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Application Of Project-Based Learning In Teaching English Speaking Through Descriptions Of Local Tourism Objects

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian tindakan kelas ini mengkaji penerapan Project-Based Learning (PjBL) untuk meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara bahasa Inggris melalui kegiatan mendeskripsikan objek wisata lokal di SMPN 2 Sekotong pada tahun ajaran 2024/2025. Penelitian dilaksanakan dalam dua siklus yang meliputi perencanaan, tindakan, observasi, dan refleksi, dengan 26 peserta didik berdasarkan tabel frekuensi hasil penelitian. Data diperoleh melalui tes berbicara dan observasi pembelajaran. Rata-rata nilai meningkat dari 63,65 pada pra-asesmen menjadi sekitar 68,7 pada siklus I dan 75,23 pada siklus II, atau meningkat 11,58 poin dari kondisi awal. Observasi juga menunjukkan partisipasi dan interaksi kelas yang lebih baik. Terdapat ketidakkonsistenan penyebutan tingkat kelas dan nilai rata-rata siklus I dalam skripsi sumber, sehingga informasi tersebut perlu dikonfirmasi sebelum publikasi.

Kata kunci: project-based learning; keterampilan berbicara; objek wisata lokal; penelitian tindakan kelas

ABSTRACT

This classroom action research examined the application of project-based learning (PjBL) to English speaking instruction through descriptions of local tourism objects at SMPN 2 Sekotong in the 2024/2025 academic year. The study used two action cycles consisting of planning, action, observation, and reflection. The score-frequency tables indicate 26 learners. Data were gathered through speaking assessments and classroom observation. The reported mean score increased from 63.65 at pre-assessment to approximately 68.7 in Cycle I and 75.23 in Cycle II, an overall gain of 11.58 points. Classroom observations also described improved participation, interaction, and engagement during group project work. The source thesis contains inconsistencies concerning grade-level descriptions and the exact Cycle I mean; these require confirmation before submission. The findings

support the practical promise of locally contextualized project work in this classroom without establishing a controlled causal effect.

Keywords: project-based learning; speaking skills; local tourism; classroom action research

INTRODUCTION

Speaking is a central communicative skill in English as a foreign language (EFL) education. Learners must organize ideas, select vocabulary, manage pronunciation and grammatical forms, and respond to listeners in real time. In classrooms where English is rarely used beyond lessons, students may have limited opportunities for meaningful oral production (Harmer, 2007; Thornbury, 2005). Speaking activities are therefore most useful when they offer a recognizable purpose and an audience for communication.

Project-based learning (PjBL) organizes learning around sustained investigation and the production of a meaningful outcome. Rather than completing isolated language exercises, learners plan a project, gather information, negotiate ideas, develop a product, and communicate their findings. Research on PjBL emphasizes authenticity, student agency, collaboration, and opportunities for formative feedback (Bell et al., 2010; Beckett & Slater, 2005; Stoller, 2006). These features may be especially valuable for EFL speaking lessons.

Describing local tourism objects provides an authentic context for speaking practice in Sekotong, West Lombok. Learners can use their familiarity with places to generate ideas and then organize descriptions for an audience. Such work connects language learning with local knowledge while creating opportunities to rehearse pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, and comprehension. The approach also reflects the value of contextualized learning activities discussed by Dewi (2016) and Fragoulis (2009).

Related research by English education scholars associated with UNDIKMA offers a useful local pedagogical context. Imran and Sandiarsa S. (2018) examined a collaborative Teammates Consult strategy in narrative reading. Sandiarsa S. and Suhaili (2019) compared Buzz Group and Critical Debate in speaking achievement, a particularly relevant example of interactive oral instruction. Sandiarsa S., Tantra, and Ratminingsih (2014) investigated PQRST and SQ3R reading strategies. These studies illustrate strategy-based learning across language skills; they should not be read as direct tests of the PjBL intervention reported

here.

Additional UNDIKMA-related research highlights purposeful interaction and learner engagement. Haerazi, Irawan, Suadiyatno, and Hidayatullah (2020) investigated genre-based instruction and creativity in writing; Haerazi, Utama, and Hidayatullah (2020) considered mobile-assisted English writing and critical thinking; and Imran, Firman, and Raudhatunnisa (2019) explored Think-Talk-Write in relation to reading comprehension. These works provide complementary evidence for active language-learning processes, although their populations, skills, and designs differ from the present classroom action research.

The thesis documented initial speaking problems at SMPN 2 Sekotong, including limited vocabulary, reluctance to speak, low confidence, and relatively passive classroom activities. To address these challenges, the researcher implemented PjBL through projects in which students described local tourism destinations. The study asked how this classroom intervention was associated with changes in speaking performance and learning participation over two cycles.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design and Setting

The study adopted classroom action research (CAR), organized into planning, action, observation, and reflection in each of two cycles (Kemmis et al., 2014). It took place at SMPN 2 Sekotong during the 2024/2025 academic year. The source thesis inconsistently refers to eighth-grade students, tenth-grade students, and a tourism department; therefore, this article identifies the setting without assigning an unverified grade level. The score-frequency tables sum to 26 students, which is used here as the reported assessment cohort.

Instructional Procedure

The researcher and collaborating teacher selected local tourism objects as project topics. Students worked in small groups, distributed responsibilities, gathered information, developed descriptions, practiced oral delivery, and presented project outcomes. The teacher provided feedback, and students revised their language and performance. Cycle I comprised three instructional meetings and an assessment; Cycle II followed reflection on the first cycle and included additional project work and a final speaking assessment. The

thesis records the Cycle I test on 14 October 2024 and the Cycle II test on 26 November 2024.

Instruments and Analysis

Speaking performance was evaluated using a rubric addressing pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, comprehension, and fluency, adapted in the thesis from Brown (2001). Observation records were used to describe participation and classroom behavior. Quantitative findings were summarized through mean scores and frequency distributions across pre-assessment, Cycle I, and Cycle II. Qualitative observations were interpreted descriptively to document classroom change. The source did not establish an independent comparison group or provide a formal significance test for the reported mean gains.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The reported average speaking score rose across the action research stages. The pre-assessment mean was 63.65 (Moderate). Cycle I was reported as 68.77 in the Cycle I results section, whereas another section stated 68.67 and a chart displayed 68.77. The Cycle II mean reached 75.23 (Good). Accordingly, the overall reported gain from pre-assessment to Cycle II was 11.58 points.

Table 1. Mean speaking performance across the action research stages.

Stage	Mean speaking score	Category
Pre-assessment	63.65	Moderate
Cycle I	68.77*	Moderate
Cycle II	75.23	Good

The thesis also reports 68.67 for Cycle I; 68.77 is the value given in its dedicated Cycle I results table narrative.

The frequency distributions also shifted toward higher achievement categories. At pre-assessment, 4 learners were rated Good, 14 Moderate, 6 Poor, and 2 Very Poor, with none Excellent. By Cycle II, 7 learners were Excellent, 11 Good, 5 Moderate, and 3 Poor, with none Very Poor. All three stage distributions summed to 26 learners.

Table 2. Speaking-score category frequencies, transcribed from the thesis improvement table.

Score category	Pre-assessment	Cycle I	Cycle II
Excellent (80–100)	0	3	7
Good (70–79)	4	7	11
Moderate (60–69)	14	11	5
Poor (50–59)	6	5	3
Very Poor (<50)	2	0	0
Total	26	26	26

Classroom observations described more active participation in group discussions, increased attention during project preparation, and more willingness to present. Students gathered information about tourism objects, practiced English in small groups, received feedback, and revised their project descriptions. These observations complement the assessment trend but do not establish the independent contribution of each project activity.

Discussion

The improvement in reported mean scores suggests that sustained, meaningful project work supported speaking practice in this particular classroom. Tourism descriptions gave students a familiar topic and a communicative purpose, while group planning and presentation created repeated opportunities to organize spoken language. Such processes align with the emphasis on authentic tasks in PjBL scholarship (Beckett & Slater, 2005; Bell et al., 2010).

The improvement in classroom interaction is also pedagogically important. Students who initially hesitated to speak were asked to discuss information, allocate responsibilities, rehearse descriptions, and respond to teacher feedback. The sequence reflects a progression from preparation to oral performance and revision, consistent with the role of scaffolding and purposeful speaking practice discussed by Harmer (2007) and Thornbury (2005).

The speaking-oriented study of Sandiarsa S. and Suhaili (2019) offers a locally relevant comparison because it examined discussion-based instructional arrangements. Imran and Sandiarsa S. (2018) likewise addressed collaborative participation, while

Sandiarsa S. et al. (2014) focused on strategic reading. Together, these studies provide a broader context for learner-centered EFL instruction, not independent verification of PjBL effectiveness in Sekotong.

Other work by UNDIKMA scholars similarly foregrounds active learning: Haerazi et al. (2020a) considered creativity in genre-based writing, Haerazi et al. (2020b) investigated mobile learning and critical thinking, and Imran et al. (2019) examined a Think-Talk-Write sequence. Their relevance lies in the importance of student activity and instructional design across skills. Direct comparisons of outcomes are limited because these studies examined different constructs.

Several limitations temper interpretation. This was action research in a single classroom, with no control group. Practice effects, teacher attention, and other classroom changes could also have influenced performance. The source thesis contains inconsistent descriptions of the grade level and Cycle I mean, and it does not report inter-rater reliability for speaking scores. These matters should be clarified from the original field records before journal submission.

CONCLUSION

The source thesis reported improvement in speaking performance while PjBL was implemented through descriptions of local tourism objects at SMPN 2 Sekotong. The average score increased from 63.65 at pre-assessment to 75.23 in Cycle II, a gain of 11.58 points. The number of learners in the Good and Excellent categories also increased, and observations described more engaged group interaction. The findings support the practical value of contextualized project activities for this classroom but do not establish a controlled causal effect.

RECOMMENDATIONS

English teachers may adapt local tourism descriptions into structured speaking projects with clear group roles, language support, opportunities for rehearsal, and formative feedback. Future studies should report participant grade levels consistently, verify score summaries, provide detailed speaking rubrics and scorer agreement, and compare PjBL with other instructional approaches.

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