

THE EFFECT OF PROBLEM BASED LEARNING STRATEGY TOWARD STUDENTS' SPEAKING ABILITY AT THE FIRST GRADE OF SMAN 1 ENAM LINGKUNG

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Abstrak

This study was to see the implementation of Problem Based Learning as one of strategies in learning descriptive text toward students speaking ability in describing people, things or places. It was done to the students at the first grade of X₂ and X₆ at SMAN 1 Enam Lingkung registered in 2012/2013. The data of the study were collected through tests. The findings of the study showed that experimental group taught by the problem based learning methods have better ability than control group which is taught by the conventional method. So, it can conclude that the used of Problem based learning in teaching descriptive text can improve students' speaking ability in expressing description about people, things and places

Keyword: implementation, Problem Based Learning, speaking ability, descriptive

A. Introduction

In learning English, there are four skills that should be mastered by the students. One of them is speaking. Through speaking, someone can convey information and ideas, and maintain social relationship by communicating with others. In addition, a large percentage of the world's language learners study English in order to be able to communicate fluently. Some people often think that the ability to speak a language is the product of language learning. They assume that speaking is a crucial part of language learning process. According to Littlewood (1981: 61), speaking is the way to use language as communication mean.

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Based on an observation done at SMA N 1 Enam Lingsung and a discussion held with the English teachers, it was found that there were some problems in English speaking class coming from students and teachers. First, students felt ashamed and afraid to speak English in the classroom so that they preferred to use their mother language. They felt that their peers would look down and laugh at them when they made mistakes. Some students, who did not take any English courses, thought that their ability was bad and did not have enough confidence to speak along with their friends. Another problem is that the students had poor grammar and pronunciation. This sometimes makes them unable to speak understandable speech. Consequently, teachers and students sometimes misunderstood one another.

The last is that they rarely practiced speaking in the classroom. After explaining the materials, the teachers only asked the students to practice one of the conversations found in the textbook. As the result they could not improve their speaking ability because there was a limited chance to practice their speaking and no feedback given by their teacher about their performance.

Then, most of the learning materials were only taken from the textbook. The material was described briefly and teacher continued giving students some task or exercise. The task given by the teacher also comes from textbook. In addition, teacher got some difficulties in choosing some appropriate strategies to teach speaking. As the result, the students did not get any significant improvement in their speaking ability.

In curriculum 2006, the students are asked to be able to communicate. They were asked to learn some kind of texts. These texts will be practiced in four language skills including speaking. One of those texts is descriptive text. Descriptive text is used to describe someone, something, or place. However, the teachers did not create a situation in which student could practice in a real-world context. They tended to memorize the list of word given by the teacher. It made the students bored if they were just asked to memorize every word that was printed in the textbook.

From the explanations above, it can be concluded that teaching speaking in this school needs to be concerned. One of the ways to solve the problems above is by applying an appropriate technique in teaching speaking that can help students to be more active in learning. One of the techniques is problem based learning (PBL). According to Hmelo (2004; 235), PBL uses real life problem to gain students critical thinking.

In PBL, learning process is changed from teacher-centered learning to students-centered learning. This students-centered learning could involve the students' active participation in the learning process, especially in speaking activities. When students believe that they can achieve their goals, the daily tasks of homework, test preparation, and the overall learning process become easier. According to Nurhasanah, (2009:12), Problem-based learning (PBL) is a learning that uses real-world context to improve students' critical thinking and problem

solving skills as well as to acquire the essential knowledge and concepts of the learning material.

Bandura (1997: 142) says that students are also more motivated when they believe that the outcome of learning is under their control. Students are more motivated when they know what they are learning and when their educational activity is implicated in personal meaningful tasks (Ferrari and Mahalingham, 1998; 33). Furthermore, Hmelo (2004: 237) underlines the goal of the problem based learning (PBL). It is to make students intrinsically motivated in the learning speaking. Intrinsic motivation occurs when learners work on a task motivated by their own interests, challenges, or sense of satisfaction.

The model of learning with PBL initiated by a problem (can be raised by students or teachers), and students deepen their knowledge about what they have already known and what they need to know to solve the problem. Students can choose the issues that are considered attractive to be solved so they encourage an active role in learning. Blumberg and Michael (1992: 3) found that PBL students were more likely to use textbooks and other books and informal discussion with peers than did non-PBL students, who were more likely to rely on lecture notes.

Whilst teaching activity is the main activity in which the lesson begins to be introduced, delivered and practiced during the class. Whilst-teaching activities are the second activity in teaching speaking descriptive text. In whilst-teaching, there are three steps that are exploration, elaboration and confirmation. In exploration, teacher gave explanation to the students about descriptive text, the communicative purpose of the text and language features that are used in the text.

In elaboration, Students were divided into some small group and were asked to solve the problem. Teachers chose one problem to be solved by students in-group while teacher acted as a facilitator in students' discussion. Teacher defined the problems then made the hypothesis about the problem to get the solution and gather information by find it with the group member. Students resolved the problem with the group help by teacher and prepared for presented their description in front of class. In confirmation, the teacher reviewed the students' performance and may give some correction if there are mistakes made by students. Then, the teacher gave feedback to the students by giving reinforcement. In the post teaching, the teacher gives the students two new topics and asks the student to choose the topic then students tell it in front of class

The benefits of PBL in language learning are various. It is widely accepted that utilizing problem solving activity promotes construction of useful knowledge, develop reasoning strategies and effective self-directed learning strategies, increase motivation for learning, and become effective collaborators (Hmelo and Pendersen, 2003: 3). Particularly in language classroom, PBL promotes meaningful interaction in the classroom. The interactions that occur while students were dealing with real-world issues and problems are more meaningful and authentic than interactions produced during activities such as assigned role plays or repetition of dialogues.

Based on the background above, supported by some theories, it can be seen that the problem based learning could improve the students' speaking ability. As to activate learners to interact with each other in listening speaking class, PBL can be powerful. While students are focusing on the problem to be solved, they will try to overcome the linguistic hindrance, retrieve prior knowledge of the language to be used, and finally, become skillful language users. Therefore, this study sought the effect of using PBL in improving the speaking ability of the first grade students at SMAN 1 Enam Lingsung, especially their ability in describing things.

B. Research Method

This research was an experimental research because it would see the effect of problem based learning toward students' ability in speaking skill. The test was conducted twice, both in the experimental and control groups. The first test was given at the beginning, while the last one was given at the end of treatment. To make the test valid and reliable, there would be two scorers in assessing the students' speaking ability (inter-rater reliability). The data of this study were collected from 60 students at the first grade of SMAN 1 Enam Lingsung registered in second semester. The test was given to the sample of the populations that were experimental group and control group. Before the treatment, pretest was given to the students to know the students are the same basic ability. To see the effect of problem based learning strategy toward students' speaking ability for senior high school was assured from hypotheses test.

C. Discussion

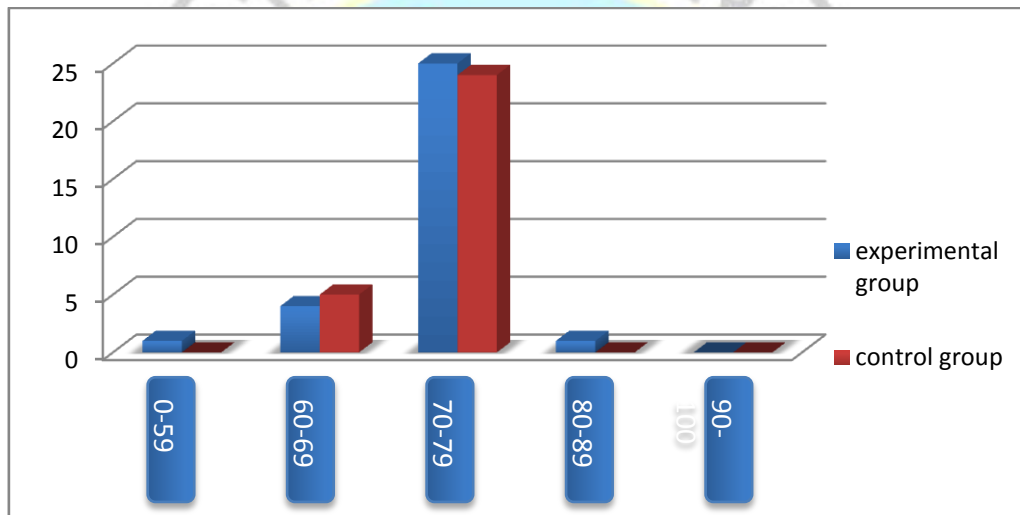
The tests were scored by using four criteria; grammar, organization, vocabulary and fluency. Moreover, there were two scorers who scored the pretest. The first scorer was the English teacher of those classes and the second scorer was the researcher.

The data were taken from both pretest and posttest. The pretest was distributed in the both group to make sure that this two class is in the same ability that describe in relatively similar score. There were some student who did not attend at the class when pretest. The average score of experimental group was 73.08. Meanwhile, the average score of the control group was 72.79. Two students in control group did not come to the class while pretest. From each score it can be seen that the level of the students was the same. There was a student get 0 because of no score for them in pretest caused by did not come at the time. It made the control group's lowest score was 0, while the lowest score in experimental 59.25. For the highest score, the experimental group was 83.75 and the control group was 78.50.

(Table 1: Frequency distribution of students' Scores)

Score Range	Experimental Group	Control Group
0-59	1	0
60-69	4	5
70-79	25	24
80-99	1	0
90-100	0	0

(Figure 1: Graphic of Frequency Distribution of the Students' pretest Scores in Experimental Group and control group)



From the graphic above, it was found that 25 students in the experimental group had speaking scores ranging from 70 to 79 and also with the control group that are 24 students. There were also 4 students got 60-69 scores for experimental group and 5 students for control group. Moreover, there was 1 student got 80-89 scores in experimental group and 1 student got score 0-59 scores. In contrast, there were two students got the lowest score in control group because they did not come to the class. So, they did not get mark in pretest.

Before the data were analyzed by using t-formula, the researcher analyzed mean (\bar{X}), sum square (SS), and standard deviation (SD) of the students' pretest score of the experimental and control group. After that, the researcher analyzed students' pretest scores by using t- formula. The data were gotten is presented in the following table:

(Table 2: The Data of Experimental and Control Groups Posttest Scores)

Experimental Group		Control Group		$t_{calculated} = 0.31$
n_1	= 31	n_2	=29	
\bar{X}_1	= 73.08	\bar{X}_2	= 72.78	
SS_1	= 602.34	SS_2	= 256.83	
SD_1	=4.48	SD_2	= 3.02	

In conclusion, the value of $t_{calculated}$ was smaller than the value of the t_{table} at the level of significant 0.05 ($t_{calculated} < t_{table} = 0.31 < 1.6679$). It means there is no a significant different between the groups.

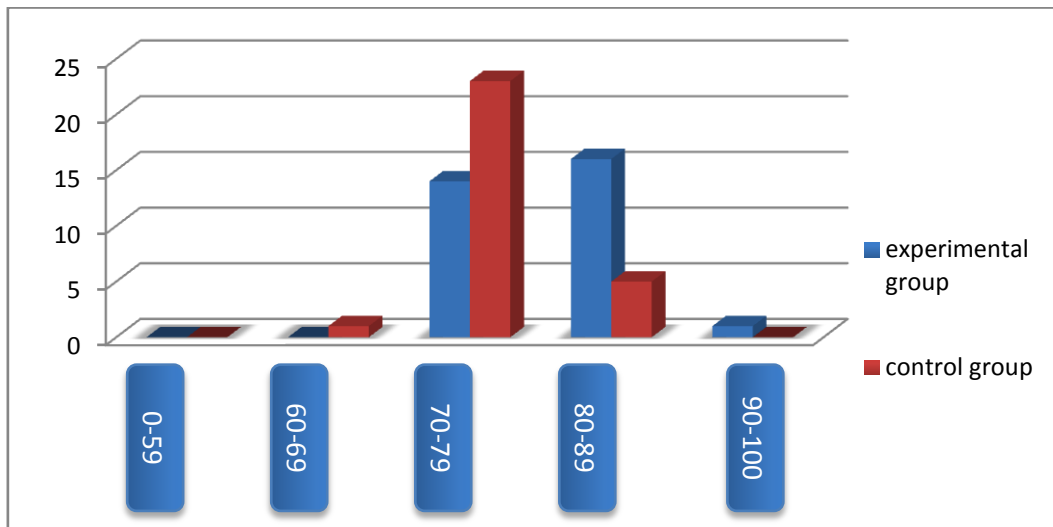
The data were taken from the students` speaking test analyzed by using t-test. By using t-test, the significance differences of the two groups can be calculated statistically. The data, which were analyzed, were the data taken from the posttest. The data were used to compare between the scores of the experimental and control groups. To get the value of $t_{calculated}$ to be compared with t_{table} , the t-formula was used.

Therefore, the results of the students` posttest scores of experimental and control groups were analyzed. From the result of the students` posttest scores of experimental and control groups, the students` score can be classified into the following graphic.

(Table 3: Frequency distribution of students` score)

score range	experimental group	control group
0-59	0	0
60-69	0	1
70-79	14	23
80-89	16	5
90-100	1	0

(Figure 2: Graphic of Frequency Distribution of the Students` Posttest Scores in Experimental and control group)



From the graphic above, it was found that most of the students in experimental group got score in good score (70-79) for about 14 students and very good score (80-89) for about 16 students. For control group, the score range that most of students got score range in a good score (70-79) for about 23 students and in a very good score (80-89) for about 5 students. In the low score, none of the students for both group got it but there were 1 student got the score range 60-69 for control group. For the excellent score (90-100), there were 1 students in experimental group got it and none of the control group students got it.

Before the data were analyzed by using t-formula, the researcher analyzed mean (\bar{X}), sum square (SS), and standard deviation (SD) of the students' posttest score of the experimental and control groups. After that, the researcher analyzed students' posttest scores by using t- formula. The data were gotten is presented in the following table:

(Table 4: The Data of Experimental and Control Groups Posttest Scores)

Experimental Group		Control Group		$t_{calculated} = 5.139$
n_1	= 31	n_2	=29	
\bar{X}_1	= 79.91	\bar{X}_2	= 74.87	
SS_1	= 353.55	SS_2	= 201.12	
SD_1	= 3.43	SD_2	= 2.63	

In conclusion, the value of $t_{calculated}$ was bigger than the value of the t_{table} at the level of significant 0.05 ($t_{calculated} > t_{table} = 5.139 > 1.667$). It means there is a significant different between the groups.

The consideration was if the value of $t_{calculated}$ was same or less than the value of t_{table} , the alternative hypothesis (H_1) would be rejected (the H_0 hypothesis would be accepted). However, if the value of $t_{calculated}$ was bigger than the value of

t_{table} , the alternative hypothesis (H_1) would be accepted (the H_0 hypothesis would be rejected).

Based on the table, the value of $t_{calculated}$ was bigger than the value of the t_{table} at the level of significant 0.05 ($t_{calculated} > t_{table} = 5.139 > 1.667$). It can be concluded that the differences of students' ability in giving description between the two groups were considerably significant. From the result of t-formula stated above, it was decided that H_0 was rejected while H_1 was accepted. In other words, it can be said that the research hypothesis where the use of problem based learning in descriptive text gave better ability than the students who are not taught by using problem based learning was supported by the data collected.

The research's findings above have showed that PBL brings some positive effects to the learning process of speaking in the classroom. The first one is that it helps create good atmosphere among students which makes the students more confident to speak. Through the small group interaction, the students speak their ideas more freely without fearing that their friends will laugh at them. Besides, they become more active in asking questions and participating in the classroom speaking activity. This results from the fact that all group members support one another in speaking. That is one of the advantages of putting the students together in a group which consists of students with different level of ability. This finding is in line with what Barr and Tagg (1995: 12) underline that this model of learning, Problem Based Learning, will be able to increase students' interest, motivation and participation in the learning process.

Another positive impact of the PBL is that it increases the students' thinking skill. This PBL facilitates the students to think more critically because they are offered the chance to solve a problem by themselves. In a group, the students are encouraged to express their ideas based on their own knowledge in real-world context to analyze the problem and try finding a solution to the problem as well. This finding is similar to Cheaney and Ingebritsen's (2005) opinions about PBL which state that PBL is an approach that utilizes the real life problems to stimulate the students' higher-level thinking in the process of completing the task to speak.

PBL encourages the students to identify what they need to learn to solve the problem by their own. The real-world task given helps construct the students' thoughts that they need to learn the skill in speaking to be successful in the field. Practically, this task makes the students realize that the speaking skills that they learn at school can be very useful in their real-life later on. This finding is supported by Maitland (1991: 205) and Hmelo-Silver (2004: 237) who say that PBL is an approach which facilitates the construction of the students' applicable knowledge in a practical settings especially in their daily life.

Besides, PBL as the students-centered learning also helps establish the students' independence in learning to speak because the teacher only takes a role as a facilitator (Blumberg-Michael, 1992: 3 and Mathews-Aydinli, 2007). It is students who will work hard to find a problem, relate it with their existing knowledge, solve it and teacher gives necessary feedback to the students'

response to the problems. It is really useful for the students later on to face the problems outside the classroom where they cannot ask help from their teacher anymore.

The last one is that PBL plays an important role in promoting the students' interaction (Hutchings and O'Rourke, 2002: 5). This is another benefit of putting the students together in a group. The students begin establishing their good relationship and friendship with their classmates whom they are not used to know. This activity involved in PBL is really useful for the first grade students who have just adapted with the new environment of the school. Not only have they been able to provide academic support to each other, they have begun to socialize outside the classroom.

So, it can be inferred from the findings of this research that PBL is beneficial in improving the students' speaking ability, their interest and motivation in speaking, their critical thinking skills, and also their ability in socializing. It means that the students who are taught by using PBL have better ability in expressing their ideas, especially in describing things than who are not. Therefore, this PBL is suggested to be used in the learning process of speaking for the first grade students of the senior high schools.

D. Conclusion

Based on the analysis of finding and the discussion, it can be concluded that the result of problem based learning on students' speaking ability gave some significant effect. From the research results, the researcher can mention and describe some conclusions. The conclusions of discussion results are as follows:

First, the implementation of problem based leaning in teaching speaking showed the good result in terms of improving students speaking. The students speaking score progress can show the improvement and the class's mean score from pretest to posttest increased. Second, because of problem based learning use small group activity, so the use of small group helped the teacher to conduct teaching and learning activity easier. The teacher could control the students' group work from one group to another group. They could help and share each other, so they could finish the task as soon as possible. The students got many opportunities to practice in small group, such as practicing the pronunciation and also the dialogue that will be performed.

And also, it can be implied that the use of problem based leaning in teaching descriptive for speaking skill can create a good atmosphere in the class. Many students were become active participants in the classroom. It was because of the students work in collaborative groups to identify what they need to learn in order to solve a problem. And the last, they were become motivated to express their opinion and ideas like to ask a question that cause all group members were active.

Note: This article was written based on the writer's research on her final project under the guidance of Dra. Hj. Aryuliva Adnan, M.Pd. and Havid Ardi, S.pd, M.Hum.

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