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# Application of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) to Improve English Speaking Skills

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#### **Abstract**

This study aims to determine the improvement of English-speaking skills through the Problem Based Learning (PBL). This research was conducted in semester 2 of 2022/2023 academic year. The research design was classroom action research carried out in two cycles for 3 months. The research subjects were students of class XI.IPA-4 at SMAN 15 Semarang, a total of 36 students. Data obtained through documentation techniques, observations and tests. The test data is processed quantitatively. And the observation data is processed qualitatively. In the initial conditions, the results of the students' speaking skill scores showed an average of 70.67, which was still less than the KKM score, which was 75. After applying the Problem Based Learning PBL learning model in cycle I, there was a slight increase in the average to 76.33 with 69% mastery. And in cycle II it becomes 82.11 with 89% mastery. The results of the study show that through the application of the PBL learning model there is an increase in English speaking skills.

Keywords: Problem Based Learning, English Speaking Skills

# 1. INTRODUCTION

The competency of the English subject is that students can communicate both in speaking and in writing using a variety of languages that are appropriate, fluent and accurate (Diknas, 2003). English learning competence includes four language skills, listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills.

According to Hermawan (2014) speaking skill is the ability to express articulation sounds or words to express thoughts in the form of ideas, opinions, desires or feelings to partner speakers. Speaking skills in the learning process at school are indispensable as a medium for expressing opinions, ideas, giving information or receive information. While the English-speaking skills that class XI students should have are skills in giving opinions, suggestions, provide explanations and present or support arguments.

However, the skill of speaking in English is still seen by most students as the most difficult and frightening language skill and can even cause feelings of embarrassment because they have to appear in front of many people. This fact also occurs in learning to speak English in class XI.IPA-4 at SMAN 15 Semarang. Based on the author's observations when teaching in the class, it was found that the students had not reached the learning completeness standard. The teaching and learning completeness standard that has been determined for the English subject is 75, but from the results of the pre-research (initial data) the average speaking skill score is 70.67 with 47% mastery.

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This happens, among other things, because the teacher does not accustom students to actively speaking in English. The teacher is still be the center of study in learning. On the other hand, students feel embarrassed and afraid to ask if they found difficulties so that in learning students are passive. This causes less optimal learning outcomes.

In addition, the cause of the low results of speaking skills in students is suspected to be due to several factors, such as students still have difficulty conveying ideas, ideas, thoughts, in answering questions in English by using a variety of spoken language properly and correctly where this can be seen from the behavior of students in the classroom when learning English on the material Asking and giving opinion.

Based on teaching experience, some of the causes of low speaking skills include:

1) If teacher asks questions and students are asked to give opinions orally, students seem to have difficulty answering, and tend to feel embarrassed, or even if they respond only a few expressions are issued. 2) Speaking skills that have been mastered by students tend to be rote or mechanical in nature. 3) The method used by the teacher in this lesson is still lecture-based which places more emphasis on theory than practice, so learning that is often carried out becomes less interesting because it is only a one -way transfer of knowledge.

Erwin Harianto (2020) mentioned that students in the process of education are required to be skilled at speaking. They must be able to express the knowledge they already have verbally during the teaching and learning process. They also have to have the courage to appear to ask questions to explore and obtain information, especially in seminars, discussions and meetings where they are required to be skilled at arguing, skilled at explaining problems and how to solve them, and skilled at attracting audience sympathy.

According to Tarigan, et al (2008) speaking is the skill of conveying messages through spoken language to others. Speaking is synonymous with the use of language orally. The use of language orally can be influenced by various factors. Factors that influence speaking directly are the following: pronunciation, intonation, choice of words, word and sentence structure, systematics of speech, content of speech, how to start and end speech, as well as appearance (gestures), self-control.

From the problems mentioned above, a learning method is needed that can improve the quality of learning, especially in English speaking skills. With the right learning method, the quality of the learning process is expected to increase and the learning outcomes in the form of students' speaking skills also increase.

One method that can overcome students' speaking problems is to apply Problem Based Learning (PBL). PBL is the right method to overcome these problems. This method has the potential to develop student independence through solving meaningful problems for the lives of students.

Nariman & Chrispeels, (2016) explained problem-based learning is student-centered learning that is in accordance with the principles of constructivism. The principle of constructivism is that students can build their knowledge through the problems given.

The PBL Learning Model has several advantages, including student-centered learning. Students are trained to always think critically and be skilled in solving a problem. Can trigger an increase in student activity in class. Learners are accustomed to learning from relevant sources. Learning activities run more conducive and effective because students are required to be active.

Several studies that have been conducted previously regarding the application of the PBL include research from Zuhra and Millati (2021) which concluded that PBL can be used to improve speaking skills, but Zuhra's research focuses on the ability to speak Indonesian. This research is also supported by Pratiwi, et al (2015) who also concluded that the problem-based learning method has succeeded in improving Application of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) to Improve English Speaking Skills

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speaking skills in elementary school students. In line with research from Windari, (2017) also concluded that the application of problem-based learning can improve students' thinking skills and learning outcomes in class XII IPA 1 at SMA Dwijendra Denpasar in the 2013-2014 academic year.

This article examines how the application of Problem Based Learning (PBL) can improve English speaking skills on students in class XI. IPA.4 at SMAN 15 Semarang.

#### 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### **Problem Based Learning (PBL)**

Problem Based Learning (PBL) is learning that uses a variety of thinking skills from students individually and in groups as well as the real environment to address the problem so that it is meaningful, relevant, and contextual. There are several reviews regarding the notion of problem-based learning, the first is Dutch, (1995) in Aris, Shoimin (2014) said that Problem Based Learning (PBL) is a teaching model characterized by real problems as context for students to learn to think critically and problem-solving skills and acquire knowledge.

In PBL, students are given a problem. Then in groups (about four to six people), they will try to find a solution to the problem. To get a solution, they are expected to actively seek the information needed from various sources. Information can be obtained from reading materials such as literature, sources, and so on. (Nelfiyanti & Didi Sunardi, 2017)

From some of the definitions above, it can be concluded that the *PBL learning model* be a learning approach that seeks to apply problems that occur in the real world as a context for students in practicing how to think critically and gain skills in problem solving, as well as not forgetting to gain knowledge as well as important concepts from the teaching material being discussed.

Based on the theory developed by Barrow, Min Liu (2005) cited in Shoimin,Aris (2014), characteristics of PBL are: 1) Learning begins with a problem; 2) Make sure that the problem given relates to the world real learners/major learners; 3) Organizing lessons around problems, not around disciplines; 4) Giving great responsibility to students in shaping and carrying out their own learning process directly; 5) Using small groups.

#### **Speaking Skills**

According to Flores (from Baileys, 2004, cited in Wuryono Day, 2017):

"Speaking is about the concept of meaning in terms of delivering, accepting, and processing the information. Speaking is unplanned process, where is the process can start and finish in any situation."

Harmer (2007, cited in Hari Wuryono, 2017) also states that when students want speak Language English with fluent, they Also must get recite phoneme with Correct, give pressure and intonation and master the conversation / discussion material. They will be able to talk in different styles and situations, and can use new conversational ones mutually justify or correct. They will also strive for each other speak with structure that sentence according to language.

The method used to determine the extent to which students are able to speak is to hold a speaking ability test on Asking and giving opinion material. For this, a reference or assessment rubric is needed. This assessment aims to monitor the development of a person's speaking skills properly. With the assessment students can also find out their competency achievements. This achievement can be used as a trigger or trigger Application of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) to Improve English Speaking Skills

to improve if something is still lacking, and to maintain if their competence is as expected.

Assessment of speaking can be carried out by administering tests. However, there is another way to conduct an assessment, namely by nontes. The test according to Gronlund cited in Nurgiyantoro (2010) is a systematic instrument or procedure for measuring a sample of behavior whose answers are in the form of numbers. Meanwhile Djiwandono (2011) defines a test as a tool used to measure something that is abstract, invisible, not concrete, such as the ability to think, the ability to remember, and the ability to speak or write other language abilities.

According to Brown (2004), the components for assessing speaking ability include five components. The five components in question are (1) speech, (2) grammar, (3) vocabulary, (4) comprehension, and (5) fluency.

This study aims to improve the ability to speak English through the application of Problem Based Learning (PBL) with success standards including: (1) students' activeness in participating in learning activities (2) Improving students' speaking skills. This research is said to be successful if 8.5 % of the number of students in the class gets an average score of 75 (complete), then the research is declared successful.

#### 3. METHODS

This study aims to improve the learning situation in the classroom so that there is an increase in the quality of learning. This research was conducted in class XI.IPA-4 of SMAN 15 Semarang, a total of 36 students in semester 1 of the 2021/2022 academic year. This research uses Classroom Action Research. According to Arikunto (2010) Classroom Action Research is a research activity conducted on a number of subjects who are targeted, namely students

The research model used in this study is the Kemmis and Mc Taggart models. According to Kusumah and Dwitagama (2011) the model put forward by Kemmis & Taggart is a cycle that has 4 phases in each cycle. In each cycle using the following sequence: Planning, Implementation, Observation and Reflection.

At the planning stage, the researcher prepares a lesson plan in accordance with the syllabus, sources /media according to the materials and tools/visual aids needed. LKPD is an assessment instrument in the form of a test. At the implementation stage, researchers held learning actions in two cycles. In cycle I is learning English by applying the Problem Based Learning learning model (PBL) on Asking and Giving Opinion materials in large groups, namely 6 students per group. In cycle II, carried out with 6 different group members. Observations were made by colleagues who also teach English subjects whose job is to observe the course of learning. Reflection is carried out by drawing conclusions from the data obtained from the Skills Value Results carried out through two cycles.

Techniques and data collection tools in the form of: a) Documentation Techniques: namely in the form of reports related to student learning outcomes in English reading skills, which are in the form of a Value List book. b) Observation Techniques, namely to determine the extent to which the role of the Problem Based Learning (PBL) learning model in improving English reading skills. c) Test technique, which aims to obtain data related to improving English learning in reading skills.

The collected data will then be analyzed through two stages according to the problems to be studied and in accordance with the research objectives. Quantitative data: The researcher used descriptive comparative, namely comparing the values/results of the Pre-cycle English Speaking Skills (Initial Conditions) and Cycles I and II. Qualitative data, taken from the results of observations that are processed in a qualitative descriptive way, that is based on observation and reflecting on the results Application of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) to Improve English Speaking Skills

of observations from each cycle, namely by comparing the Observation Results of Cycle I and II, as well as comparing the Observation Results of the Initial Conditions and the Observation Results of the Final Conditions.

#### 4. RESULTS

This research was carried out through online learning, and the research subjects were students in tenth grade from one of the public schools in Semarang, totaling 36 students and divided into 18 groups. The research object was the students' written assignments after carrying out future tense learning. The results obtained after the researchers analyzed 18 student writings which can be interpreted in Table 1. From the initial data (pre cycle) The Speaking Skills Assessment which was carried out in class XI.IPA-4, out of 36 students who took part in the assessment, the lowest score was 40, the highest score was 88, with a class average of 70.67. Meanwhile, 17 students completed KKM (47.22 %) and 19 students (52.78 %) did not complete KKM

Table 1
Mastery Speaking Skills Score Before Action (pre-cycle)

Completeness Predicate	Value Range	Amount	Percentage
complete	75 – 100	17	47.22%
Not Completed	< 75	19	52.78%
The number of students		36	100%

Source: List of 2013 Curriculum Values for SMAN 15 Semarang

# Cycle I

After designing the RPP by applying the PBL learning model, materials, media, resources, and learning tools that are appropriate to the material and learning. Followed by preparing LKPD as question text, instrument for collection data form sheet observation and speaking skills assessment test and then the researcher asked colleagues to become observers when implementing learning.

To start the learning activity, the researcher greets, takes attendance and asks how the students are doing and gives advice. The teacher gives trigger questions and explains the benefits of learning.

Then the teacher begins to apply the steps in PBL;1)At the problem orientation shows video from YouTube stage. teacher а the https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XEYgZ\_NJDd4 regarding the material "Asking and giving opinion". Students are asked to pay attention and record the expressions used in the conversation from the video show. 2) At the stage of organizing students to study, students are asked to form groups of 6 students in each group. After forming groups, students are asked to choose one of the topics/problems that the teacher has provided to discuss together. 3) At the stage of guiding individual and group investigations, the teacher guides students individually or in groups in discussions and gives directions on how or ethics of discussion. 4) At the stage of developing and presenting the results of problem solving, students and their groups are asked to write down/record the results of the discussion and then present the results of their

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discussion in front of the class. 5) At the stage of analyzing and evaluating the problem-solving process, each group is given the opportunity to respond and give their opinion on the results of discussions from other groups. Due to time constraints, the teacher has not had time to provide material reinforcement and learning ends with prayer and greetings.

Assessment of speaking skills is taken at the fourth stage, "Development and presentation of Problem Solving Results". In this activity students and their groups present the results of their group work in front of the class. They will express their opinion and give reasons why they chose that topic and give reasons for the topic they have chosen from the LKPD.

The implementation of learning in cycle I went well. When the teacher gave the topics to be chosen by each group, they seemed very enthusiastic and scrambled to choose the topics they would discuss. At the beginning of the discussion some students still seem shy to express his opinion. However, with the teacher's assistance and encouragement from their friends in the group, finally some of these students began to dare to speak English a little. In this activity the teacher goes around the group and emphasizes that in group discussions all students must give their opinion. Even though some students seemed to be more prominent and dominate in discussions and were less than optimal, learning went well and students were very responsive in responding to their friends when moving forward.

Table 2.1 Recapitulation of Observations on the Implementation of PBL in Cycle I

Indicator	Teacher Activity	Student Activity
problem orientation	73	70
Organizing students	75	68
Guiding research	70	67
Develop and present	72	70
Analyze and evaluate	73	70
Average amount	72,60	69.00

After the action, the assessment of speaking skills in cycle I, of the 36 students who took part in the assessment, obtained 25 students who had completed the KKM (69.44%) and 11 students who did not complete the KKM (30.56%).

Figure 1. The Speaking Skills score in cycle I

1 2

Description: 1 = Incomplete Score (30.56%)

2 = Complete Score (69.44%)

From the pie chart above, it can be seen that there are still 11 students who scored below 75 or incomplete (30.56%) and there were 25 students who scored above 75 (69.44%).

The advantages of applying the PBL model to material on material Asking and Giving Opinion were students who were initially shy and afraid to speak learning, after conducting group discussions of 6 people, they became more courageous to speak to express their opinions in English. The most prominent advantage is that students who were previously silent and not active in learning become actively interacting and actively involved in group discussions. Students are more responsible in solving problems according to the topics they have chosen together.

The drawback, because the formation of groups is heterogeneous, so there are some students who still dominate the conversation and some other students still depend on the group. The situation was also a bit lively because of the joint discussion. Teachers are less sensitive in dealing with group situations that require guidance. Although some the group actively participates in learning, with the application of the PBL learning model, it turns out that there are still groups that experience difficulties in discussing group work, are not yet effective in expressing their group's opinions so that the value of English-speaking skills is also not optimal.

Through acquiring the value of English-speaking skills on the material Asking and Giving Opinion and from the observations of the observers, it can be concluded that in the learning activities in cycle I, the results are still unsatisfactory and improvements need to be made in cycle II.

Based on reflection, the improvement efforts that will be carried out; 1) to avoid student/group dominance, the teacher needs to replace groups with different members so that all students are involved in group discussions. 2) The teacher changes the topic of a different discussion. 3) Sets a more efficient allocation of learning time. 4) The teacher accompanies and directs students in discussions so that the atmosphere is controlled and conducive/not crowded. 5) The teacher should help and guide students/groups who have difficulty in discussion activities. Based on that, it is necessary to proceed to cycle II.

# Cycle II

In cycle II, before learning, the teacher prepared lesson plans, media, resources, and appropriate learning tools. Followed by preparing LKPD as question text, instrument for collection data form sheet observation and speaking skills assessment test and then the researcher asked colleagues to become observers when implementing learning.

Implementation of the results of reflection, in cycle II the teacher replaces different group members from cycle I, the teacher also determines different discussion topics, provides time limits for discussions so that each student is responsible for the completion of the results of the discussion, provides guidance and assistance to groups that need assistance.

The researcher started the learning activities by greeting, taking attendance and asking how the students were doing and giving advice. The researcher also reviewed some of the material that had been taught, namely about asking and giving opinion. The researcher also asked about the difficulties they still encountered in conveying and giving an opinion.

After the researcher carried out the preliminary activities, then the researcher began to apply the syntax/steps in PBL. At the problem orientation stage the teacher provides reinforcement by showing the PPT material Asking and giving opinion. At the organizing stage, the teacher divided students into six different groups from cycle I. Then the researcher distributed worksheets containing topics that were different from the previous cycle. After that the teacher asked the students to return to discuss with their new group. In the next stage the teacher monitors the course of the discussion. And guiding individuals and groups who have difficulty in discussing. After discussing for about 30 minutes, the teacher asked each group to write down the results of the discussion and present them in front of the class. In the final stage, the teacher gives an evaluation of the discussion activities. Students from groups may ask each other questions or respond to other groups.

Assessment of Speaking Skills is taken in the fourth syntax/step, namely, Development and presentation of Problem-Solving Results. In this activity students and their groups present the results of their group work in front of the class.

When the teacher showed the PPT and gave an explanation about asking and giving opinion, the students were very enthusiastic and actively asked questions during the lesson. Entering the organizing stage, the teacher divided students into 6 different groups of members from cycle I. At first some students were still awkward with their new groups. But with the direction and guidance of the teacher, they finally enjoy and get excited. In this activity almost all students seemed to actively discuss the new topic they chose. At the developing and presenting stages, students who were still shy in cycle I began to dare to speak and appear in front of the class. The atmosphere became exciting because almost all students participated. The activity ended with an evaluation from the teacher and some students responded to opinions from other groups.

Table 3.1 Summary of Observations on the Implementation of PBL in Cycle II

Indicator	Teacher's Activity	Student's Activity
problem orientation	80	85
Organizing students	82	88
Guiding research	88	92
Develop and present	82	90
Analyze and evaluate	85	85
Average amount	83,40	88.00

From the table above it can be seen that with the experience in cycle I and making improvements in cycle II, learning by applying the PBL learning model in cycle II became interesting and not boring. All children participate in the discussion. This can be seen from the results of observations of teacher and student activities which have increased from each stage of PBL. The increase in activity from teachers and students had an impact on the English-speaking skills of class XI.IPA-4 students experiencing a significant increase.

Table 3.2 Recapitulation of the Speaking Skills Score in Cycle II

Completeness Predicate	Value Range	The number of students	Percentage
complete	75 – 100	32	88.89 %
Not Completed	< 75	4	11.11 %
The number of students		36	100%

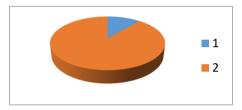


Figure 2. speaking skills score in cycle II

Description: 1 = Incomplete Score (11.11%)

2 = Due Value (88.89%)



Based on the table and pie chart above, it can be seen that there are still 4 students who scored below 75 or incomplete (11.11%) and there are 32 students who have scored above 75 (88.89%). This condition has shown a significant increase in speaking skill: English in class XI.IPA-4 students

The learning activities in cycle II went better than cycle I. The advantage of cycle II was that some students who were initially ignorant, embarrassed to speak tended to be passive, after conducting group discussions which consisted of 6 people who were different from the previous group, finally showed their participation in the discussion. They become more confident in speaking English. In addition, they also already have experience in the previous cycle, so that in this second cycle they are better prepared in terms of attitudes, abilities and sources of reference for discussion material. Each student gets the opportunity to speak and express his opinion. Even though there were some students who did have more ability in English, they were no longer dominant in discussion activities. With the assistance of the teacher they show a more cooperative attitude by giving opportunities and helping their groups in discussions. The teacher has also shown empathy by paying more attention when guiding students who need special attention. Time settings have also been adjusted to student activities so that learning becomes more effective. As for the drawbacks, there are still 4 students who really lack abilities in learning so they still depend on the group and the teacher.

Through the acquisition of the results of the English-speaking skill scores and from the observations of the observers, it can be concluded that in this second cycle of learning activities, the results were very satisfying. Students who were previously reluctant to speak and were not active in learning with the application of the PBL learning model students became more active in discussing in their groups and dared to express their opinions so that this also had an impact on the value of speaking skills which also increased. From these results the researcher decided not to continue in cycle III.

While the efforts made by the teacher in cycles I and II to improve students' speaking skills, namely 1) to avoid student/group dominance, the teacher must replace groups with different members so that all students are involved in group discussions. 2) The teacher changes the topic of a different discussion 3) Sets a more efficient allocation of learning time 4) The teacher accompanies and directs students in discussions so that the atmosphere is controlled and conducive/not crowded 5) The teacher should help and guide students/groups who have difficulty in discussion activities so that students feel comfortable.

Table.4.1 Recapitulation of Observations on the Implementation of PBL Cycles I and II

Indicator		Cycle I		Cycle II	
		Teacher	Student	Teacher	Student
		Activity	Activity	Activity	Activity
problem orient	ation	73	70	80	85
Organizing stu	dents	75	68	85	88
Guiding resear	rch	70	67	88	92
Developing present	and	72	70	82	90
Analyzing evaluate	and	73	70	85	85
Averaging amo	ount	72.50	68.75	83.75	88.75

Based on the table above. The results of observing the implementation of PBL in the activities in cycle I and cycle II showed an increase in the activity of teachers and students in cycles I and II.

After applying the Problem Based Learning learning model, students in class XI.IPA.4 SMA Negeri 15 Semarang in semester one of the 2022/2023 school year became more courageous in expressing their ideas and opinions in English. The class atmosphere became more lively with students actively asking and answering teacher questions and participating in the learning process happily. The teacher no longer dominates with his lectures. Students who are able to speak English well, no longer dominate the discussion between groups.

Table 4.2 Recapitulation of Speaking Skills Score in cycles I and II

No	Description	Initial conditions	speaking cycle I	skills	speaking cycle II	skills
1.	Students complete KKM	17(47.22%)	25 or 69.44%	ó	13 or 88.89 <sup>o</sup>	%
2.	Students did not complete KKM	19 (52.78%)	11 or 30.56%	, 0	4 or 11.11%	)

The results of the average value of speaking skills in cycle I and cycle II can be concluded that the average highest score obtained by students, the total number of class scores, the class average, and the percentage of students who complete the KKM have increased. This means that there is an increase in the value of students' speaking skills in class XI.IPA-4 from previously not using the Problem Based Learning (PBL) learning model and after using the Problem Based Learning learning model the value of speaking skills has increased.

#### 6. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this Classroom Action Research, it can be concluded that, through the Problem Based Learning Model can improve the speaking skills of class XI.IPA-4 students at SMA Negeri 15 Semarang. The average value of speaking English skills at pre-action only reached 70.67. Of the 36 students, 19 students did not complete their skill scores. After the action was held, in cycle I the average English-speaking skill score was 76.33, this increased students by 5.66%. Because there are still 11 students whose grades have not been completed. And finally, it was fixed again in cycle II and the average student score became 82.11. This has increased by 5.78%. So that the whole from pre-cycle to cycle II has increased by 11.44%.

In general, the problem-based learning method can improve students' ability to speak, especially in the material of Asking and giving opinions. Students are bolder and more active in learning. They gave their opinion according to the topic in English. Results in the pre-action only reached an average of 70.67, in cycle I reached an average of 76.33. While in cycle II the average increased to 82.11.

Thus, the use of the Problem Based Learning can be said to be successful, because throughout this learning model it can motivate students to be actively involved in learning and make it easier for students to give opinions on Asking and Giving Opinion material so that students' speaking skills increase and students get satisfactory grades which will be useful for the future.

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