RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Effect of Implementing Project-Based Learning (PjBL) on Improving English Pronunciation Skills of Class VII Students of SMPN 1 Krembung

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluates the effectiveness of the Project-Based Learning (PBL) method in improving students' English pronunciation skills. The research subjects were grade VII students at SMPN 1 Kembung, who often face challenges in pronunciation, especially in the elements of stress, rhythm, pause, and intonation. Data was collected through pre-tests and post-tests as well as observation. The results of the analysis showed a significant improvement in the students' average pronunciation score, from 63.72 in the pre-test to 73.13 in the post-test, with a significant difference ($t = -9.323$, $p < 0.001$) and high correlation ($r = 0.856$, $p < 0.001$). In addition to technical improvement, PjBL also helps increase students' speaking confidence. These findings suggest that PjBL is effective in overcoming pronunciation difficulties, and is recommended as a method that can be applied in English language learning to improve communication skills.

Keywords: (Project-Based Learning, English Teaching, Junior High School)

INTRODUCTION

Project Based Learning (PjBL) is a popular learning method as it encourages students to actively participate in the learning process through real, context-based projects. Project Based Learning (PjBL) was created to enhance 21st century skills, such as critical thinking, communication, creativity, and collaboration, which are essential in a dynamic globalized world (Undari et al., 2023). The PjBL environment helps students learn English in a more natural and purposeful way by providing them with opportunities to practice communication skills in a real-world context.

PjBL is very useful in English language learning to improve speaking skills, including pronunciation, which is often a challenge for students learning a foreign language. Research shows that project-based approaches, which involve the use of authentic materials and hands-on practice, help students improve their pronunciation skills and increase their understanding of English phonology (Yastanti et al., 2023).

Students often face difficulties in pronunciation in English, especially for Indonesian speakers, who have a very different phonology. Studies show that many students often make pronunciation errors such as substitution or omission of sounds. This may be due to the differences in the sound systems between English and Indonesian (Gunantar & Rosaria, 2020). Since the project-based approach allows students to practice pronunciation more interactively and contextually, Project-Based Learning (PBL) is expected to help overcome this problem.

To overcome the obstacles faced by students in pronunciation for English subjects in schools, therefore the application of PjBL can be carried out to find out whether the method used can help students in pronunciation skills, to be able to implement PjBL, according to (Rohmah, 2022) before learning, it is necessary to determine the

RPP and teaching modules that will be used in the method that will be applied.

Project-based learning gives students the opportunity to use various learning areas to improve their speaking skills and increase vocabulary mastery. Studying several projects as the main activity allows students to use various vocabulary in describing something. Students are asked to make a project presentation containing information about describing animals and the results. This is important to know how far the students' reading fluency is. To help students understand English words, project-based learning uses keywords for describing animals specifically (Phuong, 2018).

This research aims to find out whether PjBL can influence students' English pronunciation skills in the classroom, where the aim of using learning methods is to find out aspects that can improve students' pronunciation skills including speaking fluency, (Febriani & Sya, 2022) many things can influence pronunciation skills including self-confidence and the methods used for teaching in the classroom.

METHOD

Research Design

This study uses a qualitative approach with a pretest-posttest design to determine whether PjBL can influence the English pronunciation skills of 7th grade junior high school students, where the aim of using learning methods is to determine aspects that can improve students' pronunciation skills including speaking fluency, (Febriani & Sya, 2022) many things can influence pronunciation skills including self-confidence and the methods used for teaching in the classroom.

Participants

The participants in this study were students of SMPN 1 Kembung grade VII-7 who were selected by purposive sampling. The following factors influenced the selection of this class, the average class score for the low pre-test presentation material sections of the students of grade VII-7, the low interest and desire of the research participants to learn due to the difficulty in distinguishing different vowel sounds and intonations in English and Indonesian. In addition, students who have difficulty with basic English phonetic sounds or symbols often face more challenges in pronouncing English words accurately. This is due to the fact that English spelling often does not match the way people pronounce it [1].

Data Collection Strategy

The data in this study were obtained from the results of tests given to participants which included:

1. Tests, consisting of:

a. Pre-test, which is given at the beginning of learning, aims to determine the level of students' initial ability in listening to pronunciation parts and to determine the right learning strategy that will be applied in the learning process, in the form of a listening test for oral utterances in the form of words, phrases and sentences, and

b. Post-test, which is given at the end of the cycle, which will later determine whether the cycle will continue or end, as well as improvements that need to be made in the learning process.

2. Class observations will be conducted to assess students' ability to identify word pronunciation, control tempo, and use correct intonation patterns.

Data analysis

The data collected in this study were analyzed using pre-test and post-test. The scores from the pre-test and post-test will be compared to measure the improvement of students' pronunciation skills. Then, this comparison will provide new insights into each student's pronunciation areas that show progress. Data collection techniques in this study include observation, documentation, and testing.

The results of the observations will be analyzed by reviewing notes on each student's ability to articulate sounds, maintain the right rhythm, and regulate the tempo of speech. The data analysis process in this classroom action research begins by reviewing the results of the pre-test and post-test, as well as observations that have been written in the notes. [2]

RESULTS

Listening Learning Outcomes

To measure or evaluate whether there is an increase in student learning outcomes after implementing Project Based Learning (PjBL), a listening test is given consisting of four parts, namely stress, rhythm, juncture, and intonation. The test given is in the form of an objective test with matching, true or false questions, and provides markers on words, phrases or sentences consisting of 40 questions. The type of questions is modified in each test while still taking into account the same level of difficulty. Based on the test results given in each cycle, the data obtained is summarized in the following table:

Based on the pre-test and post-test data, the following results were obtained:

Table 1: Pre-test and Post-test Results

Measurement	Pre-test	Post-test	Improvement
Average	63.72	73.13	+9.41
Standard Deviation	8.74	10.98	-

From the results above, it can be seen that there was an increase in the average score from 63.72 in the pre-test to 73.13 in the post-test, with an increase of 9.41 points, which indicates a significant increase in students' pronunciation abilities.

Correlation Analysis between Pre-test and Post-test

Table 2: Correlation Results

Partner	N	Correlation	Signification
Pre-test & Post-test	32	0.856	0.000

The correlation between the pre-test and post-test was 0.856 (p < 0.001), indicating a very strong relationship between the two measures.

DISCUSSION

The findings from this study also highlighted the significant impact of implementing Project Based Learning (PjBL) in improving each student's English pronunciation skills. The increase in students' pretest average score and posttest average score, as well as the observations made in the classroom during the learning process, fostered students' good pronunciation skills and confidence in speaking English which is encapsulated in the following points:

Pronunciation Value Improvement

Based on the results of the pre-test and post-test, there was an increase in the average score from 63.72 to 73.13, indicating an increase of 14.76% in students' pronunciation abilities.

Increased Proficiency in Pronunciation

The students showed a greater ability to become more proficient in recognizing and pronouncing English phonetic sounds correctly, as observed during the beginning of class activities. This indicates that there is an improvement in their phonetic assessment.

Student Self Confidence

Students who participated in PjBL appeared more confident when speaking in English, especially when presenting projects. This can be seen from the observation results that students became more comfortable and confident when speaking English, especially during the presentation of the project given.

These results indicate that the use of the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) method significantly improves students' pronunciation skills in English, both in terms of correct pronunciation and their confidence in speaking English. The results of this study also answer the research question by increasing students' confidence in using English orally.

CONCLUSION

The application of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) method in English language learning has shown significant results in improving students' pronunciation skills (Endah Widyastuti, 2021). This study also found previous research that project-based learning has a significant influence on students' speaking ability (Mafruudloh & Fitriati, 2020).

This research supports previous findings that PjBL is effective in encouraging students' engagement and providing space for them to practise English in a real context, which directly strengthens their confidence and speaking skills (Widiyati & Pangesti, 2022). This is in line with the results of our research at SMPN 1 Krembung, where seventh grade students who learnt using the PjBL method showed significant improvement in the accuracy and intonation aspects of pronunciation. This finding reinforces the importance of project-based approach in language teaching to facilitate active and effective learning.

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