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The Effect of Using Project Based Learning (PJBL) Toward Students' Creativity in Speaking Skill

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini menyelidiki pengaruh penggunaan pembelajaran berbasis proyek (project-based learning/PjBL) terhadap kreativitas berbicara bahasa Inggris siswa kelas tujuh di SMPN 3 Mataram pada tahun ajaran 2024/2025. Desain penelitian yang digunakan adalah kuantitatif pra-eksperimental dengan jenis one-group pretest–posttest. Satu kelas berisi 20 siswa dipilih melalui undian kelas dari populasi sebanyak 80 siswa kelas tujuh. Siswa menyelesaikan tugas berbicara tentang kegiatan sehari-hari sebelum dan sesudah instruksi PjBL. Kinerja berbicara dievaluasi menggunakan indikator pengucapan, tata bahasa, kosakata, kelancaran, dan pemahaman. Kuesioner pasca-perlakuan yang terdiri dari sepuluh item mengeksplorasi persepsi kreativitas dalam hal kelancaran, fleksibilitas, keaslian (originality), dan elaborasi. Data dianalisis secara deskriptif dan menggunakan uji-t sampel berpasangan (paired-samples t-test) melalui SPSS 25. Rata-rata nilai berbicara meningkat secara tipis dari 13,90 menjadi 13,95; namun, perbedaan tersebut tidak signifikan secara statistik ($p = ,923$). Hasil kuesioner pasca-perlakuan sebagian besar berada pada kategori sedang menurut klasifikasi skripsi tersebut. Temuan ini tidak membuktikan adanya peningkatan kinerja berbicara yang terukur setelah intervensi. Karena penelitian ini tidak memiliki kelompok pembanding dan tidak melaporkan kuesioner kreativitas pra-intervensi, kesimpulan kausal mengenai kreativitas menjadi terbatas. Studi yang lebih panjang dan dikendalikan secara lebih ketat sangat direkomendasikan.

Kata kunci: pembelajaran berbasis proyek; kinerja berbicara; kreativitas; EFL; sekolah menengah pertama

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Abstract

This study investigated the effect of using project-based learning (PjBL) on seventh-grade students' creativity in English speaking at SMPN 3 Mataram in the 2024/2025 academic year. A quantitative pre-experimental, one-group pretest–posttest design was used. One class of 20 students was selected by a class lottery from a population of 80 seventh-grade students. Students completed speaking tasks on daily activities before and after PjBL instruction. Speaking performance was evaluated using pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension indicators. A ten-item post-treatment questionnaire explored perceived creativity in terms of fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration. Data were analyzed descriptively and with a paired-samples t-test using SPSS 25. The mean speaking score increased marginally from 13.90 to 13.95; however, the difference was not statistically significant ($p = .923$). Post-treatment questionnaire results were predominantly in the moderate category according to the classification. The findings do not establish a measurable improvement in speaking performance following the intervention. Because the study lacked a comparison group and did not report a pre-intervention creativity questionnaire, causal conclusions about creativity are limited. Longer and more rigorously controlled studies are recommended.

Keywords: project-based learning; speaking performance; creativity; EFL; junior high school

INTRODUCTION

Speaking is a demanding component of English as a foreign language (EFL) learning because students must organize ideas and produce comprehensible utterances in real time. Goh and Burns (2012) describe speaking as a complex cognitive and social process, while Brown (2001) emphasizes the interaction between linguistic resources and communicative purposes. Classroom tasks therefore need to provide opportunities not only to practice pronunciation and grammar but also to develop meaningful ideas. At SMPN 3 Mataram, the researcher observed during teaching practice that some seventh-grade students hesitated to speak spontaneously and tended to rely on memorized expressions (Andini, 2025).

Effective English speaking instruction requires meaningful opportunities for learners to practice language in communicative situations. Sandiarsa and Firman

(2024) emphasized the importance of innovative teaching strategies, including communicative and task-based approaches, in addressing challenges in English language teaching. Their discussion suggests that instructional practices should provide opportunities for active learner participation rather than relying exclusively on teacher-centered explanations. In this context, Project-Based Learning (PjBL) offers a potentially relevant approach because it engages students in planning, developing, and presenting meaningful learning products. Such activities may encourage students to express ideas independently and practice English through authentic communication.

Creativity in speaking may be understood through fluency of ideas, flexibility, originality, and elaboration. These dimensions help distinguish the generation and development of ideas from accuracy alone. Runco and Acar (2012) explain the relevance of divergent thinking to creative potential. Speaking assessments, however, often measure linguistic performance rather than creativity directly. Harris (1969), as adopted in the research, provides five speaking criteria: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. The distinction between these constructs matters when interpreting the outcomes of instructional interventions.

Project-based learning organizes instruction around purposeful projects and encourages learners to investigate problems, make decisions, and present outcomes. Thomas (2000) reviews its educational foundations, while Larmer et al. (2015) emphasize student voice, sustained inquiry, and the creation of products. These features suggest potential opportunities for original oral expression, although a project-based approach cannot be assumed to produce significant gains in every context. Project-based instruction has also been considered in the study's review of earlier classroom research (Andini, 2025).

Haryadi et al. (2021) reported that participants in an English speaking training program developed their ability to perform everyday communicative activities, including self-introduction, describing daily routines, and participating in general exchanges. Their findings highlight the pedagogical value of structured speaking

practice in familiar contexts. Similarly, Sumarni et al. (2022) implemented the Presentation, Practice, and Produce model to support English speaking development. These studies suggest that opportunities for guided practice and meaningful language production are important components of speaking instruction. Therefore, project activities involving students' daily routines may provide a useful context for developing oral communication skills.

Furthermore, Setianingsih et al. (2024) examined EFL students' speaking skills in relation to self-efficacy, drawing attention to the role of learners' beliefs about their speaking abilities. These perspectives suggest that developing creative speaking performance requires attention to students' confidence, participation, and willingness to express ideas. PjBL may provide opportunities to address these dimensions through collaborative preparation, repeated practice, and project presentations.

The present study addressed a local empirical question: did students' English speaking scores change significantly after a PjBL intervention, and how did they describe their creativity afterward? It focused on one seventh-grade class at SMPN 3 Mataram during the 2024/2025 academic year. The study also provides an opportunity to examine the limits of drawing conclusions about creativity from speaking scores and a post-intervention self-report instrument.

METHOD

A quantitative pre-experimental one-group pretest–posttest design (O_1–X–O_2) was employed (Andini, 2025). The population comprised 80 seventh-grade students across four classes at SMPN 3 Mataram. A class lottery selected VII-1, comprising 20 students. The design did not include a control group. The researcher administered an individual oral pretest on "Daily Activity," implemented PjBL activities in which students prepared oral projects on daily routines, and administered a comparable oral posttest. The study describes possible video or presentation products but does not establish a uniform project format for every student.

Speaking tests were scored on pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. A ten-statement questionnaire was administered after the project to elicit students' perceptions of creativity, addressing fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration. It does not document a matched baseline questionnaire or sufficient psychometric information to establish instrument reliability. The speaking scores were summarized by mean, minimum, maximum, and standard deviation; normality tests and a paired-samples t-test were using SPSS 25 with $\alpha = .05$. Because paired testing concerns within-student differences, the normality of paired differences is more directly relevant than separate normality tests of pretest and posttest scores.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following descriptive results for the 20 students. The mean score increased by only 0.05 points, while score dispersion was greater after the intervention.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of speaking performance

Statistic	Pretest	Posttest
N	20	20
Mean	13.90	13.95
Minimum	8	6
Maximum	21	24
Standard deviation	3.75	5.19

Table 2. Inferential test results

Test	Significance	Interpretation
Pretest normality	.125	Above .05
Posttest normality	.523	Above .05
Paired-samples t-test (two-tailed)	.923	Not statistically significant

The two-tailed significance for the paired-samples t-test was p = .923, substantially above the .05 threshold. Accordingly, the study failed to reject the null hypothesis of no mean pretest–posttest difference. This does not prove that PjBL is ineffective; it indicates that this sample and implementation did not provide statistical evidence of a change. Individual scores varied in both directions. Some learners improved, whereas others received lower posttest scores, a pattern obscured by the nearly identical group means.

The creativity questionnaire was completed after treatment. The study classified 25% of students as high, 55% as moderate, and 20% as low. Furthermore, without a pre-intervention questionnaire, these responses cannot demonstrate improvement in creativity over time. They instead provide a descriptive snapshot of students' self- creativity following PjBL.

The findings of the present study indicated that Project-Based Learning did not produce a statistically significant improvement in students' speaking performance. This result should be interpreted in relation to the instructional conditions and the complexity of speaking development. Sandiarsa and Firman (2024) discussed the importance of selecting appropriate instructional strategies and addressing contextual challenges in English language teaching. Similarly, Haryadi et al. (2021) demonstrated the value of structured communicative practice for developing practical speaking abilities. Although these publications support active and meaningful language learning, they do not establish that a short project-based intervention will necessarily produce statistically significant improvements. Therefore, the present findings suggest that project implementation, instructional support, and opportunities for practice deserve further investigation.

These findings should be interpreted in light of the conceptual differences between creative idea generation and oral proficiency. Runco and Acar (2012) associate creativity with divergent thinking, whereas the speaking rubric used here focused on linguistic performance. A student might become more willing to propose ideas without immediately achieving higher pronunciation or grammatical accuracy. Likewise, a student may improve linguistic accuracy without producing more original

ideas. Future evaluations should score creative speaking products directly using explicit originality, flexibility, elaboration, and idea-fluency criteria, alongside linguistic performance indicators.

The intervention provided opportunities to plan, develop, and present accounts of daily activities. This structure is broadly compatible with the student-centered principles outlined by Thomas (2000) and Larmer et al. (2015). Yet PjBL often requires sustained cycles of inquiry, feedback, revision, and presentation. Thus, limited exposure and uneven initial speaking proficiency are plausible explanations for the small mean change, but they were not independently tested in this study.

A further methodological concern is the absence of a control class. Practice effects, familiarity with the speaking task, classroom experiences, and other concurrent influences cannot be separated from the intervention. The sample of 20 students from one class also limits generalizability. The result is best understood as a context-specific null finding rather than a definitive judgment on PjBL. This cautious interpretation is consistent with the purpose of pre-experimental research and the distinction between association and causation (Creswell, 2018).

For classroom practice, teachers may continue using carefully structured projects to create authentic speaking opportunities, while providing vocabulary support, rehearsal, feedback, and explicit assessment of creativity. Future studies should employ comparison groups, longer interventions, validated creativity instruments administered both before and after instruction, and transparent scoring procedures. Reporting paired differences, confidence intervals, and effect sizes would also improve interpretability.

CONCLUSION

The mean speaking score of 20 seventh-grade students changed only slightly after PjBL instruction (13.90 to 13.95), and the paired-samples test was not significant ($p = .923$). The post-treatment creativity questionnaire described students' perceptions but did not measure change. Therefore, this study did not demonstrate a significant improvement in speaking performance or establish a

causal effect on creativity. Teachers may use PjBL with structured guidance, while future researchers should include comparison groups, longer implementation, and direct pretest–posttest creativity measures.

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