

The Effect of Project-Based Learning Through a Personal Profile Project on Junior High School Students' Speaking Skills

By:

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Introduction

Speaking is one of the most challenging skills in EFL learning, as it requires simultaneous control of fluency, pronunciation, grammar, and comprehension. A preliminary study involving 36 students of class VII-E at SMP Negeri 1 Wonoayu found that the main barriers were a lack of speaking skills, limited vocabulary, and pronunciation difficulties, which were further reinforced by teacher-centered instruction. These conditions indicate the need for a more structured and meaningful learning strategy to develop students' speaking ability.

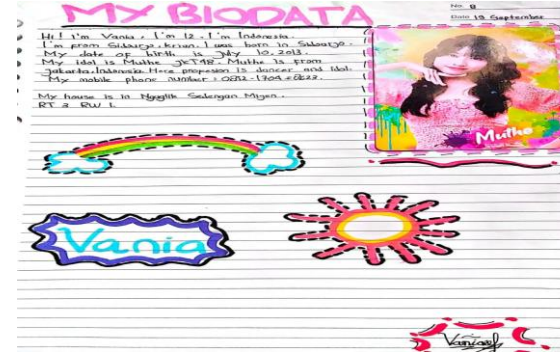
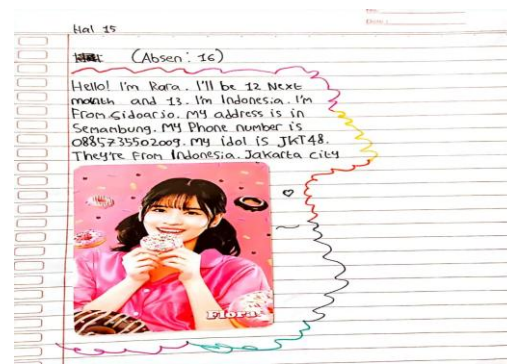
Solution: Project-Based Learning (PBL)

- **Definition (Markham 2012):** PBL is a learning process based on inquiry and challenge that helps students develop skills and apply knowledge to real-world problems.
- **8 Stages of PBL:** Driving question, Guiding questions, Assessment design, Project roadmap, Scaffolded facilitation, Research & drafting, Evaluation & revision, Final presentation.

Personal Profile Project



Student work



- **Type of project:** Students present information about themselves and a person they admire.
- **Advantage:** The topic is familiar, so students can focus fully on speaking quality rather than content recall.
- **Research gap:** Studies on personal profile projects at the junior high school level, particularly in the Indonesian EFL context, remain limited.

Research Question & Objective

- ❑ How much does Project-Based Learning through the Personal Profile Project improve the speaking skills of Grade VII-E students at SMP Negeri 1 Wonoayu?
- ❑ To investigate the effect of the personal profile project within a PBL framework on the speaking skills of Grade VII-E students.

Research Method

- **Design:** Pre-experimental, one-group pretest-posttest design (quantitative)
- **Subjects:** 36 students of class VII-E, SMP Negeri 1 Wonoayu, academic year 2024/2025 (purposive sampling)
- **Instrument:** Speaking rubric adapted from Brown (2004) scale 1–5 across 4 dimensions: fluency, pronunciation, grammar, and comprehension

Research Procedure

- ❑ **Pre-test:** Students spoke without any learning materials to establish a baseline.
- ❑ **Treatment:** 2 sessions, following the 8 PBL stages applied to the personal profile project. **Post-test:** Same format as the pre-test, conducted after treatment was completed.
- ❑ **Data analysis:** Normality test (Shapiro-Wilk) → Paired sample t-test → Cohen's d, using SPSS version 25.

Descriptive test & Normality test

Table 4. Descriptive statistics of pre-test and post-test scores

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Pre-test	36	50	88	70.31	7.452
Post-test	36	60	92	79.64	6.668

Table 5. Shapiro-Wilk normality test results

	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pre-test	.976	36	.619
Post-test	.942	36	.060

T Test Results

Table 6 Paired Samples Statistics

Pair 1	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest	70.31	36	7.425	1.242
Posttest	79.64	36	6.668	1.111

Table 7 Paired Samples Correlation

	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pretest & Posttest	36	.933	.000

Table 8 Paired Sample Test

	Mean Difference	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pretest – Posttest	-9.333	2.704	.415	-10.248	-8.418	-20.706	35	.000

Discussion

- ❑ PBL shifts students' roles: from passive receivers to active researchers, organizers, and presenters.
- ❑ The preparation–presentation cycle creates repeated and purposeful speaking opportunities.
- ❑ The personal profile project reduces cognitive load (familiar topic) students can focus fully on speaking quality.

Discussion

- ❑ Students with the lowest initial scores recorded the greatest proportional improvement.
- ❑ Score variability decreased the performance gap among students.
- ❑ These findings are consistent with previous research on PBL and speaking skills.

Conclusion

Project-Based Learning through the personal profile project had a significant effect on the speaking skills of Grade VII-E students at SMP Negeri 1 Wonoayu, with notable improvement across all four dimensions: fluency, pronunciation, grammar, and comprehension. The personal relevance of the project content allowed students to focus fully on speaking quality, creating more effective and purposeful oral language practice.

