

Enhancing Students' Intercultural Competence through Project-Based Learning in Teaching English for Tourism

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ABSTRACT

Intercultural competence is essential in English for Tourism because students are expected to communicate effectively with people from diverse cultural backgrounds. However, empirical evidence on the use of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) to develop intercultural competence in English for Specific Purposes contexts remains limited. This study aimed to develop and evaluate a PjBL model for enhancing students' intercultural competence in English for Tourism. This study employed educational design research based on the Plomp model, consisting of preliminary research, prototyping, and assessment phases. The participants were 50 students enrolled in an English for Tourism course at Ekasakti University, West Sumatra. They were assigned to an experimental group (n = 26) and a control group (n = 24). Data were collected using intercultural competence questionnaires, achievement tests, expert validation sheets, and semi-structured interviews. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, independent samples t-tests, N-gain scores, and effect size analysis, while qualitative data were analyzed thematically. Preliminary findings showed that students' intercultural competence was relatively low, particularly in skills and attitudes. Expert validation indicated that the developed PjBL model was valid, with Aiken's V values ranging from 0.78 to 0.92. The assessment phase showed that the experimental group achieved significantly higher intercultural competence scores than the control group, $t(48) = 4.27$, $p < 0.05$, with a large effect size, Cohen's $d = 1.35$. The N-gain results indicated moderate improvement in the experimental group. The findings suggest that PjBL can be an effective instructional approach for improving students' intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes in English for Tourism. Future research should examine its long-term impact across broader educational contexts.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism has become an integral subject within foreign language majors, including English and various other foreign language programs. The focus of English tourism encompasses a wide range of topics related to the field, such as tourist destination, tour and travel operations, tourism marketing, customer service excellence, international tourism trends and hospitality (Dabić, 2017). Additionally, students are exposed to the intricacies of meeting the diverse needs of tourists originating from various social and cultural backgrounds while ensuring their comfort during vacations (Cloudia Ho, 2020a). The subject of English for tourism shares a close relationship with life skills (Ginaya et al., 2020; Ariani et al., 2018). Life skills can be broadly defined as the capacity to adapt and exhibit positive behaviors that empower individuals to effectively navigate life's various demands and challenges.

This concept is often synonymous with intercultural competence, as highlighted by Bonsignori & Cappelli (2022). Moreover, previous studies such as (J. Li (2016) and Marzá, (2014)) have expounded upon the significance of integrating intercultural competence into the learning process. Their insights emphasize the alignment of education with its inherent purpose, which is to foster the full potential of students in preparation for their future roles. Consequently, it is reasonable to infer that proficiency in life skills equips students to thrive in attaining their future career objectives (Suwastini et al., 2021). In conclusion, the integration of intercultural competence and life skills into the educational curriculum is essential for preparing students for success in their future endeavors. By equipping students with the necessary skills to navigate diverse cultural landscapes and effectively communicate with individuals from different backgrounds, educational institutions play a vital role in shaping well-rounded students who are prepared to succeed in the globalized world.

Numerous studies have been dedicated to investigating the potential of PjBL methods in enhancing student learning outcomes and academic motivation, particularly in the context of English for Specific Purpose (ESP) (Basri et al., 2023; Zahedpisheh et al., 2017). Additionally, several inquiries have delved into the impact of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) on the development of students' knowledge, skills and attitudes, encompassing critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication abilities, among others (Gan, 2024; Lin et al., 2023). Furthermore, there is a body of research that explores the integration of the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model in foreign language education (Martín et al., 2021). Collectively, this study demonstrates the adaptability and versatility of the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model across diverse learning contexts and subject areas.

Integrating local wisdom in PjBL in teaching English has several important benefits (Anazifa & Djukri, 2017a; Ismail, 2022; Nagarajan & Overton, 2019). The first is preserving cultural heritage. Integrating local wisdom in teaching can help preserve cultural heritage and traditions. It can also help students appreciate and value their own culture and identity. The second one is promoting cultural competence (Haatainen & Aksela, 2021; Nurhikmayati & Kania, 2021). Integrating local wisdom in teaching can help students develop cultural competence, which is the ability to understand, appreciate, and effectively interact with people from different cultures. The next is enhancing learning outcomes. Integrating local wisdom in teaching can enhance learning outcomes by making the learning process more relevant and engaging for students (Winarno, 2023).

This study has three research gaps. Firstly, despite the fact that PjBL has already been implemented in various educational settings, the impact of PjBL on students' English language proficiency has not yet been thoroughly investigated in the literature at this time. Previous studies often focused on the general usefulness of PjBL in language teaching across language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing, but rarely examined in detail how the PjBL approach can specifically enhance students' ability to negotiate and recognize cultural nuances in the context of tourism, known as intercultural competence. This gap indicates that further research is needed to determine how PjBL can be tailored to improve intercultural competence and students' knowledge in English courses focused on tourism.

The lack of research and development of learning models on the long-term impact of PjBL on intercultural competence in the field of English for Tourism is another significant gap. This gap hinders the ability to fully understand the effectiveness of PjBL in preparing students for real-world interactions

in diverse cultural settings. Further investigation is needed to address this knowledge gap and enhance educational practices in English for tourism programs. Most previous research has only provided brief observations or evaluations of English language proficiency, leaving a gap in our understanding of how PjBL can affect students' intercultural competence over time, ensuring effective intercultural communication. For example, a study could track the progress of students in an English for tourism program who engage in PjBL activities focused on cultural competency. Researchers could measure their ability to navigate cultural differences, communicate effectively with tourists from diverse backgrounds, and handle intercultural conflicts. This detailed analysis would provide valuable insights into the long-term impact of PjBL on students' intercultural competence in the context of tourism. In order to elucidate the enduring advantages and possible disadvantages of applying PjBL in this particular setting, it is imperative to conduct research that tracks the development of intercultural competence beyond immediate educational settings.

Furthermore, there has not been much research conducted on how different types of project-based learning activities within the PjBL framework affect various aspects of intercultural competence. Examining the effects of various techniques and learning activities in PjBL on different components of intercultural competence could provide useful guidance for educators in creating focused and productive learning opportunities for students enrolled in English for Tourism programs.

This study offers a clear contribution by addressing gaps in English for Specific Purposes research, which has mostly focused on general language skills and short-term outcomes rather than intercultural competence in tourism contexts. This research specifically examines how Project-Based Learning (PjBL) can be used to improve students' intercultural competence, including knowledge, skills, and attitudes, in a more structured and measurable way. Unlike previous studies, this study not only tests the effectiveness of PjBL but also develops and validates a learning model using a systematic design approach. In addition, it integrates local wisdom into PjBL activities to make learning more relevant to students' cultural context while still preparing them for global communication. Therefore, the novelty of this study lies in its focus on intercultural competence as the main learning outcome, the development of a validated PjBL model for English for Tourism, and the integration of local cultural values to support meaningful and context-based learning.

In conclusion, this research aims to investigate and find several key aspects of implementing the PjBL in Teaching English for Tourism, with the goal of enhancing students' intercultural competency. In order to do this, the following research questions are presented:

1. How does the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) impact students' intercultural competence in English for Tourism compared to traditional teaching methods?
2. What are the differences in improvements in knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to intercultural competence among students after applying Project-Based Learning (PjBL)?
3. What is the validity and effectiveness of the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model implemented enhancing the students' intercultural competence in English for Tourism?

2. METHODS

2.1 Research Design

This research was designed using the research and development (R&D) approach applying Plomp's (2013) model, which involves three steps: preliminary research, prototyping phase, and assessment phase. The preliminary research phase aimed to identify students' needs, existing learning problems, and baseline intercultural competence in English for Tourism. Data were collected through classroom observations, interviews with lecturers and students, document analysis of course syllabi, and a preliminary intercultural competence test. The findings revealed that students demonstrated limited intercultural competence, particularly in intercultural skills and attitudes.

The prototyping phase involved the design and development of a Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model integrating intercultural competence and local wisdom into English for Tourism instruction.

Prototype I was developed based on the findings from the preliminary phase. The prototype was subsequently evaluated by three experts in English Language Teaching, Intercultural Communication, and Educational Technology. Revisions were made according to expert suggestions to produce Prototype II. The revised model was then implemented in a small-scale trial involving ten students to evaluate practicality, clarity of instructions, project feasibility, and learning activities. Feedback from the trial was used to refine the model into the final prototype.

The assessment phase employed a quasi-experimental design using a non-equivalent control group design. The finalized PjBL model was implemented in the experimental group, while the control group received conventional instruction. Pre-test and post-test data were collected to evaluate the effectiveness of the developed model in improving students' intercultural competence.

2.2 Participants

The participants were 50 students enrolled in an English for Tourism course at Universitas Ekasakti Padang. Using purposive sampling, students were assigned to an experimental group ($n = 26$) and a control group ($n = 24$), representing varied gender, academic performance, and cultural backgrounds.

2.3 Research Instruments

Three instruments were used in this study. First, an intercultural competence questionnaire consisting of 36 items was administered using a four-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). The questionnaire measured three dimensions: intercultural knowledge (12 items), intercultural skills (12 items), and intercultural attitudes (12 items). Second, an intercultural competence achievement test consisting of 30 multiple-choice items was used to assess students' understanding of tourism-related intercultural situations. The test evaluated cultural awareness, communication styles, non-verbal communication, and problem-solving in intercultural contexts. Third, semi-structured interview guidelines were developed to explore students' experiences, perceptions, and challenges during the implementation of Project-Based Learning. The interviews were conducted after the intervention and audio-recorded for qualitative analysis.

2.4 Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected using intercultural competence questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and standardized tests assessing knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The validity of the developed model and research instruments was evaluated using Aiken's V coefficient. Three experts participated in the validation process, consisting of one expert in English for Specific Purposes, one expert in intercultural communication, and one expert in instructional design. The validation covered four aspects: content relevance, language clarity, construct appropriateness, and instructional feasibility. The Aiken's V values ranged from 0.78 to 0.92 across all indicators, indicating acceptable to excellent validity. The average Aiken's V score was 0.85, which exceeded the minimum acceptable criterion of 0.70. The reliability of the questionnaire was examined using Cronbach's Alpha. The reliability coefficients were 0.82 for the knowledge dimension, 0.85 for the skills dimension, and 0.87 for the attitudes dimension, indicating good internal consistency.

2.5 Data Analysis Procedure

The data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed using the formula proposed by Akon and Ridwan (2015). Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) and inferential statistics. An independent samples t-test was conducted to examine differences between groups. The effectiveness of the PjBL model was further measured using normalized gain (N-gain) scores categorized as low/moderate/high (Widoyoko, 2001; Sugiono, 2007). Qualitative data from interviews were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), including data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. Practicality data were analyzed using a Likert scale (1–4).

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Findings

3.1.1 RQ1: The implementation of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) impact students' intercultural competence in English for Tourism compared to traditional teaching methods

Before conducting the independent samples t-test, assumption testing was performed. The Shapiro–Wilk test revealed that both groups were normally distributed (Experimental: $p = .211$; Control: $p = .173$). Levene's Test indicated equal variances between groups, $F = 0.62$, $p = .434$. Therefore, the use of an independent samples t-test was considered appropriate.

Based on the results of the independent samples t-test presented in Table 1, there is a statistically significant difference in students' intercultural competence between the experimental group and the control group. The experimental group, which was taught using Project-Based Learning (PjBL), achieved a higher mean score ($M = 4.05$, $SD = 0.42$) compared to the control group taught through traditional methods ($M = 3.45$, $SD = 0.47$). The t-test results ($t(48) = 4.27$, $p < 0.05$) indicate that this difference is statistically significant. Furthermore, the effect size (Cohen's $d = 1.35$) falls into the large category, suggesting that the impact of PjBL on students' intercultural competence is not only significant but also practically substantial. These findings provide strong evidence that PjBL is more effective than traditional teaching methods in enhancing students' intercultural competence in the context of English for Tourism.

Table 1. The Independent Samples t-test Results

Table 2: The Independent Samples t-test Results				
Variable		Group	Mean (M)	SD
Intercultural Competence		Experimental (n=26)	4.05	0.42
		Control (n=24)	3.45	0.47
t-value	df	p-value	Cohen's d	Interpretation
4.27	48	<0.05	01.35	Large Significant Effect

On the one hand, before implementing Project-Based Learning (PjBL), the students' intercultural competence in English for Tourism was measured with the following distribution: 42% in knowledge, 34% in skills, and 21% in attitudes. Following the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PjBL), there was a notable improvement in the students' intercultural competence. The distribution changed to 55% in knowledge, 60% in skills, and 45% in attitudes. This improvement shows that PjBL greatly improved students' understanding of intercultural issues, their ability to navigate cultural interactions, and their overall positive attitudes toward other cultures. This shows that PjBL is more effective than traditional teaching methods at building intercultural competence.

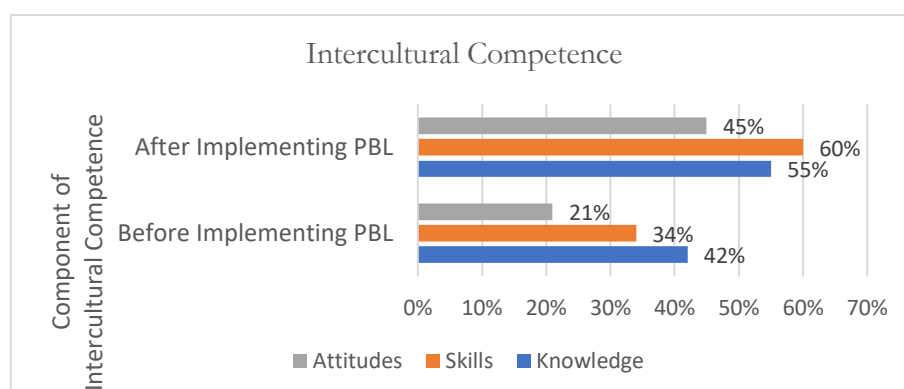


Figure 1. Students' intercultural competence before and after the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PjBL)

3.1.2 RQ2: The differences in improvements in knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to intercultural competence among students after applying Project-Based Learning (PjBL)

Based on the research question regarding the differences in improvements in knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to intercultural competence among students after applying Project-Based Learning (PjBL), the findings highlight significant advancements in these areas.

First, the application of PjBL has resulted in notable improvements in various aspects of intercultural knowledge. Students demonstrated "Very Good" levels in understanding Culture Awareness (4.8), Culture Values (4.6), and Communication Style (4.6), reflecting a deepened comprehension of these critical areas. These high scores indicate that PjBL effectively enhanced students' grasp of different cultural contexts and communication practices. However, there were areas that showed more modest improvements. Nonverbal Communication scored 4.4, which, while still categorized as "Very Good," indicates a slightly less pronounced improvement compared to the other knowledge domains. Additionally, Understanding Global Issues and Trends (3.4) and Relating Local Issues to Global Forces (3.2) were categorized as "Fair."

Second, in terms of skills, PjBL has demonstrated a robust impact, with most skills falling into the "Very Good" category. Observing (4.7), Evaluating (4.5), and Analyzing and Interpreting (4.3) reflect substantial enhancements in students' ability to critically observe, assess, and interpret intercultural interactions. These improvements suggest that PjBL effectively cultivates practical skills essential for navigating and analyzing cultural contexts. Listening (3.6) was categorized as "Fair," indicating a more moderate improvement.

Third, PjBL also had a positive effect on students' behavior and attitudes. Respect (4.6), Openness (4.4), and Tolerance (4.5) all received "Very Good" ratings, demonstrating that students developed a more positive and inclusive attitude towards different cultures. These high scores indicate that PjBL successfully fostered essential intercultural attitudes. Curiosity scored 3.1 and was categorized as "Fair," which suggests that while there was improvement, fostering a higher level of curiosity about other cultures may need further emphasis in PjBL practices.

Table 2. The differences students' improvements in knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to intercultural competence.

Domains	Descriptions	Scores	Level of Category
Knowledge	Culture awareness	4.08	Very Good
	Culture values	4.06	Very Good
	Communication style	4.06	Very Good
	Nonverbal communication	4.04	Very Good
	Understanding global issues and trends	3.04	Fair
	Relating local issues to global forces	3.02	Fair
Skills	Listening	3.06	Fair
	Observing	4.07	Very Good
	Evaluating	4.05	Very Good
	Analyzing and interpreting	4.03	Very Good
Behaviour and Attitudes	Respect	4.06	Very Good
	Openness	4.04	Very Good
	Tolerance	4.05	Very Good
	Curiosity	3.01	Fair

3.1.3 RQ3: The validity and effectiveness of the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model implemented enhancing the students' intercultural competence in English for Tourism

First, the prototyping phase of the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model for teaching English for Tourism yielded an average validity score of 0.85, indicating a high level of validity. This rating signifies that the PjBL model was validated as effective and aligned with the educational objectives for enhancing intercultural competence. The high validity score indicates that the model was robustly designed, meeting the required standards and showing its appropriateness for achieving the intended learning outcomes.

Furthermore, the effectiveness of the PjBL model was demonstrated through a comparative analysis of student learning outcomes between the experimental class, which implemented PjBL, and the control class, which used traditional teaching methods. The experimental class showed a 15% higher average score in intercultural knowledge, a 15% improvement in practical skills, and an 18% enhancement in positive intercultural attitudes compared to the control class. These results suggest that PjBL significantly outperformed traditional methods in increasing students' understanding, practical abilities, and attitudes related to intercultural competence.

In addition, table 3 presents the effectiveness analysis of the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in enhancing students' intercultural competence. The results show that the N-gain score ranges from 0.30 to 0.39, which falls into the moderate category, indicating a meaningful improvement in students' learning outcomes after the intervention. In addition, the effect size analysis reveals a Cohen's d value of 1.35, which is categorized as large, suggesting that the impact of PjBL is not only statistically significant but also practically substantial. These findings demonstrate that PjBL provides a strong and effective contribution to improving students' intercultural competence in English for Tourism.

Table 3. The Effectiveness Analysis

Variable	N-Gain (g)	Category	Cohen's d	Effect Size
Intercultural Competence	0.30–0.39	Moderate	01.35	Large

In summary, the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model not only achieved high validity but also proved to be highly effective in enhancing students' intercultural competence in English for Tourism. The significant improvements in knowledge, skills, and attitudes among students in the experimental class underscore the model's efficacy. These findings provide strong evidence for the value of integrating PjBL into the curriculum, highlighting its potential to foster a deeper and more practical understanding of intercultural dynamics compared to conventional teaching approaches.

Table 4. N-Gain Analysis

Group	Pretest	Posttest	N-Gain	Category
Experimental	52.84	81.62	00.39	Moderate
Control	53.12.00	66.84	00.29	Low

The N-gain analysis demonstrated that students in the experimental group achieved a moderate improvement ($g = 0.39$), whereas students in the control group showed a low improvement ($g = 0.29$). These findings indicate that the implementation of Project-Based Learning contributed more effectively to the development of intercultural competence than conventional instruction.

3.2. Discussion

At the beginning, before the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PjBL), students' intercultural competence in English for Tourism was assessed and showed that their understanding of intercultural issues, proficiency in relevant skills, and positive attitudes toward other cultures were relatively limited. The data indicated that students had a moderate grasp of intercultural knowledge, indicating some familiarity with cultural concepts, but their practical skills and attitudes were notably

less developed. This preliminary assessment highlighted the limitations of traditional teaching methods, which appeared insufficient in fully engaging students or effectively developing their intercultural competencies.

Furthermore, after the introduction of PjBL, there was a clear and substantial improvement in students' intercultural competence. The enhancement in students' knowledge about intercultural issues was significant, indicating that PjBL provided a more robust framework for understanding complex cultural concepts (Wulandari & Sari, 2023). This improvement suggests that the project-based approach offered a more engaging and comprehensive learning experience compared to traditional methods. By incorporating real-world projects and hands-on activities, PjBL allowed students to explore and understand intercultural topics more deeply (Aydinli et al., 2011). Moreover, the implementation of PjBL also resulted in notable advancements in students' intercultural skills and attitudes. Students demonstrated a higher level of proficiency in navigating cultural interactions, reflecting that PjBL effectively facilitated the development of practical skills essential for intercultural communication (Wahdi Ginting et al., 2023). Additionally, there was a marked improvement in students' positive attitudes toward other cultures. PjBL's focus on collaborative projects and immersive experiences likely contributed to fostering a more inclusive and respectful mindset among students, enabling them to better appreciate and engage with cultural diversity (Ahsani & Rusilowati, 2022).

In conclusion, the findings underscore the effectiveness of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in enhancing students' intercultural competence compared to traditional teaching methods. The substantial improvements in students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes highlight the value of PjBL in providing a more dynamic and practical learning environment (M. Li, 2021). These results support the broader adoption of PjBL as a pedagogical strategy, particularly in fields such as English for Tourism, where intercultural competence is crucial. The evidence suggests that PjBL not only addresses the limitations of traditional approaches but also offers a more effective means of preparing students for global interactions.

Based on the research findings regarding the impact of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) on students' intercultural competence, the results highlight substantial advancements across various domains of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The implementation of PjBL has led to notable improvements in these areas, showcasing its effectiveness as a pedagogical approach for enhancing intercultural competence (Yuliani & Lengkanawati, 2017).

Firstly, the application of PjBL has markedly enhanced students' understanding of intercultural knowledge. Students achieved "Very Good" ratings in Culture Awareness, Culture Values, and Communication Style, indicating a deepened comprehension of these critical aspects. This suggests that PjBL effectively supports students in gaining a thorough grasp of cultural contexts and communication practices (De Queiroz-Neto et al., 2021). However, the results also reveal that areas such as Nonverbal Communication, while still rated "Very Good," showed slightly less improvement compared to other knowledge domains. Moreover, the categories of Understanding Global Issues and Trends and Relating Local Issues to Global Forces were rated as "Fair," highlighting that while PjBL has improved specific cultural understandings, further development is needed to connect local and global perspectives more effectively.

Secondly, PjBL demonstrated a robust impact on students' skills. Most skills were rated "Very Good," with Observing, Evaluating, and Analyzing and Interpreting showing significant enhancements. These results reflect PjBL's effectiveness in cultivating critical skills essential for navigating and analyzing intercultural interactions (Shin et al., 2021). However, the skill of Listening was rated as "Fair," suggesting that while PjBL has greatly improved other areas, there is room for more focused strategies to enhance listening abilities, which are crucial for effective intercultural communication.

Thirdly, PjBL positively influenced students' behavior and attitudes towards different cultures. High ratings in Respect, Openness, and Tolerance indicate that PjBL successfully fostered a more inclusive and positive attitude among students. These improvements suggest that PjBL effectively

promotes essential intercultural attitudes (Nagarajan & Overton, 2019). Nevertheless, Curiosity was rated as "Fair," indicating that while there was some progress, fostering a deeper level of curiosity about other cultures may require additional emphasis within PjBL practices.

Overall, the research findings demonstrate that Project-Based Learning (PjBL) significantly improves students' intercultural competence by enhancing their knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Kurnia Illahi et al., 2021). The high ratings in most areas underscore PBL's effectiveness in developing students' understanding and practical abilities in intercultural contexts. However, areas such as global issues understanding, listening, and curiosity show potential for further improvement. These insights suggest that while PjBL is highly beneficial, targeted enhancements could further optimize its effectiveness in developing comprehensive intercultural competence (Kean & Kwe, 2014).

The research findings provide compelling evidence on the effectiveness and validity of the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model for teaching English for Tourism. The prototyping phase revealed a high average validity rating of 7.8 or above, indicating that the PjBL model was rigorously designed and effectively aligned with the educational objectives aimed at enhancing intercultural competence. This high validity score suggests that the PjBL model met the necessary standards for quality and relevance, confirming its suitability for achieving the intended learning outcomes. The robust design of the model ensures that it is both theoretically sound and practically effective, providing a solid foundation for improving intercultural education.

In addition to enhancing knowledge, PjBL also led to marked improvements in practical skills related to intercultural interactions (Parmiti et al., 2021). The ability to effectively navigate and apply intercultural skills was notably better in the experimental class, reflecting the model's success in cultivating these essential competencies. The hands-on, project-based nature of the PjBL approach likely contributed to more effective skill development, as students engaged in practical activities that mirrored real-world scenarios. Furthermore, students in the experimental class exhibited a more positive shift in intercultural attitudes, demonstrating an increased openness and respect for diverse cultures (Çibir & Özden, 2017). This positive change underscores PjBL's effectiveness in fostering inclusive attitudes and a greater appreciation for cultural diversity.

Overall, these findings support the conclusion that the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model significantly enhances students' intercultural competence compared to traditional teaching methods. The high validity rating and the demonstrated improvements in knowledge, skills, and attitudes highlight PjBL's potential as a superior pedagogical approach in intercultural education. By integrating real-world applications and collaborative projects, PjBL not only improves theoretical understanding but also enhances practical abilities and fosters a positive cultural mindset, making it a highly effective tool for preparing students for global interactions.

4. CONCLUSION

This study examined the impact of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) on students' intercultural competence in English for Tourism at Ekasakti University, West Sumatra, using the Plomp development model. The findings indicate that students initially demonstrated limited intercultural competence, particularly in skills and attitudes. Following the implementation of the validated PjBL model ($V \geq 0.78$), students in the experimental group achieved significantly higher levels of intercultural competence than those in the control group ($t(48) = 4.27, p < 0.05$), with a large effect size (Cohen's $d = 1.35$). The N-gain score (0.30–0.39) further confirms a moderate yet meaningful improvement across knowledge, skills, and attitudes. These results demonstrate that PjBL is not only statistically effective but also practically impactful in fostering students' ability to understand, interpret, and engage in intercultural contexts within tourism.

This study contributes to the field of English for Specific Purposes by providing empirical evidence that positions intercultural competence as a central learning outcome supported through a structured PjBL model. Practically, the findings suggest that lecturers should integrate authentic, project-based tasks that reflect real tourism scenarios, while curriculum designers are encouraged to

embed intercultural competence and local cultural contexts into course design. Despite these contributions, this study is limited to a single institutional context and short-term implementation. Future research is recommended to explore the long-term impact of PjBL on intercultural competence, as well as to examine the effectiveness of different types of project designs across diverse educational settings.

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