%) knew how to teach English to primary school students after being introduced to that course. In addition, most of them who already attended the course felt capable of making lesson plans for English subjects at primary school (96.30%). Dealing with how the EFL pre-service teachers developed in English learning media, it was found that 100% of the students had affirmative perspectives. Most of them also agreed that they could develop an English test for primary school students (98.15%). Thus, the EFL pre-service teachers' knowledge of the course had increased (98.15%). The mean ranges from 3.28 to 3.56, and the standard deviation ranges from 0.49 to 0.54.

Table 1: The improvement of EFL pre-service teachers in developing lesson plans through TBP

No	Questions	SD	D	A	SA	%	Mean	STDV
1	I have known how to teach English for young learners.	0.00	0.00	51.85	48.15	100	3.48	0.50
2	I am able to make a lesson plan for English subjects at primary school.	0.00	3.70	62.96	33.33	100	3.30	0.54
3	I am able to develop an English learning media for young learners.	0.00	0.00	44.44	55.56	100	3.56	0.50
4	I am able to develop an English test for primary school students.	0.00	1.85	57.41	40.74	100	3.39	0.53
5	My knowledge of English learning has increased.	0.00	1.85	68.52	29.63	100	3.28	0.49

The qualitative analysis further demonstrated EFL pre-service teachers' responses reporting affirmative ideas on the benefits of team-based project (TBP) within the English Learning for Young Learners course. All the EFL pre-service teachers felt that TBP could increase their skills and provide something new and challenging to students, mainly in developing the project for teaching preparations such as lesson planning. In addition, TBP was prospective for EFL pre-service teachers in their English learning and boosted them to be keen on learning English better. However, this result articulated some challenges such as adjusting new

instructional methods and technologies applied during the class. Below are the excerpts from interview results from respondents 30, 32, 42, and 48.

- Student 30 : "Yes, the project-based assignment can hone skills and improve cohesiveness in the group, because the task is a group activity not for individuals."
- Student 32 : "Because by working on projects I can learn to make many things that I have never made before, such as making teaching materials, creative PPT, evaluation, and also lesson plans in English learning, especially in elementary schools."
- Student 42 : "Because project-based learning includes several people who can exchange ideas or the best opinions to be used as teaching materials later, and learning tools are very important to make it easier to teach."
- Student 48 : "Yes, because projects can increase students' desire to learn more enthusiastically. In teaching it is very important to use projects, and it makes it easier for students to grasp what material we explain."

4.2. Promoting EFL In-service Teachers' Creativity in English Learning through TBP

Concerning the EFL pre-service teachers' creativity in English learning for young learners course in collaborative settings (see Table 2), most students (98.15%) believed that they could share ideas and knowledge with teammates in developing instructional tools such as lesson plans, learning material, media, and assessments. EFL pre-service teachers also showed better creative thinking when having collaborative activities (98.15%). In addition to promoting creativity, it was discovered that students could ask their teammates to improve the project and performance of their teaching despite 5.55% of the EFL pre-service teachers disagreeing with that statement. In line with the collaborative activities, all the EFL pre-service teachers had positive ideas on collaboration, encouraging them to think openly and actively. Thus, 98.15% of the EFL pre-service teachers viewed that the activities with team-based project also improved their English teaching skills.

Table 2: EFL pre-service teachers' creativity in collaborative activities

No	Questions	SD	D	A	SA	%	Mean	STDV
6	I share ideas and knowledge with teammates in producing instructional tools.	0.00	1.85	44.44	53.70	100	3.52	0.54
7	I can think more creatively than before.	0.00	1.85	48.15	50.00	100	3.48	0.54
8	I ask my teammates to make the project and teach English better.	1.85	3.70	61.11	33.33	100	3.26	0.62
9	Collaborative activities encourage me to think openly and actively.	0.00	0.00	33.33	66.67	100	3.59	0.69
10	The activities carried out in the team improved my English teaching skills.	0.00	1.85	42.59	55.56	100	3.54	0.54

Qualitative feedback from EFL pre-service teachers regarding their creativity in collaborative activities addresses some experiences in generating their projects. Some EFL pre-service teachers had positive opinions, and they found working in groups to generate English instructional tools, mainly lesson planning as the project, helpful as they could exchange ideas and share knowledge and increase their creativity. Nevertheless, few EFL pre-service teachers had passive concerns about collaborating with other members in sharing ideas or exchanging opinions on the projects to complete. Below are excerpts from respondents 19, 32, 48, and 53 interview results.

- Student 19 : "Yes, it is more improved, because from the way of doing English learning together we can exchange thoughts and opinions from each student."
- Student 32 : "Yes, because by working on projects together it can increase my creativity and I can share knowledge with other group friends."
- Student 48 : "Yes, because working in a group I can exchange ideas, and discuss how to produce a good project for teaching."
- Student 53 : "Yes, because I can be more active in group discussions and develop the creative minds of each group member."

4.3. Promoting EFL In-service Teachers' Motivations in English Learning through TBP

From Table 3, it was found that most EFL pre-service teachers felt enjoyable working on developing English instructional tools for English peer-teaching practice (94.44%). Besides, they were pleased with English learning activities in teams (96.30%). Feedback from a lecturer, such as some revisions and suggestions for the improvement of the project quality, caused all the participants to appreciate it. Thus, most EFL pre-service teachers no longer worry about learning English as they worked together to complete the projects (94.44%). All the participants also actively joined the class in team learning activities.

Table 3: EFL pre-service teachers' motivation in team-based project instruction

No	Questions	SD	D	A	SA	%	Mean	STDV
11	I enjoy working on projects to develop learning tools for elementary English teaching practice.	0.00	5.56	48.15	46.30	100	3.41	0.60
12	I am pleased with group learning activities.	0.00	3.70	48.15	48.15	100	3.44	0.57
13	I appreciate the feedbacks from the lecturer regarding projects made together.	0.00	0.00	31.48	68.52	100	3.69	0.47
14	I am not worried about learning English anymore.	0.00	5.56	64.81	29.63	100	3.24	0.55
15	I actively participate in group learning activities.	0.00	0.00	42.59	57.41	100	3.57	0.50

These qualitative responses regarding EFL pre-service teachers' motivation in learning English through TBP reveal that they were pleased and motivated when completing the projects successfully. They felt happy as they could participate in making the instructional tools and teaching English in class as well. In addition, some good feedback and appreciation, especially from the other teams made the students keep on trying to do their best. However, challenges are faced by a minority including communication problems and different opinions among them in developing instructional tools. Below are the excerpts from interview results from respondents 24, 32, 42, and 48.

- Student 24 : "What makes me motivated in developing English learning tools for elementary school is participating in teaching, because I can process my teaching skills in the classroom and be evaluated together."
- Student 32 : "I feel happy because I can make a lesson plan that is considered better than other friends by my lecturer, even though I have never tried to make a lesson plan before."
- Student 42 : "Because the results of the team's hard work have matured and have previously been practiced in advance, we are smooth during the teaching performance. Although not 100% is perfect, my team and I have tried to achieve maximum results."

Student 48 : "What makes me motivated is that when I do my teaching practice directly in class I get a good response from my friends, and this makes me feel happy and successful."

5. Discussion

This study is aimed to investigate the EFL pre-service teachers' perspectives on team-based project (TBP) in developing English lessons from the contexts of their improvement on the project, creativity, and learning motivation as well as their obstacles.

EFL pre-service teachers' improvement in developing English lesson plans through TBP

In exploring the effectiveness of TBP in EFL settings, this study aligns with existing literature on collaborative learning and its impacts on student active participation and engagement. The findings suggest that TBP significantly contributes to students' ability to develop instructional tools which support the idea that social contact is essential in the development of cognition (Tzuriel, 2021). Vygotsky's theory supports the idea that learning is inherently a social process (Locklear, 2020), and the data presented in this study reinforces this by showing students' increased competencies in creating lesson plans, learning media, and assessments for young English learners.

In response to the skill improvement and pedagogical insight, TBP, as described by the students, serves as a practical avenue for applying theoretical knowledge to real-world teaching contexts. This experiential learning opportunity allows students to engage deeply with the material, enhancing their understanding and retention of pedagogical concepts (Chan et al., 2020). By working on projects, students gain hands-on experience in lesson planning, material development, and instructional design, which are critical skills for any teaching professional (Swanson et al., 2019). Such activities echo the principles of constructivist learning, where learners construct knowledge through active engagement with tasks and challenges (Finkelstein et al., 2006).

Dealing with the responses from EFL pre-service teachers on their experiences with TBP in developing English lesson plans provides valuable insights into the dynamics of collaborative learning in language education. These reflections underscore the multifaceted benefits of TBP, including enhanced creativity, improved skill development, increased learning motivation, and the joy of achievement. However, they also reveal the inherent challenges of collaborative work, such as managing diverse opinions, organizing contributions, and overcoming communication barriers (Morse, 2023). By examining these experiences through the lens of educational research, we can better understand the implications for effective EFL instruction and collaborative learning.

This study also disclosed the challenges in collaborative work among team members. Despite the numerous benefits, the students' experiences also highlight challenges inherent in team-based projects, including conflict resolution, organizational issues, and communication barriers. These challenges are consistent with the literature on collaborative learning, which acknowledges the complexity of group dynamics and the need for effective communication and conflict management strategies (Johnson & Johnson, 2005; Keramati & Gillies, 2021). Teachers must therefore provide scaffolding and support to help students navigate these challenges, fostering an environment that encourages constructive interdependence, individual accountability and teacher support for interactions (Abramczyk & Jurkowski, 2020).

The data also hints at potential obstacles in team-based learning, such as anxiety or varying levels of English proficiency among EFL pre-service teachers. These findings resonate with the concerns raised by (Hussein, 2021) regarding the complexities of group dynamics in collaborative language learning. The discrepancies in comfort and enthusiasm about learning English suggest that while TBP offers significant benefits, they also require careful management to ensure all students can participate fully and benefit equally.

TBP promotes students' creativity in English learning

The findings support the enhancement of creativity through collaborative activities, highlighting increased idea-sharing and creative thinking. This is in line with a study by Puccio (2020) on Amabile's componential theory of creativity, which emphasizes the role of the social environment in fostering creativity. The theory suggests that collaboration can enhance individual creativity by exposing learners to diverse perspectives and ideas. The reported increase in students' creativity and their perception of improved English teaching skills through teamwork corroborates Sawyer's (2019) idea on the essentials of collaborative learning for creativity in education.

Moreover, the EFL pre-service teachers' responses highlight the significant role of collaborative learning in enhancing their ability to create English lesson plans. This aligns with the findings of (Laal & Ghodsi, 2012; Peters et al., 2020), who emphasize the importance of collaborative learning in nurturing creativity, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills among EFL pre-service teachers. It means that EFL pre-service teachers within teams would have different ideas and skills, enriching broader competencies in the learning process. This collaborative approach not only aids in the development of more innovative and effective lesson plans but also organizes students for the collaborative nature of the modern workforce (Hsiung, 2012).

TBP promotes students' motivations in English learning

Motivation in TBP is another critical aspect highlighted by this study. Ryan and Deci's (2000) self-determination theory, which stresses the role of competence, autonomy, and relatedness in motivation, provides a useful framework for understanding these findings. The enjoyment and satisfaction derived from group work, as well as the positive reception of feedback from lecturers, suggest that such projects can meet these psychological needs, thereby enhancing intrinsic motivation such as the students' enjoyment of developing learning tools and having a teaching practice (Apoko & Cahyono, 2024). Mora et.al. (2020) further discuss the specific motivational dynamics in language learning, noting how collaborative tasks can enhance motivation by providing a sense of community and shared purpose.

This current study also pointed out that TBP could promote EFL pre-service teachers' motivation and emotional rewards. The sense of accomplishment and the positive feedback received from peers and a teacher significantly contribute to EFL pre-service teachers' motivation and satisfaction. This result is in line with a study showing that motivation could be achieved for deep and enduring learning as team-based learning developed students' ability to work productively and provide more opportunities to express their understanding (Ruder et al., 2021). The joy and pride students feel in successfully developing and implementing lesson plans reflect the motivational power of TBP, validating its use as a strategy to engage and inspire language learners (Strobel & van Barneveld, 2009).

Thus, the positive outcomes of TBP in EFL settings, as shown by this study, are well-supported by existing theories and research in education and psychology. The improvement in developing instructional tools, enhanced creativity, and increased motivation highlight the value of collaborative learning. Nevertheless, EFL teachers must be mindful of the challenges inherent in group work, ensuring strategies are in place to support all learners. Future research could explore more deeply the strategies that facilitate effective group dynamics and equitable participation, ensuring that the benefits of collaborative learning are accessible to all students in diverse educational contexts.

6. Conclusion

The reflections of EFL pre-service teachers' perspectives on their team-based project (TBP) offer a rich perspective on the advantages and challenges of collaborative learning in language education. These experiences, supported by educational research, underscore the value of TBP in enhancing creativity, facilitating skill development, boosting motivation, and providing emotional rewards. However, they also emphasize the need for careful planning, support, and guidance from teachers to address the challenges of collaborative work. As such, TBP emerges as a powerful pedagogical strategy in EFL contexts; it requires thoughtful implementation to realize its full potential.

Shedding light on EFL pre-service teachers' perspectives of TBP underscores the importance of incorporating TPB into teacher training programs. The insights gained can guide curriculum developers and teachers in designing more effective, engaging, and relevant training experiences that better prepare future teachers for the complexities of teaching English in primary schools. This research also underscores the need for further empirical studies to explore the impact of collaborative learning methodologies across different educational settings and cultures, thereby enriching the understanding of best practices in teacher education.

One limitation of this study is its potential reliance on self-reported data from EFL pre-service teachers regarding their experiences with TBP, which may introduce biases and limit the generalizability of the findings to wider contexts.

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