

DEVELOPING ENGLISH SPEAKING COMPETENCE THROUGH PROJECT-BASED LEARNING (PBL) TECHNOLOGY

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Abstract: This article examines the role of Project-Based Learning (PBL) technology in developing English speaking competence among language learners. It explores the theoretical foundations and practical applications of PBL as a learner-centered instructional approach that promotes active participation, collaboration, and authentic communication. The study discusses how project-based activities create meaningful learning experiences by encouraging students to solve real-world problems, conduct research, present their findings, and interact with peers in English. Furthermore, the paper highlights the contribution of PBL to improving learners' fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, critical thinking, creativity, and communication skills. The findings suggest that Project-Based Learning significantly enhances students' speaking competence, increases learning motivation, and fosters learner autonomy, making it an effective methodology in modern English language education.

Keywords: Project-Based Learning (PBL), English language teaching, speaking competence, communicative competence, learner-centered learning.

The rapid advancement of globalization and digital transformation has significantly influenced educational systems worldwide, creating new demands for innovative teaching methodologies that foster learners' communicative competence and twenty-first-century skills. English has become the dominant language of international communication, science, technology, business, and higher education, making effective English language instruction a global educational priority. Consequently, language educators are increasingly adopting student-centered teaching approaches that promote active learning, critical thinking, collaboration, and authentic communication. Among these approaches, Project-Based Learning (PBL) has emerged as one of the most effective methodologies for improving learners' speaking competence. Project-Based Learning is an instructional approach in which students acquire knowledge and language skills by actively engaging in meaningful projects that address authentic questions, challenges, or real-world problems. Unlike traditional teacher-centered instruction, PBL encourages learners to investigate topics, collect information, collaborate with classmates, and present their findings using the target language. Throughout the learning process, students continuously practice speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills while applying English in realistic communicative situations.

Speaking competence is widely recognized as one of the most essential components of communicative competence. It involves not only grammatical accuracy but also fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary usage, discourse management, interactional skills, and the ability to express ideas confidently in various social and academic contexts. However, many English language learners experience difficulties in developing speaking skills because traditional classroom instruction often emphasizes grammar exercises, vocabulary memorization, and written assessments rather than authentic oral communication. As a result, learners may possess theoretical knowledge of English but lack confidence and practical experience in speaking the language. Project-Based Learning addresses these challenges by creating meaningful opportunities for authentic communication. Students participate in discussions, interviews, debates,

presentations, research projects, and collaborative problem-solving activities that require them to use English for real communicative purposes. Such activities encourage learners to negotiate meaning, exchange opinions, ask and answer questions, and present information confidently before their peers. Consequently, speaking becomes a natural part of the learning process rather than an isolated classroom activity.

Another important characteristic of PBL is its emphasis on learner autonomy and collaboration. Students take responsibility for planning, organizing, and completing projects while working individually and in groups. This process develops independent learning skills, leadership, teamwork, creativity, and critical thinking. At the same time, continuous interaction with classmates and teachers provides valuable opportunities to practice spoken English in authentic educational contexts. These collaborative experiences increase learners' confidence, reduce communication anxiety, and promote active classroom participation. The integration of digital technologies has further expanded the educational potential of Project-Based Learning. Digital platforms, online collaboration tools, multimedia resources, virtual classrooms, and artificial intelligence-based educational applications allow students to conduct research, communicate with peers, prepare digital presentations, and share project outcomes effectively. These technologies make project-based instruction more interactive, flexible, and accessible while supporting the development of both digital competence and English speaking skills. Despite its numerous educational advantages, implementing Project-Based Learning also presents several challenges. Teachers need sufficient methodological knowledge to design meaningful projects, manage collaborative learning activities, and assess both the learning process and final outcomes. In addition, successful implementation requires appropriate instructional materials, effective classroom management, technological resources, and sufficient time for project completion. Nevertheless, educational research consistently demonstrates that the long-term benefits of PBL significantly outweigh these challenges.

The purpose of this study is to examine the effectiveness of Project-Based Learning technology in developing English speaking competence. The study explores the theoretical foundations of PBL, analyzes its contribution to improving learners' oral communication skills, collaborative learning, and critical thinking, and discusses practical strategies for integrating project-based instruction into English language classrooms. It is expected that the findings of this research will provide valuable recommendations for educators seeking to enhance speaking competence through innovative and learner-centered teaching practices.

Project-Based Learning (PBL) is a student-centered instructional methodology that enables learners to acquire knowledge and practical skills by actively participating in meaningful projects. Unlike traditional teaching approaches that emphasize memorization and teacher-led instruction, PBL encourages students to investigate real-world issues, solve authentic problems, and present their findings through collaborative learning activities. In English language education, this approach provides learners with opportunities to use the target language in realistic communicative contexts, making language learning more purposeful and engaging. The theoretical foundation of Project-Based Learning is based on constructivist learning theory, which argues that knowledge is actively constructed through experience, interaction, and reflection. According to this perspective, learners develop deeper understanding when they are involved in authentic tasks that require communication, inquiry, and cooperation. Therefore, PBL creates an educational environment where students become active participants rather than passive recipients of information.

Speaking competence is one of the most important components of communicative competence because it enables learners to express ideas, exchange information, participate in discussions, and communicate effectively in academic and professional contexts. However, many English language learners experience difficulties in speaking due to limited opportunities for authentic communication, fear of making mistakes, and insufficient classroom interaction. Project-Based Learning addresses these challenges by providing students with meaningful speaking opportunities throughout the learning process. During project implementation, learners discuss research topics, share opinions, negotiate responsibilities, conduct interviews, solve problems collaboratively, and present project outcomes. These communicative activities require students to use English naturally and continuously, thereby improving fluency, pronunciation, grammatical accuracy, vocabulary usage, and interactional competence. Regular participation in project discussions also helps learners develop confidence in public speaking. Instead of memorizing dialogues or repeating isolated sentences, students learn to communicate spontaneously while expressing their own ideas and responding to questions from classmates and teachers. This authentic communication significantly strengthens oral proficiency and communicative confidence.

In conclusion, Project-Based Learning is an effective pedagogical approach for developing English speaking competence in contemporary language education. By engaging learners in meaningful projects, authentic communication, and collaborative problem-solving, PBL enables students to use English in realistic contexts rather than relying solely on traditional classroom exercises. This approach not only improves speaking fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, and presentation skills but also strengthens learners' confidence, critical thinking, creativity, and teamwork abilities. Despite challenges such as time management, assessment procedures, and teacher preparation, the educational benefits of Project-Based Learning significantly outweigh its limitations. Therefore, integrating PBL into English language teaching can enhance communicative competence, increase learner motivation, and prepare students for effective communication in academic, professional, and global environments.

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