

IMPLEMENTING PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING APPROACH IN ENGLISH CLASSES AND ITS BENEFITS

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Abstract. In this paper writer purposes to explore core poit of views of scholars' about problem-based learning, its importance in foreign language teaching classes and its features. Also, stages of implementing problem-based learning in a classroom was explained. The research was conducted as an interview by asking some questions to identify benefits of Problem-based learning approach in developing speaking skills.

Key words: PBL (Problem-based learning), approach, motivation, collaboration, student confidence, research skill.

I INTRODUCTION

Language teaching is always challenging. For decades English teachers are trying hard to find out the easiest and effective way to transfer the language. In this case teachers polish their classes with various models, methods and techniques which are either succesful or not. One of approaches which teachers consider as an effective in PBL-Problem -based learning .

Literature review

Problem-based learning (PBL) was first introduced in the 1960s by a Canadian medical teacher, Howard Barrows (Delisle, 1997). Since that time, problem-based learning has moved into mainstream curriculum in most content areas and, more reluctantly, into higher education as well (Kaminskiene & Januliene, 2006; Savin-Baden, 2000). Nevertheless, problem-based learning has successfully spread from the medical field into other fields of study, one final frontier for instruction is utilizing problem-based learning with English language learners (ELLs).

Barrows (1982; 2002) defines problem-based learning as an approach to education that starts with real-world challenges in order to acquire and integrate new information. It is a learner-centred approach to education that seeks to problem-solving abilities, a lifelong habit of self-directed learning, and teamwork abilities. It enables students to get a comprehensive body of knowledge from several topic areas or disciplines. Problem based learning is one of the method that student as a cantered of learning process. It is supported by (Duch, 1995) who state that Problem -Based Learning is a learning method which the main characteristic is that real problem as the context for the students learn thinking critical and skill solve a problem and gained knowledge. Torp and Sage (2002) consider PBL as a focused, experiential learning organised around investigation and resolution of messy and real-world problems.

Teachers use real-world problems as they coach learning through probing, questioning, and challenging students' thinking (Torp & Sage, 2002). PBL confronts students with a messy, ill-structured situation in which they assume the role of the stakeholder or "owner" of the situation.

They identify the real problem and learn whatever is necessary to arrive at a viable solution through investigation.

Problem Based Learning generally can be known with this features:

1. Problem Based Learning can be started with giving problem first.
2. The problem which is served relate with students' real life
3. Students are divided to some groups
4. Students are given with maximum responsibility when they are forming learning process directly.
5. Students are demanded to demonstrate the product or project that has been done by them.

The process of PBL can be broken down into six stages:

1. **Present the problem.** Students are introduced to a real-world or curriculum-based problem without a clear solution.
2. **Define the problem.** The class works to clarify what the problem is and what they are being asked to solve.
3. **Identify knowledge.** Students consider what they have already known and what they need to find out.
4. **Research and investigate.** Students seek out relevant information through research, discussions and exploration.
5. **Solve.** Students develop possible solutions, test ideas and decide on the most effective approach.
6. **Reflect.** Students review both the outcome and the learning process, identifying strengths and successes, as well as areas for improvement.

This process is made as a group work activity and require critical thinking, problem-solving, taking risk skills by discussing given questions in a group and presenting the solution to the problem in English.

II METHODOLOGY

Design of the Research

This qualitative study employs a case study design to explore the benefits of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) approach in the context of oral practice in English classes. By conducting in-depth interviews with students, the research seeks to uncover personal experiences and perceptions regarding the implementation of PBL. This approach allows for rich, detailed insights into the educational process and the specific impacts on speaking skills.

Research Question

The primary research question guiding this study is: *What are the benefits of the Problem-Based Learning approach in the Oral Practice subject?*

Sample

The sample consists of 20 undergraduate students enrolled in an Oral Practice course at a higher education institution. Participants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure that they had experienced PBL methods in their coursework. The diversity of the sample includes students from various cultural backgrounds and academic disciplines, allowing for a broader understanding of the benefits of PBL.

Procedure

1. **Recruitment:** Participants were recruited through announcements in the Oral Practice course, emphasizing the opportunity to share insights about their learning experiences with PBL.

2. **Interview Format:** Semi-structured interviews were conducted to allow flexibility while ensuring that key topics were covered. Each interview lasted approximately 30-45 minutes and was audio-recorded with participants' consent.

3. **Interview Questions:** Questions focused on students' perceptions of PBL, their experiences with oral practice tasks, and the impact on their speaking skills (Table 1).

Questions of interview

1	How did the PBL approach affect your confidence in speaking English?
2	Can you describe a specific problem-based project you found particularly beneficial?
3	What skills do you feel you developed through the PBL approach?

4. **Data Analysis:** The recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim. Thematic analysis was used to identify recurring themes and insights related to the benefits of PBL. Coding was conducted manually, with an initial set of codes developed based on the research questions and emerging themes.

III RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings from the student interviews reveal plenty of main profits of implementing Problem-Based Learning (PBL) in oral English practice. One of the most common themes emerging from the interviews is the **increase in student confidence** in speaking English. As one student noted, "Before PBL, I was always nervous and anxious about speaking in front of people, however working on real problems assisted me see the cost of my voice. I feel much more confident now!" This resonates with the key principles of PBL, which, according to Savery (2006), encourages active learning and better understanding, leading to enhanced self-esteem and a more self-motivated attitude.

By providing a supportive environment where students tackle real-world challenges, PBL diminishes the anxiety often associated with language learning and inspires students to take risks in their oral communication.

Furthermore, the interviews highlighted the **development of improved collaboration skills**.

Students emphasized the importance of teamwork in solving problems, stating that "Working in groups allowed me to learn from my peers. We had to communicate effectively to solve problems, which improved my ability to work with others." This aligns with the findings of researchers like Bédard et al. (2012), who emphasize that PBL fosters teamwork, practical skills, and interpersonal communication abilities. The collaborative nature of PBL encourages students to negotiate meaning, share ideas, and learn from diverse perspectives, all of which are crucial for effective oral communication.

The emphasis on **real-world application** was another significant benefit identified by the students. One participant mentioned, "The projects were based on real-life issues, which made learning so much more relevant. I'm now more aware of how to communicate in different professional contexts." This reflects the core tenet of PBL, which is to use complex, real-world problems as a stimulus for learning[8] .

By connecting classroom activities to authentic contexts, PBL enhances students' motivation and engagement, enabling them to see the practical value of their language skills [9].

As William and Shelagh (1993) argue, PBL makes learning "as authentic as it gets" [5], preparing students for the communication demands of their future professions.

Moreover, the interviews underscored the **enhancement of critical thinking skills**. As one student explained, "PBL developed my critical thinking about language use. I had to analyze issues and present solutions, which made me a better speaker." This aligns with the views of researchers like Cosgun & Atay (2021), who stated that PBL improves critical thinking, creativity, and language skills. By requiring learners to analyze problems, evaluate information, and develop reasoned arguments, PBL promotes a deeper understanding of both the language and the subject matter [8][10].

The increased **motivation and engagement** were mentioned by students further validate the essential sides of PBL in English classes. One student claimed, "I was more engaged in my learning. PBL made classes lively. I am able to work on problems rather than just memorizing!"

This enthusiasm is consistent with the findings of Ali (2019), who notes that students become more engaged and enthusiastic about the learning process through PBL [11]. By shifting the focus from passive reception to active problem-solving, PBL creates a more stimulating and enjoyable learning environment, fostering a greater sense of ownership and responsibility among students [9][12].

The research results say that PBL is a valuable approach to instruct oral English in higher education since it cultivates essential communication skills and prepares students for real-world challenges. As noted by researchers, PBL fosters deeper learning, active participation, and meaningful language use [13].

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