

**Exploring Students' Perceptions of Problem Based Learning (PBL) in Enhancing Speaking Skill at SMP Muhammadiyah 3 Bandar Lampung**

**Winda Puspitasari<sup>1</sup>, M. Ridho Kholid<sup>2</sup>, M. Nawawi<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1,2,3</sup>UIN Raden Intan Lampung, Indonesia

windapsptsari@gmail.com<sup>1</sup>, ridhokholid@radenintan.ac.id<sup>2</sup>,

muhammadnawawi@radenintan.ac.id<sup>3</sup>

**ABSTRACT**

*This study investigated the effectiveness of problem-based learning (PBL) in improving junior high school students' English-speaking ability. A case study of students at SMP Muhammadiyah 3 Bandar Lampung showed that students generally had positive perceptions of PBL. They felt that PBL made learning more interesting and encouraged them to participate more actively. The results showed improvements in self-confidence, vocabulary mastery, and ability to interact in English. However, students still faced challenges in terms of grammar and pronunciation mastery. This study concluded that PBL can be an effective approach to improving students' speaking ability, but it needs to be supported by additional activities to overcome existing obstacles.*

**Keywords:** *Problem-Based Learning (PBL), Students' Perception, Speaking Skill*

**ABSTRAK**

Penelitian ini menyelidiki efektivitas pembelajaran berbasis masalah (PBL) dalam meningkatkan kemampuan berbahasa Inggris siswa SMP. Studi kasus terhadap siswa SMP Muhammadiyah 3 Bandar Lampung menunjukkan bahwa siswa umumnya memiliki persepsi positif terhadap PBL. Mereka merasa bahwa PBL membuat pembelajaran lebih menarik dan mendorong mereka untuk berpartisipasi lebih aktif. Hasilnya menunjukkan peningkatan kepercayaan diri, penguasaan kosakata, dan kemampuan berinteraksi dalam bahasa Inggris. Namun, siswa masih menghadapi tantangan dalam hal penguasaan tata bahasa dan pengucapan. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa PBL dapat menjadi pendekatan yang efektif untuk meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara siswa, namun perlu didukung dengan kegiatan tambahan untuk mengatasi kendala yang ada.

**Kata Kunci:** Pembelajaran Berbasis Masalah (PBL), Persepsi Siswa, Keterampilan Berbicara

**INTRODUCTION**

The educational landscape is rapidly evolving, demanding innovative approaches that encourage active, critical, and creative learners. Problem-Based Learning (PBL) has emerged as a promising pedagogical strategy that aligns with these contemporary educational goals. Problem-Based Learning (PBL) is a student-centered instructional approach that involves students in collaborative problem-solving activities that are designed to develop their critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills (Gaber & El-shaer, 2014). Problem-Based Learning (PBL) is a learning method that focuses on solving real-world problems, where students are actively involved in the learning process. PBL is an instructional method designed to

prepare students for real-world settings by requiring them to solve complex, open-ended problems. PBL is an instructional approach that poses a complex problem or question to students and guides them through a process of collaborative inquiry and problem-solving to find solutions. (Yew & Goh, 2016). This approach enhances students' learning outcomes by promoting their abilities and skills in applying knowledge, solving problems, practicing higher-order thinking, and self-directing their own learning.

PBL is an active learning method that focuses on students as active learners. With PBL, students are engaged with complex problems that are relevant to the real world but lack a clear solution (Sukacké et al., 2022). This method encourages students to conduct research, work together in groups, and develop critical thinking skills as well as problem solving abilities. PBL is a type of teaching methodology that addresses problems as early as possible in the learning process. In PBL, students are not only receiving information passively, but they are also actively participating in solving problems related to the stated life. PBL stands as a powerful pedagogical approach that empowers students to take ownership of their learning, develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills, and prepare them to address real-world challenges effectively.

PBL provides ample opportunities for students to practice speaking in real-life contexts, thereby indirectly improving their speaking skills. PBL is an effective learning approach to develop students' speaking skills comprehensively. With PBL, students are expected to be able to practice speaking in more relevant and interesting contexts, so that they can improve their motivation and communication skills. By immersing students in real-world problems, PBL encourages them to collaborate, research, analyze, and present solutions. This student-centered approach has the potential to significantly enhance various skills, including speaking proficiency.

English is the world's international language, so it is important for people to learn it. English plays an important role in the world because English is an international language that has a major influence on human life in relation to the development of science and technology. English has four basic skills in general, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Daeli, 2022). Speaking is one of the four skills of learning a foreign language. It is important for language learners because speaking is the first form of communication. According to Thornbury as cited in Syamsuar, et.al defined speaking is interactive and requires the ability to cooperate in the management is speaking terms (Syamsuar et al., 2020). Speaking is considered the most challenging skill in mastering a language because of its spontaneous nature and the implementation of conventional teaching approaches that emphasize memorization and students' passive role (Kassem, 2018).

Speaking skills are crucial for effective communication and academic success. According to Fulcher and Davidson stated that there were five elements of speaking skill, there are: Pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension (Syamsuar et al., 2020). According to Rosanti et al., Speaking skill is considered as an initial skill that directs students to develop other communications such as listening, reading, and writing that have been described previously (Sihotang et al., 2023).

Speaking affects a person's performance in many aspects, such as social, political, business, and education. They enable individuals to express ideas, share knowledge, and participate actively in discussions and presentations. By engaging students in authentic problem-solving scenarios, PBL provides ample opportunities for them to practice speaking in meaningful contexts. Through collaborative discussions, presentations, and debates, students can develop their fluency, pronunciation, and confidence in using the target language.

Speaking is an important part of communication as it allows people to express their ideas, information and opinions in a concise and persuasive manner. In order for students to fully participate in class discussions, presentations, group projects and other learning activities, students need to have good speaking skills. Speaking is the ability to speak fluently and presupposes not only knowledge of language features, but also the ability to process information and language on the spot (Sinurat, 2021). Speaking is a bridge between individuals. Through spoken language, we not only convey information, but also build relationships, influence others, and solve problems together. In a learning context, good speaking skills enable students to actively participate in various classroom activities. By speaking, students can practice critical thinking, analyze information, and construct coherent arguments. In addition, speaking also helps students to develop self-confidence, overcome nervousness, and become effective communicators.

Related to the findings above, students' perceptions regarding the use of PBL in helping to improve their speaking skills show a positive correlation. So in this study, the researcher will focus on analyzing students' perceptions in the use of problem-based learning teaching methods in helping to enhancing their speaking skills. Perception is peoples' opinion about something that they are thought is true, and perception refers to someone sense or view toward a certain object (Lamatokan, 2018). Perception is the process of interpreting sensory information. It involves selecting, organizing, and interpreting information from the environment through our senses (sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell) (Foley, 2019). Perception is a person's subjective interpretation of the world around them, shaped by their individual experiences, beliefs, and values. It's how we perceive and understand information, forming our opinions and beliefs about people, objects, and events. Perception is influenced by a variety of factors, including our senses, cultural background, personal biases, and past experiences.

Students' perception refers to how students interpret and understand information, experiences, and concepts in a learning environment (Jumiatty & Kuswoyo, 2023). It encompasses their beliefs, attitudes, and feelings about various aspects of their education, such as teachers, curriculum, and learning methods. Students' perceptions can significantly impact their motivation, engagement, and overall learning outcomes.

Based on the results of observations made by researchers, many students at SMP Muhammadiyah 3 Bandar Lampung still have difficulty speaking English. This is influenced by factors such as anxiety disorders, lack of self-confidence, and lack of opportunities to practice speaking English in front of the class. Problem-Based

Learning (PBL) is a student-centered approach that encourages students to solve real-world problems, has been shown to be effective in promoting higher-order thinking skills and active learning. This study aims to explore whether PBL can be an effective strategy to enhancing students' speaking skills by examining students' perceptions of PBL at SMP Muhammadiyah 3 Bandar Lampung.

## **METHOD**

This study employed a qualitative descriptive design with a phenomenological approach. The aim of this research was to gain an in-depth understanding of seventh-grade students' perceptions of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) in enhancing their English-speaking skills.

The population of this study consisted of all seventh-grade students at SMP Muhammadiyah 3 Bandar Lampung. A purposive sampling technique was used to select a sample of 9 students from 3 different classes. Purposive sampling is a non-random sampling technique where researchers select participants based on specific characteristics that align with the research objectives (Mauliddiyah, 2021). This method is particularly useful in qualitative research, where the goal is to gather in-depth insights rather than to generalize findings across a broader population (Practices, 2024). The inclusion criterion was that the students had experienced PBL for at least one semester.

The primary research instrument was a semi-structured interview guide. The interview guide was developed based on a review of the literature on PBL and English-speaking skills. The questions in the interview guide covered aspects such as students' experiences with PBL, the benefits of PBL for their speaking skills, challenges faced, and suggestions for improvement.

Data were collected through face-to-face interviews with each participant. Before the interview, the researcher explained the purpose of the study, assured participants of confidentiality, and obtained informed consent. All interviews were recorded and then transcribed verbatim.

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

The results of this study indicate that the majority of students have a positive perception of PBL in improving English speaking skills. Students feel motivated, confident, and active in learning. However, some students also experience obstacles in working together in groups and difficulty in finding suitable sentences to answer or respond.

To gain a deeper understanding of how students perceive PBL, in-depth interviews were conducted with 9 students. One of the main themes that emerged was that students felt that PBL helped them overcome their fear of speaking in English. One student said, 'I used to be shy to speak in front of the class, but PBL made me more courageous to try.' This finding statement that PBL not only improves speaking ability, but also increases students' self-confidence (Hamsia & Erydani, 2022).

In interviews, most students said that they really liked the problem-based learning method. One student said, 'at first it was a bit confusing and difficult, but after a while I felt it was fun, fun and also enjoyable learning and it wasn't boring.' Similar sentiments were also expressed by other students who felt that the method and method helped them understand the subject matter better.

The interview results showed that the majority of students believed that problem-based learning (PBL) was effective in improving their English-speaking ability. The main reason they gave was that PBL provided an authentic learning environment where they could actively practice English. As expressed by one student, 'PBL is like we are solving real-world problems, so we become more accustomed to using English.' In addition, many students also felt that PBL helped them build confidence in public speaking. This finding is in line with constructivist learning theory which emphasizes the importance of active learning experiences. The implication of this finding is that teachers need to integrate PBL into English language learning more often to improve students' speaking ability.

Problem-Based Learning (PBL) has emerged as a promising approach to enhance language learning. Students in this study generally viewed PBL positively, highlighting its effectiveness in improving speaking skills. They appreciated the authentic context provided by PBL, which encouraged them to use language in meaningful ways. As one student noted, 'I Can know new words in English.' This exposure to new vocabulary is crucial for language development (Tawarik, 2021).

However, the implementation of PBL also presented challenges. Some students expressed concerns about language barriers, particularly vocabulary and grammar. Additionally, public speaking anxiety was identified as a significant obstacle (Mulyani, 2018). To address these issues, teachers should provide ample opportunities for language practice and offer support in developing language skills. By carefully designing PBL activities and providing appropriate scaffolding, teachers can help students overcome these challenges and maximize the benefits of PBL.

This finding is in line with previous studies showing that PBL can improve students' learning motivation and communication skills. This can be explained through the theory of constructivism, which states that students will better understand concepts if they are actively involved in the learning process (Gianistika & Sukma Firmansyah, 2023). The obstacles faced by students in working together can be caused by a lack of experience in working in groups or differences in ability levels.

The implication of this study is that PBL can be an effective alternative in learning English. Teachers need to provide sufficient guidance to students in working together in groups and choosing topics that are relevant to students' lives.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings and discussions above, it can be concluded that students have a positive perception of the use of PBL techniques in improving speaking skills. PBL techniques allow students to be more active and build their confidence. It should be noted that students consider PBL techniques as a way to develop their confidence

in making presentations, solving problems or questions given, asking and answering some questions.

Students seem to be more involved in class activities. In addition, students' language skills such as pronunciation, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension are considered to have improved. For further research, other researchers can confirm the usefulness and effectiveness of PBL techniques in the process of teaching speaking because it has not been explored further. Although students have perceived the application of questioning techniques positively, further investigation is needed whether it significantly affects each aspect of speaking ability.

## REFERENCES

- Daeli, S. (2022). Implementing Problem Based Learning to Improve Students' Speaking Ability at the Tenth Grade of SMK Negeri 1 Fanayama. *Jurnal Ilmiah Mahasiswa Keguruan*, 1(2), 1–12. <https://jurnal.uniraya.ac.id/index.php/FAGURU>
- Foley, H. J. (2019). *Sensation and perception*. Routledge.
- Gaber, H., & El-shaer, A. (2014). Impact of Problem-Based Learning on Students' Critical Thinking Dispositions, Knowledge Acquisition and Retention. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 74–86.
- Gianistika, C., & Sukma Firmansyah, V. (2023). Improving student learning outcomes by using the discovery learning model in the learning process language indonesia. *Edukasi*, 17(2), 176–187.
- Hamsia, W., & Erydani, V. A. C. (2022). Implementation of Problem-Based Learning Model in Improving Speaking Skills for Part-Time Students at A Higher Education Institution in Semarang. *Journal of English Teaching and Learning Issues*, 5(2), 135. <https://doi.org/10.21043/jetli.v5i2.17087>
- Jumiaty, A. A., & Kuswoyo, H. (2023). Undergraduate Students' Perceptions Towards Lecturer'S Classroom Management in the Indonesian Tertiary Context. *Linguistics and Literature Journal*, 4(1), 89–99. [http://jim.teknokrat.ac.id/index.php/linguistics\\_and\\_literature/article/view/3252](http://jim.teknokrat.ac.id/index.php/linguistics_and_literature/article/view/3252) [http://jim.teknokrat.ac.id/index.php/linguistics\\_and\\_literature/article/download/3252/841](http://jim.teknokrat.ac.id/index.php/linguistics_and_literature/article/download/3252/841)
- Kassem, M. A. M. (2018). Improving EFL Students' Speaking Proficiency and Motivation: A Hybrid Problem-based Learning Approach. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 8(7), 848. <https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0807.17>
- Lamatokan, A. (2018). Students' perception toward teachers' teaching styles and the use of learning strategies in teaching English. *Eralingua: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Asing Dan Sastra*, 2(2), 41–46.
- Mauliddiyah, N. L. (2021). *No 主観的健康感を中心とした在宅高齢者における健康関連指標に関する共分散構造分析* Title. 9(2), 6.

- Mulyani, S. (2018). ANXIETY IN SPEAKING ENGLISH Investigating Factors Causing Students' Anxiety in Speaking English Sri Mulyani. *International Journal in Applied Linguistics of Parahikma*, 1(1), 85–103. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/325107390\\_Investigating\\_Factors\\_Causing\\_Students%27\\_Anxiety\\_in\\_Speaking\\_English](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/325107390_Investigating_Factors_Causing_Students%27_Anxiety_in_Speaking_English)
- Practices, B. (2024). *The Crucial Role of Data Collection in Research : Techniques , Challenges , and The Crucial Role of Data Collection in Research : Techniques , Challenges , and Best Practices*. June.
- Sihotang, R. B., Dewi, N. L. P. E. S., & Juniarta, P. A. K. (2023). Student Perceptions on Problem-Based Learning (PBL) in Learning to Speak English of Tenth-Grade at SMA Swasta Masehi GBKP Berastagi. *Journal of Educational Study*, 3(1), 9–14. <https://doi.org/10.36663/joes.v3i1.453>
- Sinurat, J. D. (2021). an Analysis of Students' Learning Strategies in Speaking. *Journal MELT (Medium for English Language Teaching)*, 6(1), 81. <https://doi.org/10.22303/melt.6.1.2021.81-93>
- Sukackè, V., Guerra, A. O. P. de C., Ellinger, D., Carlos, V., Petronienè, S., Gaižiūnienè, L., Blanch, S., Marbà-Tallada, A., & Brose, A. (2022). Towards active evidence-based learning in engineering education: A systematic literature review of PBL, PjBL, and CBL. *Sustainability*, 14(21), 13955.
- Syamsuar, F., Pratama, E. Y., & ... (2020). The Impacts of Project-Based Learning in Enhancing Students' Speaking Skill. *The 2nd Bogor English Student and Teacher (BEST) CONFERENCE 2020*, 150–155. <http://pkm.uika-bogor.ac.id/index.php/best/article/view/817%0Ahttp://pkm.uika-bogor.ac.id/index.php/best/article/download/817/696>
- Tawarik, O. (2021). *249-Article Text-1093-1-10-20210911*. 1(2), 52–64. <https://doi.org/10.46229/elia.v1i2>
- Yew, E. H. J., & Goh, K. (2016). Problem-Based Learning: An Overview of its Process and Impact on Learning. *Health Professions Education*, 2(2), 75–79. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hpe.2016.01.004>