STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS THE ADOPTION OF ODT AND PBL IN SPEAKING CLASS

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Abstract: There are many researchers who have been discussing EFL learners' perceptions on the implementation of online digital technology (ODT), but there are few of them who specifically investigate their familiarity in using technology when applying project-based approach. This research analysis students' attitudes in using ODT to improve their speaking skills and how familiar students use ODT to accomplish a project in a Speaking Class. Because the approach of learning English in this research is PBL with ODT, the students must be familiar with the technology in order to create some projects assigned. Therefore, they had to own smartphones or laptops, and familiar with very basic ODT before beginning the program. 24 students of Speaking class were selected and trained to pedagogically show their awareness towards the learning approach and the use of ODT. The researcher divided them into some smaller groups to work together to improve their projects by looking at their learning approach with technology. The result of the posttest indicated their positive attitudes towards the implementation of PBL in the Speaking class with digital technology and the increasing familiarity of using ODT. They realized that they needed to create, and evaluate the results of their project by themselves during online learning to improve their speaking skills.

Keywords: *Speaking, Project-based, ODT, Students' Perceptions*

INTRODUCTION

During pandemic, the use of technology in learning English is so intense, especially because the teaching and learning activities are mostly online and involve multimedia instead of text books. The use of online digital technology in delivering learning materials in PBL requires the use of smartphones and computer technology, as well as internet access (Ngo and Eichelberger, 2019), and ODT has changed methods that students use while learning a foreign language Watkins & Wilkins, 2011).. It is the reason a teacher needs to make sure that students have the access to the technology and familiar with it (Wrigglesworth, 2019).

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The research looks at the students' perceptions towards ODT in PBL approach of an intermediate level speaking class and their familiarity of using ODT to do their tasks. Although technology helps students and motivates them to accomplish their tasks, they need interesting challenging tasks too when implementing PBL with technology (Kenning, 2007). Guiding principles of PBL like explicit learning objectives, authenticity of tasks, engaging activities can promote higher order of thinking skills, continuous assessment and evaluation of students' progress.

PBL equipped with ODT is more students-centered than conventional learning approaches. Using technology in PBL also improves Students' cognitive and affective aspects when learning a foreign language (Ochoa et al, 2015). However, combining PBL with ODT will not be effective and can be problematic when students are not ready with the new technology (So and Kim, 2009). Students can have difficulties with technology due to lack of training of using it or because they don't get enough facilities to access learning materials online.

PBL gives more autonomy in learning a language, which makes students speak more confidently because there is less tension when they practice the language (Snelson and Perkins, 2009). The students become more creative and productive with projects assigned to the students, and tasks such as English presentation and video recording of their conversations are exposure to the use of the target language. The integration of online digital technology into PBL stimulates students not only to produce something meaningful in the speaking class, but also give a change to improve their work. (Cheng, 2021; Watkins & Wikins, 2011).

As ODT is interesting and challenging, students intensify their learning, and it makes students understand the learning materials better (Deng & Yuen, 2011). The use of internet gives students access of obtaining cross-cultural knowledge to help students speak naturally about a topic or to improve their video projects (Barrs, 2012). However, using technology can be a problem when students do not have access of using it or because their unfamiliarity with the new technology.

Because technology can be drawbacks, there should be investigation of Students' attitudes towards the implementation of ODT in PBL approach. The researcher focuses on the impacts of using ODT and the technology skills in PBL approach on the students, who are concerned with pedagogical aspects in the familiarity of using ODT. It means they need to be independent learners and think critically although the teacher facilitates learning activities.

METHOD

The research aims at investigating students' perceptions towards the application PBL with ODT and the familiarity of using technology. The approach of PBL in speaking class is the independent variable, and the students' perceptions towards the use of ODT and familiarity of using it are the dependent variables. The first objective is to analyze students' motivation. The second objective is to see how students see themselves with their learning outcomes of the projects with ODT. The students' projects were students' online presentation and video recording of their conversations based on the topics they had chosen.

Participants

The participants in this research were 24 students at STIBA IEC Jakarta who took Intermediate Speaking Class. The goal is to pedagogically investigate their perspectives about the use of ODT to facilitate the implementation of PBL approach, as well as to make the students able to evaluate their outcomes in the program. All 24 undergraduate students majoring in English Literature of the research had to take pre-test and posttest to see their progress.

Instruments

The instruments in this research were the students' questioners and tests. The first set of questionnaires contained 16 items to ask about students' perception of using ODT in the Speaking class. The second one

had 12 items to investigate their familiarity of using ODT to learn English and do their assignment. The pre-test and post tests were also administered to analyze the students' improvement of speaking skills before and after the program.

Procedures

Having digital devices such as laptops and mobile phones were the prerequisite in the program. Although ICT-based projects were done by each group of students who worked collaboratively, owning a gadget for each of them is the basic necessity to make classroom activities run smoothly (Burston, 20016). There were 6 groups of students, and each group consisted of 4 students. All the students had to follow instructions from the lecturer based on what they had to do based on the lesson plans and the syllabus. The students were encouraged to find extra learning materials to get more self-paced independent practices or to get online digital resources to develop their projects. However, they had choices to select topics for their projects with group presentations and video recording of conversations as long as they were still relevant with the topics. They were even motivated to practice and asses their own progress by taking online quizzes, so that they could increase their ability to select useful expressions, check pronunciation, (Rudolph, 2018), and consult online dictionary when necessary (Wagner, 2007).

FINDINGS

The findings showed that students had both phones and laptops to access their learning materials and do their projects before the program began. In the pre-test, to see their awareness of using technology, they had freedom to select materials needed and spend how much time wanted. They browsed multimedia resources on the web to get ideas about their projects in the Speaking Class. Out of 24 students, 20 of them preferred focusing on the attractiveness of the video resources before deciding which resources were suitable enough for the topics in the project. They watched some English movie clips, listened to music, or even watched English videos in Tik-Tok related to topics given. However, there were only four of them who directly browsed the internet only to find samples needed to give inspiration in their project. To accomplish their project based on the topics selected, they work together to improve the quality of their project. By applying PBL approach, they used ODT to produce their videos as attractive as possible.

The Students' Perspectives about PBL

In the pre-test, 24 students also had to tell what they knew about PBL by answering a question. Eight students knew the meaning of PBL and explained it clearly, 14 students could not define it clearly, and 2 students didn't know the meaning. The students' responses about PBL were important information of their perspectives about PBL before the program began. At the end of the program, in the post-test, all of the students could explain more clearly about the meaning of PBL, and how to use the approach properly in the Speaking class. They became more independent and knew the PBL approach well without too much intervention from the lecturer.

To get information about the students' perception of using ODT in their PBL in Speaking Class, the researcher uses Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Scale 1 means strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 3 slightly agree, 4 agree, and 5 strongly agree. As shown in the table adapted from Lei (2009) below, their positive attitudes are indicated through how beneficial is ODT in their PBL in Speaking Class.

Table 1 Students' Perceptions towards the approach of PBL with ODT in speaking class

No	Benefits of the implementation PBL with ODT	Students' opinions				
		1	2	3	4	5

1	Multimedia, such as YouTube increases motivation and makes students easily comprehend learning materials.		1	23
2	Digital information and English lessons from websites give meaningful activities in speaking class.		2	22
3	ODT gives cross-cultural knowledge that helps students communicate or to speak English more naturally.		2	22
4	Students can learn together and share ideas with others to reduce stress.		3	21
5	PBL approach enables students to have conducive learning atmosphere that makes students speak English more confidently.			24
6	Students feel free to give corrective feedback on other students' projects, such as students' video recordings of conversations and presentation.		3	21
7	Learning materials and information the students get online make students speak more fluently.		5	19
8	Students can remember useful expressions more quickly from online multimedia, which helps them to create better sentences.		1	23
9	Audio and video that they get online helps them to improve their pronunciation.		1	23
10	Because students are the center of classroom activities, they become more autonomous learners than teacher centered.		2	22
11	The authenticity of learning materials helps students with the contexts of English conversations according to the contexts and with so many different situations found in the real communication.		2	22
12	PBL not only encourages students to work together to create presentation and videos of their conversations, but also makes them exposed to the target language.			24
13	Speaking practices through video recording projects make students feel freer to express their ideas and opinions.		2	22

14	The integration of online media into students' project develop critical thinking and creativity.	1	23
15	Doing class projects makes learning more interesting and challenging.	1	23
16	The integration of technology and PBL approach into the speaking class provides students the opportunity to improve and evaluate their projects.	3	21
	Percentage	7.55	92.45

Table 1 shows that 92.45 percent of the students feel the benefits of the implementation PBL with ODT, which is an indication of the students' positive attitudes towards the program. They need online multimedia to increase their motivation and comprehension. Online resources, such as the ones from websites or YouTube give meaningful activities to improve their speaking skills (Watkins & Wilkins, 2011). In PBL, students also need to work collaboratively and share ideas, which helps them learn more comfortably that depending too much on their teacher.

Their perceptions are evident that earning together can reduce stress (Barrs, 2012), and ideal learning environment makes students speak English more confidently (Snelson and Perkins, 2009). They also have positive attitudes towards their group work, because through corrective feedback among the groups they can optimize their work.

Students' recorded presentation and presentation make students feel more independent, but the teacher still plays an important role to facilitate their learning. The teacher may give explanation when necessary, during classroom activities, too much teacher's interference can reduce the students time to speak the target language. In addition, students realize that they need extra time to practice, so they can see examples of conversations online for their learning resources. At their own pace, students can use authentic learning materials based on daily conversations from native speakers of English.

Most students strongly agree that the integration of online digital technology by doing group projects of recording their presentation and conversation, give them some advantages. The projects encourage students to feel freer to express their ideas and opinions, develop critical thinking, and make them more creative through projects. Eventually, PBL approach with ODT is not only interesting and challenging, but they also provide tools to make learning effective in order to improve their speaking skills.

Although it is clearly stated that implementing PBL in Speaking class with ODT gives students lost of advantages, knowing how familiar the students use ODT is important too. Table 2 below shows how familiar when they use ODT while implementing PBL in Speaking class.

Table 2 Students Familiarity of using ODT**.**

No	Students' opinions

	Statements about Familiarity of Using ODT	1	2	3	4	5
1	Students use their gadgets without technical difficulties and only have few problems with internet connection.				18	6
2	There are almost no problems with the gadgets that the students use.				16	8
3	Students use ODT more frequently than they use to be because the learning materials are more interesting and they can understand better.				20	4
4	Students can access lessons more easily and they can keep learning resources in their laptops or smartphones.				5	19
5	ODT helps them to select materials about cross-cultural knowledge and manage the files for self-study or for developing their video projects.				2	22
6	Students can use their phones or laptops to collaborate and exchange information.				3	21
7	Students can use an online application to improve pronunciation.					24
8	Students can use learning tools to get online video resources to improve speaking skills.				3	21
9	Students can record videos and do some editing or their projects.				2	22
10	Students can record or voice over their presentation.					24
11	Students can use their gadgets to access online dictionary more quickly from the internet, so that they can prepare useful expressions to speak English with more effective vocabulary.					24

12	Students can use their gadgets to improve and evaluate their speaking projects.	1	23
	Percentage	24.22	75.78

The majority of students or 75.78 percent strongly agree with 12 items of questions about their familiarity of using ODT. Based on the students' opinions, most of them can access the internet without connection problems, and they can use their gadgets well. It can accelerate their learning, because they can get various learning materials efficiently. They can select and store important learning resources for independent learning into a storing device or smartphone. It helps them to learn anytime at any place, which helps them learn more conveniently than using a text book (Deng & Yuen, 2011). Students can use their laptops or smartphones not only to store information, but also to find relevant material to develop their projects (Watkins & Wilkins, 2011).

In their view, by using online digital technology, they can easily use applications that encourage each member in a group share knowledge. Students feel the importance of using ODT to do their projects. They have enough skills to record and edit videos, so that the projects can show their speaking abilities although done through some rehearsals. Sharing and editing videos in groups can increase students' speaking skills because they have to practice and improve their work until they feel satisfied (Alhamami, 2019). The can voice over their presentation to make the delivery of their message more effective (Watkins & Wilkins, 2011). Their familiarity with the ODT not only make them able to produce interesting and challenging projects, but also help them to improve their speaking skills, as well as evaluate their own progress by sharing their videos and ask opinions from their peers.

Even though this research focuses on the students' perception, it is also necessary to look at their progress in the speaking skills. Table 3 is a brief description of the students' speaking skills in the pretest and post-test.

Table 3 Students' Pretest and Posttest Scores of Intermediate Level Speaking Class

Students	Pretest Scores	Posttest Scores
Student 1	56	90
Student 2	56	89
Student 3	53	80
Student 4	49	80
Student 5	55	88
Student 6	60	90
Student 7	58	76
Student 8	58	92

Student 9	53	92
Student 10	52	92
Student 11	61	90
Student 12	50	85
Student 13	48	75
Student 14	56	82
Student 15	46	70
Student 16	44	82
Student 17	58	90
Student 18	62	95
Student 19	55	90
Student 20	57	90
Student 21	54	85
Student 22	57	88
Student 23	64	92
Student 24	49	84
Average Scores	54.62	86.12

As seen from table 3, the average scores of the students in the pre-test were only 54.62. Although all the students have laptops and smartphones, they need to be familiar with both the PBL approach and the use of ODT. The projects that involve recording students' presentation and conversations requires the students not only to follow the approach, but also to know how to use the technology in the students' project. Lacking familiarity with the instructions and learning strategies can inhibit them to practice speaking properly. Furthermore, through group projects, they need more practices to make using ODT more efficient.

The program takes 16 meeting, and the last meeting is post test intended to measure the student's ability in Speaking English. At the end of the program, in the posttest, it is obvious that their scores increase significantly from 54.62 to 86.12. As a result of their intensive learning of PBL approach and using ODT, they manage to improve their speaking skills by 31,5.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the implementation of PBL using online digital technology makes learning effective. Working together with PBL approach creates less stressful situation because the teacher facilitates students to share ideas and feelings to create natural conversation among the students themselves. It gives more opportunity for the students to talk more, because too much explanation from the teacher can reduce their time to think independently and share opinions among the students themselves. However, it is the teacher's responsibility to motivate and monitor students to make sure that the students

implement the PBL approach by using technology to accomplish their tasks. The teacher must encourage members in a group to do their projects collaboratively and use ODT to improve the quality of their projects.

Recording students' own presentation and conversation allows the students themselves creates conducive learning environment. By having positive attitudes towards PBL and the use of ODT, the students are aware of following the PBL approach properly, and realize the importance of using technology to make their projects interesting and meaningful. Students can find samples of conversations from YouTube that contains cultural understanding from the perspective of a native speaker from a target language. Students can select videos from lots of social contexts that happen in the real conversations, and select one of them to inspire them to create meaningful and natural conversations in their projects.

All of the 24 students in this research agree that PBL approach helps them to increase their speaking skills, especially when they are familiar with online digital technology. Their spirit to do challenging projects is an indication of their enthusiasm to learn more. It makes them think critically to express their thoughts and feelings about their projects. It triggers them to comment, criticize, or give opinions to other members in a group to invent something with their projects and make them more creative.

The development of technology makes the use of online digital technology in a language approach become crucial. The further research about students' perspectives of other new learning methods or approaches with different digital skills can be done in the future. As learning methodology is dynamic, there will be a new approach or method, and with new technology too.

Digital learning tools and online learning applications are not only technology that makes learning convenient, but also makes students use higher-order of thinking skills and more independent. However, some applications make students lazy, for example, instead of thinking in English to create sentences, they just use online translation apps, or they just paraphrase or summarize paragraphs using online tools although they have the skills to do it without depending on technology. Therefore, the students' "real" language skills and the positive or negative impacts of new technology worth investigating for future research.

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