Improving the Students Achievement in Speaking By Using Project-Based Learning Method

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ABSTRACT

This study deals with the improvement of the vocational school students' achievement through Project-Based Learning Method. This research was conducted by applying classroom action research in two cycles. The subject of this research was a class in the second year student of SMK TKJ HARAPAN STABAT. There were 35 students that participated in this research. The quantitative and the qualitative data were gathered by administering oral test and diary notes. The result of the quantitative data indicated that the score of the students improved from cycle I to cycle II with a pre-test mean of 59,5, the test of cycle I was 70, and the test of cycle II was 83,8. The result of the qualitative data indicated that the use of Project-Based Learning Method helped to improve the students' achievement in speaking English.

Key Words: Speaking, Project-Based Learning, Oral Test, Diary Notes

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INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Brown (2000:118) declares that English is increasingly being used as a tool for interaction among nonnative speakers. Well over one half of the one billion English speakers of the world learned English as the second (or foreign) language. Most English language teachers across the globe are nonnative English speakers, which mean that the norm is not monolingualism, but bilingualism. Further he states that English is not frequently learned as a tool for understanding and teaching US or British cultural values. Instead, English has become a tool for international communication in transportation, commerce, banking, tourism, technology, diplomacy, and scientific research.

English is one of foreign languages for Indonesian learners, and now it becomes an international language which is used as a communication language. English has been used in all aspects of life, especially educational aspect. That's why students are expected to be able to communicate using English well, spoken as well as written not only for transactional and interpersonal purposes, but also for accessing information in this global era.

One of the main necessities in the learning of a foreign language is a developing of the four skills, which are listening, speaking, reading and writing. According to Fulcher (2003:03) speaking is the verbal use of language to communicate with others. In speaking, there is a process of communication between speaker and listener. People put ideas into the words, talking about perception, feelings that they want another people to understand. Then listener turn words, tries to reconstruct the perceptions that they are meant to understand.

Bailey (2003:64) states that speaking is the productive oral skill. It consists or producing systematic verbal utterances to convey meaning. Speaking is a language skill that can be performed by any speaker of a language although this skill may be acquired naturally. In learning speaking, students are expected to be able to use certain language expression in communication. In fact, most of students are unable to communicate in English, especially vocational school students.

Based on the writer's experience during field teaching practice in a vocational school, most of the students there do not like English; they think that English

is a scared subject matter. That's why they are lazy in learning it. Actually, vocational school's students are expected to be able to speak English better than general school students, since they will practice their ability directly after graduating their study. It means that the vocational school's students can work and apply the knowledge which they got in at school directly in a company for instance. Whereas, if they know English better and able to speak English well, it will be easier and become an additional value for them to apply their ability in computer technical program, since the computer terms mostly in English.

Project-Based Learning (PBL) is a teaching and learning model (curriculum development and instructional approach) that emphasizes the students centered instruction by assigning projects. It allows students to work autonomously to construct their own learning, and culminates in realistic, student-generated products.

PBL is a method used to teach speaking in vocational school students. It will be useful since their major is vocational, and of course they are accustomed to do a project. It can be a way of practice their speaking ability by presenting their project using English.

According to previous researcher, it was proved that in the last competence test, the mean was 81. It is higher than the second competence test 73.22 and also the first competence test 60.57. The findings of the research showed that PBL was able to improve students' achievement in speaking to senior high school students.

Based on above reasons, PBL is a suitable method to improve speaking ability of vocational school students.

Research Question

The problem of the study was formulated as the following: Does the use of Project-Based Learning method improve speaking achievement of vocational school students?

Objective of the Study

The objective of this study was to find out whether the Project-Based Learning method improves students' speaking achievement of vocational school.

Scope of the Study

The scope of this study was limited to improvement of the speaking achievement of vocational school students by using Project-Based Learning method.

Significance of the Study

The result of this study would be important and useful for those who teach speaking of course for the student especially vocational school who apply the language skill directly to the working world. Besides, this study could also motivate students to increase their confidence in speaking English communicatively. Thus, the result of the analysis would be useful and worthwhile both for the writer and other who want to speak English better.

Conceptual Framework

Speaking

Speaking is one of the four basic skills in language learning beside writing, listening and reading. It is one of the most important skills because speaking is a productive skill which produces a language besides writing. Meanwhile, listening and reading are non productive skills.

The main aim of speaking is to communicate, which conveys information or expression one's thoughts and feelings in spoken language from a speaker to a listener. The listener should interpret the information from the speaker. That is why the speaker should convey the information in a good way.

Speaking is not as simple as it looks. We must know the rules of conversation language. When people with similar cultural linguistic background get together, they speak to each other easily, because both they understand the rule of the language they are speaking with. While speaking in a foreign language, linguistic competence is necessary, it is very important for the speaker of foreign language to know the rules of the language itself.

Clark and Clark (1997:223) state that speaking is fundamentally an instrument act. Speakers talk in order to have some effect on their listener. The simplest effect that they want to have to their listener is any information or ideas to share, they ask them

questions, they request them to do something for them, and many other things they can share and do with the listener.

Speaking Achievement

The word 'achievement' is derived from 'achieve' (Hornby,1986:7) means to gain or to reach by effort then it becomes to noun word furthermore. According to Oxford (1995:10) 'achievement' means a thing is done successfully, especially with efforts and skill.

Speaking achievement can be measured through the significant improvement of scores toward the act, utterance, or discourse of one who speak. Platt and Weber as quoted by Savignon (1983) states that speaking as one of the communication competences has several essential characteristics.

Communication competences include:

a) Knowledge of grammar and vocabulary of language,

b) Knowledge of the rules of speaking, know how to begin and end conversation, know what topics can be talked about indifferent types of speaking events, know which address forms should be used with indifferent situations,

 c) Know how to use and response to different types of speech such as request, apologize, thanks, invitations,

d) Know how to use language appropriately from the characteristic of the communication competence. It can be said that speaking is not only produce some words, but also it is important to analyze the topic, grammar, vocabulary and context to prevent the misunderstanding in doing communication because before students speak the language, they should be having knowledge of the language itself.

Method

According to Richard and Rodgers (1982:154) as quoted in Brown (2000:14) a method is an umbrella term for the specification and interrelation of theory and practice. Anthony (1963) as quoted in Brown (2000:122) states that a method is an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material, no part which contradict, and all which is based upon the selected approach. An approach is axiomatic, a method is procedural. A method is the practical realization of an approach. The originators of a method have arrived at decisions of activities, roles of teachers and learners. The kinds

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of materials which will be helpful and some models of syllabus organizations, method include various procedures and techniques.

Project-Based Learning

According to Nunan David (1998:99), project is an activity that includes investigation about the facts of a particular issue and the reporting of these facts in various ways. Projects may include research reports, surveys or case studies with a particular purpose or objective. Projects provides students with the opportunity to work somewhat independently from the teacher, have positive academic experiences with their peers, developing independent learning skills, become especially knowledge in one area of the subject matter and develop skills in reporting their knowledge. Project-based learning (PBL) is an approach that allows for maximum learner involvement in choice in the learning process. It includes a group of learner taking an issue close to their hearts, developing a response, and presenting the result to a wider audience. A PBL is enjoyable for every student and teacher involved. PBL is an approach for a classroom activity that emphasizes learning activity that is long-term, interdisciplinary and student centered (http:/en.wikipedia.or/wiki/project-based learning).

PBL is a model which distinguishes from traditional teaching since the focus is put on the learner and his project. Learners have the opportunity to work more autonomously and build their knowledge. A project allows learners to identify and formulate their own problems. The goals they set as well as unexpected discoveries they will make during their interaction with the environment serve as guides.

PBL focuses mostly on a production model. Students start by defining the purpose of creating the end-product, identify their audience, they research the topic, design the product, do the project management, solve the problems that arise and finish the product followed by a self-evaluation and reflection. So, the driving force is the end-product, but the key to success is the skills acquired during its production.

PBL is a structure that transforms teaching from "teachers telling" to "students doing". Students become active problem-solvers, decision and meaning-makers rather than passive listeners; they collaborate or cooperates forming groups, organize their activities, conduct research, solve problems, synthesize information, organize time and resources and reflect on their learning. Teachers change their roles "from sage on the

stage to guide on the side" and assume the role of cognitive and meta-cognitive coach (by asking, monitoring, probing, managing, group regulating, keeping moving) rather than knowledge-holder and disseminator. Project serves as the initial challenge and motivation (appealing to be explored, setting up the context of learning).

The impact of PBL to students is they have generally been shown to be effective in increasing student motivation by engaging them in their own learning, in improving student problem-solving and higher order thinking skills. Teaching with the PBL method enables students to work cooperatively with peers and mentors in a student-centered environment where learners are encouraged to explore various topics of interest.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study was based on the principle of Classroom Action Research (CAR). According to Wallace (1998:16-17), CAR refers to classroom investigation initiated by the researcher, perhaps teachers, who looked critically at their teaching and the quality of education. Action research involves the collection and analysis of data related to aspects of professional practice. It is a loop process in the sense that the process could be repeated (refreshing the problem, collecting fresh data, refreshing the analysis, etc) until found satisfied solution.

Wallace (1998:18) states that classroom action research is different from more conventional types of research. It is very focused on individual or small group professional practice and it is not concerned with making general statement. CAR occupies a midpoint on a continuum ranging from teacher reflection at one end to traditional educational research at the other. It is more data based and systematic than reflection, but less formal and controlled than traditional educational research. Instructors use data readily available from their classes in order to answer practical questions about teaching and learning in their classroom.

According to Anderson, Herr and Nihlen, in www.bamaed.ua.edu/`kstaples/ActionRes.HTM, action research is directed toward an action or cycle of actions that a researcher wants to take to address a situation. This is why the term "action" is used for this method of research.

According to Kemmis and Taggart (1988), action research has three conditions must be exist. Firstly, a project relates to a social practice, regarding as a form of strategy action susceptible of improvement; secondly, it proceed though a spiral of cycles of planning, acting (implementing plans), observing (systematically) and reflecting; thirdly, it involves those responsibility for the practice in each of the moments of the activities, widening participation in the project is gradually to include others affected by the practice, and maintaining collaboration of the process.

According to Celce Murcia (2001), in action research the researcher begins by planning of the action to address a problem, issue or question in his/her context. Instructor uses data readily available from their classes in order to answer practical questions about teaching and learning in their classrooms.

Further Kemmis and Taggart in Wiraatmadja (2005) explained that the characteristic of classroom action research is a dynamic process which is done in four-stage cycle, namely the cycle of Plan, Action, Observation and Reflection.

a. Plan means the reflection of the action will be done. It includes plan detail about data that is collected by the researcher.

b. Action means the activities that are done. It is implementation of project of the researcher. Action is guided by planning in the sense that looks back to plan its rationale. Action is the fluid and dynamic requiring instant decision about what is to be done and how exercise of practical judgments is

c. Observation is the research of action that is done. It foreshadows the achievement of reflection. It has the function of the documenting the effect of the critically informed action it looks forward, providing the basis critical self-reflection.

d. Reflection is the evaluation of actions that have been done. It recalls action as it has been recorded in observation. It is evaluate aspects. It asks action research to weigh the experience to judge whether efforts are desirable and suggest ways of producing.
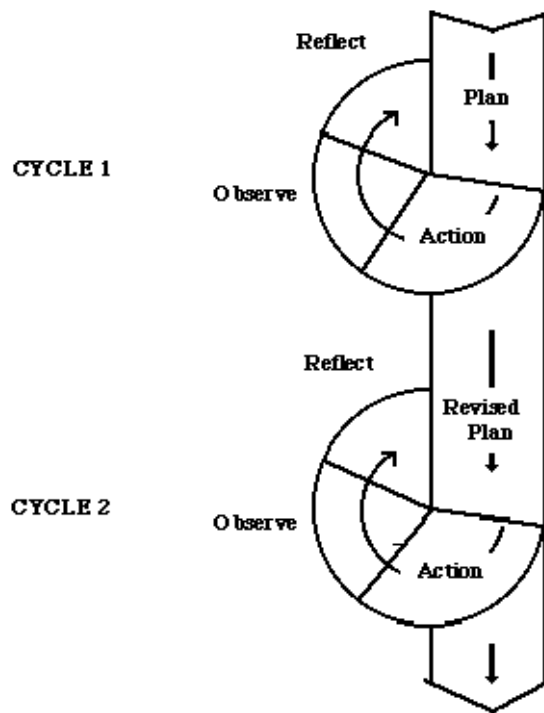
Figure 1 Simple Actions Research Model

(Source: MacIsaac, 1995)

Subject

The subject of this research was the 2010/2011 of the second year students of SMK Harapan Stabat. There were 6 (six) parallel classes in major of technical computer. Each class has different numbers of the student. The total numbers of the students are 228 students. The chosen class is XI-4 TKJ and it consists of 35 students.

Data Collection

There were some types of the data in this study namely quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative is broadly used to describe what can be counted or measured. In collecting the data, the researcher tested the students by asking them to present orally based on the topic given. Therefore, it could be considered as objective. Qualitative is used to describe data which are not amenable to being counted or measured in an objective way and therefore subjective (Wallace: 1998)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Qualitative Data

Interview

The interview was done to the students at the first meeting before the learning process begun. It was done to identify the students' interest in studying English at school. Based on the interview, the researcher found that only ten students like studying English. The other students confessed that they have bad scores in English subject. They still couldn't get the use of English language to their daily life. One of the students who were interested in English said that she like English because she liked listening English songs. It motivated her to learn English. The other students said that they like watching English movie. Based on the researcher experience in teaching practice in that school and teaching the same students, the researcher found that students more interested in practice rather than theory. However, the English teacher in that school state that the students were often playing during the study practice in the group work, therefore the teacher thought them in theory. Otherwise, the students said that theory made them bored. They prefer practice in group work to individual. The students were interested in speaking English but they were still difficult to find the vocabularies and pronounce the words. On average they were very lazy to bring the dictionary and the English textbook to school. Their English teacher seldom used the teaching media in the class. Sometimes they were difficult to learn, they wanted to see the real of English use in their daily life. Therefore, by using PBL they would experience what they are studying in the class.

Diary Note

From the observation, the researcher noted that in the first meeting in cycle I , almost all of the students were lazy to speak English, they just kept silent because they were afraid of making mistakes, and lack of vocabularies. Although some of them didn't bring the English text book even didn't have it, they could follow the lesson. Next day, in the second meeting, by using the media, all of the students could see what they have learned. After given the explanation about report text, they were given the task to be discussed in the group. They worked cooperatively but some of the students made noisy in the class (See Appendix I)

Quantitative Data

The quantitative data was taken from the test result and done in a pre test and two cycles.

The researcher applied the following formula:

$$\overline{X} = \frac{\sum x}{N}$$

Where :

$\overline{X}$ = The mean of the students' score

$\sum X$ = The total score

N   = The number of the students

The result of the test was shown in the table below:

Table 4.1

The score of the students

No	Name	Pre Test	Post test Cycle I	Post Test Cycle II
1	AK	70	78	87
2	AFJ	60	70	85
3	ASP	70	80	80
4	AN	50	65	77
5	AR	75	80	95
6	COD	75	75	95
7	CMI	60	65	80
8	CP	50	75	85
9	DM	40	55	72

10	DS	50	65	77
11	DN	50	70	80
12	EN	75	80	95
13	FH	60	75	80
14	FN	50	55	80
15	GV	50	65	77
16	IRH	45	55	72
17	MRA	70	70	80
18	MIM	50	55	80
19	MHR	75	75	85
20	NNH	60	75	85
21	NRH	70	75	85
22	PMS	60	70	77
23	PNS	75	85	95
24	RRN	60	75	77
25	RD	45	60	80
26	RZ	50	75	87
27	RF	60	70	90
28	RYA	75	75	95
29	SFY	70	70	85
30	SE	60	70	87
31	SHM	50	70	87
32	SHH	75	65	85
33	SLS	45	60	80
34	UAP	60	65	85
35	WA	50	70	87
	Total	$\sum X = 2085$	$\sum X = 2448$	$\sum X = 2934$
	Mean	$\overline{X} = 59.5$	$\overline{X} = 70$	$\overline{X} = 83.8$

The score of the students improved better from treatment to treatment; the score in the second cycle was higher than the first cycle. Through Project-Based Learning method (PBL) students' speaking ability was improved and they could express their ideas easier in English.

From the table above, it could be concluded that the students' score had improved from the first to the last.

a. The students who got the improvement score about 30-37 point

1. DN from 50 to 80

2. MIM from 50 to 80

3. FN from 50 to 80

4. RF from 60 to 90

5. SLS from 45 to 80

6. RD from 50 to 80

7. CP from 50 to 85

8. RZ from 50 to 87

9. SHM from 50 to 87

10. WA from 50 to 87

The students in this range were active during the teaching process and they paid attention in listening the researcher's explanation, so that their scores increased in every cycle.

b. The students who got improvement score about 20-27 points

1. CMI from 60 to 80

2. FH from 60 to 80

3. COD from 75 to 95

4. PNS from 75 to 95

5. EN from 75 to 95

6. RYA from 75 to 95

7. AR from 75 to 95

8. AFJ from 60 to 85

9. NNH from 60 to 85

10. UAP from 45 to 72

11. IRH from 50 to 77

12. DM from 45 to 72

13. DS from 50 to 77

14. GV from 50 to 77

15. AN from 50 to 77

16. SE from 60 to 87

The students in this range were active in learning process. Even though they didn't have ability to speak English, they have tried hard to speak up although their pronunciations were not so good. They paid attention on the lesson, and asked questions if they got difficulty during the study. So, their score improved.

c. The students who got the improvement score about 10-17 points.

1. ASP from 70 to 80

2. MRA from 75 to 80

3. MHR from 75 to 85

4. SHH from 75 to 85

5. NRH from 70 to 85

6. SFY from 70 to 85

7. PMS from 60 to 77

8. RRN from 60 to 77

9. AK from 70 to 87

These students were a group of clever students who had good ability in speaking English. Their pronunciation is good so they can speak English well. They were so active during the learning process.

Based on the data analysis above, it was concluded that all of the students had the improvement in their score. There was high improvement and also low improvement.

Therefore, it could be concluded that PBLM could improve students' achievement in speaking. The percentage was shown on the table and counted by using the formula as follows:

$$P = \frac{R}{T} \times 100\%$$

Where:

P = The percentage of students who get the point 75

R = The number of students who get point up to 75

T = The total number of the students who do the test

The percentage of the students' improvement could be seen below:

1. $P1 = \frac{7}{35} \times 100\% = 20\%$

2. $P2 = \frac{14}{35} \times 100\% = 40\%$

3. $P3 = \frac{33}{35} \times 100\% = 94\%$

The result showed that the students' score from cycle I to cycle II have improved.

In the first treatment there were only 20% of the students who got 75 point. In the second treatment the researcher found out that 40% of the students who got point up to 75. In the last treatment was far different from the previous, the students who got point up to 75 were 94% of all subject. So, it could be concluded that in the last treatment only two students didn't get good point but their score improved from treatment to treatment.

Table 4.2

The percentage of students' Improvement in speaking achievement

Test	Percentage
I	20%
II	40%
III	94%

The range improvement of the first treatment (20%) and the last treatment (94%) was 74%. It had been proved that 74% of all the students got good scores on the last meeting.

Discussion

This research proved that the students' ability in speaking English had improved. Based on the writer's experience in teaching practice in the school, the writer found that many students didn't like English subject because they didn't see the use of English language to the life around them. However, this research use PL method to help students see the meaning of the material they are studying by connecting academic subject with the context of their daily lives. In this case, students were helped to see the use of English to their daily lives.

In the first meeting of the research all of the students were enthusiastic follow the learning process but many of them were afraid to speak up. There were only seven students could speak up because they loved English subject. In the second meeting they were invited to talk about computer. On average, the students enjoy the study because they could see the example of the topic given.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion

After analyzing the data, a conclusion can be drawn as the followings: There is an improvement I students' speaking achievement when they were taught project-based learning method. The improvement can be seen from the increasing of the students' mean from pre test (59.5) to test in cycle I (70) and last test in cycle II (83.8).

Suggestions

The result of this study shows that using Project-based learning method could improve students' speaking achievement. Therefore, the following suggestions are offered:

1. To the English teachers, it is better to use Project-Based Learning method in teaching learning process especially for vocational school students because teacher can improve and make new variation of her way in teaching English.
2. To the students, it is suggested to use Project-based Learning method because it can make them more enjoyable and more creative in learning English, especially speaking.

3. To the reader, it is suggested to use project-based learning method, because y applying it in daily life, their speaking skill will be improved.

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