The Implementation of Project Based Learning in Teaching Speaking to Students of Vocational School

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ABSTRACT

Scientific approach has several methods that lead the students to be active in learning English applicative skills such as speaking. One of methods that can be considered for enhancing students' speaking skill is project-based learning (PjBL). Vocational School teachers might often apply PjBL to speaking activities in learning process. Regarding to this fact, the researcher conducted a descriptive study to explore Inservice teachers' definitions of project-based learning (PjBL) and their accounts on the meaning of their PjBL implementations. A purposive sample of six teachers from grades ten until twelve and several students in public schools participated. Observation, interviews, and document collection are used for gathering the data. The result of this research shows that through PjBL, teachers could cover speaking activities that support students' development in speaking through PjBL.

Keywords: project based, teaching speaking, vocational school

Introduction

Students of Vocational School have an intended outcome which emphasizes them on English practices. To deal it, they are encouraged to speak in naturally context. Many students might have difficulties to do it because of their background knowledge, low motivation in speaking English, lack of experience, and limited time of teaching learning process in the class. Regarding to this condition, Vocational Schools' teachers provide a method in teaching speaking that is able to solve students' problem and to enhance students' ability namely project-based learning (PjBL) which involved in Merdeka curriculum.

Project based Learning (PjBL) is one of methods recommended by the teachers to be used in teaching speaking. Working on projects, students gain the opportunity to learn and practice their English and at the same time they develop various important skills.

Through PjBL, students are engaged in purposeful communication to complete authentic activities (project-work), so that they have the chance to use the language in a relatively natural context. Related to that phenomenon, the researcher studied the implementation of project-based learning (PjBL) in teaching speaking for students of Vocational School since many studies successfully apply it in learning process. Moreover, she wanted to know about the activities were used by the teachers in PjBL in which the teachers sometimes face difficulties or challenges in implementing it. According to Anazifa & Djukri (2017) project-based learning and problem-based learning affect student's creativity and critical thinking. Moreover, PjBL activities not only can give benefits for the students, but also for the teachers to enhance the collaboration among the teachers, students, and the institution, to cooperate with the students in a good relationship, and to improve professionalism. Teaching speaking skill is different with teaching other English skills since the teachers should engage students actively practicing their English in communicating one way or two ways by providing activities that explore their competence. It has led studies applying many ways or methods to help teachers teaching speaking skill in order to improve the students' competence. One of the methods that have been applied by teachers is project-based learning (PjBL) involved in teaching learning process. PjBL itself has been defined by some experts, Markham (2003, p. 4) states,

> "Project based learning is a systematic teaching method that engages students in learning knowledge and skills through an extended inquiry process structured around complex, authentic questions and carefully designed products and tasks."

In addition, Ribe and Vidal in Fauziati (2014) describes project-based learning is a systematic instruction method that develops students' language skills, cognitive domains and global personality skills through valuable projects. Thomas (2000) also defines project-based learning (PjBL) as a model that organizes learning around projects.

In other words, Project-based learning is a systematic instruction method that engages students in learning knowledge and skills through valuable projects. By considering those definitions, the writer infers that PjBL is appropriate in teaching speaking since the students need a real-life experience in practicing their English

orally. Besides, learning is not only a way in which teachers transfer knowledge, but also a process that students may obtain from classmates and from outside the classroom.

Regarding to the process of implementing PjBL, there are some stages of project development according to Stanley, et al. in Fauziati (2014:168).
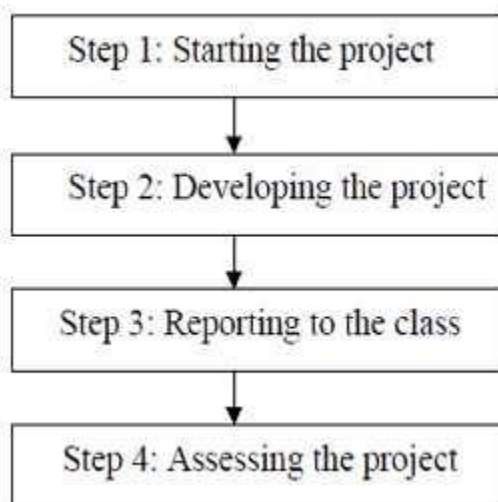

Figure 1: Stages of Project Development

Starting the project means selecting the relevant topic to students guided by teachers. There are various activities can be applied such as dialogue, simulation, information gap, or role play. In developing the project, students practice the language skills to gather information needed. Then, the students report the project by presenting their work in various forms or displays in order to receive feedback from others on the improvements to the project. Finally, the project is assessed. Those stages deal with the concern of 'learning by doing' for the students to enhance their skills especially in speaking. Besides, to involve PjBL in teaching learning process the teachers should be the facilitator and the instructor to make sure the process is on the track.

It is in line with some researchers who have successfully applied PjBL and who have studied the implementation of PjBL, some researchers had done on studying it. Sympson (2011) stated in the result of his study that there is a significant effect on the development of low, medium, and high achievers' English language skills especially in speaking. He mentions that there are some features in PjBL activities such as; authentic learning, roles of teachers and students, learner autonomy, cooperative learning, and multiple

intelligences. Authentic activities allow the students to connect with the real world while completing their project, such as communicating with other people outside of the classroom using teamwork. The role of teachers contributes to the role of students. Teachers in PjBL activities should be facilitators, instructors, and advisor in order to guide students running their project. The autonomy in learning is given for students to engage actively, experience, and know their learning. Students are also facilitated cooperative learning activities that can maximize their learning. They can utilize their skills, interest, or preference to gain their knowledge.

Maulany (2013) also stated in her study that PjBL could improve students' speaking ability although she focused on young learners. She provided speaking activities to engage students' participation and activation. In addition, PjBL activities can also be combined with cooperative (students learn in groups) and collaborative learning (students learn through positive interdependence).

Regarding to the studies about PjBL, it can be said that PjBL is appropriate to be involved in teaching English, speaking skill also since students can gain their learning by themselves through experiencing directly in the real situation. Moreover, it is a must for the teachers to conduct assessment on students' project by utilizing peer assessment, self-assessment, and teachers' assessment, but there must be clear design on rubric dealing with the goals and objective of projects. Those kinds of assessment function to give feedback on students' project. By implementing PjBL in the learning process especially in speaking activities, there are benefits obtained. Fragoulis (2009) and Bell (2010) state that there are many benefits of implementing PBL in teaching English as Foreign Language.

1. PBL gives contextual and meaningful learning for students.
2. PBL can create optimal environment to practice speaking English.
3. PBL can also make students actively engage in project learning.
4. PBL enhances the students' interest, motivation, engagement, and enjoyment.
5. PBL promotes social learning that can enhance collaborative skills.
6. PBL can give an optimal opportunity to improve students' language skill.

Simpson (2011) also adds that by using PjBL in the language classroom are students

are able to gain language proficiency, self-efficacy, and self-esteem, students to use real life language and experience language in meaningful life situation, and to develop motivation, self-confidence, and the cognitive domain in language learning. Those are the evident that PjBL can provide meaningful opportunities for students to apply skills and knowledge they acquire through direct experience to develop their language skills. Hadim and Esche (2002) state that besides enhancing students' participation in the learning process (active learning and self-learning), it also helps to improve communication and collaborative skills that are important in their working life later. Regarding to the implementation of PjBL in teaching speaking for students of Vocational School, there are many challenges faced by the teachers in order to provide the effective and beneficial activities. Hutchinson et al. in Fauziati (2014) states that ESP; in theory nothing, in practice a great deal. It indicates that teaching English in ESP concentrates more on language in context rather than on teaching grammar and structures. Since the ESP program is built on students' needs, the projects in speaking activities should relate to students' need.

Methods

This study tried to obtain the deep information concerning the implementation of project based learning in teaching speaking specially for students of Vocational School. In order to ease the data collection process, the researcher formulated an understanding on the research design. According to Ari (2010, p. 42), research design is "the researcher's plan of how to proceed to gain an understanding of some group or some phenomenon in its context". Moreover, Creswell (2012) states that the qualitative research is used because the researcher needs to investigate the participants/subject of study to get more information about a phenomenon of study. Derive from the experts' explanation above; the researcher concluded that qualitative research focuses on describing a phenomenon from participants of the study in order to get deeper understanding and information about it. Furthermore, it provides rich descriptions of setting, situations, and participants from the observation, interview and document analysis.

Based on the definition of qualitative research design, this research used descriptive qualitative research design as the approach to conduct this present study. The qualitative research design was used because the researcher intended to explore the teachers'

understanding about PjBL, the teachers' way in implementing PjBL activities in teaching speaking, and the problems faced by the teachers in implementing PjBL activities.

The subjects of this study were six English teachers of Vocational School. They were taken as the subjects of the study because they have been teaching for more than two years so they have already known about PjBL involved. Moreover, they have often attended such training on how to teach speaking on students of Vocational School.

According to Ary (2010), there are three main methods in collecting the data: observation, interview, and document analysis. In this present study, the researcher used all of them for collecting the data. The researcher also used an observation checklist, an interview guide and documents as the instruments of data collection. In line to Ary (2006), observation is one of the main methods in collecting the data of the human's behavior in qualitative research. In this study, the researcher used the participant observation because she is a teacher who gets involved in teaching learning process. The observation was done during the teaching learning process in the classroom.

According to Ary et al. (2010), there are three types of interviews: structured Interview, unstructured Interview, and semi structured interview. In this study, the researcher used the semi-structured interview to gather the data from English teachers because the researcher might develop some questions in interview guide to answer the statement of problems.

The researcher also used visual materials to gain an understanding of the phenomenon under study. She analyzed not only syllabus and lesson plan created by teachers but also videos created by the students in terms of project.

Result and Discussion

Based on the research problems that lead this study to collect the evidence, there are some findings related to them. All the teachers in this study showed agreement on this research question. They all defined PjBL through its perceived advantages on learning and they all revealed similar perceptions on the nature of these advantages. Teachers revealed four sets of advantages: support and facilitation in teaching speaking of the learning process, differentiation and creative abilities, motivation and engagement, and

collaboration. Teachers reported seeing several benefits of PjBL on the learning process of their students. When involved in a project, students' performance was improved, they worked harder and they gave better quality of work. Moreover, teachers found that their students learned more, became more informed, and got a better understanding of the topic at hand in a PjBL activity. One of the teachers, Indiriani said:

> *Students actively explored certain topic and engaged in speaking activity of learning process. By acting as customer service to explain their products, then it was recorded, they understood the topic.*

Other important skills that the teachers saw develop during PjBL were research skills, communication skills, cooperation skills, time management, project management, and discipline. Qolis said:

> *On project designing, students are more enthusiastic and responsible because they can creatively develop the project to enhance speaking skill.*

Therefore, increased effort and performance, improved learning, and the acquisition of a variety of academic and non-academic skills are what teachers perceived as the facilitation and support that PjBL brought in teaching speaking. Through PjBL, teachers found a way to have students choose the way of learning they are most comfortable with. Having students work on projects was perceived by teachers to increase their motivation and engagement also. In defining PjBL, teachers elaborated on its advantages of being a teaching method that improved the learning process and allowed students to be creative, showing their learning in their preferred styles. Moreover, teachers believed that by bringing authenticity to the learning process, students in PjBL acquired necessary life skills for working environments.

This finding indicates that teachers who choose to use PjBL do so because they observed and experienced its return on the learning gains they aimed for. Consequently, these teachers developed positive perceptions about PjBL that led them to believe in it and value its advantages. They also play an important role in conducting PjBL. All of them stated that,

> *As teachers, we should be a partner and a facilitator in order to conduct a successful PjBL.*

However, teachers face constraints in implementing project-based learning to teach speaking such as conducting the project is time consuming, limited available media to

support the project, and the process of assessing the project itself is longer because teachers should give feedback and assessment on the project by observing the details completely. This research also observes the videos created by students. The findings show that students are more confident in expressing their ideas by processing the project although there are still many errors and mistakes. However, project-based contributes more on developing students' skill.

Conclusion

By implementing project-based learning in teaching speaking to students of Vocational School, students have more chance to develop their competence and creativity. In addition, their other skills that support the project are also improved since project-based learning allows the students to design their own project in order to achieve the intended outcome. In addition, teachers' role is also the key for succeeding the activities of project-based learning although the type or way of teachers give projects is different. Teachers should guide along the process on project developing. By having a good responsibility in controlling it, students will have a willingness also to gain the activities and enhance their speaking skill well. However, the constraints that the teachers often face can be handled by minimizing the complexity of the projects and link the projects to the achievement or outcome that should be gained in speaking.

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