ESTEEM: JOURNAL OF ENGLISH STUDY PROGRAMME
P-ISSN 2622-9323
E-ISSN 2622-2213

REDEFINING PROJECT BASED LEARNING IN ENGLISH CLASS

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Abstract: This study used the experimental method with quasi experimental design, specifically, non-equivalent control group design. There were two groups, namely, experimental group in which it was given treatment by using PBL and control group in which it was given no treatment. For collecting the data, both groups were given speaking test and self-confidence questionnaire. For speaking, the data were collected using speaking test which was evaluated by two raters using analytic rubric consisting of five elements, namely accent, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension. Meanwhile, students' self-confidence was evaluated using a ready-made-self-confidence questionnaire which measured (1) language use anxiety, (2) causal attribution, (3) perceived L2 competence, and (4) self-efficacy. Both data were analyzed by using t-test to see the difference in means (1) between pre- and post-test of students' speaking achievements and of their self-confidence, and (2) of post-test of speaking achievements and of their self-confidence between the first and the second group. Regression analysis was also given to see the contribution of PBL to the variables in questions. The results showed that (1) there was a significant difference both in speaking achievement (t=8.828, p<.000) and self-confidence (t=7.968,p<.000) of the experimental group after being taught using PBL, (2) there was also a significant difference between experimental and control groups both in speaking ability (t=2.307, p<.027) and self-confidence (t=3.595, p<.001) , (3) the contribution of PBL to the students' speaking achievement was 99.7% and to self-confidence was 92.7%. In conclusion, PBL could be considered as an effective method in teaching speaking and in increasing students' self-confidence.

Keyword: *Project-Based Learning, Speaking, Self-Confidence*

I. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, English becomes a global language which is used for international communication. There are two main reasons to determine a language as a global language. They are 1) the language becomes the official language in many countries, 2) the language becomes priority to be learned in the foreign language countries (Crystal, 2003). As we know that now English is used in "over 100 countries" (Crystal, 2003, p. 5) in the world as official language or priority learned language. That is the reason why Graves (2008) mentions that the purpose of learning English is to be

global citizen in order to communicate and to improve one's economic prospects. English is used in many concerns for education, job, information, entertainment, etc. According to Nga (2008, p.262) English is the main language of books, newspapers, airports and air-traffic control, international business and academic conferences, science, technology, medicine, diplomacy, sports, international competitions, pop music, and advertising. Over two-thirds of the world's scientists write in English. Three-quarters of the world's mail is written in English. Of all the information in the world's electronic retrieval systems, 80% is stored in English. By looking at the facts described above, it is a must for learner to learn English in order to communicate with many people around the world. In learning to communicate in English, speaking takes place as the most important language in the world. Many students argue that fluency to communicate verbally with others often consider more important than the ability to read or write (Nazara, 2011, p. 29). Burnkart (1998) argues that speaking is the most important language skills that need to be controlled, and the achievement in mastering English is based on the ability to speak English. In addition, the new parameter used to determine success in second/foreign language education program is to develop English speaking proficiency (Widiati & Cahyono, 2006, p. 269) in which it is followed by the changed paradigm of English learners that a large percentage of the world's language learners study English on the goal of developing proficiency in English (Richards & Renandya, 2002, p. 201). In Indonesia, the changed paradigm in learning English is not followed by the change of students' proficiency in speaking English. Althought it was found that the position of Indonesia in terms of the score of English proficieny has increased for the last three years based on Education First-English Proficiency Index (EF-EPI). In 2016, Indonesia was predicated in low proficiency level with the rank of 34th out of 44 countries. In 2012, it increased to 27th out of 44 countries still in the low proficiency level with the score of 53.31. In 2013, Indonesia was positioned in moderate proficiency level, in the rank of 25th out of 60 countries with the score of 53.44. In comparison with some countries in Asia, Indonesia is positioned under Singapore (Rank 12th) and Malaysia (Rank 11th) which included to high proficiency countries. Gan's study (2012) which interviewed 20 students in the final 4-year of Bachelor of Education (BEd) in dealing with their experience during BEd programme in Hongkong mentions that in fact, some important points which influenced students' speaking proficiency are: 1) inadequate vocabulary, 2) grammar as stumbling block, 3) imperfectly learned pronounciation, 4) inadequate opportunities to speak in the class, 5) lack of focus on language improvement in the curriculum, and 6) input poor environment outside class. Those problems actually covers almost all areas of knowledge that language learners need to recognize in speaking (Bashir, Azeem & Dogar, 2011), namely: 1) mechanics which is meant to use right words in right order with the correct pronounciation (the problems number 1,2 and 3); 2) function of speaking as transaction or interaction, and 3) social and cultural rules and norms. In Indonesian context, from the reports on teaching problems, Widiati and Cahyono (2006, p. 278) mention that there are two core problems faced by students in oral English proficiency. *Firstly,* the students of English major have a great number of errors when speaking (Mukminatien,1999). The errors cover 1) pronunciation, 2) grammatical accuracy, 3) vocabulary, 4) fluency, and 5) interactive communication in which they are called mechanics problems (Bashir, et.al., 2011). *Secondly,* the problems is related to emotion, such as: students feel anxious (Padmadewi, 1998), keep silent which is caused by the lack of self-confidence, the lack of prior knowledge about the topics, and poor of teacher-learner rel ationship (Tutyandari, 2005). On the

other words, the students' problems in speaking can be classified intoknowledge and emotion(e.g. self –confidence). All students are absolutely eager to develop their speaking skills. It is mentioned in Nazara's study (2011), the result of the questionnaire administered to 40 students in the fifth and seventh semester of FKIP UKI is 100% of respondent agree that they are eager to develop speaking skills. But, again, they have not got enough time to practice their speaking even in the class. 90% respondents agree that the time provided for practicing speaking in speaking classes is too limited (p. 37). So, if a teacher gives much more time to the students to practice and to explore their Speaking, of course, the two main problems mentioned above can be solved. Nobody is diffident to speak in front of others, as happened in Awan, Azher, Anwar and Naz' study (2010) in which 55.3% of respondents state that "speaking in front of others" becomes the highest anxious to do. it can be seen that the students lacked of confidence. Although, it was only 20%, but other responses also indicate that they have problem with confidence in speaking English (e.g. nervous, shy to speak English, etc). There are only two responses which indicates positive motivation, namely: *'not nervous, try hard to use English'*. The role of teachers is to foster the students to get their speaking ability. Teachers need to apply a strategy which can give students much more opportunity to explore their competence as well as to grow their confidence in speaking English. The strategy proposed in this study was project based learning (PBL). PBL is an approach which can "engage students in activities that are interesting to them and important to the course" (Fleming, 2000, p. 1). It focuses on two points which can give solution to the problems mentioned in speaking. *Interesting activities* support students to enjoy their learning process. Here, students are not stressed to join in learning process, since, the activities are fascinating. It can motivate students and avoid their less-confident. *Secondly, important course(s)* means that even though a class is set by considering students' interest in the activities, but, the corridor that must be followed is the activities still keep on the track. Poonpon (2009) argues that PBL brings to benefits cognitively, emotionally and psychometrically. *Cognitively*, most students showed improvement in all four language skills. *Emotionally* most learners are eager to participate in learning activities. They seemed to developed intrinsic motivation. *The last, psychomotor aims* foster the development of curiosity and observation skills to the students (p. 115-116). In other words, PBL can improve students' cognitive competence, emotion and psychomotor. Considering facts and reasons explained above, the writer was interested in conducting research in the form of experimental study to the second semester students of University of PGRI Palembang. Therefore, the writer posted the study entitled: "The implementation of Project-Based Learning (PBL) in increasing speaking achievement and self-confidence. The problems of study were formulated in the following questions: (1) was there any significant increase in speaking achievement of second semester students of University of PGRI Palembang using PBL? (2) was there any significant increase in self confidence of second semester students of University of PGRI Palembang by using PBL? (3) How much was PBL contribution in increasing speaking achievement of second semester students of University of PGRI Palembang ? And (4) How much was PBL contribution in increasing self confidence of second semester students of University of PGRI Palembang?

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used the experimental method, the writer used quasi experimental design, specifically, non-equivalent control group design. There were two groups, namely, experimental group in which it was given treatment by using PBL and control group in which it was given no treatment (McMillan, 1992:176). Both groups at the

beginning section were administered by pre test, and they were administered by post test at the last section of the study.

The writer used purposive sampling. Fraenkel, et. al, (2012) mentioned that in using purposive sampling, a researcher used their judgement to select the sample that they believed based on the prior information about the population they had. To select the sample of the research, the writer considered the following criteria: 1) the age of students was around 18-21 years old. 2) The score of semester test were grouped into three categories; the above average, average and below average. The writer chose the average group (56-70) as the sample that consists of 40 students. Those students were placed into two groups, experimental group and control group. 3) They were divided in the same number of each gender because there were more female than male. In analyzing the data, the writer used quantitavive data analysis by using SPSS version 21. There were two kinds of data that were analyzed. They were the data of students' speaking achievement and the data of students' self confidence from questionnaire. At the beginning, the writer got the score through oral test which was conducted as pre test and post test. The scores were analyzed based on five criteria, namely: 1) Accent, 2) Grammar, 3) Vocabulary, 4) Fluency, and Grammar (Adam & Frith cited in Hughes, 2003, p. 131-133).

III. FINDING AND INTERPRETATIONS

The data were gained and calculated statistically and the documentation as the supporting data analyzed qualitatively, the writer attempts , Statistically, it was found that the students who were taught through Project-Based Learning got better achievement than those of the students of control group. At the beginning in the pretest, the writer postulated that between the two groups, experimental and control group, the students' score were similar. It showed that the students had the equal ability in Speaking ability and their self confidence. After a treatment, the experimental group experienced the significance progress in speaking and the increase of their self confidence better than the control group. It indicated that the treatment used, in this case PBL, was a good strategy which can be implemented in a teaching and learning process.

There are some reasons bringing the success of PBL on its implementation to the second semester students' speaking ability of University of PGRI Palembang in the academic year of 2017/2018. First reason is that PBL has characteristic which can support the students to explore their ability withouth making them saturated. The design of learning activities was arranged by the students themselves. They planned, organized, worked, and evaluated their works by themselves. It caused the students were motivated in joining the class. This reason is supported by Fleming (2000, p. 1) that PBL can "engage students in activities that are interesting to them and important to the course."

Second, PBL is also in line with the nature of teaching speaking. In teaching speaking, there are five taxonomy emerges. They are 1) imitative, 2) intensive, 3) responsive, 4) interactive, 5) extensive (Brown, 2003, p. 140-141). In comparison, the design of tasks in PBL in the learning and teaching process to the students was arranged based on the easier to the more difficult ones. There were three programs namely: A parody-TV Show, Gallery Walks, and Exhibition. In the first program, the students did an imitative and intensive process through the performance. The second program, Gallery walks, in which the students still worked in the groups made stations which were visited by their friends. In the second program, the students experienced responsive and also interactive process.. For the last program, Exhibition, the students displayed and explained in detail the product they made in the previous two programs to the visitors who were not from their class. In the last process, they did extensive speaking.

PBL also increases students' self confidence. PBL gives motivation to the students to explore their ability. It opens the space for the students to show their existence in the class. Everybody got the same opportunity to speak, to respond, to comment, etc. By getting the chance, the students got responsibility and were engaged to do best for their program. Eventually, they got their self confidence.

Besides, PBL gave many advantages beyond the variables investigated in this study, for example: 1) students' readiness to accept suggestion from their friends, 2) self-evaluation, 3) solving their problems. The students were accustomed to accepting suggestion even criticism from their friends. At the end of each program, the audiences can deliver their ideas in the form of question, suggestion, criticism, and or review. They shared one and each other as a process of evaluation. Their readiness to be evaluated was also supported by their self evaluation. They noted in their learner diaries about their feelings, problems, and planning for the next week. They really understood about themselves related to their problems in speaking and their self confidence. They also wrote their planning to solve their problems.

This study answered the challenging things underlined by some experts on students' readiness and time management (Ravitz, 2008; Fragoulis & Tsiplakides, 2009; Chayanuvurat, 2007 in Poonpon, 2009). It was proved that during the process the idea came from the students themselves. The teacher was only as facilitator and coordinator. The students decided and created some programs by having discussion in their groupworks. Time management factor was also solved by stretching the time schedule planned at the beginning. The students were informed about the time they had to finished their works. The writer thought that these condition happened because students understood how they should work with PBL.

However, there were some notes which became challenge in this study. From the data, it was known that there was one aspect of each variables, speaking ability and self confidence, which did not significantly increase. They are 1) perceived L2 Competence and 2) comprehension. There were some possible reasons the writer argued for the problem occurred. First, the writer thought that the designs of the program implemented in the treatment actually tended to emphasize the students to memorize the material. From the three programs, the students had the material and memorized it before the performance. The writer assumed that because of less comprehension, the students still perceived that they had less competence in L2. To prove this assumption, the writer calculated to correlate between the two things. It was found that r=0.156. It means that there was no correlation between these two things. Second, The students focused on the grammar and vocabulary. It can be seen from the note the students wrote in their learner diary. In their self evaluation, they wrote that vocabulary and grammar are the two problems of their speaking ability. It could be one of the reason which caused the writer was inattentive on their comprehension and something burdened them so that they always felt they were not competent in L2. Third, in evaluation section, the students focused on the performance rather than on the comprehension. In this case, it was probably problem which make the students as well as the writer inattentive toward students' comprehension. The last, the students were in second semester of their school. It indicated that they were in-growth students of their comprehension. It meant that they need much more things to increase their comprehension and perceived L2 competence.

In conclusion, PBL contributed to the second semester students' speaking ability and their self confidence of University of PGRI Palembang in the academic year of 2017/2018. It was seen

from the results of the study in the form of statistical analysis and descriptive analysis collected from test and documentation during the research process. Furthermore, PBL not only increased students' self confidence and speaking ability, but also in fact it absolutely worked more than that. It can increase students' readiness in accepting criticism, self evaluation, and problem solving, since in the process of teaching and learning, PBL gives the students time to evaluate their works in evaluation section. In this case, the students try to listen other comment, suggestion, and criticism in order to make their works better. The writer believes that by implementing this method and by considering some notes to others investigation, researchers can dig deeper related to the students' potential in learning, and get many benefits from Project-Based Learning.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings and interpretations, the writer intends to conclude his study. Project-Based Learning increased the students' speaking ability. There were some aspects improved, namely: accent, grammar, vocabulary, and fluency. There was only one aspect which did not increase when it was compared between the two group. It was comprehension. It indicated that the treatment designed had been able to support the increase of technique for speaking, but it needs much more efforts to support the students' comprehension.

PBL also increased the students' self confidence for some aspects. They were language use anxiety, causal attribution, and self efficacy. It showed that the intervention given to the students in this study gave them space to explore and to exist on their lesson. It helped them feel safe and relax when they were studying in the class. However, the students still felt that they had less competence in L2. Although there was no correlation between students' comprehension and their perception towards L2 competence, but the writer believed that their so called feeling was caused by their comprehension which made them uneasy to neutralize and to save their feelings and to convince them that they were good at English.

Finally, each aspects for both speaking achievement and self confidence contributed to their improvement. On speaking achievement, the aspects which had strong contribution were fluency, vocabulary, and grammar and comprehension. It is interesting to know that comprehension contributed to students' speaking achievement, since it did not increased when the mean was compared between students' post test of control and experimental group. The contribution of comprehension was only 0.7% which indicated it gave contribution but could not increased students' speaking comprehension. Second, the aspect of accent did not influence very well. The writer assumed that in the teaching and learning process, the writer was inattentive to the accent. Besides, on self confidence, the aspects influenced well were language use anxiety, causal attribution, perceived L2 competence and self efficacy. Perceived L2 competence and self efficacy did not significantly contribute to the students' self confidence. It indicated that the students have had the opportunities to explore themselves and the learning designed support the students to decrease their anxiety when they were speaking in the class. However, again, it needs much more time to convince the students and to change their paradigm related to their perception towards L2 competence.

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