

THE USE OF PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS IN MA DAARULMASAAKIN

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Abstract

Senior high school students are expected to have good speaking skills, meanwhile, their ability to speak English is meager, especially in terms of fluency. Therefore, teachers need an alternative method to teach speaking skills called Problem-based Learning. The objective of this study is to know the application of problem-based learning as a teaching method in improving students' speaking ability and students' achievement in speaking English. The action research was carried out in some steps. Those steps were a pre-elimination test, conducting the cycles starting with planning, acting, observing, reflecting, and post-testing. As data collection instruments, I used observation sheets, questionnaires, interviews, and self and peer assessments of the students. The implementation of this method was reflected in the classroom activity, students' self and peer assessment, questionnaire, interview, and observation sheets. The result of the study showed significant improvements in students' speaking ability after being taught problem-based learning. They also enjoyed the activities in class by having a discussion, sharing, and cooperation with their friends. In addition, the students gave positive opinions, responses, and interest in the implementation of the problem-based learning method. Therefore, the students' speaking ability was increased. Based on the result above, it can be concluded that this method made a positive contribution to the improvement of the student's speaking ability. This method is beneficial to help the students learn to speak English more enjoyably.

Keywords: *Problem Based-learning; Speaking; Skills.*

Abstrak: Siswa SMA diharapkan memiliki kemampuan berbicara yang baik, sedangkan kemampuan berbahasa Inggris mereka sangat rendah, terutama dalam hal kefasihan. Oleh karena itu, guru memerlukan metode alternatif untuk mengajarkan keterampilan berbicara yang disebut Pembelajaran Berbasis Masalah. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui penerapan pembelajaran berbasis masalah sebagai metode pengajaran dalam meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara siswa dan prestasi siswa dalam berbicara bahasa Inggris. Penelitian tindakan ini dilakukan dalam beberapa tahap. Langkah-langkah tersebut adalah tes pra-eliminasi, melakukan siklus yang dimulai dengan perencanaan, pelaksanaan, observasi, refleksi, dan post-test. Sebagai instrumen pengumpulan data, saya menggunakan lembar observasi, angket, wawancara, dan penilaian diri dan teman sejawat terhadap siswa. Penerapan metode ini tercermin dalam aktivitas kelas, penilaian diri siswa dan teman sejawat, angket, wawancara, dan lembar observasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat peningkatan yang signifikan dalam kemampuan berbicara siswa setelah diajar dengan pembelajaran berbasis masalah. Mereka juga menikmati kegiatan di kelas dengan berdiskusi, berbagi, dan bekerjasama dengan teman-temannya. Selain itu, siswa memberikan pendapat, tanggapan, dan minat

yang positif terhadap penerapan metode pembelajaran berbasis masalah. Oleh karena itu, kemampuan berbicara siswa meningkat. Berdasarkan hasil di atas, dapat disimpulkan bahwa metode ini memberikan kontribusi positif terhadap peningkatan kemampuan berbicara siswa. Metode ini bermanfaat untuk membantu siswa belajar berbicara bahasa Inggris dengan cara yang lebih menyenangkan.

Kata Kunci : Pembelajaran Berbasis Masalah; Berbicara; Keterampilan.

INTRODUCTION

In the fast-paced globalized world of the 21st century, effective communication skills are essential for success in various aspects of life. Among these skills, speaking is a fundamental component of language proficiency, which plays a crucial role in both academic and professional environments. The ability to articulate thoughts, convey ideas, and engage in meaningful conversations is vital not only for personal growth but also for academic achievement and career advancement.

As the demands of the modern workforce continue to evolve, there is a growing recognition of the importance of effective speaking skills. Employers seek individuals who can communicate persuasively, collaborate seamlessly, and adapt to diverse communication situations. Similarly, educational institutions recognize the need to prepare students with the linguistic competence and confidence required for effective spoken communication (Wuntu et al., 2022).

Problem-based learning (PBL) is a student-centered teaching method that engages students in solving real-world problems (Rohim, 2014). Problem-Based Learning (PBL) has emerged as a pedagogical approach that seeks to enhance students' speaking skills by fostering active, student-centered learning experiences (Riswandi, 2018). In PBL, students are presented with real-world problems or scenarios, which they must investigate, analyze, and discuss collaboratively. This approach encourages students to apply critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills in a context that mirrors the complexities of the professional world.

Given this, Project-based Learning (PBL) is one of the methods recommended to be used. PBL refers to a method allowing “students to design, plan, and carry out an extended project that produces a publicly exhibited output such as a product, publication, or presentation” (Patton, 2012:13). Through PBL, the learners are engaged in purposeful communication to complete authentic activities (project-work) so that they have the opportunity to use the language in a relatively natural context (Haines, 1989, as cited in Fragoulis, 2009) and participate in meaningful activities which require authentic language use (Fragoulis, 2009).

The success of PBL implementation has been reported by Gaer (1998) who taught speaking skills to a population of Southeast Asian refugees who had been in their beginning-level ESOL (English for Speaker of Other Language) classes. Their speaking skill is improved through PBL.

While the merits of PBL in improving speaking skills have been widely discussed, it is important to investigate its efficacy within the specific context of language education (Khotimah, 2014). Language learning, particularly speaking, often presents unique challenges, such as fluency, pronunciation, and cultural nuances. Traditional language teaching methods, which often prioritize rote memorization and grammar drills, may not adequately equip students with the practical speaking skills they need.

Therefore, this study aims to explore the potential of PBL in enhancing students' speaking skills, particularly in the context of language education. By focusing on the specific challenges associated with speaking, such as building fluency and confidence, this research aims to address the following: The objective of this study is to know the application of problem-based learning as a teaching method in improving students' speaking ability and students' achievement in speaking English.

METHOD

The design used in this research is Classroom Action Research. Classroom action research is practical research that aims to address deficiencies in classroom learning practices through specific interventions. Improvement efforts are designed to answer questions related to problems teachers encounter in their daily teaching (Mills, 2003). Classroom Action Research is also a systemic inquiry conducted by teachers, researchers, principals, counselors, and other stakeholders in the teaching and learning environment to obtain information about how they teach and how students learn. Classroom Action Research aims to overcome problems in teaching and learning and to solve the real problems faced by teachers. The research design of Classroom Action Research is collaborative. This means that the researcher will collaborate with the English teacher of MA Daarulmasakin in conducting the study, the role of the researcher is that of an English teacher who teaches students how to write via WhatsApp and online learning. The role of the real English teacher, on the other hand, is that of an observer who observes the teaching and learning activities during the writing learning process. The real English teacher is not only an observer but also a collaborator who assists the researcher in creating a lesson plan and assessing and analyzing data.

The data of this research was obtained from the students at MA Daarulmasakin on the reason, the school is located in Semoyang, Praya Timur District, Central Lombok Regency, Nusa Tenggara Barat Province. This school was also selected as the study area because the researcher observed that this school can use problem-based learning for students. Furthermore, the technique of data collection in this study includes both qualitative data and quantitative data. The researcher

uses qualitative data which consists of an interview, field notes, and questionnaires. The technique of data analysis was the last phase of this study. They analyzed four written components. According to Weigle, there are five components listed in the analytical evaluation rubric for writing, namely content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics (Weigle, 2002). To determine the mean and percentage of students' writing scores, use the formula (Meltzer, 2008). In the analysis of field notes and interviews, the last value represented by the description is while the questionnaire analyzed in terms of percentage and represented by the description of the results of the questionnaire.

RESULT

The data resulting from the pre-test up to the post-test showed that the students' speaking skills increased relatively stable along the process of implementing Problem-based Learning in the three cycles. The final result of the test deals with the total score the students gained before and after using Problem-based Learning. In the pre-test result, the students had problems in every aspect of speaking skills. In short, pronunciation control was very poor and they could not produce utterances fluently. The lack of vocabulary variation was also a problem. It means that the vocabulary variation was not sufficient to express the idea. It influenced the result of the comprehension component, while the students couldn't show the performance as the teacher's expectation.

After conducting cycle one and cycle two, the result of the post-test increased. The figure below shows the improvement of each component:

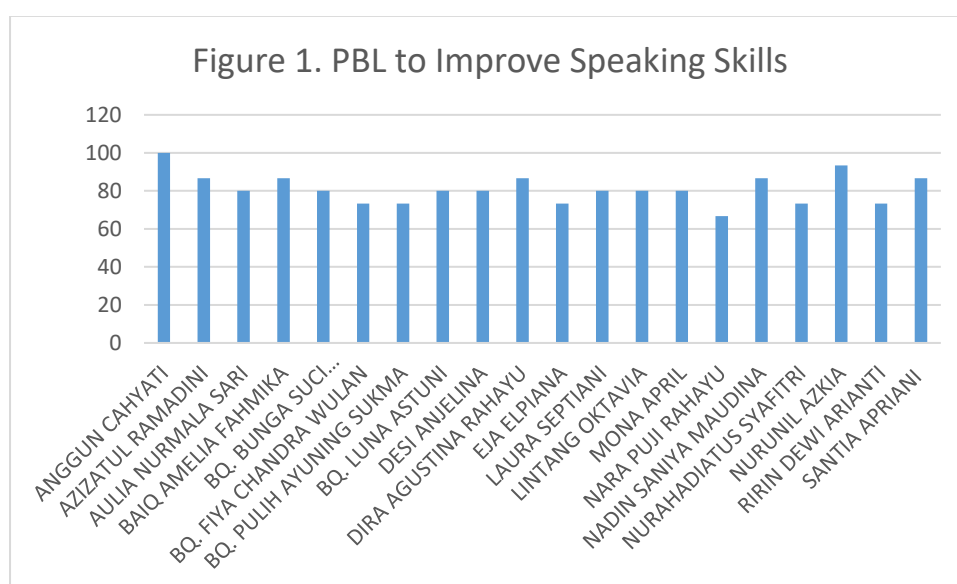


Figure 1. Student's improvement

By using Problem-based Learning, the researcher improved students' speaking in all aspects. All students got good scores for fluency, pronunciation, and intonation.

The improvement of each aspect of speaking skill is explained as follows:

1. Fluency

Fluency is one of the most important and difficult aspects to be achieved in speaking skills. The result of the pre-test showed that fluency got a second grade of low score. As stated above in the questionnaire result, the students admitted that they rarely spoke English English in real life, so it influenced their fluency. After given the treatment, the students'

2. Pronunciation

The student's pronunciation got a low score on the test. They made many mistakes though they used familiar and simple words. After being given the treatment, the student's achievement increased. The students' pronunciation improved because they learned how to pronounce the words correctly since their wrong pronunciations were corrected in cycles one, two, and three.

3. Intonation

Students could maintain their intonation quite well since the pre-test. They could differentiate how to say a statement sentence or affirmative sentence. So that, the writer did not have any difficulties in helping them to improve the intonation aspect of speaking English. After conducting the third cycle, students' improvement in intonation aspect was high and they could apply it in conversation unintentionally.

The Advantages of Using Problem-Based Learning Method in Teaching Speaking

The use of the Problem-Based Learning Method had several advantages for the students' speaking skills. First, the most important is it improves the students' speaking skills in oral communication. The problem-based Learning method forced the students to speak only in English. All of the students must say something or give an opinion about something. This condition made the class conducive for the students to learn to speak English. All of the students could be more active in class, which increased students' oral communication, especially in English. The result is students' speaking skill is getting better.

Second, the use of the Problem-Based Learning method in teaching speaking could increase students' motivation and interest in learning English, especially in speaking skills. Students will like the learning atmosphere by using a fun treatment that is not too formal. Students will enjoy those conditions so that their interest in English improves. Besides, the problem used in the discussion was a daily problem that they often face. It made them more active in discussing the solution to the problem. In addition, all the activities that were involved in this strategy gave the students an

experience in speaking English so that they could be more confident in performing their speaking. Students also will not feel shy when conveying their ideas.

Third, the Problem-Based Learning method is a technique that requires cooperation with other

students in the group. Students learn how to work together to achieve the goal and how to solve the problem. Thus, by conducting the Problem-Based Learning method, students learn social skills such as cooperation, teamwork, and communication skills which are useful in their future lives. Moreover, this method also requires students to think critically before deciding what they have to do, so that, it will help them to be critical thinkers.

DISCUSSION

In this study, Problem-based learning was implemented in four meetings in cycle 1 and cycle 2. The first and the second meetings were direct face-to-face learning in the classroom intended to give an understanding of the learning topics. The third was online learning purposed to provide the students opportunity to apply knowledge from the previous meetings to a speaking project. The fourth, in addition, was also conducted in the classroom to observe and discuss the results of the speaking projects done in the previous meeting. The explanation of the implementation of Problem-based learning in each cycle in the results section above indicates that this model of learning proves to bring an improvement in students' speaking skills which can be seen by the increased average score from the pre-test, post-test 1, and post-test 2. Among four aspects scored in students' speaking (pronunciation, vocabulary, fluency, and grammar), vocabulary and fluency were found to have higher improvement in every cycle than two others. The numbers of common and technical vocabularies used by the students in their speaking projects were increased although some of those were repetitions. Despite the grammar which was found to be neglected by the students, these varied vocabularies affected the students' fluency in a positive way in which the students were able to anticipate the long pauses and even silence during their speaking. The result of this research is in line with Riswandi's research (2018). The implementation of PBL in teaching speaking may help the students to fulfill the criteria for speaking success. Since the students work in groups, they are less afraid and have a higher motivation to get involved in learning. Furthermore, working in groups can help the students train their pronunciation, enrich their vocabulary, and make it easier to find an idea in producing sentences while speaking. In addition, working on the project provides the students with an authentic environment to practice their speaking skills (Sirisrimangkorn, 2021). Another remarkable point of this study is that this learning

model succeeds in changing students' learning attitudes. Direct observations which were done in the classroom during the written and spoken exercises shows that student were interested and actively involved in the process of learning. The students were no longer afraid to answer the questions given by the researchers and they even had more confidence to ask something which they were still confused about. Observation through WA Group and Zoom Meeting during the speaking project making also shows the same thing in which the students looked excited in discussing, making, and submitting the project as well as solving the problems encountered during those processes. This condition, from students' point of view, is resulted from some factors. First, students feel more interested in learning the topic chosen by themselves. Second, students prefer doing the speaking assignments in groups so they can help each other whenever they have problems. Lastly, doing a speaking project using online learning media is more challenging for the students than having a common assignment usually done in the classroom. The change in students' learning attitude according to Kusumawati (2019) resulted from the learning designed appropriately to the student's ideas and needs. Therefore, students feel comfortable and interested during the learning process. In simple words, getting actively involved in all processes makes the students not only get a good speaking achievement but also have extra skills that further contribute to the speaking achievement itself. Simbolon (2019) proposed that Problem-based learning not only help students achieve better speaking skill but also helps the students build their self-confidence and have critical thinking as well as good presentation skill.

Project making is also found to help students enlarge students creativity. Encountering some problems that appeared during the project encouraged and challenged the students to be more creative in finding the solution. As is seen, the result of the video recording in Speaking Project 2 was presented much better than the first video in Speaking Project 1 in terms of the quality of the sound and the picture. Related to this finding, Lubis, Lubis, & Ashadi (2018) reported that Problem-based learning combined with Experiential Learning is proven to improve their students' interpersonal communication skills and creativity in which the students successfully create creative videos containing English persuasive text. A similar result is exposed by Praba, Artini, & Ramendra (2018). Problem-based learning promotes students' critical thinking and creativity which leads to improvement in stating ideas, constructing sentences, exhibiting various vocabularies, maintaining good structure, and making fewer errors in spelling and pronunciation.

CONCLUSION

Based on data interpretation and discussion presented in the, I draw the following conclusions: According to the data analysis, it can be drawn some conclusion that: First, the

purpose of the study is ‘to find out how Problem-Based Learning is used in teaching speaking to the tenth graders of senior high school Daarulmasakin in the academic year 2022/2023.’ It is based on the result of analysis from the observation sheets about students’ behavior during the treatment, and also the analysis of the questionnaire. The implementation of Problem Based Learning itself was easy and students seemed to like this method based on the questionnaire analysis. This method was applied in class and the students played their role seriously, discussed the solution of the problem together with their group members, and constructed the argumentation to back up their solution before they told their solution in front of the class. The application of this method could improve students’ speaking ability. The first purpose was accomplished well. Second, the Problem-Based Learning method improves students’ achievement in speaking after being taught by this method. Students’ improvement in speaking can be seen from the results of the pretest and posttest. It can be seen from the aspects of speaking skills which cover grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, pronunciation, and intonation. The result from the test proved that students’ speaking ability was getting better after using this game.

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