

**THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECT-BASED LEARNING IN
IMPROVING ENGLISH SPEAKING PROFICIENCY
THESIS**

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SCHOOL SUBULUSSALAM**

Adalah benar-benar karya saya, kecuali semua kutipan dan referensi yang disebutkan sumbernya. Apabila kesalahan dan kekeliruan di dalamnya, maka akan sepenuhnya menjadi tanggung jawab saya. Demikian surat yang pernyataan ini saya buat dengan sesungguhnya.

Banda Aceh, 2 Juli 2025

Saya yang membuat surat pernyataan



Dewi Kartika Sari

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ABSTRACT

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Thesis's Title : The Implementation of Project-Based Learning in Improving English Speaking Proficiency At Senior High School Subulussalam

Supervisor : Rahmi, M.TESOL, Ph.D.

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This study aims to determine the effectiveness of Project-Based Learning in improving students' English speaking skills at SMAN 2 Simpang Kiri, Subulussalam. This study used quantitative method with one-group pre-test and post-test design. The research sample consisted of 33 students of class XI. Data were collected through oral test using Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) rubric and analyzed using paired t-test with the help of SPSS 25.0. The results showed an increase in the mean score from 44.55 in the pre-test to 57.42 in the post-test. Statistical analysis showed a significant difference (Sig. 2-tailed = $0.000 < 0.05$), which indicated that Project-Based Learning had a positive influence on students' speaking ability. It can be concluded that Project-Based Learning is an effective strategy to improve English speaking skills, especially in a rural school environment.

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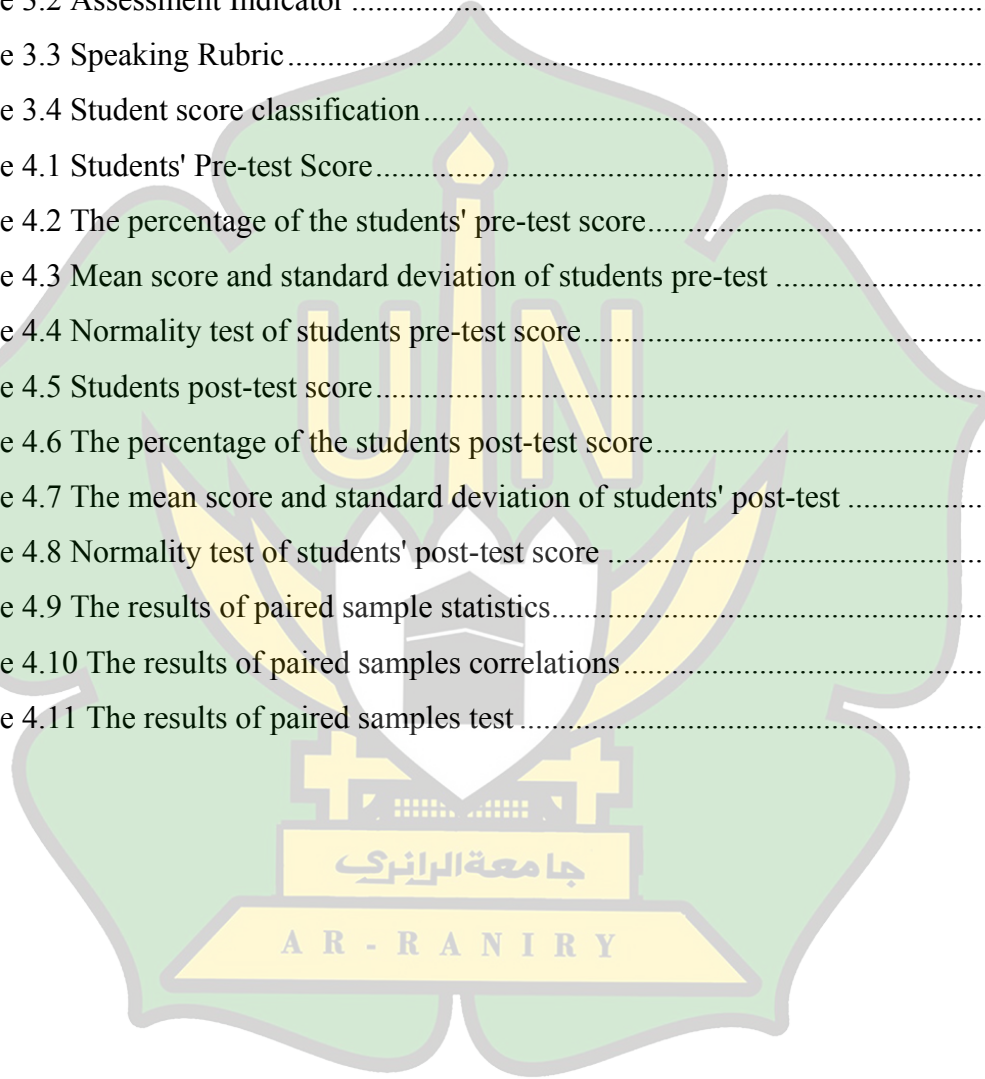
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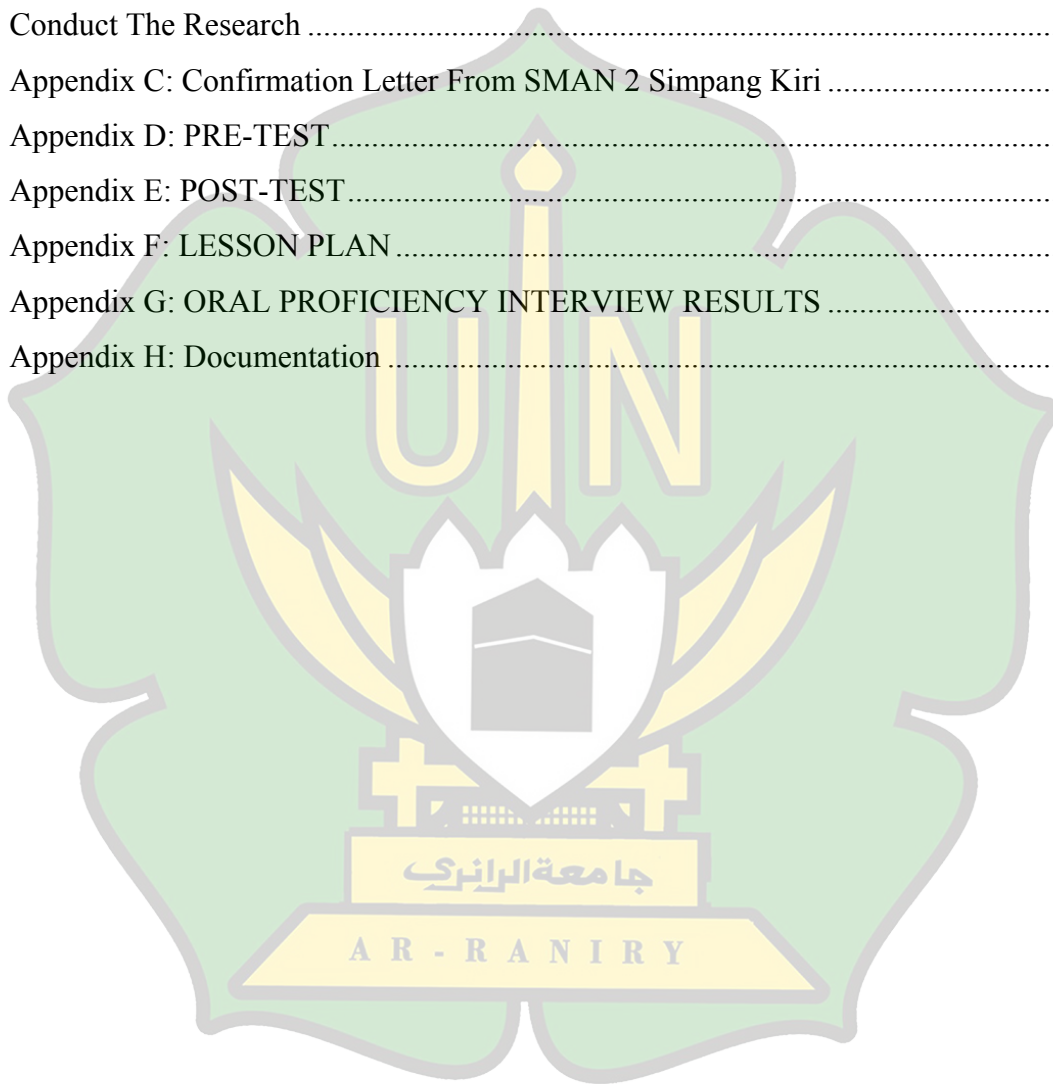
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

English speaking proficiency, especially in speaking, is increasingly becoming an important skill in this era of Globalization. English is not only an international communication tool, but also one of the determinants of success in various fields of life, including education, career, and social life. In Indonesia, English language teaching has been part of the education curriculum from primary to secondary level. However, various challenges still arise in achieving the expected level of speaking proficiency (Barrows, 2021). One of the main problems is the low level of English speaking skills among students, especially in geographically remote areas such as Subulussalam, Aceh. Limited learning facilities, minimal exposure to English in daily life, as well as lack of interaction with native speakers or English-speaking environments are significant obstacles in improving students' speaking skills in remote areas (Ningsih et al., 2023).

In general, English language learning in Indonesia is still dominated by conventional methods that focus more on grammar and reading and writing skills. This causes the aspect of speaking skills to receive less adequate attention (Susanti, 2021). This is in line with the explanation of Yunita et al. (2022), that traditional teaching methods tend to limit students' opportunities to use English actively and authentically

in oral communication. As a result, students often feel awkward and lack confidence when speaking in English, even though they have studied this language for many years.

One of the approaches that is now getting more attention in an effort to improve students' speaking skills is Project-Based Learning (Dopperlt, 2020). Project-Based Learning is a learning method that puts students at the center of learning. Where they are actively involved in working on projects that are directly related to real life or issues relevant to their experiences. This method allows students to use English in a more authentic and meaningful context, so they are more encouraged to speak and communicate actively (Firdaus et al., 2022). According to Barrows (2021), project-based learning is able to provide an interactive and participatory learning experience, where students can develop their language skills through group discussions, project presentations, and reflection on the results they achieve.

There are several types of project-based learning that are effective in improving English speaking. Investigation project-based learning helps students speak more fluently through exploration and presentation of results (Beckett & Slater, 2022). Design project-based learning engages students in projects such as videos or presentations, which improves speaking skills (Thomas, 2022). Problem solving Project-Based Learning focuses on collaboration, which strengthens the use of English in critical discussions (Larson & Miller, 2020). Product Project-Based

Learning encourages students to practice speaking while creating a final project such as a podcast (Harmer, 2021). Community project-based learning allows students to speak English with the community, expanding their communication skills (Beckett & Slater, 2022).

Project-Based Learning has been proven effective in improving English speaking proficiency. First, project-based learning provides a real context for students to actively practice English through group discussions, presentations, and project completion (Beckett & Slater, 2022). In Project-Based Learning, students engage in authentic interactions that help improve fluency and confidence when speaking in English (Thomas, 2022). In addition, Project-Based Learning encourages the use of a wider and more diverse vocabulary as students often have to research and use language to solve complex project problems (Harmer, 2021). Project-Based Learning also supports language learning in a collaborative way, where students learn from each other, thus improving interpersonal communication skills (Larson & Miller, 2020). Finally, in Project-Based Learning, students get immediate feedback from teachers and peers, which helps them improve their pronunciation, grammar and sentence structure (Beckett & Slater, 2022).

Research conducted by Amalia et al. (2022) showed that the implementation of Project-Based Learning in English learning can significantly improve students' speaking skills. Students involved in collaborative-based projects tended to use English more actively in daily classroom activities, both in group discussions and

during project presentations. They also showed significant improvements in vocabulary, sentence structure and speaking fluency. This is supported by another study from Susanti (2021), who found that Project-Based Learning has a positive impact on students' motivation in learning English, especially because this method allows them to see the direct relevance between the material learned and the application in real life.

In Subulussalam senior high school, the application of Project-Based Learning in English language learning has not been widely explored, although this area has its own challenges in terms of the quality of English language education. As stated by Maulidya & Setiawan (2023), limited access to learning resources and lack of English-speaking environment make students in Subulussalam lack opportunities to practice their speaking skills. Therefore, this study seeks to further explore how the implementation of Project-Based Learning can help improve English speaking skills among high school students in Subulussalam.

Moreover, the Project-Based Learning approach is believed to help students not only in the aspect of speaking skills, but also critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving skills. In the context of Subulussalam, students may not have many opportunities. The application of Project-Based Learning is expected to provide a more interactive and meaningful learning experience, so that students feel more motivated to speak in English (Pratama & Rahman, 2023). Thus, this research is also

expected to make an important contribution to the development of English language learning strategies in remote areas of Indonesia.

The importance of this study also lies in its ability to provide new insights for educators regarding the effectiveness of Project-Based Learning in improving English speaking skills, especially in areas that have limited educational resources. According to a recent study by Widodo (2023), although Project-Based Learning has been widely recognized in academic circles as an effective method in improving speaking skills, its application in educational contexts in remote areas is still very limited. Therefore, this study aims to bridge the gap, by providing empirical evidence on the implementation of project-based learning, namely Subulussalam high school.

Thus, the background of this study focuses not only on the effort to improve students' English speaking ability through Project-Based Learning, but also on how this method can be adapted and applied effectively in a unique context, such as that faced by students in Subulussalam. The results of this study are expected to serve as a reference for other schools in Indonesia, particularly those in remote areas, in implementing Project-Based Learning methods to improve the quality of English language learning.

B. Research Question

From the description above, the researcher can formulate the research question as follows:

Does the implementation of project-based learning improve English speaking ability among Subulussalam senior high school students?

C. Research Aim

From the formulation of the problem above, the researcher has the following research objectives:

To investigate whether the implementation of Project-Based Learning effectively improves the English speaking ability of senior high school students in Subulussalam.

D. Significance of the study

The benefits of this research are expected to contribute thoroughly in various aspects, namely:

1. Theoretical Benefits

This research is expected to enrich scientific studies on the effectiveness of Project-Based Learning in the context of foreign language learning, especially English.

2. Practical Benefits

- a. For Teachers: This research can provide insights and practical guidance for high school English teachers, especially in remote areas, on how to effectively apply project-based learning to improve students' speaking skills.
- b. For Students: With the implementation of Project-Based Learning, students are expected to be more actively involved in the learning process, improve their English speaking skills, and gain a more meaningful learning experience that is relevant to real life.
- c. For Schools: The results of this study are expected to be taken into consideration to design innovative and relevant learning policies, which can be implemented in the school curriculum to improve the quality of English education in the school environment.

3. Policy Benefits

This research is also expected to provide input for education policy makers at the local and national levels regarding the potential of Project-Based Learning as one of the solutions to improve English language skills in schools in remote areas.

E. Terminologies

The terminology utilized in this study will be explicitly specified as follows:

1. Project-Based Learning

In this study, Project-Based Learning refers to an instructional method that places students at the center of the learning process by engaging them in authentic, meaningful projects designed to develop their English speaking proficiency. Students actively participate in solving real-world problems, conducting research, and presenting their findings orally. Project-Based Learning in this study emphasizes collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and active language use in a real context (Beckett & Slater, 2020; Krajcik & Shin, 2022).

2. English Speaking Proficiency

English Speaking Proficiency in this research is defined as the students' ability to communicate orally in English effectively and appropriately. It involves four main components: fluency (the ability to speak smoothly without excessive hesitation), pronunciation (the clarity and accuracy of sounds and intonation), vocabulary (the range and appropriateness of words used), and grammar (the correct use of sentence structure and rules) (De Jong, 2022; Webb & Nation, 2022).