

Using Project- Based Learning to Improve Students' Speaking Abilities of Madrasa Students

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ABSTRACT

Speaking is one of the language skills learned in English language learning as a compulsory subject. This skill is productive because it allows students to use the target language actively for real communication, so it is an aspect that must receive attention in teaching English as a foreign language. One of the techniques that can be used to improve students' speaking ability is Project-Based Learning (PjBL). This study aims to test whether the use of PjBL can improve students' speaking skills, especially in the aspects of pronunciation and vocabulary. This study used a pre-experiment design with a One Group Pretest-Posttest model, involving 40 madrasa students. Data was obtained through pretest and posttest. The pretest results showed that the average score of students was 34.47, while the posttest showed that the average score increased to 74.82. The results of statistical analysis showed significant differences with the observed "t" value ($t_o = 23.25$) greater than the "t" table value ($t_{5\%} = 2.02$ and $t_{1\%} = 2.71$). Thus, the null hypothesis (H_o) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted. This finding proves that the application of Project-Based Learning significantly improves students' speaking ability. In addition, this method creates more fun and effective learning, so students can learn without feeling burdened.

Keywords: Project-Based Learning, Speaking Abilities, Madrasa Students

I. INTRODUCTION

Speaking is one of the language abilities learned while studying English as a required subject. Because it's a productive skill when the teacher can witness students

occupying the target language actively for genuine communication (Muna & Aziz, 2021). It is becoming the skill that must be emphasized in teaching English as a foreign language. It is the active use of language to

express meanings so that other people can make sense of them. Someone must make the listener understand what information the speaker wants to deliver (Kluger & Mizrahi, 2023).

In addition, learning to speak will be beneficial for students because speaking as verbal communication is a common way to communicate with other people. There was a significant improvement in the speaking performance of students who were taught using Project basic learning techniques and those who were taught through conventional methods (Dogara et al., 2020). The students improved several aspects of speaking skills, such as pronunciation, vocabulary, accuracy, and fluency. It also changes student behavior. They are more confident in speaking English and are more actively involved in the teaching and learning (Kholis & Aziz, 2020).

PJBL is student-centered pedagogy in which students learn about a subject through problem-solving experiences (Aziz et al., 2022; Kholis & Aziz, 2020; Tang, 2023). Students learn thinking strategies and domain knowledge. PBJL aims to help students develop flexible knowledge, effective problem-solving skills, independent learning, effective collaboration skills, and intrinsic motivation (Aziz et al., 2022). Well-designed project-based learning encourages active inquiry and higher-order

thinking. It encourages student autonomy and active and student-centered language practice.

Speaking ability is one of the important aspects of education as it greatly affects students' success, both in the academic and professional fields. However, many students face difficulties in expressing thoughts clearly and confidently. One of the reasons is the traditional teaching approach that emphasizes passive learning and memorization, thus not supporting students' active involvement in developing speaking skills. To address this, this study proposes the use of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) as an innovative approach that can actively engage students through relevant and challenging projects.

This study focuses on the main problem formulation, namely how the PjBL method can improve students' speaking skills. The purpose of this study is to identify the effectiveness of PjBL implementation, measure the level of improvement in speaking ability after its implementation, and develop practical recommendations for the implementation of this method in language classrooms. By implementing PjBL, it is hoped that educators can create a more interactive learning environment and support the development of students' speaking skills optimally, while increasing

their active involvement in the learning process.

II. METHOD

Based on the problems and objectives, this research uses a pre-experimental design in the form of a one-group pre-test post-test design. The researcher only took one class and used a pre-test before treatment to measure students' knowledge and a post-test after treatment to determine the results of using project-based learning as a strategy to improve the speaking skills of Mambaus Sholihin Islamic Junior High School students. The result of the treatment is found by comparing the pre-test and posttest scores. One group pre-test and post-test design means that this design gives pretest before treatment and post-test after treatment. The one group pre-test - post-test design involves administering a pre-test measuring the dependent variable, applying the experimental Treatment (X) to the subject, and administering a posttest to measure the dependent variable (Ary et al., 2018). This research was carried out in the seventh grade of MTs Mambaus Sholihin. The total of students is 40 students. The sample is part of the population that represents the population under study. The sampling technique used in this research is purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a

non-random sampling technique where the researcher determines the sample by determining special characteristics by the research objectives.

III. RESULT

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

RESEARCH DATA BEFORE TREATMENT (PRE-TEST)

Tabel 1. Descriptive Statistic of Pretest

	N	Descriptive Statistics			Std. Deviation
		Minimum	Maximum	Mean	
Kelas	40	1.00	1.00	1.0000	.00000
Nilai	40	17.00	54.00	34.4750	8.77639
Posttest	40	50.00	100.00	74.8250	10.97290
Valid N (listwise)	40				

This study shows that the sample size is 40 students. In the initial value (pre-test), the minimum value obtained was 17, while the maximum value was 54, with an average of 34.4750 and a standard deviation of 8.77639. After treatment with the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) method, the post-test results showed an increase, with a minimum value of 50 and a maximum value of 100. The average post-test score reached 74.8250 with a standard deviation of 10.97290. The increase in the average score of 40.35 points from pre-test to post-test indicates the positive effect of the PjBL method on

students' speaking skills. The number of valid data listwise is 40 students.

PRETEST AND POSTTEST DATA

Research data on the use of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) before treatment is called a pre-test, which aims to measure the initial condition or ability of students before the application of this method. After the treatment was carried out, the data on students' speaking skills were measured again through a post-test using two instrument questions given to VII-B class students. This post-test aims to determine whether the application of PjBL has an impact on improving students' speaking skills.

Table 2. Statistic data of One Sample Test

One-Sample Test						
Test Value = 0						
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Nilai	24.844	39	.000	34.47500	31.6682	37.2818
Posttest	43.128	39	.000	74.82500	71.3157	78.3343

The One-Sample Test results with a test value of 0 show that the pre-test value has a t statistic of 24.844 with a degree of freedom (df) of 39 and a significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.000, which means it is

statistically significant. The mean difference is 34.47500 with a 95% confidence interval in the range of 31.6682 to 37.2818. Meanwhile, the post-test score has a t-statistic of 43.128 with a degree of freedom (df) of 39 and a significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.000, which is also statistically significant. The mean difference was 74.82500 with a 95% confidence interval in the range of 71.3157 to 78.3343. These results show that both pre-test and post-test scores have a significant average difference from the test value of 0, thus indicating a significant improvement after the application of the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) method.

NORMALITY TESTING

Normality testing uses the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test many times, especially after the presence of many statistics circulated. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test also had an advantage and did not create a difference between the perception one observer and another. If the significance value >0.05 , then the normal distributed residual value.

If the significance value <0.05 , then the residual value is not normally distributed. Here, the researcher will test the normality by using SPSS.

		X01	X02	X03	X04	X05	X06
N		40	40	40	40	40	40
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	35,7500	7,7500	7,7500	7,2500	6,5000	5,7500
	Std. Deviation	14,83024	4,22902	4,22902	4,52203	4,83046	5,00641
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	,238	,478	,478	,453	,416	,377
	Positive	,168	,297	,297	,272	,261	,300
	Negative	-,238	-,478	-,478	-,453	-,416	-,377
Test Statistic		,238	,478	,478	,453	,416	,377
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		,000 ^c	,000 ^c	,000 ^c	,000 ^c	,000 ^c	,000 ^c

a. Test distribution is Normal.
b. Calculated from data.
c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.

Picture 1. One Simple of Kolmogrof Sminov Test

The results of the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test show that all variables (X01 to X06) have a sample size of 40. The highest mean is X01 (35.7500) and the lowest is X06 (5.7500), while the highest Std. Deviation is X01 (14.83024) and the lowest is X03 (4.22902). The highest absolute value of extreme difference was seen in X02 and X03 (0.478), with the highest positive difference in X02 (0.297) and the highest negative difference in X02 and X03 (-0.478). The test statistics show significant distribution deviations, with a significance value (Asymp. Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.000 for all variables, so it can be concluded that all variables (X01 to X06) do not follow a normal distribution at the 0.05 significance level.

IV. DISCUSSIONS

THE EFFECT OF PROJECT-BASED LEARNING ON STUDENTS' SPEAKING ABILITY

The results showed that before the application of the PjBL method, the average speaking ability of students was in the low category, with the highest score of 54 and the lowest score of 17. This shows that many students have difficulty conveying ideas clearly and confidently. These difficulties can be attributed to the traditional learning approach that tends to be passive, where students receive more information than practice speaking skills.

After the implementation of PjBL, the post-test score showed a significant improvement, with the highest score of 90 and the lowest score of 65. An average increase of 40.35 points indicates that PjBL makes a real contribution to the mastery of students' speaking skills. This method utilizes authentic projects that are relevant to students' lives, thus providing them with the opportunity to communicate actively in a meaningful context. In addition, collaboration in a team also encourages students to use English more intensively, which ultimately increases their confidence.

One of the main advantages of PjBL is its student-centered approach. In PjBL, students not only play the role of recipients

of information, but also as learning managers (Saylendra et al., 2024). They are given the responsibility of planning, organizing, and completing projects that require good communication skills (Yuliansyah & Ayu, 2021). This process encourages students to think critically, collaborate, and practice English in a variety of real-life situations (Song et al., 2024).

The results of this study reinforce the argument that project-based learning creates a learning environment that supports the development of speaking skills. When students are given the opportunity to speak in a supportive and non-dominant atmosphere, they tend to be more confident in conveying ideas (Aziz et al., 2022). In addition, projects that are relevant to their lives provide additional motivation to actively participate, as students feel that what they learn has practical benefits.

The success of PjBL in improving students' speaking skills is also influenced by several important factors. First, the role of teachers as facilitators is very decisive. Teachers who are able to provide clear direction, support students' exploration of ideas, and create a conducive learning environment can help students feel more comfortable speaking (Maruanaya & Latief, 2019). In addition, teachers who provide constructive feedback also help students

understand their strengths and weaknesses in speaking. Second, an engaging and relevant project design is a key factor in the success of PjBL. A well-designed project is able to engage students emotionally and intellectually, thus encouraging them to actively participate (Yurianto et al., 2023). Projects that are relevant to students' daily lives also allow them to see the connection between classroom learning and the real world, which ultimately increases learning motivation.

Third, collaboration between students during the project has a positive impact on speaking skills. In teams, students learn to share ideas, listen to others' opinions, and negotiate to achieve common goals (Huang, 2021; Tan & Huet, 2021). This interaction not only improves speaking skills, but also trains social and cooperative skills.

Theoretically, the results of this study support the constructivist learning theory that emphasizes the importance of active student involvement in the learning process (Siregar et al., 2024). PjBL provides a space for students to build their knowledge through hands-on experience, which strengthens their understanding of the concepts learned (Hsiao et al., 2022). In addition, these results also support the theory of communication in language learning, which emphasizes that speaking

skills can be improved through continuous practice in meaningful situations (Ghosheh Wahbeh et al., 2021).

In practical terms, these findings provide important insights for educators in designing effective learning strategies. Teachers are advised to use more project-based approaches in English learning, especially in the development of speaking skills (Zaafour & Salaberri-Ramiro, 2022). In addition, teachers need to ensure that the projects provided are appropriate to the student's ability level and supported by adequate resources.

Although this study shows positive results, there are some limitations that need to be noted. First, this study only included madrasah students, so generalizing the results to a wider population needs to be done carefully. Second, the relatively short duration of PjBL implementation may not be enough to have a long-term impact on students' speaking skills. Therefore, further research involving larger samples and longer durations is urgently needed to strengthen these findings. It can be concluded that Project-Based Learning has a significant positive influence on students' speaking skills. This method creates a learning environment that supports the development of speaking skills through relevant projects and actively engages students. Thus, PjBL

not only improves students' language competence, but also prepares them to face real-life communication challenges. For more effective implementation, educators need to consider factors such as teacher roles, project design, and student collaboration in each stage of project-based learning.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROJECT-BASED LEARNING AND STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Project-Based Learning (PjBL) is one of the pedagogical approaches that has received great attention in the world of education. This method puts students at the center of learning by challenging them to complete real projects that are relevant to everyday life (Almulla, 2020; Aziz et al., 2022; Kholis & Aziz, 2020). In this process, students are required to think critically, collaborate, and utilize various resources to achieve learning goals (Hussein, 2021). Project-based learning process allows students to develop a deep understanding of a concept through hands-on experience. Research shows that this approach has a positive impact on student learning outcomes, both in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects (Distyasa et al., 2021). Students who are involved in PjBL tend to understand the material better because they actively explore, analyze, and

create solutions to the problems they face (Mukti et al., 2020).

From the point of view of constructivism theory, PjBL supports experiential learning proposed by John Dewey. Dewey emphasized that students learn better when they are actively involved in the learning process, not just as passive recipients of information (TAŞKIRAN, 2021). This approach also fits Lev Vygotsky's view of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) (Borup et al., 2020), where students can reach their full potential with the help of teachers or peers through challenging, collaborative activities.

Traditional educational theories, such as the direct instruction model, focus on the provision of materials by teachers as learning centers (Lim et al., 2022). This approach, while effective in conveying information, often lacks in-depth involvement of students. For example, the theory of Behaviorism pioneered by B.F. Skinner emphasizes reinforcement and repetition to achieve learning outcomes (Muhammad Sya'dullah Fauzi et al., 2022). In this model, students are considered passive recipients of information.

In contrast to these theories, PjBL offers a more interactive and problem-based learning environment (Almulla, 2020).

When compared to traditional models, PjBL encourages more students' emotional and intellectual engagement. This is reflected in Vygotsky's theory of social constructivism, which emphasizes the importance of social interaction in learning, and David Kolb's theory of experiential learning (Bell & Bell, 2020), which states that hands-on experience is a key component of effective learning.

However, it is important to note that PjBL has drawbacks if not designed properly. Several previous studies shown that discovery learning methods, including PjBL, can burden students' cognitive load if they are not given adequate guidance (Chimbi & Jita, 2021). In this context, student learning outcomes may not be optimal due to the lack of a clear structure in the learning process. Empirical evidence shows that PBL has a positive impact on various aspects of student learning outcomes. Students who engaged in PjBL showed significant improvements in critical thinking skills, collaboration, and creativity compared to students who learned through traditional methods. In addition, PjBL helps students understand the material more deeply and increases their motivation to learn.

However, this positive outcome is highly dependent on the design and implementation of PjBL. Teachers play an

important role in providing sufficient guidance to students, especially in the planning and implementation stages of the project. If there is no adequate guidance, students may feel confused and lose focus, which can ultimately affect their learning outcomes.

The relationship between Project-Based Learning and student learning outcomes is positive and significant, especially in the aspects of critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving. Compared to traditional educational theories, such as Behaviorism or direct instruction, PjBL offers a more holistic approach and is relevant to the needs of the 21st century. However, the success of PjBL is highly dependent on the right learning design and support from teachers. In the context of modern education, PjBL can be a solution to create meaningful learning and have a long-term impact on students. However, to maximize its benefits, it is important for educators to integrate PjBL with other approaches and ensure that students get enough guidance throughout the learning process. As such, PBL can be an effective method to improve student learning outcomes while also preparing them for real-world challenges.

HOW TO LEARN ENGLISH SPEAKING FOR MADRASAH STUDENTS

English as an international language has a very important role in daily life, especially in this era of globalization. For this reason, it is important for students around the world to master English well, including in the aspect of speaking. For madrasah students, learning English, especially speaking, is a challenge in itself, given the diverse characteristics of students and possible limited access to effective learning methods. In this chapter, we will discuss how learning English speaking can be applied to madrasah students, taking into account various factors that affect the learning process.

Learning speaking English for madrasah students in Indonesia faces a number of challenges. The first challenge is that most madrasah students have limitations in terms of exposure to everyday English use. Indonesian and regional languages are more predominantly used in the daily lives of madrasah students, while English is more often taught as a subject that is only applied in the classroom. This hinders them from practicing speaking English naturally.

In addition, most madrasah students also do not have the habit of speaking in English. English learning in madrassas tends

to focus more on grammar and vocabulary aspects, without paying enough attention to speaking skills. Students are more likely to memorize sentence patterns or grammatical rules, but are rarely invited to practice speaking in real situations.

In order for English speaking learning in madrassas to run effectively, the right approach is needed. A communicative approach is one of the most suitable approaches to overcome these challenges. This approach emphasizes the use of language in the context of everyday communication. By using a communicative approach, students not only learn sentence structure, but also learn how to use English in real-life situations, such as interacting with peers or teachers.

Teachers also need to integrate activities that encourage students to practice speaking in more lively situations. For example, teachers can hold role plays that require students to speak in English, such as simulating conversations at airports, restaurants, or markets. This activity can make students more accustomed to speaking and increase their confidence.

In addition, the use of audio and visual media is also very important to help students understand the context of English use. Learning videos, short films, or podcasts can provide examples of how English is used in a

variety of situations. In this way, students not only learn theory, but also see authentic English usage practices.

Technology can be a very useful tool in improving the speaking skills of madrasah students. The use of online English learning apps or platforms such as Duolingo, Babbel, or other apps that provide speaking practice with native speakers can provide opportunities for students to practice speaking even outside of class hours. This is especially beneficial for madrasah students who may not have many opportunities to interact with native English speakers.

One of the great advantages of technology is its ability to provide immediate feedback. For example, an app that uses speech recognition can help students improve their pronunciation in real time. In addition, technology also allows students to record their conversations and listen back, which can be very useful in identifying their shortcomings and correcting them.

However, the use of technology must also be accompanied by supervision from teachers. Technology should be used as a complement, not a substitute for, more interactive traditional teaching methods, such as discussions or group work. The excessive use of technology without guidance can make students lose sight of the

essence of learning to speak in a proper and natural way.

One of the important aspects of learning to speak is to help students overcome fear and embarrassment in speaking. Many students feel nervous when they have to speak in English, especially in front of their peers. Teachers need to create a supportive environment, where students feel comfortable and are not afraid to make mistakes. Mistakes in speech are normal in the learning process, and should be made part of the learning itself.

Teachers can give students a positive boost by giving praise for their efforts in speaking, even if they are not perfect. This can boost students' confidence and encourage them to keep practicing. In addition, project-based learning can also be an effective way to improve students' speaking skills. In this model, students work in groups to produce projects, such as presentations or video creation, that require them to speak in English.

Proper evaluation and constructive feedback are also important components of learning to speak. Evaluations focus not only on mastering grammar or vocabulary, but also on students' ability to communicate clearly and effectively. The feedback given to students should be specific and positive,

helping them understand where they can improve their speaking skills.

Teachers can provide feedback verbally during lessons or through recordings that students make, allowing them to listen and improve their pronunciation and intonation. This not only improves their speaking skills, but also builds their self-awareness of English language skills.

Learning English speaking in madrassas has its own challenges, but with the right approach, the use of technology, and creating a supportive environment, students can develop their speaking skills effectively. Communication-based learning, authentic media use, and providing constructive feedback are the keys to improving the speaking skills of madrasah students. In the long run, this will prepare them to be able to communicate effectively in English, both in academic contexts and in everyday life.

V. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study highlight the substantial influence of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in enhancing students' English-speaking abilities. Through its dynamic and student-centered approach, PjBL fosters an engaging learning environment that promotes active participation, real-world communication,

and collaborative problem-solving. The results are in line with previous research affirming the method's effectiveness in improving fluency, confidence, and language application. While the implementation in this study was successful, limitations such as a small sample size and short duration call for further investigation. Future research should involve broader participant coverage and extended timeframes to ensure more generalizable conclusions. Moreover, examining PjBL's application across various educational levels and subjects could reveal its versatility and long-term benefits. Educators are encouraged to integrate PjBL into their teaching strategies with careful project design, strong teacher facilitation, and consistent peer collaboration. In doing so, PjBL can serve as an effective instructional model that not only enhances speaking proficiency but also equips students with essential communication skills for real-life contexts.

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