

## **Exploring the Stages of Project-Based Learning for Enhancing Speaking Skill in Indonesian EFL Classroom**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The objective of this research is to know the stages of project-based learning in Indonesian EFL classroom in order to enhance students' speaking skill. This study used experimental design. The sample of this study was twelfth grade students of SMAN 2 Sidenreng Rappang in academic year 20023/2024. The researcher used random sampling technique to get the sample, the students of XII MIPA 6 was selected to be the sample of the research. The researcher used speaking test which conducted in pretest and posttest as research instrument to know the progress of students' speaking skill after implementing project-based learning in the treatment. The research results show that there are seven stages of project based learning which the researcher implemented in this research such as: The formulation of expected learning outcomes, Understanding the concept of teaching material, Skills training, Designing the project theme, Making the project proposal, Executing the project task, and Presentation of the project report. In implementing project-based learning in teaching speaking in Indonesian EFL classroom has significantly enhanced students' speaking skill. The results demonstrated that the students' mean score increased from 15.88 in the pre-test to 18.81 in the post-test, indicating an improvement. This reflects 18.5% enhancement in the students' speaking performance from pre-test to post-test.

**Key words:** Project-Based Learning, Speaking Skill, EFL Classroom.

### **INTRODUCTION**

In the era of globalization, learning English has become crucial, especially for the younger generation, as it is widely used in various fields such as education, economics, social affairs, and technology. Learning innovation must keep pace with current developments, as the demands of 21st-century education emphasize the need for students to be more creative. In today's rapidly evolving world, educational approaches must adapt to ensure that students not only acquire knowledge but also develop the skills necessary to think critically, solve complex problems, and approach challenges with creativity. This change reflects the increasing importance of fostering innovation, adaptability, and collaboration, which are essential for success in both academic and professional settings. Therefore, both educators and students must carry out continuous learning and creativity to thrive in the modern

educational landscape. According to Sudarisman (2015) stated that in 21<sup>st</sup> century learning we are required to design the class with collaboration, creativity, communication, and critical thinking.

Having experience in teaching and learning in Indonesian EFL classrooms a few years ago is definitely an advantage for conducting this experiment, especially in speaking skills. Most Indonesian EFL classrooms mainly focused on reading and writing, while speaking was often overlooked. However, in the real world, speaking is essential for connecting with others..

In facing these challenges, Ummah *et al* (2019) stated that the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model is a teaching method where students are actively involved in solving problems. It also gives them a chance to show their creativity by creating a product. This method provides opportunities for learners to participate actively in the learning process and develop English speaking skills naturally through activities that are relevant to real-life situations. Therefore, the implementation of project-based learning in teaching English speaking in the classroom is an interesting topic to be studied. The use of project-based learning method in teaching English speaking in Indonesia becomes increasingly important. This method allows students to develop English speaking skills in an interesting and fun way, thereby increasing students' interest and motivation in learning English. Additionally, this method can also help students understand and remember English speaking skills better as they are given opportunities to apply them in real-life situations.

According to Larmer and Mergendoller (2015), project-based learning is an educational approach designed to offer students the chance to integrate information from diverse domains of study and apply it in a thoughtful and innovative manner to real-world scenarios. However, more exploration and research are still needed to find the best ways to use project-based learning for teaching English speaking in Indonesian EFL classrooms. This research would provide useful insights and suggestions for teachers, helping improve the quality of English teaching in Indonesia, especially in developing students' speaking skills.

In Indonesian EFL classrooms, there is a clear gap in teaching speaking skills, which are often less developed than reading and writing skills. While significant attention has been given to these latter skills, the integration of speaking as a core component of language learning remains insufficient. Previous studies have demonstrated the potential of project-based learning (PjBL) in enhancing student engagement and practical language use, yet the specific application of this method to improve English speaking skills in Indonesia is underexplored. Most research has focused on general language acquisition or the development of other skills, leaving a gap in understanding how PjBL can be optimized for speaking practice. Moreover, although PjBL is recognized as an effective approach to foster creativity and communication, little has been done to examine its stage-by-stage implementation in the unique context of Indonesian classrooms. This research aims to address this gap by exploring how the structured stages of PjBL can be utilized

to enhance speaking skills among Indonesian EFL learners, providing a framework for teachers and contributing to the wider discussion on innovative language teaching methods.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Previous Related Study

Several studies highlighted the effectiveness of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in enhancing students' speaking skills in English language classes. According to Kusumawati (2015) in her study implemented PjBL to teach speaking skills to first grade students of a nursery class at SMK Dian Indonesia, Sidoarjo. Her research demonstrated that PBL was not only effective in improving students' speaking abilities but also in stimulating their interest and engagement during teaching and learning process.

The study emphasizes the importance of providing students with opportunities to choose topics of their interest, which fosters a more enjoyable and comfortable learning environment. Furthermore, the collaborative nature of PBL helps students develop social relationships, think critically, and build their knowledge through active participation in group discussions and presentations. This finding confirms the value of PjBL in language teaching, suggesting that it can be a powerful tool for enhancing oral proficiency and promoting a learner-centered approach.

According to Batubara (2023) outlines a comprehensive framework of PjBL for writing instruction, emphasizing key stages that facilitate the learning process. These stages include posing essential questions, planning and scheduling, outlining, drafting, monitoring progress, presenting drafts, reviewing and editing, finalizing and publishing, as well as evaluating and reflecting on the process. These steps help guide students through a structured and collaborative writing process, allowing them to take active roles in their learning. In his study promotes a dual commitment to both language and content learning, requiring students to take responsibility for information gathering, processing, and reporting. This approach encourages students to assume new roles, working collaboratively in groups while reflecting on their learning journey.

Halim (2023) in his research did a systematic review of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) methodologies reveals that PjBL has been extensively used in educational settings, particularly in higher education. This review analyzed data from 15 journals sourced from platforms such as Garuda and Google Scholar, highlights the growing trend of PjBL, especially between 2017 and 2022. The review found that PjBL was most commonly applied in universities (60%) during this period, with the peak of its popularity occurring in 2022. This indicates a significant increase in the adoption of PjBL as an instructional strategy in recent years.

## **Speaking**

According to Richards in Murti *et al* (2022) stated that there are some functions of speaking namely: speaking as interaction, speaking as transaction, and speaking as skill.

Speaking is an interaction that is similar to what we normally do, which is "talking," and it represents interactions that have primarily a social function. When individuals meet, they greet each other and engage in small talk with the hopes of becoming friendly and finding a comfortable zone of contact with others.

Speaking as transaction refers to circumstances in which the emphasis is on what people said or did. The major goal is to communicate the idea clearly to others, rather than to focus on the participants and how they engage socially with one another. others.

Speaking as a skill refers to public speaking, where information is shared with an audience, such as in class presentations, public announcements, or speeches. Speaking as a performance is typically done in the form of a monologue rather than a dialogue.

## **Speaking Skill in EFL Classroom**

According to Newton (2020), The goals of an EFL speaking course are as follows: 1. To enable learners to quickly engage with and use meaningful language. 2. To motivate students by including them in successful listening and speaking activities, and 3. To make sure that early learning closely matches their language needs. When it comes to speaking, people generally aim to achieve specific objectives, share ideas, explore various topics, or simply engage in social interaction.

Developing speaking skills proves to be most successful when it captures learners' attention and enthusiasm, is clearly applicable to their needs, necessitates active participation from the learners, and is set within a context that allows learners to grasp when and how to use their speaking abilities. The most effective learning encounters often comprise immersive, lifelike simulations or interactive engagements led by proficient guides. Nonetheless, many learning opportunities lean heavily on text-based materials, involve an excessive number of knowledge assessments, and rely on instructors who may be well-intentioned but lack the requisite level of expertise.

## **Project-Based Learning**

Frequently, students perceive the target language as being detached from their daily experiences, as they lack opportunities to apply the language acquired in the classroom or employ it in real-life situations. Project-Based Learning offers them the chance to engage in genuine and purposeful situations, either independently or

in collaboration with peers. Within this frame work, students are presented with challenges and are tasked with solving real-world issues, fostering a sense of responsibility and motivation. Rahayu and Hartono (2016) stated that Project-based learning is a teaching method that uses real-life projects. These projects are based on interesting and engaging questions, tasks, or problems, and they help teach students academic subjects through teamwork and collaborative problem-solving.

When students recognize that language is applicable to their daily lives and serves a purpose for their tasks and requirements, they have the opportunity to enhance their language proficiency and their ability to communicate effectively. This process also fosters self-assurance, collaborative skills, creativity, self-reliance, and discipline. Consequently, they become capable of expressing themselves on subjects related to their life, culture, and the world in the target language

## **METHOD**

### **Design and Samples**

The researcher applied an experimental approach in this study, aiming to observe specific effect under controlled conditions. A quasi-experimental design was used in this research, involved both an experimental class and a control class. The experimental class received project-based learning as a treatment, while control class used discovery learning. Both classes get the same process: pre-test, treatment, and post-test. This method was suitable for the study, as it helped determining whether project-based learning effectively improved students' speaking skills or not.

This study took place in the second semester of third grade during the 2023/2024 school year. It was held at SMA Negeri 2 Sidenreng Rappang, located at Jl. Wolter Monginsidi No.4, Rijang Pitu, Kec. Maritengngae, Kabupaten Sidenreng Rappang, Sulawesi Selatan. The research focused on third-grade students at SMAN 2 SIDRAP, which has ten third-grade classes. Two classes were randomly selected for the study, one of them was the experimental class and the other was the control class.

### **Instrument and Procedure**

In this study, a speaking test was used as the primary instrument to collect data, administered through both a pre-test and a post-test. The speaking test aimed to evaluate the students' speaking skills based on three key criteria: accuracy, fluency, and comprehensibility. The procedure began with a pre-test conducted before the implementation of project-based learning (PjBL) to establish a baseline of the students' speaking skills. During the pre-test, students completed a speaking task, and their performance was scored based on the aforementioned criteria. Following the pre-test, the researcher introduced the PjBL intervention, which involved seven stages: formulating expected learning outcomes, understanding the concept of

teaching materials, skills training, designing the project theme, developing the project proposal, executing the project task, and presenting the project report. Throughout the PBL process, students were actively engaged in tasks that required the use of English, particularly focusing on enhancing their speaking skills.

After the PjBL intervention, the post-test was administered using the same speaking task and scoring rubric as the pre-test. The students' performances in the post-test were again evaluated for accuracy, fluency, and comprehensibility.

The speaking tasks were designed in presentation activities to enhance students' speaking skills through structured practice. During both the pre-test and post-test, students were required to complete a presentation task, where they delivered a short, prepared speech on a given topic. The presentation format encouraged students to practice organizing their thoughts, using appropriate language, and delivering their message clearly. This task not only assessed their ability to speak accurately and fluently but also provided an opportunity for them to improve their public speaking and communication skills. By incorporating presentation activities into the speaking tasks, the study aimed to simulate real-world speaking scenarios, helping students gain confidence in their ability to use English in both academic and practical contexts. Throughout the process, students were encouraged to focus on the measurement of speaking skill such as speaking accuracy, fluency and comprehensibility.

### **Data Analysis**

To determine the significant difference between the pre-test and post-test results, the researcher utilized SPSS Statistics 25 for data analysis. This software was employed to calculate whether there was a statistically significant improvement in students' speaking skills after the implementation of project-based learning, comparing their performance before and after the treatment.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

In this part the researcher shows the stages of project-based learning for enhancing speaking skill in Indonesian EFL classroom which has significantly improved the students' speaking skill, it was proven by the students' mean score increased from 15.88 in the pre-test to 18.81 in the post-test, indicating an improvement. This reflects 18.5% enhancement in the students' speaking performance from pre-test to post-test. There are seven stages that the researcher used in this study as follows:

### **Formulating Expected Learning Outcomes**

In the beginning of the treatment, the researcher explains to the students about project-based learning and the stages that they will do during the research which has the output to make narrative text then present it in the classroom. The researcher also explains about project-based learning and expected learning outcomes.

### **Understanding the Concept of Teaching Material**

After formulating the expected learning outcome the researcher explains the concept of teaching material to the students to make sure they understand about narrative text. The researcher divides the students into three groups then directing them to analyze the example of narrative text then discuss it. In this step the researcher directs the students to work in their group to analyze the example of narrative text so they can know the elements of narrative text and after analyzing the text the researcher directs the students to discuss about some information that they get from the text.

### **Skills Training**

In this part, the researcher focuses to train the students about the skill that they want to do in the project task. The researcher directs the students about some skills that they have to master before doing the project task. In this step the researcher shows the example of project report then explaining some skills that the students have to know before doing their project task namely: how to look for the data, how to interview the respondent, and how to make the report of the data. After that, the researcher doing discussion with the students about some steps of creating narrative text.

### **Designing the Project Theme**

After training the students about some skills, the researcher directs the students to discuss about the project theme. In this step the researcher directs the students to discuss the topic of their project, the students express their idea about the topic after that the researcher directs the students to vote the topic. The voting result shows that most of the students choose The Legend of Nene' Mallomo to be the topic of their project.

### **Making the Project Proposal**

After designing the project theme, the researcher directs the students to make the project proposal with their own group. In the beginning of making project proposal the researcher explain the contents of the proposal then doing discussion with the students in the classroom. During making the project proposal, the students activity is not only in the classroom but also outside the classroom. In outside classroom activity the researcher has role to control the process of making project proposal like give some suggestions about the interview question. After reviewing and giving suggestion to all groups about the project proposal, the researcher directs the students to conduct their project task.

### **Executing the Project Task**

In this part, the students conduct the activity in outside the classroom to find out the data through interview, study visit, and from the internet. The researcher's role in this part is being a guider, tutor and evaluator for the students, the researcher gives some suggestion to the students when they face some problems. In this step the researcher gives suggestion to the students to visit museum of Nene' Mallomo because the students can get more information related to their project tasks. During executing project task, the researcher and the students discuss through WhatsApp, the researcher always ask the progress of each group and also remind them to work based on the timeline. After all groups have collect the data the researcher instructs them to start writing the story then send it in WhatsApp group then the researcher gives the suggestion to each groups about the story that they have made, the researcher starts from their title of the story than the content of the story. This activity is conducted through WhatsApp during a week. After giving the suggestion to all groups the researcher directs the students to prepare their presentation of their project report.

### **Presenting the Project Report**

After the students collect the data of their project tasks and preparing their presentation, the researcher directs the students to present the result in the classroom. In this step the researcher directs the students to present their project in front of the class then direct the students to discuss after each group present their project result. In this activity, the researcher also give some suggestions of the story that the students have made then collecting the project report.

The findings of this study align with the literature regarding the effectiveness of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in enhancing speaking skills. For instance, Kusumawati (2015) implemented PjBL to teach speaking skills to first-grade students at SMK Dian Indonesia and found that this approach significantly improved students' speaking abilities while also fostering their interest and engagement during the teaching and learning process. Similarly, the current study's results demonstrate a notable enhancement in students' speaking skills following the PjBL intervention, suggesting that this method not only promotes skill development but also engages learners effectively.

Halim (2023) conducted a systematic review of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) methods and found that the use of PjBL has grown significantly in education, especially in higher education. By looking at data from 15 journals on platforms like Garuda and Google Scholar, Halim discovered that PjBL was mostly used in universities (60%) from 2017 to 2022, with its popularity peaking in 2022. This trend shows that more educators recognize PjBL as an effective teaching strategy. The current study adds to this research by examining how PjBL is applied in Indonesian EFL classrooms, showing that it is effective not just in higher education but also in improving speaking skills among secondary school students.



When comparing the results of this study with previous research, it becomes clear that using PjBL leads to better speaking skills in different educational settings. These results support what Kusumawati and Halim concluded, emphasizing that PjBL is a strong teaching method that can increase student interest and engagement while effectively improving language skills. Therefore, this study contributes to the growing evidence that PjBL is a valuable teaching approach and encourages its wider use in various educational environments.

## CONCLUSION

The conclusion of the research is the implementation of project-based learning (PjBL) in an Indonesian EFL classroom significantly improved students' speaking skills. The research identified seven key stages of PBL that contributed to this improvement: (1) Formulating expected learning outcomes, (2) Understanding the concept of teaching materials, (3) Skills training, (4) Designing the project theme, (5) Making the project proposal, (6) Executing the project task, and (7) Presenting the project report. Through these stages, students in the experimental group showed great improvement in their speaking skill between the pre-test and post-test. This highlights that project-based learning is an effective teaching method for improving speaking skill in Indonesian EFL classroom.

The results of this study are important for future classroom practices and point to several areas for more research. First, the effective use of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) to improve speaking skills shows that this approach can be widely used in Indonesian EFL classrooms to help close the gap in speaking skill. Teachers could include the seven stages of PjBL in their lesson plans to create more interactive and student-focused learning environments that emphasize speaking along with other language skills. Moreover, this study suggests the need for more research on how PjBL can be adjusted for different skill levels and learning situations. Future studies could look at the long-term benefits of PjBL on students' speaking skill and its effects on other language skills, such as listening or teamwork in group tasks. Additionally, research could investigate how technology and digital tools can improve PjBL, providing new ways to engage students and support communication in a more connected educational world.

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