

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECT-BASED LEARNING TO IMPROVE VOCATIONAL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to describe: (1) the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PBL) to improve students' speaking skill in SMK N 1 Bantul, (2) the strengths and challenges of the implementation of PBL. This study is an action research consisting of two cycles. The results showed that (1) many students have the opportunity to speak English during the PBL implementation; besides, the students' interest in learning English increased significantly, (2) the strengths of PBL implementation deals with team work as stimulation for interactions and students could integrate their language skill to social skill and technology. The challenges were: the teacher could not closely assist and monitor the students' project doing directly. The project making also requires sufficient time. From the results and discussion, it can be concluded that PBL can be used as an alternative learning model since it supports not only language skill improvement but also social and technological skills integration.

Key words: *speaking, PBL, project ideas, cooperation*

Introduction

Basically, Vocational High School prepares the students for career or working, though the opportunity to take higher education is widely open. In case of the working preparation, one of the skills required besides the majored one is English. The vocational school graduates who have sufficient English competence will be more employable in this MEA-era. They will need English to communicate whether it is in oral or written form. When the graduates' writing competence is not yet perfect but they can speak comprehensibly, companies will likely hire them. Thus, speaking skill is definitely needed to be improved.

Before the students are able to perform effective communication, they need to acquire the elements of good speaking. As stated by Harmer (2002: 269), there are two elements of good speaking. First, language features which cover pronunciation, stress, intonation, pitch, grammar, and fluency. Second, the ability to process information covering the language processing or comprehend, interacting with others in order to make the conversation sound natural, and on the spot information processing.

Besides, teaching and learning process of speaking must support the students to do the effective communication, as stated by Kayi (2006: 73), teacher should provide speaking activities where meaningful communication takes place rather than leading the students to pure memorization. Additionally from Wallace, Stariha, and Walberg (2004: 10), teachers have to provide students with opportunities for practicing speaking English.

However, based on the writers' limited observation, students of vocational school did not perform effective communication. They were passive rather than active; they are afraid of making mistakes because they lacked vocabularies they need to say. They also felt shy to speak English because sometimes they were uncertain about the pronunciation of certain words. These problems were worsened by the teaching and learning speaking process which was monotonous.

Hence, a more communicative learning model is definitely needed to give students more chances to speak. One of the learning models is Project-Based Learning (PBL). This

model might solve these problems since it deals with project or activity as a means of learning to achieve attitudes, knowledge and competency. As stated by Thomas (2000):

“Project-Based Learning utilizes complex task, based on challenging question or problems that involve students in design, problem-solving, decision making, or investigate activities, give students the opportunity to work relatively autonomously over extended periods of time, and culminate in realistic products or presentations.”

The idea above supports the students to have many opportunities to practice speaking English and get involved in meaningful communication. The project doing is also hoped to help the students improve their confidence. In addition, the process of teaching and learning speaking is less boring because the students have to be responsible for the project which can be done outside the classroom. Through the project doing, the students are hoped to speak more naturally, confidently and frequently. In other words, PBL is considered to be effective model to improve the students’ speaking skill.

Method

This study is an Action Research and was done in one of vocational school in Bantul Regency, SMK N 1 Bantul. The writers involved students of class X AP1 in the academic year 2016/2017. There were 32 students involved. The data were obtained through observation and interview. In analyzing the data, the researcher used descriptive-qualitative technique.

Discussion

The implementation of PBL was done in four stages. In the first cycle, the students made video conversation project and in the second cycle they created an audio recording project. Table 3 presents the detailed activities during the implementation of PBL.

Table 1. The Implementation of PBL in Teaching and Learning of Speaking

Stages	Cycle 1	Cycle 2
Speculation	The writers prepared dialog for role play activity about “introducing self”.	The writers prepared dialog for role play activity about “congratulating to others”.
Designing the project activities	There were situations related to the topic of self-introduction and the students in group made the transcript of the conversation based on the given situation.	The writers gave dialog completion task to the students (in pair).
Conducting the project activities	Students in group begin to implement the plans they had discussed in the previous stages (making the video based on the transcripts they made). In this stage, the researcher gave 1 week for the video making. The next meeting each group would present the result of their video project.	Students worked in pair to start making audio recording project after the dialog completion task.
Evaluation	Feedback giving was done for the students, covering comments on pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency. Students from other groups also gave comment and appreciation towards the presentation and the project. Reflection by the groups was also elicited in terms of the difficulties that the students had experienced during the project doing and the positive impact the PBL gave to them.	Feedback giving (by the teachers), as in cycle 1.

In cycle 1 and 2 there were some differences about the students' group task and the student's role play. While in cycle 1 the writers used situation task as the idea for the students to design a conversation, in cycle 2 there was only dialog completion task. The students had to complete the dialog using expressions in congratulating others. This was intended to minimize mistakes in students' grammar, and increase vocabulary mastery and pronunciation. In addition, it was also intended to save time in the process of making the project while the teacher also could assist directly the process of making the project and correct some students' mistakes in grammar, pronunciation, or others. Another difference is cycle 1 the students worked in group, while in cycle 2 the student worked in pairs. This was intended to increase the opportunities to practice speaking English.

Furthermore, figure 1 below is the results of analysis of the students' work (project) and the teaching and learning transcripts in cycle 1.

Figure 1. Project Transcript of Cycle 1

From the above transcript, it is shown that the students used basic vocabularies but their grammar and expressions were correct. Another transcript is taken from cycle 2. It had more accurate and varied word structure, as shown below.

Figure 2. Project Transcript of Cycle 2

From the above students' project, it can be seen that the students' vocabulary mastery increased. The grammar and expressions were also correct. Additionally, the pronunciation was also increased from cycle 1 to cycle 2, since in the cycle 2, the teacher could assist and guide the students more. The elaborate discussion on the results or increased aspects is presented in table 2 below.

Table 2. The Result in Cycle 1 and Cycle 2

Cycle 1	Cycle 2
- Students became interested and enthusiastic in learning English speaking.	- Students were interested and more enthusiastic in following English speaking lesson.
It could be seen in the teaching learning transcript :	- Students were more active to give answer and propose question. It could be seen in the teaching learning transcript:

<p>Teacher :<i>Untuk lebih jelasnya, yuk kita lihat video introducing self ya.</i></p> <p>Students : <i>Hore nonton video!</i></p> <p>Teacher : From the first video, can you guess what is the possible situation?</p> <p>Nanda : Introducing self when meeting someone in cafe.</p> <p>Teacher : Great! Then, the second? Anyone else has an idea?</p> <p>Hesti : <i>Interview kerja miss.</i></p> <p>Teacher : Great!</p>	<p>Teacher : <i>Trus yang ini, i would like to say congratulations to you, ini bener, great! Ini, i would to like...congratulation..</i></p> <p>Students : <i>Salah</i></p> <p>Teacher : <i>Apa yang bener?</i></p> <p>Students : I would like to...</p> <p>Additionally, it can be seen also in this transcript:</p> <p>Teacher: Now, do you have any idea what is the funcion?</p> <p>Students : To congratulate someone success</p> <p>Teacher : Yes, great! To congratulate someone on their success or their achievement ya.</p> <p>Students : Yes.</p> <p>Teacher : And then, how to congratulate someone?</p> <p>Students : Good job, congratulate, good luck.</p> <p>Teacher : Ya, is correct like what i...<i>Itu semua adalahexpresi untuk mengcapkan selamat. Tadi ada apa aja?</i></p> <p>Students : Great job, congratulations, happy new year's eve</p> <p>Teacher : Yes, and etc ya. And then how to respond?</p> <p>Students : Thank you very much.</p> <p>Teacher : Ya, is there anything else?</p> <p>Students : Congratulations too.</p> <p>Teacher : Ya, any other idea?</p>
<p>- Teacher could not correcting directly, since the students finish the transcript at home and did the video project outside of the class.</p>	<p>- Teacher gave many correcting in students' pronunciation, since others language specific target was achieved.</p> <p>It could be seen in the teaching learning transcript below:</p> <p>Teacher : <i>Tadi ada kesalahan pronunciation di kata since and place, tulisannya s-i-n-c-e dan p-l-a-c-e.Nah kaya gini. Tadi miss dengernyasains dan plais. Harusnya since and place.</i> Repeat after me, since!</p> <p>Students : Since /sɪns/</p> <p>Teacher : Untuk plais, harusnya place. Repeat after me, place!</p> <p>Students : Place /pleɪs/</p>

<p>- Students had the opportunity to express their ideas by speaking English, but there were still some who only had the opportunity to write the transcripts.</p> <p>It could be seen in the students's work project transcript, since they only got situation to make the conversation transcript. Some of the students wrote the transcript, some of them became the artist, and the other was taking the video.</p>	<p>- All students involved in the process of making the transcript and audio recording project. In the processes, they had to speak English as much as possible.</p> <p>Since in cycle 2 the students worked in pair, each of them had bigger chance to speak English.</p>
<p>- Students could integrate English lesson with technology (making video project on English conversation).</p>	<p>- Students could integrate English lesson with technology (making audio recording project in English).</p>
<p>- Train the group to work cooperatively because each student got their own responsibility.</p>	<p>- Pair-work training</p>
<p>- Few students opened dictionary.</p>	<p>- The interest of students' learning in speaking increased, almost all groups of students opened a dictionary to check the vocabulary and corrected the pronunciation. Some consulted their problem directly the teacher.</p>
<p>- Students enjoyed the teaching and learning process through PBL. It could be seen in the transcript of the interview below:</p> <p>Teacher : well, it's oke but you can learn something, right? Group one: Yes miss, team work. Bisa praktek ngomong inggris, study together and happy. Group one: Amazing because we together are fun. Teacher : What do you feel after you make the video? Group one: Satisfied</p>	<p>- Students enjoy the teaching and learning process through PBL. It could be seen in the transcript of the interview below:</p> <p><i>Researcher: Bagaimana menurut pendapatmu tentang pembelajaran yang kamu ikuti, soal congratulating to others kemarin?</i> <i>Shafira: Menyenangkan dan bisa buat pengalaman.</i> <i>Researcher: Apakah kamu senang dengan pembelajaran yang kamu ikuti kemarin?</i> <i>Shafira: Ya senang sekali</i></p>
<p>- The feedback and appreciation made the students confident and motivated to learn English language.</p>	<p>- The feedback and appreciation made the students confident and motivated to learn English language. - The student performed a critical mind, which was shown by the student being able to give feedback to the other groups' performances.</p> <p>It showed from the teaching learning transcript below:</p> <p>Teacher : So, what is your comment in the first audio? Students : Pronunciation /gri:t/ miss. Teacher : Correct! What must be? Students : Kalau greet /gri:t/ kan menyapa, itu kan maksudnya</p>

	<p>luar biasa. Teacher :Smart! Jadi harusnya pronunciationnya gimana? Students : Great /gret/miss.</p>
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From the results above, it is obviously clear that making some projects in speaking class provides an opportunity for students to develop ideas that they want to convey directly and involve them in the learning process learning activities. During the project doing, the students can speak more confidently with the other members. Social skill and cooperation are improved too.

However, the implementation PBL yielded some challenges or weaknesses. Because of the work or project doing, the class can be so crowded and noisy. Besides, the time required to make the project is relatively long. Another challenge is the teacher needs good way of monitoring the students' activities or project doing when they work outside the class hour. Despite of the challenges, however, PBL provides significant changes and improvements to the learning process of students in SMK N 1 Bantul class X majors AP1 academic year 2016/2017.

Conclusion

Based on the results and discussion of this study, it can be concluded that using PBL to improve speaking skill in SMK N 1 Bantul class X major AP1 in the academic year 2016/2017 was effective. The teaching and learning process of speaking became more interesting and gave many opportunities for all students to express their idea by speaking in English. Using project doing provided many opportunities for students to speak English; indirectly it would build students' confidence to speak and improved student pronunciation, grammar, fluency, and comprehension. In addition, the vocabulary they used would also increase when they were able to start actively speaking English with confidence. In addition, with the frequent students practiced speaking or communicating using English, it would make it easier for students to grasp the meaning or information from the conversation. Besides the language and speaking skills, the students experienced cooperation or collaboration through the group and pair works. The social skill is well-developed. The integration of technology is another reason why PBL is one of the suggested learning models for today's education.

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