



Repurposing Mobile-Assisted Language Learning
(MALL) at Tourism Vocational Schools:
Analysis of Group Dynamics and Technical Barriers
in the "Tour-Vlog" Project

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Article Info	Abstract
Received: 2026-05-25 Revised: 2026-05-29 Accepted: 2026-06-30 Keywords: Project-Based Learning (PjBL); Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL); Tour-Vlog; Vocational English; Digital Literacy; Group Dynamics. DOI: 10.24256/ideas.v14i1.10816 Corresponding Author: Baiq Husnia Hamidayani baiqhusnia.2024@student.uny.ac.id English Education, Faculty of Languages, Arts, and Culture, Yogyakarta State University	<i>This study explores the implementation of a Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL)-based Project-Based Learning (PjBL) innovation through an English "Tour-Vlog" project. The focus of this research is directed at addressing the issues of passive learning and the counterproductive utilization of smartphones in the 11th-grade Tourism Services (Usaha Layanan Wisata/ULW) class at SMKN 2 Selong. Employing an exploratory mixed-methods case study design, data were gathered from 23 students through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, perception questionnaires, as well as individual performance and group product assessment rubrics. Student speaking ability data in the individual performance assessment rubric was adapted from the components of Harris' (1969) standard oral test, which included aspects of fluency, pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary adapted to the vocational context of tourism. The results demonstrate a significant transformation in the learning culture, shifting from passive detachment to active engagement, which achieved a 100% speaking participation rate. Furthermore, students exhibited highly positive perceptions regarding vocational career relevance (mean score of 4.61/5). Nevertheless, the success of the final group products remained varied, with only a 50% passing rate. Qualitative analysis revealed that this sub-optimal outcome was triggered by the phenomenon of social loafing within group dynamics and technical constraints, specifically environmental acoustic disturbances during outdoor recording processes. This study concludes that while integrating MALL into PjBL effectively mitigates students' speaking anxiety, it requires a stringent individual accountability mechanism to optimize collaborative learning outcomes in vocational contexts.</i>

1. Introduction

Learning English for Specific Purposes (ESP) at the Tourism Vocational High School (SMK) level bears a great responsibility in equipping students with practical communication competencies that are ready to work. In the era of the modern digital tourism industry, speaking skills are no longer just an academic complement, but a main vocational competency that determines the competitiveness of graduates in the workplace (Syafudin et al, 2025; Alotaibi, 2026). However, the pedagogical reality in the field often shows that there is a wide gap between the demands of the competency curriculum and the practice of daily learning. Based on the analysis of initial needs in class XI of Tourism Service Business (ULW) SMKN 2 Selong, it was found that the classroom atmosphere tends to be passive, theoretical, and teacher-centered.

The instructional process is dominated by lectures, grammar materials and written exercises sourced from the SPLASH textbook. The textbook was judged by the teacher to be too complex and uncontextual for the current level of proficiency of the students. As a result, students' motivation to learn decreases drastically, which is manifested in the form of boredom, drowsiness, and the covert use of smartphones for non-academic activities during class hours.

This condition creates a crucial learning paradox. On the one hand, in-depth interviews with students reveal that they have very strong vocational aspirations to be able to speak English fluently with tourists. They also show a high preference for practical learning methods such as tour guide simulations or role-play. But on the other hand, students are often trapped in insecurity, limited vocabulary, and high speaking anxiety about pronunciation errors when asked to speak spontaneously in front of the class. In addition, the lack of time allocation of only 4 hours per week and the rigid classroom arrangement in the form of linear lines further narrow the space for students to practice the target language authentically. Therefore, a pedagogical reconstruction is needed that is able to transform gadgets (smartphones) from what were originally a source of distraction in the classroom, repurposed into a tool for producing meaningful vocational content.

Theoretically, Project-Based Learning (PjBL) combined with Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) offers integrative solutions to overcome these linguistic and affective barriers (Thomas, 2000). Rooted in the epistemology of cognitive constructivism (Piaget, 1972) and social constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978), learning will be optimal when students are faced with real challenges (driving question) that requires them to build knowledge collaboratively through hands-on experience. Through the PjBL framework adapted from Stoller (2006), the digital video production process forces the integration of four natural language skills to achieve an authentic final product.

Furthermore, the literature on MALL confirms that the use of mobile devices is able to expand the boundaries of the classroom (seamless learning) and increase students' learning autonomy (Kukulska-Hulme & Shield, 2008; Lengkanawati & Wirza, 2021). In the context of speaking skills, the video production process provides an "affective safety net" through rehearsal and editing mechanisms. Delete features and the opportunity to re-record in a private space psychologically lower students' affective filters, enabling them to evaluate their pronunciation metacognitively before publishing their work to a wider audience.

Several previous studies have also demonstrated the positive contribution of MALL in vocational English learning, particularly within tourism education contexts. A large-scale study involving 171 vocational schools in Bali found that metacognitive-based MALL significantly supported the development of literacy and communication skills in Tourism English learning (Tegeh et al., 2025). Similarly, research conducted at Mataram Tourism College revealed that hospitality students showed highly positive perceptions regarding the

usefulness and ease of use of MALL applications in supporting English learning (Mulyawan & Resmayani, 2022). Other findings by Octavia et al. (2019) indicated that vocational students perceived MALL materials as more authentic than conventional materials, increased classroom interaction, and facilitated immediate feedback from teachers. These findings suggest that MALL has considerable potential to create more contextual, interactive, and student-centered learning experiences in vocational education.

Nevertheless, several limitations remain evident in the existing literature. Previous studies predominantly focused on general vocational English contexts, while research specifically examining tourism-oriented MALL implementation is still limited (Sutrisna et al., 2020). In addition, challenges related to teacher readiness, technological integration, and pedagogical adaptation continue to become major obstacles in implementing MALL effectively in classrooms (Biantoro, 2020). Recent studies even emphasize that the development of MALL applications for tourism and hospitality learning still requires further needs analysis and contextual adjustment (Sari et al., 2024). These gaps indicate that although MALL has demonstrated promising outcomes, further empirical exploration is still needed, particularly in relation to how MALL can be integrated with project-based pedagogies in vocational tourism education settings.

Although the effectiveness of PjBL and MALL has been widely documented in previous studies (such as Sanz, 2013; Zare-Behtash et al., 2016), most literature studies tend to focus on successful outcomes and isolate research in the context of a pure English major. There is still limited research that honestly and critically explores the internal dynamics of groups as well as the technical frictions that arise when this model is applied to non-language vocational school students in rural Indonesia.

Therefore, the novelty of this study lies in a comprehensive analysis of how the dynamics of interaction between students, including peer tutoring and social loafing phenomena, as well as real technical barriers in the field, affect the quality of the vocational products produced. This study aims to evaluate the implementation of the "Tour-Vlog" project in increasing students' active engagement, analyze its impact on their speaking competence, and map the procedural challenges faced during the innovation cycle.

2. Method

This study employed an exploratory mixed-methods case study design to investigate the implementation of the "Tour-Vlog" project in improving students' speaking skills and engagement in vocational English learning (Guetterman & Fetters, 2018). This design was selected because it integrates quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding of educational phenomena, in line with the methodological perspectives of Creswell (2018) and Yin (2018). Through this approach, quantitative data were used to measure students' speaking performance and learning perceptions, while qualitative data were utilized to explore classroom interactions, collaborative dynamics, and challenges encountered during the implementation process. The study was conducted at SMKN 2 Selong, Lombok, Indonesia.

The participants of this study consisted of 23 eleventh-grade students majoring in Tourism Services Business (Usaha Layanan Wisata/ULW). The participants were selected through purposive sampling based on the results of a preliminary needs analysis, which revealed that students tended to be passive during classroom activities and frequently used smartphones for non-academic purposes during English lessons. In addition, students demonstrated low confidence in speaking English despite having strong vocational aspirations to communicate with tourists fluently. To facilitate collaborative learning during the project implementation, students were divided into four heterogeneous groups based on differences in their linguistic proficiency and technical abilities.

To ensure the validity and credibility of the findings, this study employed data triangulation through several research instruments. Classroom observations were conducted using a structured Project Observation Checklist to document students' engagement, peer interactions, and on-task behavior throughout the project activities. Students' speaking performance was assessed using an Individual Performance Rubric adapted from Harris' (1969) oral proficiency framework, which evaluated fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. Furthermore, the quality of the students' video projects was assessed through a Group Product Assessment Rubric that focused on content relevance, creativity, technical quality, and organizational structure.

In addition to observation and performance assessment, a post-project perception questionnaire based on a Likert scale was distributed to all participants to examine students' intrinsic motivation and perceptions toward the vocational relevance of the project. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with the English teacher and ten student representatives from different proficiency levels to gain deeper insights into the psychological, linguistic, and technical challenges experienced during the implementation process. Moreover, reflective journals written by the researcher were used to record unexpected classroom dynamics, collaborative issues, and procedural obstacles encountered during the intervention.

The implementation of the "Tour-Vlog" project was carried out intensively for four weeks by adapting the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) framework proposed by Stoller (2006). The first week focused on the planning stage, including project orientation, group formation, destination research, and storyboard development. During the second week, students entered the scripting stage, where they collaboratively developed vlog scripts and participated in peer-feedback activities using the "Two Stars and a Wish" technique. The third week emphasized the production stage, which involved pronunciation practice, rehearsals, and outdoor video recording activities using smartphones.

Finally, the fourth week was dedicated to reflection and presentation activities, including mobile-based video editing workshops, classroom screenings through a "Vlog Festival," and the completion of self-evaluation and perception questionnaires. Through these stages, the project was designed not only to improve students' speaking competence, but also to foster collaboration, creativity, digital literacy, and vocational communication skills relevant to the tourism industry.

3. Result and Discussion

Transforming Student Engagement and Vlog-Based Speaking Competency

The results of the study show that the integration of MALL in the PjBL framework has succeeded in disrupting the classroom atmosphere that was originally passive and teacher-centered into a dynamic learning environment. Records from reflective journals document the occurrence of the "*Productive Chaos*" phenomenon from the first week, in which the silence of the classroom that is usually dominated by teacher lectures is replaced by active debates between students regarding the choice of tourism destination topics. The most significant success of this intervention was the achievement of a 100% speaking participation rate. The students who were previously identified as pretentious and passive in the initial observation were able to record their own speaking parts in the group vlog product.

Quantitatively, the analysis of the Individual Performance Rubric shows that there is a developmental imbalance between the phonetic aspect and the structural aspect of language. The Pronunciation aspect achieved the highest average score of 2.91 on a scale of 4.0. This high score was triggered by the effectiveness of the "*Pronunciation Clinic*" sessions and repeated exercises during the script production process. On the other hand, the

Grammar aspect became the domain with the lowest achievement with an average score of only 2.5 out of a scale of 4.0. Fossilization errors such as *subject-verb disagreement* such as "The scenery are..." and the omission of the copula (*omission of to be*) still appears frequently.

These findings empirically prove the hypothesis *Affective Filter* from Krashen (1982). The mechanism of digital video creation provides a "psychological safety net" for students through the process *rehearsal and edit*. Presence of buttons *Delete* on editing apps *Smartphone* lowers language anxiety (*speaking anxiety*) because the student's failure or mispronunciation is not directly witnessed by the public audience in the classroom. This condition confirms research from Sun (2009) which demonstrated that voice blogging activities, including audio- and video-based blogging, provide students with a private and flexible space to perform repetitive self-evaluation before presenting their performance publicly.

Through the opportunity to rehearse, re-record, and review their own speaking performances, students gradually experience reduced levels of communicative anxiety and develop greater psychological comfort when using English. In the context of this study, the "Tour-Vlog" project created a similar learning environment in which students could practice speaking independently, evaluate their pronunciation and delivery, and make improvements before submitting the final product. Such conditions encouraged students to focus more on delivering meaningful messages rather than being overly afraid of making mistakes.

However, the findings also indicate that although MALL-based PjBL is highly effective in improving students' confidence, participation, and speaking fluency, this approach does not automatically resolve deeper grammatical problems. Many students still produced noticeable grammatical inaccuracies despite demonstrating higher communicative competence and willingness to speak. This suggests that project-based digital learning environments tend to prioritize fluency and message delivery over structural accuracy (Spring, 2020; San Fauziya et al, 2025). Therefore, explicit grammatical instruction and targeted corrective feedback remain necessary to complement the implementation of MALL-based PjBL, particularly in vocational English learning contexts where both communicative effectiveness and language accuracy are essential for professional communication.

The Dichotomy of Group Dynamics: Positive Interdependence vs Social Loafing

Evaluations of the quality of the final product showed mixed results, with only 50% of the group successfully meeting the proficiency graduation target. Analysis of case studies reveals that the main differentiator between high-quality products and below-target products lies not in the linguistic abilities of individuals, but in the quality of the internal collaboration dynamics of the group.

Table 1. Result processed from Group Product Assessment

Groups	Destination Topics	Product Score (4–16)	Category	Characteristics of Group Dynamics
Group 2	Kuliner <i>Plecing</i>	15/16	<i>Proficient</i>	Clear, collaborative, and solution to the problem is clear.
Group 4	Monument Selong	15/16	<i>Proficient</i>	Meticulous, focusing on technical quality and script accuracy.
Group 1	Pancor Kopong	11/16	<i>Below Target</i>	Enthusiastic but undisciplined, dominated by the phenomenon of <i>social loafing</i> .
Group 3	Pottery Industry	11/16	<i>Below Target</i>	Inequality of participation (<i>hitchhiking</i>), a rigid product like news.

(Source: Data source processed from Group Product Assessment Rubric)

Group 2 and Group 4 succeeded in building *positive interdependence*. In Group 2, role negotiations run effectively where students who are proficient in video editing act as *peer tutors* for other members in operating the *Keyframing feature* in the CapCut application. As a result, they are able to produce creative products with high scores (15/16).

In contrast, Group 1 and Group 3 are trapped in group dysfunction. Observation sheet confirms the existence of a phenomenon *social loafing* (social laziness) in Group 1, where the video editing process was only done by one student (Nanang) while the other five members were passive. The phenomenon of free ridership (*hitchhiking/free-riding*) also occurs in Group 3, where two students dominate the work while the other member is caught sleeping in class. As a result, the videos produced by Group 3 became stiff and lost the essence of the dynamic vlog. This group dysfunction is in line with Johnson & Johnson's theory of social interdependence (2009) as well as teamwork guidance from Oakley et al. (2004), which emphasize that the effectiveness of cooperative learning in Project-Based Learning (PjBL) is strongly influenced by the presence of clear individual accountability structures within group activities.

In collaborative learning environments, students are expected not only to work collectively, but also to contribute actively according to their respective responsibilities. In this study, although students generally demonstrated high motivation and enthusiasm during the “Tour-Vlog” project, several groups experienced unequal participation patterns in which more active members dominated the production process while others became less involved. This condition indicates that collaborative learning does not automatically guarantee equal contribution from all group members.

Therefore, this study provides an important theoretical contribution to the PjBL literature by highlighting that the absence of structured accountability mechanisms may cause group work to function merely as a “mask” that conceals the passivity of certain students (Ma & Zhan, 2022). Without explicit systems such as individual role cards, task distribution frameworks, or contribution-based assessment, some students may rely excessively on more competent peers during project completion (Yamada, 2026). As a result, the collaborative process may appear successful externally while still containing hidden participation gaps internally. These findings reinforce the importance of designing cooperative learning structures that balance teamwork with personal responsibility in order to maximize the pedagogical effectiveness of MALL-based PjBL implementation in vocational education.

Technical Friction and Google Translate "Pitfalls" in MALL Apps

Although the students who became participants were categorized as *digital natives*, the results of the study proved that there is a large gap between the capacity to consume social media content and the capacity to produce academic digital content (*digital creators*). The two main frictions that arise during the intervention are the reliance on digital translators and the technical barriers of the environment.

At the Script Writing Stage (Week 2), students are stuck in "*Google Translate Trap*". Based on the observation sheet data, students tend to translate whole sentences directly from Indonesian to English without structural editing. As a result, their manuscripts are filled with unnatural and syntactically incorrect phrases, such as the inclusion of double capitals "*You must to visit*" or loss of copula in "*The food very spicy*". This overdependence reflects the phenomenon identified by Lee (2020), where language learners tend to treat machine translation tools as absolute authority without conducting critical evaluations, thus triggering negative transfers from the mother tongue (*negative L1 transfer*) which undermines the structural accuracy of the text.

The second obstacle is the "audio battle" in the Production Stage (Week 3). The process of shooting in school corridors and open spaces forced students to deal with acoustic disturbances in the form of wind roar and the sound of passing motorcycles. This real technical friction ultimately gave birth to two different responses. Group 1 ignored the interference so that their final product experienced a decrease in communication quality due to wind-blocked sound. Instead, Group 2 critically designed a standalone solution by adding English translated text (*English subtitles*) in full to save the quality of their video communication.

Rooted in the initial formulation *Technology Acceptance Model* (TAM) by Davis (1989), this technical failure changes the perception of usability (*Perceived Usefulness*) gadget in the eyes of students. Gadgets are no longer seen as entertainment tools, but rather as professional production instruments that demand a high level of problem-solving (*high-order problem solving*) (Wagino et al, 2024).

Formation of Vocational Identity

One of the most significant long-term impacts identified in this study is the strengthening of students' vocational identity through the implementation of the "Tour-Vlog" project. The post-project questionnaire revealed that the indicator related to "Relevance to Future Careers" obtained the highest mean score, reaching 4.61 out of 5.0. This finding indicates that students perceived the learning activities as highly connected to their future professional needs in the tourism industry. Through the process of creating tourism-based digital video content, students were not only practicing English speaking skills, but also positioning themselves as prospective tourism practitioners capable of promoting local destinations to international audiences. As a result, English was no longer viewed merely as a compulsory academic subject, but as a practical communication tool that would directly support their vocational careers.

The interview findings further demonstrated a transformation in students' perceptions toward English learning. Before the project was implemented, many students considered English difficult, theoretical, and disconnected from their daily experiences. However, after participating in the project, students began to associate English with authentic workplace communication in tourism contexts, such as guiding tourists, introducing local attractions, and creating digital promotional content. The process of becoming "local tourism content creators" fostered a stronger sense of ownership over their language learning process and increased their confidence in using English meaningfully. This condition reflects the central principle of English for Specific Purposes

(ESP) proposed by Basturkmen (2015), which emphasizes that language learning becomes more meaningful when classroom activities replicate authentic target-situation tasks encountered in professional environments. In this study, the “Tour-Vlog” project successfully bridged classroom learning with real-world vocational practices.

Furthermore, these findings also support Hafner’s (2014) argument that digital video projects function as multimodal learning environments that enable students to construct their professional identities while simultaneously integrating linguistic competence with digital literacy skills. Through the vlog production process, students were required to combine speaking ability, creativity, collaboration, technology operation, and audience awareness into one integrated vocational product (Khastini, 2021).

Such experiences are particularly relevant in the context of the modern tourism industry, where communication skills are increasingly intertwined with digital media competencies. Therefore, the integration of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) and Project-Based Learning (PjBL) not only contributes to improving speaking proficiency, but also plays an important role in preparing vocational students to adapt to the communicative and technological demands of the contemporary workplace.

4. Conclusion

This study concludes that the integration of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) into the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) framework through the “Tour-Vlog” project successfully transformed the learning environment in Tourism Vocational Schools from passive and theoretical instruction into a more active, contextual, and vocationally oriented learning process. The use of smartphones as tools for digital video production was effective in reducing students’ speaking anxiety by providing opportunities for rehearsal, self-correction, and repeated recording before presenting their work publicly. As a result, students demonstrated significantly higher participation in speaking activities and developed stronger awareness of the relevance of English communication skills to their future careers in the tourism industry. These findings indicate that MALL-based PjBL can promote not only speaking competence, but also students’ motivation, confidence, creativity, and vocational identity formation.

Nevertheless, this study also identified several procedural and technical challenges during the implementation process. The quality of the final group products did not always correspond with students’ high motivation levels, as some groups experienced difficulties related to unequal participation, social loafing, and free-riding behaviors within collaborative tasks. In addition, environmental factors such as noise disturbances during outdoor recording activities negatively affected the technical quality of students’ video productions.

Therefore, the successful implementation of MALL-based PjBL in vocational education requires not only students’ linguistic readiness, but also effective teacher management in designing individual accountability systems and minimizing technical constraints during project activities. Based on these findings, future practitioners are encouraged to assign clear individual roles within group projects and provide more explicit language support before the production stage. Furthermore, future researchers are recommended to conduct broader and longer-term studies, as well as explore the use of additional recording technologies, such as wireless microphones, to improve the quality of students’ digital communication products.

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