

# Improving English Speaking Skill By Structured Dialogue through Problem Based Learning (PBL)

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**Abstract:** In this study, which began with an initial speaking score of 60.5, the main objective was to enhance students' English-speaking skills through structured dialogue by applying Problem-Based Learning (PBL). The research was conducted using a Collaborative Classroom Action Research approach, which followed four key stages: planning, action, observation, and reflection. These stages were carried out in distinct cycles, with each cycle consisting of two meetings. Data were collected through several instruments, including structured dialogue tasks to measure speaking performance, questionnaires to evaluate students' perceptions of PBL practice, and field notes to capture classroom dynamics. The participants of this study were fourth-semester students of the D3 English Study Program at the State Polytechnic. The findings indicated a significant improvement in students' English-speaking performance across the two cycles. In Cycle I, the total score achieved was 1,500, with an average of 75 and a success percentage of 70%. In Cycle II, the total score increased to 1,700, with an average of 85 and a success percentage of 90%. This shows a substantial enhancement not only in terms of numerical achievement but also in students' active engagement and confidence during structured dialogue activities. Furthermore, the effectiveness of the PBL approach in facilitating learning also improved notably. In Cycle I, the average effectiveness score was 6.4, while in Cycle II, it rose to 9.4. These findings suggest that integrating structured dialogue with PBL provides an effective strategy to foster students' speaking proficiency. It also highlights the potential of collaborative classroom action research in promoting reflective teaching practices and sustained learning improvement.

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## 1. Introduction

In the context of global issues, the role of Problem Based Learning (PBL) not only influences students' English-speaking skill but can also have a positive impact on responding to and solving global problems especially in English teaching and learning process. Through Problem Based Learning (PBL), students can learn more about global issues such as climate change, world peace, social inequality, etc. They can take on roles as world leaders, diplomats, or activists working together to find solutions to these global problems. The studies conducted indicate that Problem Based Learning (PBL) creates a dynamic and motivating learning environment, allowing students to interact and develop their speaking skill. This can lead to a better understanding of global issues, improved cooperation among students, and enhanced English-speaking skill, which can, in turn, be used to contribute to global issue solutions.

This study uses theoretical framework with Arends (2012) explains Problem Based Learning is a learning model based on constructivist understanding that accommodates student involvement in learning and authentic problem solving. Acquiring information and developing understanding of topics, students learn how to construct problem frames, organize and investigate problems, collect and analyze data, compile facts, construct arguments, recognize problem solving, work individually or collaboratively in problem solving.



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The Problem Based Learning (PBL) learning model according to Arends (2013) has five learning steps, namely: 1) providing problem orientation to students, 2) organizing students to study, 3) supporting investigative groups, 4) developing, presenting the product and showing it off, 5) analyzing and evaluating the problem-solving process. The principle developed in this learning model is the role of educators as guides and negotiators. Widiastuti, (2023) and Kristianti (2023) stated that the focus of Problem Based Learning (PBL) is on student learning and not on lecturer teaching, where students are expected to be able to have the competence to research, express opinions, apply previous knowledge, generate ideas, and create decisions. The process carried out by students is far more important than just learning outcomes. If the learning process is carried out optimally, the learning results obtained will be optimal (Annegret, 1976). Problem Based Learning (PBL) will help students find the best way to convey the concepts being taught so that students can remember and understand the concepts longer (Schmidt, 2011). Having a good understanding of concepts will have a positive impact on learning because students can explore knowledge anywhere. Kwangmuang (2021) conducted a study focusing on grade 11 students in Bangkok, demonstrating the benefits of project work in developing thinking skills, utilizing the internet for additional information, managing time effectively, and establishing strong ties among students. Similarly, (Kavlu, 2016) investigated the effect of Project Based Learning on undergraduate EFL students' speaking skill, revealing a positive impact on their speaking skill. Additionally, Shiraz (2013) found a significant positive relationship between Project Based activities and intermediate EFL students' speaking skill. [Nilgun, 2011] explored the effect of Project Based on English speaking skill and intercultural communicative competence among undergraduate students, reporting significant improvements. [Chu, 2011] conducted a study on narrative text comprehension, demonstrating a notable enhancement in students' reading scores through Project Based Learning (PBL). However, there is limited research comparing the effectiveness of Project Based Learning (PBL) and collaborative strategic speaking skill in enhancing speaking ability among second-grade students. In conclusion, the consistent evidence from these studies suggests that the use of Problem Based Learning (PBL) is a highly effective approach to teaching English speaking skill. Problem Based Learning (PBL) activities create a dynamic and engaging learning environment that fosters interaction, fluency, and confidence in English-speaking skill by simulating real-life situations, Problem Based Learning (PBL) provides students with valuable opportunities to apply their language knowledge, leading to enhanced English-speaking skill.

The aim of this study is to determine the improvement in speaking skills by structured dialogue of Business Administration Department, State Polytechnic of Madiun students through Problem Based Learning strategy.

The reason of this study in State Polytechnic of Madiun, English Study Program is because of the researcher is a lecturer of it and he wants to implement the PBL to improve speaking skill by structured dialogue in teaching and learning process so it can improve speaking skill.

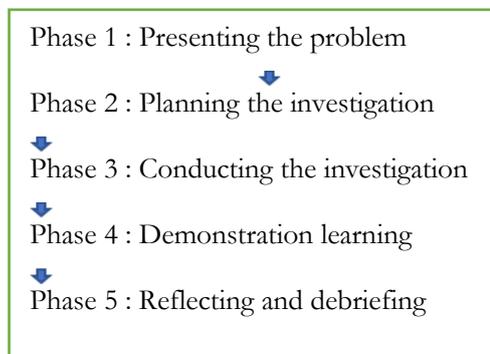
## 2. Literature Review

(Widiastuti, 2023) concluded that “PBL as an instructional strategy based on constructivism, is the concept that learners construct their own understanding by relating concrete experience to existing knowledge where process of collaboration and reflection are involved” and also “Problem Based learning (PBL) is considered a student-centered instruction approach in which inspired students to apply critical thinking through simulated problems in order to study complicated multifaceted, and practical problems that may have or not have standard answers”.

(Mintzes, 2020) explains the characteristics of PBL as: 1) to promote flexible thinking, 2) problems must be complex, 3) unstructured and open; 4) to support intrinsic motivation, they must also be realistic and connected to the student experience.

(Binnendijk, 2014) stated that the benefits of PBL are :1) ability to be critical thinkers, 2) skills to analyze and solve complex, real- worldproblems, 3) expertise in finding, evaluating, and using information resources, 4) ability to work cooperatively in groups 5)

skills to communicate orally and in written form, 6) interest in being lifelong learners and role models for students. The disadvantages of PBL are as follows: (1) when students have difficulty solving problems and students are less enthusiastic about learning, students will feel lazy to try, (2) it takes a long time to prepare, and (3) there is no explanation from the lecturer about the purpose of solving the problem. students don't want to learn and try it. [35,36] stated that syntax of PBL is as shown in Figure 1:



**Figure 1.** Syntax of PBL

Coiro (2003) stated that Speaking skills are defined as the skills which allow us to communicate effectively. They give us the ability to convey information verbally and, in a way, that the listener can understand. [39] stated speaking is a key activity in learning English. This study shows how speaking is the most crucial component of learning a second language. In today's global environment, effective communication is critical to success in a variety of industries. Cotter (2023) stated that structured dialogue is a planned conversation with a specific pattern, as opposed to unstructured, free-flowing conversation. Its purpose is to achieve better understanding, resolve problems, or make decisions, and it is often used in various contexts such as negotiation, counseling, and decision-making. It is planned, has a clear purpose, and follows a specific pattern or set of rules. By understanding the concept of structured dialogue, we can utilize this method to improve communication, understanding, and collaboration in a variety of situations.

### 3. Materials and Method

#### Materials

The materials used in the research planning was English-speaking by structured dialogue through Problem Based Learning (PBL). of speaking skill that speaking is a difficult skill because it requires specialized skills to produce. These skills include word choice, structure, pronunciation, and knowledge of the sound system. Choosing words requires a large vocabulary and familiarity with their use. This allows the speaker to communicate clearly and correctly to the listener. However, vocabulary is a problem for students (Schultz, 1976). Furthermore, the habit of using language and body language is essential for language production.

The aspects of speaking include 1) vocal communication which includes an attractive voice, a voice that helps in concentrating concepts, a voice that pays attention to the message being conveyed, a pleasant voice, a voice that can explain well, and a clear voice, 2) pronunciation and diction which includes accent and pronunciation, 3) fluency and clarity which includes the ability to produce words, word choice, clarity of understanding between speaker and listener, 4) body communication which includes the appearance of eye and facial movements, gestures, concealment, group or organizational affiliation, status, role, and expression, 5) determining the purpose of speaking, 6) analyzing the audience and situation, 7) selecting and simplifying the discussion, 8) collecting materials, 9) making a speaking outline, 10) arranging good words in speaking, 11) delivering explanations by speaking. (Arevat & Nation, 1991; Devito, 1990; Fletcher, 1990; Brown, 2004, Mudofir, 2014). Based

on these aspects of speaking, it can be concluded that the components of speaking are response, coherence, vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, fluency, and clarity.

Speaking ability is one of the products of language learning, and speaking is also an important part of the language learning process. Klippel (1984) stated that "English speaking settings are real communicative situations in which they learn to express their own views and attitudes." Speaking is a tool for expressing feelings, opinions, and attitudes verbally, which constitutes real communication. Speaking also requires interaction skills, as Bygate (1987) stated that "Interaction skills involve the ability to use language in order to satisfy particular demands."

### Method

The research used both quantitative and qualitative methods, employing Classroom Action Research (CAR). The participants were selected through purposive random sampling. The quantitative method involved numbers derived from students' English-speaking test scores through dialogue. The qualitative method involved a questionnaire assessing students' interest in participating in the learning process using the Problem-Based Learning strategy to improve their English-speaking skills through dialogue.

The method used in the research planning was English-speaking by structured dialogue through Problem Based Learning (PBL). In preliminary observation are 1) students' English-speaking skill is still low, the average is 60.50, and 2) students are not yet accustomed to using Problem Based Learning strategies. In planning are 1) the instructor explains the Problem-Based Learning strategy to improve English speaking skills, 2) the instructor explains the Lesson Plan (RP), 3) prepares learning facilities, 4) prepares the speaking test evaluation instrument, 5) prepares a questionnaire instrument to assess student interest in the Problem-Based Learning strategy, 6) the instructor explains the speaking for Workplace Communication material, 7) the instructor forms groups of 4-5 members. Students take turns acting as instructors, explaining the Speaking for Workplace Communication material to their groups, 8) each cycle consists of three 90-minute meetings. The first meeting covers the planning stage, which includes explaining the material on Problem-Based Learning and Speaking for Workplace Communication. In implementing, implement activities according to the established learning plan. During the research, the lecturer acts as a facilitator during the learning process. Students are guided to learn English through Problem-Based Learning, which involves steps taken according to the learning scenario. In observing, Collecting data on Speaking for Workplace Communication skills and questionnaire results on interest in Problem-Based Learning strategies. In reflecting, analyzing the results of Speaking for Workplace Communication skills and student interest in using the Problem-Based Learning strategy. Finally, deciding the cycle success or fail. If it is cycle success will stop, and if it is cycle fail will continue to the next cycle until success. The second and third meetings also cover implementation, observation, and reflection.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### Cycle I

In planning, the results of the Problem Based Learning (PBL) strategy practice are discussed together with collaborators. In the actions and observations of Problem Based Learning (PBL) learning strategy practice carry out in the form of groups in which there are four-five students. The steps of Problem Based Learning (PBL) learning strategy practice are pre-activity, whilst-activity, and post-activity. In meeting 1, the activities are explaining the material about English-speaking skill by structured dialogue material and training Problem Based Learning (PBL) learning strategy. In pre-activity, the lecturer gives an opening and greeting, teaches students, motivates students, shares material and worksheets, and divides students into several groups. In whilst activity, the lecturer gives and explains English-speaking material. Students are also trained English-speaking skill by structured dialogue. In post activity, the lecturer tells students to prepare activities at the next meeting and close the learning process. In meetings 2 and 3, the students prepare themselves in their respective groups in the pre-activity activity. In whilst activity, students present their English-speaking skills by structured dialogue. In the first session, assessing

the appearance of students in English-speaking skill by structured dialogue.

In post-activity, students have a test and collaborators give appreciation and correction to Problem Based Learning (PBL) strategy practice. In reflection of the cycle I is the students are not active enough to discuss the material in the learning process. The interaction between students in Problem Based Learning (PBL) strategy activities were unsuccessful. In cycle I, the conclusions relate to Problem Based Learning (PBL) strategy for improving English-speaking skill by structured dialogue has not been successful. In meeting 2 and 3, some students have not been able to use English-speaking skill by structured dialogue well in explaining material. In Problem Based Learning (PBL) strategy practice, they are not ready and afraid of making mistakes. Second, it is quite good lecturer, student interaction. Third, Problem Based Learning (PBL) activities were unsuccessful. And fourth, the attention of it is quite successful (See Table 1).

**Table 1** Score of English-Speaking Skill by Structured Dialogue in Cycle I

NO	Respondent Name	Cycle I
1	R1	80
2	R2	80
3	R3	75
4	R4	90
5	R5	75
6	R6	75
7	R7	95
8	R8	75
9	R9	70
10	R10	75
11	R11	65
12	R12	75
13	R13	85
14	R14	85
15	R15	60
16	R16	65
17	R17	70
18	R18	65
19	R19	70
20	R20	70
21	Total	1.500
22	Average	75
23	Percentage	70 %

A total score of English- speaking skill by structured dialogue in cycle I is 1.500 and average is 75 and percentage is 70 %.

## Cycle II

In planning, the problems are activities in a conversation, lecturer and student interactions, student attentions in learning process of improving English-speaking skill by structured dialogue through Problem Based Learning (PBL) strategy practice. The activity of meeting 1 is discussing English-speaking skill by structured dialogue material and Problem Based Learning (PBL) strategy to improve English-speaking skill. Students often correct to comprehend the text from the result of the observation. In the whilst-activity is the explanation of English-speaking skill material by using Problem Based Learning (PBL) strategy. Discussion is also needed in the pre-activity. In post-activity, the activity ends with the preparation the next meeting. In meetings 2 and 3, the preparation of Problem Based Learning (PBL) strategy is pre-activity and whilst activity is implementing and observing on

English-speaking skill by structured dialogue. In post-activity, students have a test, collaborators give appreciation and correction on Problem Based Learning (PBL) strategy practice, and the activity ends with the preparation the next meeting. In reflection, improving English-speaking skill by structured dialogue is considered to be good in cycle 2. Students show an increase in good interaction. Interaction is not only shown by lecturers to students but also by students to lecturers (See Table 2).

**Table 2** Score of English Skill by Structured Dialogue in Cycle II

NO	Respondent Name	Cycle I
1	R1	85
2	R2	95
3	R3	90
4	R4	95
5	R5	75
6	R6	90
7	R7	95
8	R8	90
9	R9	80
10	R10	85
11	R11	85
12	R12	90
13	R13	90
14	R14	85
15	R15	65
16	R16	80
17	R17	95
18	R18	65
19	R19	85
20	R20	90
21	Total	1.700
22	Average	80
23	Percentage	90 %

A total score of English-speaking skill by structured dialogue in cycle II is 1.700 and average is 80 and percentage is 90 %.

The Effectiveness of the Problem Based Learning (PBL) Strategy we can know the effectiveness of demonstrating the Problem Based Learning (PBL) in the learning process in speaking skill by structured dialogue in cycle I and cycle II through Table 3 below:

**Table 3** The Effectiveness of Demonstrating the Problem Based Learning (PBL) in the Learning Process in Reading Skill by Structured Dialogue in Cycle I and Cycle II

No	Observed Aspects	Meeting			
		Cycle I		Cycle II	
		1	2	1	2
<b>I</b>	<b>Phase 1 (Student orientation to the problem)</b>				
	1. Students appear enthusiastic about participating in the learning process	3	4	4	5
	2. Students form heterogeneous groups consisting of 4-5 people	3	4	4	5
<b>II</b>	<b>Phase 2 (Organizing students)</b>				
	3. Students found problems in the speaking material about Tourism Places	3	3	4	4
	4. Students answer questions correctly during learning	2	3	4	4
	5. Students clearly state their opinions on the problems contained in the speaking material about Tourism Places.	2	4	4	5
	6. Students respect other people's opinions	2	4	4	5
	7. Students pay attention to the material presented by the lecturer	3	4	4	5
<b>III</b>	<b>Phase 3 (Guiding individual and group investigations)</b>				
	8. Students optimize interactions between students and lecturers through group work.	2	4	4	5
	9. Students are directly involved in classroom activities during the learning process.	3	4	4	5
	10. Students work together to solve problems quickly	3	4	4	5
<b>IV</b>	<b>Phase 4 (Developing and presenting the work)</b>				
	11. Students talk about Tourism Place in groups	3	4	4	5
	12. Students discuss the group's findings with other groups.	3	4	4	5
<b>V</b>	<b>Phase 5 (Analyze and evaluate the problem-solving process)</b>				

13.	Students conclude the courses they have taken	3	4	4	5
14.	Students carry out a speaking test	2	4	4	5
15.	Students carry out a speaking test	2	3	4	4
		39	57	60	71
	<b>Total</b>		<b>96</b>		<b>141</b>
	<b>Average</b>		<b>6,4</b>		<b>9,4</b>

## DISCUSSION

This research aligns with the findings of [42-44], indicating that the use of Problem Based Learning (PBL) strategies in learning significantly enhances the quality and production of students' English speaking skills by structured dialogue. Feedback gathered from student questionnaires after the post-test highlights a widespread preference for the Problem Based Learning (PBL) strategies approach in the educational process, noting its effectiveness in fostering active participation in English classes. This method not only facilitates student engagement and attention in learning speaking English but also encourages interaction among students and between students and lecturers. A majority of the students reported ease in conversation and an understanding of the discussed topics within the Problem Based Learning (PBL) strategies framework. These outcomes resonate with the principles proposed by [45][36][11]. The study's findings, which support the theoretical and empirical evidence on the efficacy of Problem Based Learning (PBL) strategies in enhancing English speaking skill, suggest potential improvements for the English-speaking skill by structured dialogue of semester 4B at Madiun State Polytechnic's English Study Program. For future enhancement, it is recommended that students engage in more practice at home, develop quicker thinking for practice English speaking skill by structured dialogue.

In Cycle I, the implementation of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) did not yield optimal results. Students were generally passive during discussions, and interaction among peers was minimal. Many students appeared unprepared to engage actively and hesitant to participate due to fear of making mistakes. These challenges hindered the overall effectiveness of the PBL strategy. Additionally, some students struggled to speak. Although the interaction between the lecturer and students showed some promise, the overall learning objectives were not fully achieved. The average score for English speaking comprehension in this cycle was 75, with a completion percentage of 70%, reflecting suboptimal outcomes.

In Cycle II, several improvements were made based on reflections from Cycle I. The planning phase was enhanced with a more structured approach to organizing learning materials, and during the implementation phase, the lecturer provided increased support to boost students' confidence. Discussions were made more effective by offering clearer guidance and ample time for students to grasp the problems in speaking. Moreover, recognizing and appreciating students' efforts became a vital part of the strategy, motivating them to engage more actively in the learning process. These adjustments underline the importance of thoughtful planning and adaptive teaching strategies in improving the effectiveness of PBL.

Student engagement and interaction significantly improved during Cycle II. Unlike in Cycle I, where students were hesitant and passive, in Cycle II they demonstrated more confidence in expressing their thoughts and actively participated in group discussions. This was evident in the way they contributed ideas, answered questions, and collaborated with their peers. The lecturer's consistent support and encouragement helped students overcome their fear of making mistakes in speaking.

The lecturer's role as a facilitator who consistently provided constructive feedback and encouragement also played a critical part in boosting students' motivation. When students felt their efforts were valued, they became more motivated to contribute to the

learning process. This appreciation also fostered better group dynamics, as students began to respect each other's opinions and worked collaboratively to solve the problems presented in the learning tasks.

The improvement in students' performance was reflected in the test results for Cycle II, where the average score for English speaking skill increased to 85, with a completion percentage of 90%. This substantial improvement highlights the positive impact of the PBL strategy on students' learning outcomes. Furthermore, students demonstrated deeper understanding of the material, a better grasp of speaking, and an ability to apply the learning strategies effectively.

The effectiveness of PBL was also evident in several key aspects observed during the learning process. Students showed greater enthusiasm for participating in the lessons, formed heterogeneous groups more effectively, and engaged more actively in identifying problems and proposing solutions. The interaction between students and the lecturer became more dynamic, with the lecturer not only delivering the material but also actively supporting students at each stage of the learning process.

The success of PBL was further underscored by students' ability to complete group tasks, present their findings, and evaluate the processes they had undertaken. Through this approach, students not only improved their speaking skill but also developed essential competencies such as teamwork, critical thinking, and collaborative problem-solving. These skills are crucial for their overall academic and personal development in the 21st century.

Overall, these findings reaffirm that PBL can be an effective strategy for enhancing students' speaking skill, provided it is implemented with careful planning and supported by strong lecturer-student interactions. The significant improvements observed from Cycle I to Cycle II highlight the value of reflective practice in teaching, which enables educators to continually refine and adapt their methods to better meet students' needs.

## 5. Conclusion

The ability of students in speaking skill showed a marked improvement across second cycles, rising from the cycle I and II. A total score of English-speaking skill by structured dialogue in cycle I is 1.500 in Cycle II is 1.700, average in cycle I is 75 in cycle II is 85 and the percentage in cycle I is 70 % and in cycle II is 90 %. This growth in proficiency coincided with a noticeable enthusiasm and satisfaction among students regarding the application of Problem Based Learning (PBL) as a learning strategy to enhance their speaking skills by structured dialogue. The research achieved its objectives by the second cycle, aligning with the predefined success criteria, thereby concluding the study at this stage. Problem Based Learning (PBL) strategy proved effective in the English Study Program for class 2B, semester 4B, within the Business Administration Department at Madiun State Polytechnic. The progression of student scores from the initial pretest through to the posttests of cycles I and II demonstrated consistent improvement. By the end of the second post-test, students' average scores met the established standards of proficiency, affirming the decision to conclude the study in the second cycle. Students expressed a daily preference for the Problem Based Learning (PBL) strategy approach, finding it both supportive and motivational for their English-speaking skills development by structured dialogue. This research represents a novel contribution to teaching methods in the English Study Program at Madiun State Polytechnic, specifically within the realm of spoken English enhancement. For educators, this study underscores the efficacy of Problem Based Learning (PBL) as a strategy in teaching English, especially for improving the English-speaking skill by structured dialogue of students in class 4B of the English Study Program. The strategy offers a viable alternative for structuring English language instruction. Essential elements for implementing Problem Based Learning (PBL) strategy in the classroom include lesson plans, teaching materials, laptops, LCDs, and whiteboards. Furthermore, disseminating the findings of this research through informal discussions, seminars, and publications can enrich the knowledge and teaching repertoire of other educators, providing valuable insights and strategies for enhancing teaching performance in the field of education.

## COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors have no relevant financial or non-financial interests to disclose.

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