

Problem-Based Learning Model in EFL Classroom: Eyes of Teacher and Students

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ABSTRACT

Problem-based learning is important because it helps students develop critical thinking skills, learn in a relevant way, develop collaborative skills, encourage deep understanding, and increase intrinsic motivation. PBL is very relevant when used in current learning, or more precisely, in the Merdeka curriculum. However, the discussion regarding how PBL is perceived as one of the evaluations has not been widely studied. Therefore, this study aims to investigate teacher and student perceptions of the PBL model in the EFL classroom. This research method uses a qualitative case study design by using semi-structured interviews with one selected teacher and four selected students at a junior high school in Garut, West Java. In general, teachers and students had positive perceptions of PBL, but there were still some problems. First, teachers still lacked of the knowledge to implement PBL. Second, teachers had barriers in engaging students in class. Third, students felt that the teacher could not control the group work in class. Therefore, it is noted that in implementing PBL, teachers have to pay attention to classroom management, especially student engagement, and teachers also need to improve their skills in PBL by following some trainings.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In EFL classroom, students lack of critical thinking. Students are less encouraged to develop thinking skills during the learning process, particularly critical thinking skills in problem solving (Dayu, 2022). Rahmawati (2020) states that students struggle to develop ideas. Students are unable to develop ideas effectively. Their speaking demonstrated that they were stuck on forming the sentences. They still consider the teacher to be the only source of knowledge, so it is difficult for students to develop their abilities, including critical thinking, and students also have a dependency on others, especially teachers (Rubiyanti et al., 2020). According to Stapleton (2002), Asian EFL students lack critical thinking skills as well as individual voice or opinion.

One of teaching approaches is PBL. Walfajri and Harjono (2019) argue that the use of PBL models can promote critical thinking abilities and learning outcomes. Problem-Based Learning is a teaching style in which challenging real-world situations, rather than direct presentations

of facts and concepts, are used as the vehicle to facilitate student understanding of concepts and principles. In addition to course content, this study can assist students in developing critical thinking skills, problem-solving abilities, and communication skills. It can also facilitate collaborative work, the discovery and evaluation of research resources, and lifelong learning. (Duch et al, 2001). Khotimah (2014) states that problem-based learning is a strategy that uses problems to teach students to think critically when confronted with a problem. In this approach, PBL is an instructional technique that can effectively boost learners' motivation and retention of material by actively requiring them to utilize their critical thinking abilities in order to solve problems. (Schwartz et al., 2001). According to Tiwari et al. (2006), thus method is the most effective teaching technique for developing critical thinking skills, as evidenced by empirical research. Furthermore, this approach encourages meaningful learning since most of its power fosters critical, introspective, and creative thinking (Blackburn, 2015). In conclusion, critical thinking can be overcome with problem-based learning methods.

Numerous studies have been carried out. Some studies focus on the implementation of Problem Based Learning (Chadziqoh & Abdulkarim, 2017; Brata & Mahatmaharti, 2019; Igut & Ain & Pratiwi, 2019; Sari & Rokhmana, 2019; Sakaa & Kumab, 2009; Rosmiyati, 2021). The main result shown that the PBL model successfully improved students' motivation and critical thinking skills. Another research topic regarding the effectiveness of Problem Based Learning has also been conducted by (Nadeak & Naibaho, 2020; Manuabal & Yi-No & Chih Wu, 2022; Fitriaa & Yettib & Aminic & Eliyasnid, 2019; Ramdhani & Aprillia & Kustiawan, 2021). The main findings that the problem based learning model can improve students' learning competencies. Also, several studies focused on students' perception of implementing Problem Based Learning (Sulaiman, 2010; Ismail & Edi, 2022; Sulistiyana & Khasanah, 2020). Finally, numerous studies have been conducted. Students' perceptions of problem-based learning have yet to be explored in the EFL classroom, so this focus is still needed. Based on the problem statements set out, the purpose of this study is to determine students' perceptions of the Problem-Based Learning model in EFL classroom.

2. METHOD

Research Design

The design of this research was case study qualitative. It was utilized in order to describe perception of the problem based study in critical thinking. It was line Qualitative research is a method of scientific inquiry that aims to comprehend socially relevant human problems by presenting a comprehensive and complex picture, providing in-depth analyses of the sources of information, and conducting the investigation in settings free from researcher intervention (Creswell, 2008). According to Wohlin's (2021), a case study is an empirical investigation of a case employing many data gathering methods to analyze a contemporary phenomenon in its real-life setting, with the investigator(s) not actively participating in the case investigated. This step is carried out to understand the character of the individual who is studied in depth. Qualitative method was considered relevant to the present research since it involved the data collection for perception of the problem based study in critical thinking. It means that the data collected in form of words not in the form of number.

Research Site and Participant

This research was conducted on March 16, 2023 in a high school at Garut. The reason of choosing the school as the setting was because this school is one of the schools that uses the problem based learning method and students lack understanding of PBL learning in this school and do not know about what the teacher teaches through the PBL method. The subject of this research one of English teacher and students at Junior High school in Garut.

Instrument

The instruments that were used in collecting data is interview. Schostak (2006) states that an interview is an extended dialogue between partners that tries to obtain 'in-depth knowledge' about a specific topic or subject, and that a phenomenon can be interpreted in terms of the meanings interviewees bring to it. In this research, the researcher used the semi structured interview because this interview has been categorized as in depth interview. Semi-structured interviews, which are based on open-ended questions, are standardized, flexible, unique, and personal (Gillham, 2000). The interview was conducted in Bahasa Indonesia to allow the teacher and students to express ideas, beliefs, and feeling fluently. The interview explored students and teacher ideas, thoughts and understanding about perception of the problem based study in critical thinking. The Researcher interviewed and Student and English teacher by using recording in phone to record the interview. Of the 7 research questions divided into 2 categories, they are; students' understanding of learning English, teacher's understanding of the problem based learning in school. The researcher would analyze the result of the research interview to determine the perception of the problem based study in critical thinking.

Data Analysis

This study uses inductive analysis. Inductive analysis refers to approaches that primarily use detailed readings of raw data to derive concepts, themes, or a model through interpretations made by an evaluator or researcher from the raw data (Thomas, 2006). The following are the four steps for data analysis:

1) Prepare and Organize the Data

The first step in analyzing the data is the preparation and arrangement of the data. Data management is accomplished by compiling the collected data, recording and transcribing interviews with participants, and providing a brief overview of teacher and student understanding of problem-based learning methods, as well as how to apply problem-based learning methods. Then, categorizing the data from semi structured interview.

2) Explore the Data

In the second step, an initial analysis of the data is conducted by reading through it in order to get a general sense of the data.

3) Build Description and Themes

After the data is explored. The researcher reads and rereads all of the data, sorting it by interview units into sentences or phrases for easy comprehension. After collecting all of the data, the researcher gathers all of the units with the same coding to make the data easier to read.

4) Conclusion from the Data

In this section, after the data is categorized the researcher makes a summary of the results of the transcripts from the interviews that have been conducted by the researcher.

Data Analysis Procedure

The research procedure was obtained through interviews with several steps which can be described as follows: first, the researcher prepared interview questions in the form of questions used to obtain information about teacher and student perceptions of problem-based learning. Second, the researcher conducted interviews, in this section the researcher interviewed the participants directly and recorded them. Third, the recorded interview results were transcribed into written form. Fourth, categorizing and displaying the results of the interviews. Fifth, conclusion, as a result of the interview data.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Findings

This part reports the data findings related to how PBL is perceived by a EFL teacher. This discussion consist of Knowledge, Experience, Opinion.

3.1.1. Knowledge

Regarding this topic, the teacher showed her knowledge, particularly on the purpose PBL, the stages of PBL, and the characteristics of PBL. First, the teacher said that 'PBL is problem-based learning, which makes students actively discuss with their group members to solve problems and find their own concepts. So when the teacher explains, students will have various solving procedures; therefore, students are required to actively read and explain material from the teacher, which will bring up varied student thoughts. So with this PBL, we can know the mindset of children, who think critically and creatively to solve problems'. It means that the teacher already knows the purpose of the PBL. Second, explain the steps of PBL, the teacher said that 'For the first stages of using PBL, namely the orientation of students on a problem, the teacher explains what the learning objectives are, then explains what things are needed for the learning, for example, phenomena, demonstrations, or stories. If English usually uses stories that will be displayed first to raise a problem, that will stimulate students to be involved in solving the problem that will be discussed. The second stage is organizing students to learn; here, the teacher helps students organize or define learning tasks related to problems. The third stage is guiding student investigations; here, the teacher encourages students to collect information that is in accordance with experiments or problem-solving explanations. The fourth stage is developing and presenting the work, so the teacher helps students plan and prepare their work according to videos or reports and helps students share assignments with their colleagues. The fifth stage is analyzing and evaluating the problem-solving process itself, so the teacher helps students reflect on or evaluate the solutions or learning that has been done'. It shows that the teacher recognizes that PBL has five stages: first, the student's orientation to the problem; second, student organization; third, guiding the investigation; fourth, creating results; and fifth, analyzing and evaluating the problem. Third, talking about the characteristics of PBL, the teacher said that 'The characteristics of PBL are planning, implementation, observation, and reflection'. This means that the teacher understands enough about the characteristics of PBL.

3.1.2 Experiences

For this topic, the teacher shared her experience, especially about how long her used the PBL method and whether learning was more effective using PBL. First, the teacher said 'I've been a teacher here for 15 years, and in that time I've used the PBL approach for roughly 5 years, even then modifying the subject. If I believe that PBL is necessary for this content, I will use it, and I will regularly use PBL more'. It means that the teacher has been implementing the PBL method for a long time. Second, talking about how long she's been using PBL, the teacher said 'It should be effective because it can provide many benefits to students. So if we are better able to share information and knowledge with our group or we can develop problem-solving abilities, critical thinking skills, and communication skills. We can also develop integration-based knowledge, improve our ability to work together in groups, and solve problems ourselves. must be completed. The teacher gives questions or tasks and shows how to solve them by working together'. It shows that the teacher knows that PBL is quite effective for learning.

3.1.3 Opinions

Related to this topic, the teacher conveyed her opinion, especially about the advantages and difficulties of the PBL method. First, opinions about the advantages of PBL, the teacher said 'The advantage is that students are more creative in solving a problem in the learning itself, so that more ideas arise to solve a problem. There is also cooperation, and collaboration also

trains critical thinking skills. Therefore, there will be many questions and understandings that arise from students, and we as teachers must be able to answer those questions because from some groups there will be several thoughts that can be justified'. It explains that, according to the teacher, PBL has many advantages for its students. Related to the teacher's opinion that PBL has many advantages and is supported by student interviews. Student 1 said "If the understanding that is obtained is sufficient, then we can help each other because each individual also needs other individuals", also student 2 said "The understanding that is obtained is that apart from material problems, we can also help each other and work with anyone; sometimes we can understand more too". This shows that students give a positive response to the PBL method.

Second, the teacher said 'The difficulty is that we have to choose material that is suitable for PBL, depending on what the material is like, so that later it is suitable for this PBL learning model'. This means that the teacher has difficulties with the material when implementing PBL learning. However, the teacher also had difficulties regarding the PBL method, which were supported by student interviews. Student 1 said "The difficulty is that sometimes in that group there are people who are difficult to work with", and student 2 said "The difficulty is when there are friends who can't be managed and who are difficult to work with". This means that students also have difficulties using the PBL method.

3.2 Discussions

3.2.1 Knowledge

Problem-Based Learning (Problem Based Learning) or hereinafter often referred to as PBL is a learning model that is centered on students by confronting these students with various problems faced in their lives. With this learning model, students from the start have been faced with solving real problems, as said by the teacher with PBL can provide many benefits to students, one of which is being able to remember information and knowledge that can be shared with their group or class mates. them, then can build problem-solving skills, critical thinking and communication skills, focusing on tracking the root of the problem and solving the problem. Thus, Problem-Based Learning (Problem-Based Learning) is a learning model that focuses on tracking the root of the problem and solving the problem (Abbudin, 2011: 243).

Furthermore Stepien, et al, 1993 (in Ngalimun, 2013: 89) stated that PBL is a learning model that involves students to solve a problem through the stages of the scientific method so that students can learn knowledge related to the problem and at the same time have the skills to solve problems. Meanwhile, according to the teacher, PBL can also develop integration-based knowledge, can improve the ability to collaborate in groups to solve a problem by giving questions and assignments and then solving them in groups. Whereas the DIRJEN DIKTI (in Cholisin's hand out: 2006) provides the understanding that Problem Based Learning is a learning approach that uses real world problems as a context for students to learn through critical thinking and problem solving skills in order to acquire essential knowledge and concepts from the material lesson.

In addition, according to the teacher's narrative, by using the PBL method it is hoped that students can discuss, work together in solving problems and find their own concepts so when the teacher explains students will have various ways therefore students are required to read and explain material from the teacher from here will bring up students' varied thinking, so with this PBL we can find out the critical, creative thinking of students to solve problems. In accordance with (Wina Sanjaya, 2010: 213). Learning is not merely a process of memorizing a number of facts, but a process of conscious interaction between individuals and their environment. Through this process, little by little students will develop as a whole. That is,

student development does not only occur in cognitive aspects, but also in affective and psychomotor aspects through internal appreciation of the problems they face.

So based on the description above, it can be concluded that Problem Based Learning is a learning model that focuses on tracking the roots of problems that exist in the real world as a learning context by involving students in the process of solving problems through the stages of the scientific method so that students learn to think critically and learn through problem solving experience.

3.2.2 Experience

The teacher applies the PBL method for about 5 years, and even then adapts to the material, if it is felt that this material requires PBL I will use it and it will be routinely used PBL, then during the learning process using the PBL method the teacher must really pay attention to students who sometimes in the learning process students are not focused because in the application of learning models that rely on problem solving or Problem Based Learning (Problem Based Learning), the teacher provides a very broad opportunity for students to determine the topic of the problem that is relevant to the learning material even though the teacher has actually prepared what should be discussed and carried out in the lesson.

Referring to Wina Sanjaya (2010: 214-215) there are three main characteristics of PBL. First, PBL is a series of learning activities, meaning that in the implementation of PBL there are a number of activities that must be carried out by students. PBL does not expect students to just listen, take notes, then memorize subject matter, but through PBL students actively think, communicate, search and process data, and finally draw conclusions. Second, learning activities are aimed at solving problems. PBL places problems as keywords in learning. added to the narrative from students using the PBL method students feel more exciting because there is an opportunity for students to be able to communicate more then the understanding that is obtained is sufficient and can also help each other because each individual also needs other individuals and can lighten the learning load as well.

According to the teacher during the use of the PBL method students become more active and creative in solving problems, there is also cooperation, collaboration also exists then trains critical thinking skills, therefore there will be many questions and understanding that arise from students and we as teachers must be able to answer that question, because from several groups there will be several thoughts that could be justified. according to Mustaji (2012) provides a view of critical thinking, namely reasoned and reflective thinking by emphasizing decision-making about what to believe and do. then it can be seen that the use of learning methods using PBL has quite a significant effect on students who are more involved in the learning process.

3.2.3 Opinion

Thus the teacher believes that with the PBL learning method, it can increase students' understanding of learning, they can self-taught explain learning material and students become more active and creative in solving problems increasing collaboration, collaboration then training critical thinking skills, so there are lots of questions and understanding which appears, in accordance with (Trianto 2007), the advantages of PBL are "can help students develop thinking skills and problem solving skills, learn the role of adults and become independent learners" while also According to (M. Taufiq Amir), PBL has several benefits including other:

- a) become more memorable and improve understanding of teaching materials,
- b) increasing focus on relevant knowledge,
- c) encourages thinking,
- d) build soft skills,

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- e) build learning skills,
 - f) motivating students to learn

According to the teacher after using the PBL learning method, students can discuss working together in solving problems and finding their own concepts. According to Sanjaya (2007: 218) the advantages of Problem Based Learning (PBL) are as follows

- a) Problem Based Learning (PBL) can improve critical thinking skills, foster student initiative in work, internal motivation for learning, and can develop interpersonal relationships in group work;
- b) with Problem Based Learning (PBL) meaningful learning will occur. Students learn to solve a problem, students will apply the knowledge they have or try to find out the knowledge needed;
- c) make students become independent and free learners;
- d) problem solving can help students to develop their new knowledge and be responsible for the learning they are doing, it can also encourage self-evaluation of both learning outcomes and the learning process

The teacher also explained that when the teacher explains students will have various ways, therefore students are required to read and explain material from the teacher from here it will bring up varied student thinking, so with this PBL we can find out critical, creative thinking from students to solve problems by because of that there will be many questions and understandings that arise from students and we as teachers must be able to answer those questions, because from several groups there will be several thoughts that can be justified and the teacher must be able to supervise and direct, because there will be many questions and the different understanding of each student, that is where the role of the teacher must still be able to direct and guide.

According to the opinion of Taufik (2012) revealed that the main key to PBL lies in the application of problems to encourage and direct the learning process. Problem Based Learning is carried out in small groups (7-10 people) guided by a tutor who acts as a facilitator. The foundation of PBL is the theory of constructivism, namely learning is a process of forming new knowledge or experiences based on students' prior knowledge then in accordance with the opinion of the teacher acting as a facilitator, in addition to providing a stimulus to achieve the synthesis of their own thoughts (Mahabbati, 2007).

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings above, there are some conclusions. First, generally, teachers and students have a positive perception of the PBL; however, one of them still had some issues. That teacher still lacks knowledge in determining any stages in PBL. Second, teachers have difficulty engaging students in classroom activities. PBL still prevents students from being active. Last, students feel that the teacher lacks control over group work in class. Therefore, it is safe to say that teachers still need to upgrade their knowledge and skills on PBL, such as by following some relevant training and workshops, while also considering aspects of classroom management such as giving feedback and controlling group work.

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