USING INFORMAL ASSESSMENTS IN PROJECT-BASED LEARNING TO MOTIVATE STUDENTS TO SPEAK UP: A CLASSROOM ACTION RESEARCH LEARNED FROM ESP COURSES

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Article Info	Abstract
Article History Received: November 2023 Revised: January 2024 Published: April 2024 **Keywords** Informal assessment; ESP Courses; Project-based learning; Speaking skills;	*An assessment is a way of gathering and discussing data from various sources to gain an understanding of what a student knows, understands, and is able to do with their knowledge resulting from their education to improve their future learning. The purposes of this study were to see the motivation of students to learn the English project suggested in the ESP Course, Business Meetings Project, and also measured the student's success in language skills, especially oral communication skills. The study was conducted using an action research method where a questionnaire, students' achievements, and classroom activities were taken as the data. The questionnaire was scored using the Likert scale rating. Students will respond to this scale by rating the motivation factor on a scale. The researchers employed a pre- and post-test to determine how much the students' abilities had improved. The pre-test and post-test mean scores were compared and computed by the researcher using the T-test technique. The participants were 26 students from the Accounting Department of the State Polytechnic Of Malang. The outcome of this study was the successful implementation of the model. The T-test for the first project showed 62,30, the second project had 74,69, and the third project had 79,30.*

INTRODUCTION

In the educational landscape of the past, the role of teachers was heavily focused on evaluating student learning through a process typically known as summative assessments. This form of assessment played a pivotal role in the academic journey, primarily functioning as a tool to gauge what students had assimilated over the course of a specific educational unit or, more broadly, throughout the entire academic year. Such evaluations were typically conducted through standardized tests or final exams, designed to measure the accumulation of knowledge and skills acquired by students (Angeli & Valanides, 2009; Butler, 2023). However, this traditional approach to assessment had its limitations. Once these summative assessments were administered, there was a notable lack of follow-up in terms of addressing the learning gaps identified through these tests (Aprianoto & Haerazi, 2019; Castilla-Earls et al., 2021).

The general practice involved conducting the exam, recording the grades, and then promptly moving on to the next topic or subject area. This methodology, while efficient in terms of progressing through the curriculum, often overlooked the essential aspect of reteaching or reinforcing concepts that students may not have fully grasped. Essentially, the process was more about recording a snapshot of student performance at a particular moment in time, rather than

a continuous evaluation of their learning journey (Linch, 2016; Gultom, 2016). This approach raised concerns about its effectiveness in truly enhancing student learning. While summative assessments were useful in providing a quantifiable measure of student achievement, they were limited in their ability to capture the holistic progress of students.

The reliance on the traditional forms of evaluation often meant that the nuanced aspects of student learning, such as critical thinking, application of knowledge, and other soft skills, were not adequately assessed. To address these limitations, the need for a more dynamic and comprehensive assessment approach became apparent. This is where the concept of informal assessment comes into play. Unlike summative assessments, informal assessments are more fluid and continuous. They involve a variety of methods such as observations, discussions, and project-based evaluations that allow for a more comprehensive view of student progress (Chan, 2021; Chen et al., 2022). This form of assessment is not just about measuring learning at the end of a unit or term; it is an ongoing process that provides immediate feedback and allows for adjustments in teaching strategies to better meet the needs of students. Informal assessments thus offer a more holistic understanding of student progress, encompassing not just the academic achievements but also the development of skills and competencies that are crucial for long-term educational success (Harding et al., 2015; Lee, 2015). By integrating informal assessments into the educational process, educators can foster a more inclusive, responsive, and effective learning environment that recognizes and nurtures the diverse talents and abilities of all students.

The role of assessment in the context of teaching the English language is multifaceted and pivotal for both teachers and students. The primary objective for educators in this domain is to gauge students' progress throughout the course and evaluate their overall achievement at the semester's end. This process of assessment is not merely a tool for grading but serves a broader educational purpose, as highlighted by various scholars. Rhamli (2020) emphasizes the concept of 'assessment for learning,' which involves collecting and interpreting data about student learning. This approach is instrumental for both teachers and learners, as it allows for an ongoing adjustment of teaching methods and learning strategies. The essence of this approach is its formative nature, wherein assessment is an integral part of the learning process, rather than being an endpoint. Ben-Jacob (2017) expands on the significance of assessment, noting its critical role in enhancing education from various perspectives, including faculty, students, and educational programs.

Assessment is seen as a source of feedback, providing valuable insights for all involved parties. This feedback loop is essential for learning and making necessary changes to improve the educational environment. Pierce (2002), as cited by ÖzkanKırmızı (2019), views assessment as a cornerstone of any teaching and learning activity. It serves multiple functions: guiding day-to-day instructional decisions, diagnosing students' strengths and weaknesses, and offering specific feedback to support student learning. This perspective underscores the diagnostic and formative aspects of assessment, highlighting its role in shaping teaching methods and addressing individual student needs. Saragih (2016) broadens the scope of assessment, defining it as a tool to identify learners' needs, document progress, and evaluate the effectiveness of teachers as educators and planners. This definition encapsulates the comprehensive nature of assessment, extending beyond academic performance to include aspects like student awareness, understanding, perception, and attitude towards learning. This holistic approach ensures that assessment is aligned with the needs of the students and central to teacher planning.

Tosuncuoglu (2018) reinforces this view by emphasizing the importance of assessment in responding to student needs and shaping teacher planning, including the development and implementation of tests. This perspective highlights the dual role of assessment in both understanding and addressing student needs and in informing and guiding the educational

strategies employed by teachers. The scholarly perspectives collectively underscore the critical role of assessment in the teaching of the English language. Assessment is not just a means of evaluating student performance; it is a dynamic and integral component of the educational process, serving as a feedback mechanism, a diagnostic tool, and a guide for both teaching and learning. Therefore, the current study was focused on the implementation of project-based learning in speaking classes through implementing informal assessment in the EFL classes.

RESEARCH METHOD
Research Design
The methodology employed in this study involves the application of classroom action research, a systematic approach characterized by five distinct steps: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. Each of these steps plays a crucial role in the research process, contributing to the overall systematic and logical progression of the study. The first step, planning, entails the careful formulation of research objectives, hypotheses, and a detailed plan of action. During this phase, researchers outline the specific goals they aim to achieve through the research and devise strategies for implementation. Following the planning stage, the action phase involves the execution of the planned interventions within the classroom setting. This could include implementing teaching methods, introducing new materials, or incorporating innovative instructional techniques aimed at addressing the research objectives. The subsequent step, observation, involves systematically collecting data and monitoring the effects of the implemented interventions. Researchers observe and document the behaviors, interactions, and outcomes within the classroom environment, seeking to gain insights into the effectiveness of the interventions. Upon completion of the observation phase, the reflection stage provides an opportunity for researchers to critically analyze the collected data and reflect on the outcomes of the interventions. This phase involves examining the observed results in relation to the initial research objectives, identifying patterns, trends, and areas for improvement. The following are the action research steps.
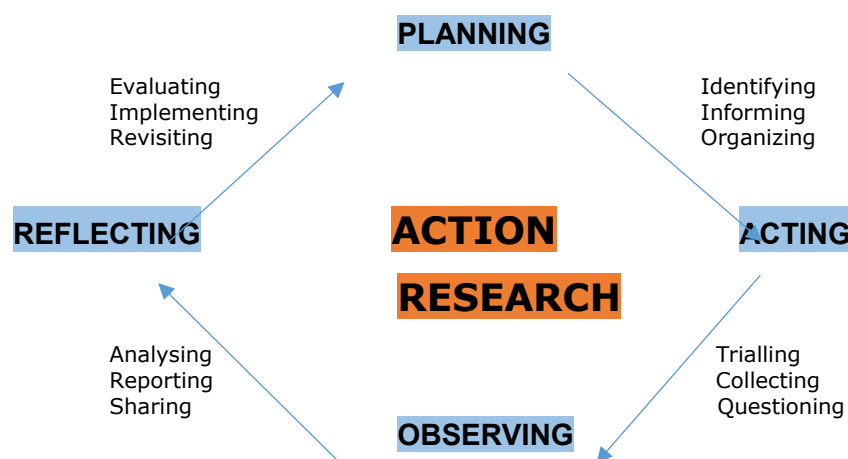
Research Participants
The focus of this research centered on accounting students enrolled in the fifth semester of the D4 Management Accounting Department at the State Polytechnic of Malang. The study involved a sample size comprising 26 students from this cohort. Specifically, the research aimed to investigate the effectiveness of project-based learning within the context of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses. In this educational setting, English language proficiency,

particularly speaking skills, was targeted for enhancement. To achieve this goal, project-based learning methodologies were implemented, supplemented by informal assessment activities. The rationale behind this approach was to foster student motivation and engagement in language learning. Throughout the implementation of project-based learning and informal assessment activities, the participants demonstrated a high level of engagement and activity. Their active participation was evidenced across various aspects of the learning activities. Importantly, the assessment of all facets of the learning process was deemed crucial in determining the efficacy of the interventions employed. The findings of the study indicated that the combination of project-based learning and informal assessment effectively motivated students and enhanced their speaking skills. This was reflected in the participants' active involvement in the learning process and their demonstrated proficiency in speaking activities. The comprehensive assessment approach utilized in the study provided valuable insights into the students' motivation levels and language proficiency, underscoring the importance of holistic evaluation in educational research.

Data Collection Technique

In conducting this research, a variety of instruments were utilized to gather data and assess the effectiveness of the interventions employed. These instruments included speaking tests and observation sheets, each serving a distinct purpose in evaluating different facets of the learning process. The speaking tests were designed to assess students' speaking skills, employing an informal speaking assessment approach. Through these tests, researchers aimed to gauge the participants' proficiency in verbal communication, particularly in the context of the project-based learning activities. The informal nature of the speaking assessment allowed for a more authentic evaluation of students' speaking abilities, capturing their spontaneous language use and communicative competence. In addition to the speaking tests, observation sheets were utilized to document the learning process associated with the implementation of project-based learning. These observation sheets served as a systematic tool for researchers to track and analyze various aspects of the learning activities.

By systematically recording observations, researchers could gain insights into students' engagement levels, interactions, and overall participation in the project-based learning tasks. To ensure comprehensive data collection, researchers were supported by a team of observers tasked with documenting all relevant aspects of the learning processes. These observers played a vital role in capturing nuanced details and providing additional perspectives on the effectiveness of the instructional strategies employed. By collaborating with multiple observers, researchers could enhance the reliability and validity of their observations, ensuring a more robust analysis of the learning outcomes. Overall, the utilization of speaking tests and observation sheets, supplemented by the assistance of observers, enabled researchers to conduct a thorough assessment of the project-based learning initiatives. Through these research instruments, valuable insights were gained into students' speaking proficiency, as well as their engagement and participation in the learning activities. This systematic approach to data collection and analysis facilitated a deeper understanding of the impact of project-based learning on students' language learning experiences.

Techniques for Analyzing the Data

In this research study, the data collected comprised both qualitative and quantitative data, each serving distinct purposes in examining various aspects of the research objectives. The quantitative data primarily focused on assessing speaking achievement, while the qualitative data centered on evaluating the learning processes associated with implementing informal

assessment within project-based learning. The speaking achievement data, categorized as quantitative data, provided numerical insights into students' performance in speaking tasks. Through quantitative analysis, researchers aimed to quantify the level of speaking proficiency demonstrated by the participants. Descriptive statistical analysis was employed to summarize and interpret the quantitative data, providing a clear overview of students' speaking achievements. This analytical approach enabled researchers to identify trends, patterns, and variations in speaking performance among the participants. Conversely, the qualitative data pertained to the qualitative aspects of the research, specifically the learning processes involved in implementing informal assessment within project-based learning. This qualitative data encompassed rich descriptions, narratives, and observations gathered throughout the research process.

Qualitative analysis techniques, such as data condensation, display, and drawing conclusions, were employed to analyze and interpret the qualitative data. Data condensation involved synthesizing and summarizing the qualitative data, condensing it into manageable and meaningful units for analysis. Through data display, researchers organized and visually represented the qualitative data to facilitate interpretation and comparison. Finally, drawing conclusions from the qualitative data involved synthesizing key findings, identifying themes or patterns, and generating insights into the effectiveness of the instructional strategies employed. By integrating both quantitative and qualitative data analysis approaches, researchers were able to gain a comprehensive understanding of the research phenomenon. The quantitative analysis provided quantitative insights into speaking achievement, while the qualitative analysis offered deeper insights into the intricacies of the learning processes.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
Research Findings
The implementation of project-based learning in the teaching of speaking skills is aimed at motivating students to speak. To see the speaking activities and achievements are assessed using informal asessment. The informal assessment was done by researchers in speaking activites. Based on the informal assessment, the students' speaking performances can be presented as follows.
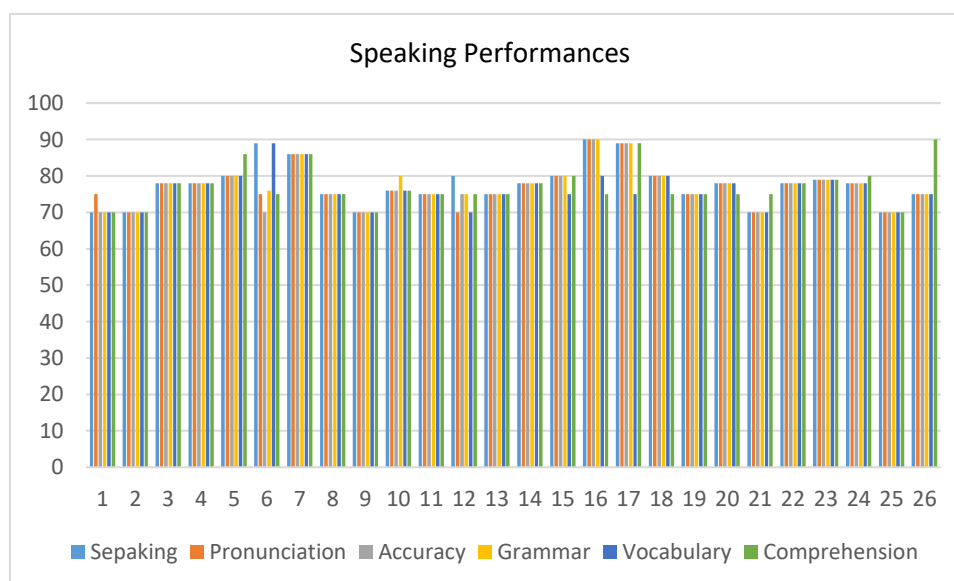

Figure 1. Speaking Performance in Implementing Project-Based Learning

The figure provided represents the assessment results of students' speaking skills, yielding a score of 77. This score encompasses an evaluation of multiple components critical to spoken communication, including pronunciation, accuracy, grammar, vocabulary, and comprehension. Within the context of this informal assessment framework, these elements are collectively analyzed to gauge the proficiency level of students in verbal expression. Specifically, the speaking aspect attained a score within the range of 77-78, positioning it within a category deemed sufficient for effective communication. This outcome signifies a notable enhancement in students' speaking abilities, indicative of successful efforts aimed at refining this skill set. The observed improvement suggests a positive trend in the development of students' verbal communication proficiency, underscoring the efficacy of strategies implemented to foster linguistic growth and fluency.

In the process of evaluating students' speaking skills, they are tasked with completing various projects designed to assess their oral communication abilities. These projects serve as practical applications of language proficiency, allowing students to demonstrate their speaking skills in real-world contexts. The assessment of these speaking skills is conducted through informal speaking assessments, which typically involve speaking tests administered to students. Upon completion of the speaking tests, the results are analyzed to determine the proficiency levels of the students. The analysis yields insights into the effectiveness of their verbal communication, considering factors such as pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary usage, and coherence. These assessments aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of students' speaking abilities, offering valuable feedback for further improvement.

Table 1
Students who Reached the Target Learning

Projects	Students' Scores	No. of Students
Project 1	Students who reached the score of 70	16 students
Project 2	Students who reached the score of 75-80	12 students
Project 3	Students who reached the score of 78-88	13 students

Table 1 presents the findings of the analysis, highlighting the students who have demonstrated exemplary speaking skills. The table serves as a visual representation of the distribution of speaking proficiency among the student population. Notably, the majority of students have performed at a sufficient level in their speaking assessments. This suggests a generally positive outcome, indicating that a significant portion of the student body possesses adequate oral communication skills. However, the analysis also identifies students who excel in their speaking performance, showcasing exceptional linguistic competence and proficiency. These individuals stand out as exemplary models of effective verbal communication, exemplifying the outcomes achievable through dedicated practice and skill development initiatives. Overall, the results of the informal speaking assessment provide valuable insights into the speaking abilities of students, guiding future instructional strategies and interventions aimed at further enhancing their oral communication skills.

Discussion

The incorporation of informal assessment within the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) curriculum, specifically through the implementation of the Business Meeting Presentations Project, has demonstrated a notable enhancement in students' motivation to actively participate in discussions, aligning with the anticipated outcomes as identified by researchers. Through the feedback and sharing sessions integral to this assessment method, all study participants affirmed that the collaborative evaluation process notably revitalized students' engagement in learning English, fostering a renewed enthusiasm for skill enhancement. This observation resonates with

findings by Aprianoto and Haerazi (2019), who emphasize the role of informal assessment in facilitating students' self-directed learning by enabling them to gauge their comprehension levels and focus their efforts accordingly. By providing students with opportunities for self-assessment and constructive feedback, informal assessment strategies like the Business Meeting Presentations Project contribute significantly to students' overall language proficiency development within ESP contexts.

The integration of assessment strategies within educational contexts serves a dual purpose, fostering active student participation and collaboration while also providing educators with invaluable insights into students' learning processes and areas of challenge. As noted by Armstrong (2020) and Bahous & Nabhani (2011), assessments not only encourage student engagement but also offer educators a nuanced understanding of student progress, enabling them to adapt and tailor their teaching methodologies accordingly. In practical terms, teachers often structure projects that require students to engage in collaborative activities, thereby promoting speaking skills and fostering dynamic discussions among peers. Through these projects, students not only actively participate but also benefit from informal assessment practices facilitated by teachers, who observe and evaluate individual speaking proficiency. This dual role of educators as facilitators and informal assessors enables them to gauge students' progress accurately and make informed instructional decisions. Consequently, informal assessment emerges as a potent tool for enhancing student learning outcomes, providing educators with actionable insights to refine and optimize their teaching approaches in response to students' evolving needs and challenges.

In the realm of informal assessment, researchers have adopted project-based learning activities as a means to facilitate students' acquisition of speaking skills. These activities serve as platforms for students to gather relevant information and develop the necessary linguistic resources to engage in verbal communication effectively. Within classroom settings, teachers play a pivotal role in providing students with varied forms of feedback as they practice speaking. Oral feedback, in particular, emerges as a potent tool, offering students insights into metalinguistic aspects of their communication. Through this feedback loop, students not only receive guidance on linguistic nuances but also gain motivation and encouragement, fostering a sustained interest in enhancing their language proficiency. The effectiveness of this approach is underscored by findings from studies such as those by Goultom (2016) and Saragih (2016), which highlight its positive impact on students' language skills development. By integrating project-based learning activities and oral feedback within informal assessment frameworks, educators can effectively support students in honing their speaking abilities, thereby bolstering their overall language proficiency and academic achievement.

The incorporation of informal assessment strategies, particularly through project-based learning, proves highly effective in managing and refining students' speaking skills, focusing notably on aspects such as pronunciation and grammatical accuracy. Within the framework of project-based learning, teachers actively engage in monitoring and guiding students' pronunciation during discussion sessions, providing direct corrective feedback to address any inaccuracies. Similarly, teachers play a crucial role in identifying and rectifying grammatical errors made by students in real-time, thereby offering valuable insights to the entire class regarding language structure and usage. This direct approach to feedback aligns with the perspective presented by Aprianoto and Haerazi (2019), who advocate for the effectiveness of immediate feedback in enhancing students' understanding of grammatical concepts and improving their spoken communication. By addressing errors promptly, students gain valuable insights into the grammatical aspects of their speech, enabling them to make informed adjustments and refine their language usage for future interactions. Consequently, this feedback loop serves not only to correct errors but also to inform and guide students on what to prioritize

in their speaking endeavors, ultimately contributing to their overall linguistic development and proficiency.

In the conducted study, the adoption of the project-based learning model yielded predominantly positive results, indicating a notable level of oral communication proficiency among a considerable segment of the student cohort. However, the research also discerned a subset of students who distinguished themselves by displaying exemplary speaking abilities, demonstrating a high degree of linguistic competence and fluency. These individuals serve as exemplars of effective verbal communication, underscoring the potential outcomes attainable through consistent practice and deliberate skill refinement efforts (Castilla-earls et al., 2021; Chan, 2021). Moreover, the informal speaking assessment emerged as a valuable tool in evaluating students' oral communication aptitude, offering nuanced insights into their speaking capabilities. These insights serve as a foundation for informing future instructional strategies and interventions aimed at fostering continual improvement in students' oral communication skills. By leveraging the findings gleaned from the assessment, educators can tailor their approaches to address specific areas of need and provide targeted support to enhance overall communication competence among students. Thus, the integration of project-based learning and informal speaking assessment not only validates existing proficiency but also informs ongoing efforts to cultivate and elevate students' oral communication prowess.

Conclusion

The incorporation of informal assessment within the framework of project-based learning has proven to be a highly effective strategy in enhancing students' motivation to engage in oral communication and improving their speaking skills. By integrating feedback mechanisms into speaking activities, students are provided with valuable opportunities to refine their linguistic competencies and enhance their overall oral communication proficiency. One of the key outcomes of this approach is the emergence of the informal speaking assessment as a valuable tool for evaluating students' oral communication aptitude. Through this assessment, educators gain nuanced insights into students' speaking capabilities, enabling them to identify areas of strength and areas requiring improvement. These insights serve as a foundational basis for informing future instructional strategies and interventions aimed at fostering continual growth in students' oral communication skills. The effectiveness of this approach is underscored by the tangible evidence of students' speaking achievement, as evidenced by a passing rate of 79.30%. This statistic not only validates the efficacy of the project-based learning model coupled with informal assessment but also highlights the tangible impact of these strategies on students' ability to succeed in oral communication tasks. As such, this holistic approach not only cultivates students' speaking skills but also empowers them to effectively navigate and excel in various oral communication contexts.

The integration of informal assessment strategies, particularly through the framework of project-based learning, has emerged as a highly effective approach in cultivating and honing students' speaking skills, with particular emphasis on aspects such as pronunciation and grammatical accuracy. Within the dynamic setting of project-based learning, teachers assume an active role in monitoring and guiding students' pronunciation throughout discussion sessions. This proactive involvement allows educators to provide direct and immediate corrective feedback to address any inaccuracies that arise. By closely observing students' pronunciation during discussions, teachers can identify areas of difficulty and provide targeted support to help students refine their speech patterns. This feedback loop not only fosters greater awareness of pronunciation nuances but also empowers students to make incremental improvements over time. Moreover, the direct corrective feedback provided within the context of project-based learning serves to reinforce language learning objectives and promote greater accuracy in oral communication. Furthermore, the interactive nature of project-based learning enables teachers

to engage students in meaningful dialogue, facilitating a collaborative learning environment where linguistic challenges can be addressed in real-time. Through this hands-on approach, students are encouraged to actively participate in their own language development process, ultimately leading to enhanced speaking proficiency and greater confidence in communication. Thus, the incorporation of informal assessment strategies within project-based learning serves as a catalyst for managing and refining students' speaking skills, contributing to their overall language acquisition and fluency.

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