



The Positive Effects of Problem-Based Learning Activities Toward Indonesian EFL Learners' Productive Language Skills

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Abstract

With the rapid globalization occurring all around the globe, educational landscapes also underwent some dramatic shifts. One of those notable shifts is the rapid transition from teacher to student-centered approach. In Indonesian EFL productive language learning contexts; speaking and writing, problem-based learning activities can enable learners to be more confident, autonomous, spirited, and proficient speakers as well as writers. This present qualitative study was plied in the support of document analysis by integrating 30 prior problem-based learning studies held in our archipelago in order to encourage Indonesian ELT experts, practitioners, and policy-makers to start to incorporate this student-centered learning approach in their both speaking and writing learning vicinities. The obtained results revealed 3 positive L2 productive language-learning merits potentially promoted by problem-based learning activities namely: 1) Learners can be more productive L2 academicians, (2) Learners transformed into more high quality and autonomous L2 writers, and (3) Learners progressively became more confident as well as proficient L2 speakers. Following all of these 3 core beneficial productive L2 learning values, contextual, hands-on, and pleasurable problem-based learning design should be well established at the commencement of speaking and writing learning activities to disseminate more holistic learning outcomes progressively for learners.

Keywords:

Indonesian EFL Learners, problem-based learning, speaking, writing

INTRODUCTION

With the actual presence of ever-changing globalized educational contexts, there is a dramatic shift that should be fairly acknowledged as well in both globalized and Indonesian EFL teaching-learning enterprises. As a result, learners are not merely commissioned to acquire the set of intended knowledge and skills passively, yet they need to transfigure into more proactive knowledge discoverers fully responsible for their learning venture. This argument is corroborated with transformative learning theory postulated by Dewi and Marsigit (2018) theorizing that to impart more striking positive influences for worldwide educational institutions, EFL teachers are advised to play their new roles as supportive learning facilitators accentuating on student-centered and independent learning approaches. On the contrary, the majority of formal educational institutions, particularly in Indonesia are still inhabiting traditional teaching-learning enterprises strongly emphasizing the memorization, remembering, and understanding stages without perceiving the critical importance of disseminating a more student-centered approach. Pratiwi et al., (2015) revealed that there were still a substantial number of educational institutions in Indonesia relying mostly on lower-order thinking skills by neglecting the urgent internalization of higher-order thinking skills intensive rehearsals for diverse learners.

A similar issue also goes similarly with EFL teaching-learning dynamics taking place in this archipelago, the indispensable need to master the English language full had been one of the pivotal requirements for Indonesian EFL learners to transform into more astute global citizenships and thinkers aiming to promote some significant changes to their social communities as well as surroundings. This conception is closely interlinked with the global language theory adduced by Naveed (2017) asserting that the major benefits for Indonesian EFL learners that can potentially be attained after mastering the English language are they successfully transformed into more proficient citizens who are insistent willing to bring about positive influential changes for other people's life. In addition, two paramount English language skills need to be acquired by Indonesian EFL learners namely receptive and productive language skills. In receptive language skills, learners are only required to master the target language competencies passively. Receptive language skills in English comprised of reading and listening. While in productive language skills, learners are demanded to exert more effortful actions to master the target language since they are advocated to create more understandable information transference to others. Productive language skills in English can be subsumed into speaking and writing. More taxing challenges arise when dealing with these two productive English language skills since learners should be capable of utter a group of meaningful communication expressions to their targeted interlocutors in speaking, and readers in the writing. Astawa et al., (2017) articulate that the major impediment for Indonesian EFL learners to obtain productive English language competencies fully is the potent willingness to conduct more extensive trial-error practices to be more flawless communicators as well as writers.

However, these aforementioned productive English language learning issues do not steadily halt there since it is an easier task for Indonesian EFL teachers to discover learners who are lack self-confidence, bravery, and required competencies while communicating with their learning companions in the light of the target language utilization. This contention is inextricably associated with the prior speaking research result unveiled by Anggiati, Riswandi, and Sugiman (2018) mentioning that the majority

of Indonesian EFL learners could not optimally foster their communicative competencies due to the lower level of self-confidence, grit, and speaking proficiency. Similarly, Indonesian EFL learners also encounter identical laborious learning situations in writing since they cannot synthesize their intended ideas obviously, harness the appropriate collocations, and properly capitalize on more precise grammatical sentences. This assumption had been corroborated by the previous writing research result unfolded by Yuliani (2017) reported that the specific arduous writing learning impediments frequently confronted by Indonesian EFL learners are the dearth of well-organized writing constructions, proper expressions, vocabulary, and grammatical knowledge. Regarding the above-elucidated learning situations, it is worthwhile to be suggested for Indonesian EFL teachers constantly infusing more supportive, enjoyable, and safer second language teaching-learning enterprises in the presence of multiverse learners. All of these three indispensable components need to exist in a wide variety of EFL teaching-learning climates to breed more competent future generations strongly possessing a higher degree of learning enthusiasm and independence. This line of argument seems to concur with the critical importance of instilling a more holistic educational process as proffered by Dewi (2020) believing that through transformative, supportive, and pleasurable second language learning vicinities, educational institutions can potentially cultivate more resilient as well as proficient future academicians for long-range advantageous education investment.

Concerning all of these above-mentioned rewarding learning values induced by problem-based learning activities, Indonesian EFL learners attempting to master two specific productive English language competencies; speaking and writing can be predicted to be more empathic, socialized, and proficient second language academicians in the light of problem-solving skills rehearsals. This matter strongly indicates that they are going to share similar learning problems, pain, interest, plans, and objectives working as one of the propelling forces to elevate their both speaking as well as writing competencies meaningfully. Akin to this holistic learning reward, Ribeiro (2011) confesses that the essence of problem-based learning in the light of productive English language skills is to transfigured EFL learners to be more innovative, creative, and empathic learning community members progressively becoming more supportive helpers for other learning counterparts. Specifically in EFL speaking learning contexts, problem-based learning activities mutually assist learners to improve their communicative competencies to the fullest potentials by expressing their thoughts, ideas, and opinions in an actual attempt to resolve the given projects successfully with their learning partners. Torres and Rodriguez (2017) believe that the proper implementations of problem-based learning activities in speaking learning dynamics enable learners to foster their communicative skills in a more meaningful manner by establishing more solid collaborative works with others. While in EFL writing learning contexts, problem-based learning activities also bring about more positive influential impacts for learners' overall writing skills progression in terms of reasoning, synthesizing, and organizing abilities. Following this contention, Othman and Shah (2013) confirm that the problem-based learning approach can act as one of the striking positive impetus functioning to help EFL learners transfigure into more competent, careful, and organized writers. Aprilani (2021) discovered that more hands-on and enjoyable student-oriented learning processes will be more meaningful for the successful attainment of the prominent target language element like vocabulary.

Based on the previous basic conceptions of project-based learning implementations immersed in productive English skills; speaking and writing, it is optimally indispensable for Indonesian EFL experts, teachers, practitioners, and policy-makers to enact more obvious predetermined learning objectives harmonious with project-based learning philosophies. Considering this perspective, the researcher is currently prompted to conduct a more in-depth qualitative study concerning the positive effects of problem-based learning activities on Indonesian EFL learners' productive language skills. The obtained results will allow a positive conjecture for the further advancement of ELT enterprises taking place in Indonesia since educational institutions embark to design more contextual problem-based learning practices matching with EFL learners' distinctive unique learning backgrounds. To reach this research objectivity, one research problem was proposed as guidance namely: What are the positive influential impacts promoted by problem-based learning activities for the further advancement of Indonesian EFL learners' productive language skills

LITERATURE REVIEW

This part aimed to profoundly expound 2 major theoretical frameworks mutually associated with the proposed research topic namely: (1) Problem-based learning and (2) The advantages of problem-based learning.

Problem-Based Learning

One of the rewarding student-centered and holistic teaching-learning approaches that should be continuously resided in the productive English language competencies mastery is problem-based learning. Wiggins et al., (2016) define problem-based learning as a complete set of knowledge discovery activities in which learners aim harder to critically plan, enact, and manifest their learning projects in the light of tangible work-field enterprises. The apparent educational merits that can potentially be seized by Indonesian EFL learners after being exposed to a problem-based learning venture are they can be more proactive knowledge disseminators, judicious decision-makers, supportive teammates, critical thinkers, and most importantly develop their productive target language competencies into the utmost levels. All of these values are also confirmed by the seminal theory of project-based learning offered by Bell (2010) arguing that the activation of problem-based learning allows more a more positive springboard not merely for the further advancement of EFL learners' productive language skills but also future essential work ethic attitudes like potent mentality along with social competencies. Concerning these above-explained tenets, it is also worth advising for EFL teachers to harness more open-ended and contextual real-life problems intimately correlated with their learners' daily-life events to create more meaningful and synergized second language learning enterprises for them to proactively engage. This perspective was attested by the theory of problem-based learning devised by Dole et al., (2015) averring that the main aim of contextual problem-based learning is to expose learners to distinctive real-life issues enabling them to be more mature, critical, and competent future academicians. Another crucial value that needs to be pondered more exhaustively by EFL teachers upon applying this multifunction learning approach is to select the set of actual classroom learning issues matching with learners' current learning levels, needs, and preferences to elude them from frustrating as well as meaningless learning experiences. Anchored from this suggestive advice, Wiggins et al., (2016) prompt EFL teachers to

design more appropriate problem-based learning activities closely linked with existing learners' learning situations to ascertain that the meaningful learning journey truly happens. The last important notion that needs to be accommodated by EFL teachers while incorporating this learning approach is to rejuvenate their roles as supportive learning facilitators to scaffold learners' problem-solving processes. In obedience to this suggestion, Jumariati and Sulisty (2017) affirm that when EFL teachers play their new roles as supportive learning facilitators in applying problem-based learning activities, learners will be able to construct a more overarching understanding of the intended knowledge through more conducive collaborative learning processes with their learning companions.

The Advantages of Problem-Based Learning

There are vast arrays of advantageous values taken by Indonesian EFL learners after participating in problem-based learning dynamics concerning their further progression of English productive language skills. Firstly, problem-based learning may benefit EFL learners to be more effective problem-solvers while overcoming various given learning issues addressed by their teachers. Kuvac and Koc (2019) state that the accurate internalization of problem-based learning will enable EFL learners to be more resilient problem-solvers in their proactive learning endeavor. Secondly, the utilization of a problem-based learning strategy will also allow EFL learners to be more judicious figures responding to the potential problems that may hamper their daily-life events as well as life-long academicians who are always willing to discover a wider array of knowledge insistently. Soyadi (2015) acclaims that more accurate problem-solving activities will transform learners into more autonomous academicians and persistent figures in their everyday routines. Thirdly, problem-based learning enterprises enable EFL learners to be more compassionate, caring, and supportive learning partners for other developing learning counterparts eventually resulted in the manifestation of holistic learning environments. This perspective is in agreement with the benefactors of problem-based learning theory proposed by Susanti et al., (2020) avowing that EFL learners having been exposed to problem-based learning activities are more capable of providing continual supportive learning assistances for other learning companions working together with them in an identical designated group.

METHODS

The researcher runs this present qualitative study in the support of document analysis. By integrating this research approach, the significant findings yielded by prior studies will provide better enlightenment in enriching readers' existent understanding of the subject-specific fields. To fulfill this research aim, the researcher chose 30 prior studies heeding a more profound investigation of problem-based learning implementations in two specific productive English language skills namely speaking and writing. By aligning with this in-depth research planning, the researcher will also simultaneously elucidate the positive influences of problem-based learning activities toward Indonesian EFL learners' productive language skills. The Indonesian EFL productive learning settings were stipulated since the majority of Indonesian EFL learners frequently encounter taxing learning hindrances in an attempt to master these two indispensable second language competencies as indicated in the previous subsection. For the data analysis processes, the researcher planned to elucidate each major-specific finding argumentatively to proffer

such a new perspective for Indonesian ELT experts, practitioners, and policy-makers regarding the crucial importance of internalizing the problem-based learning activities at the onset of both speaking and writing classroom learning enterprises. Hence, to release this aforementioned objectivity, the researcher is going to subsume each generated finding under two big themes namely: (1) Problem-based learning activities enabled Indonesian EFL learners to be more productive L2 academicians, (2) Problem-based learning activities progressively transformed Indonesian EFL learners into more qualified and independent L2 writers, and (3) More confident and high-quality L2 speakers are breed in intensive Problem-based learning activities. By depicting these two specific themes, it is expectantly hoped that educational institutions in Indonesia start to holistically incorporate problem-based learning activities in productive English language classroom circumstances; speaking and writing to provoke more transformative, enjoyable, stress-free, and meaningful hands-on learning dynamics for both struggling and proficient Indonesian EFL learners.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section heeds more exhaustive attention to delineate the positive effects of problem-based learning activities toward Indonesian EFL learners' productive language skills. Three major themes will be explicated in these following lines namely (1) Problem-based learning activities enabled Indonesian EFL learners to be more productive L2 academicians, (2) Problem-based learning activities progressively transformed Indonesian EFL learners into more qualified and independent L2 writers, and (3) More confident and high-quality L2 speakers are breed in intensive Problem-based learning activities. Each in-depth elucidation was accompanied by the relevant findings generated from prior problem-based learning studies plied in Indonesian EFL speaking and writing learning contexts.

Table 1: Problem-based learning activities enabled Indonesian EFL learners to be more productive L2 academicians

Theme 1	Authors
Problem-based learning activities enabled Indonesian EFL learners to be more productive L2 academicians	Amin et al., (2020); Artini et al., (2018); Aryanti and Artini (2017); Astawa et al., (2017); Hutagalung, Agustina, Arham (2016); Iswandari et al., (2017); Wiliyanti (2015).

From the obtained data, it can be inferred that the further activation of problem-based learning activities allowed Indonesian EFL learners to be more productive L2 academicians. The first major factor inducing this positive L2 learning value is caused by the actual rehearsals of problem-solving skills in a vast range of challenging learning activities as a whole group member. By inculcating a higher degree of positive L2 learning objectives altogether as one unity, all learners can potentially enrich their existent target language knowledge, competencies, social, and critical thinking skills concurrently. As a corollary, there will also be a greater chance for the resurrection of holistic learning circumstances where all learning community members are striving, collaborating, and thriving as a solid group. The above explications found support from the findings of Amin et al., (2020) as well as Artini et al., (2018) discovering that the

majority of Indonesian EFL learners having been exposed to problem-based learning activities will possess more precious chances to elevate their creativity, critical thinking skills, and strong learning mentality while attempting to acquire 2 indispensable second language skills; speaking and writing. Astawa et al., (2017) also unearthed that problem-based learning activities instill a more positive springboard for Indonesian EFL learners aiming to develop both speaking and writing competencies magnificently in the light of supportive learning vicinities.

Furthermore, the appropriate internalization of problem-based learning activities cogently affects the affective domains growth of Indonesian EFL learners engaging in speaking and writing learning enterprises since they will be more motivated to continually heighten their productive language skills autonomously, practice their productive language skills in apparent daily-life events, and widen their current understanding of the target language they are aiming to master. All of these rewarding productive learning skills are calibrated with the prior research results unveiled by Hutagalung, Agustina, and Arham (2016) proclaiming that Indonesia EFL learners could potentially be transfigured into more persistent L2 academicians after participating in problem-based learning activities due to the contextual-designed learning dynamics imparted by their teachers. In a similar vein, Wiliyanti (2015) discovered that problem-based learning enterprises make Indonesian EFL learners become more life-long L2 academicians eager to foster their productive language skills more vehemently amid varied taxing learning challenges.

Table 2: Problem-Based Learning Activities Progressively Transformed Indonesian EFL Learners into More Qualified and Independent L2 Writers

Theme 2	Authors
Problem-Based Learning Activities Progressively Transformed Indonesian EFL Learners into More Qualified and Independent L2 Writers	Affandi and Sukyadi (2016); Dharma and Adiwijaya (2018); Ghufroon and Ermawati (2018); Jumariati and Sulistyono (2017); Nurhayati et al., (2019); Palupi et al., (2020); Praba et al., (2018); Toba et al., (2019); Wachyu and Rukmini (2015); Yuliani (2017); Yusuf (2010).

Concerning the above-displayed research findings, it can be extrapolated that problem-based learning activities gradually transformed Indonesian EFL learners to be more qualified and independent L2 writers. With the actual presence of problem-based learning activities, Indonesian EFL learners can be more self-regulated in managing the pivotal second language writing learning resources comprising of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains resulted in more gratifying L2 writing learning achievements. As a result, these types of learners will be more ready to confront a wider array of unpredictable writing challenges hindering their potent writing learning endeavor as well as positive writing learning vicinities. This argument is inextricably associated with the prior problem-based learning research results unfolded by Dharma and Adiwijaya (2018) avowing that problem-based learning activities do not merely promote more significant improvement toward Indonesian EFL learners' overall writing competencies but also their affective as well as psychomotor streams, which one is self-regulated learning behavior. Moreover, the internalization of problem-based learning activities also encouraged Indonesian EFL learners to scaffold other learners' developing learning levels in a better purpose, establish more positive social interactions with other learning

members upholding distinctive learning perspective, magnify their self-confidence, and liven up their learning responsibility within L2 productive language learning surroundings. All of these valuable writing learning merits are closely intertwined with the prior research findings uncovered by Ghufron and Ermawati (2018) averring that Indonesian EFL learners will be more adept in cultivating their social, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills beneficial to raise their self-confidence along with learning responsibility in acquiring the targeted L2 writing skills. In another identical study, Jumariati and Sulisty (2017) found out that the major influential writing learning impact imparted by problem-based learning activities allow Indonesian EFL learners to be more collaborative, creative, and confident L2 writers while producing the targeted writing products.

With the enactment of all these precious L2 writing learning infestations through the trajectory of problem-based learning activities, Indonesian EFL learners can also be more competent L2 writers possessing laudable writing competencies as the indispensable writing learning requirement to generate more high-quality writing products comprising of structured writing organization knowledge, richer vocabulary knowledge, adequate grammar knowledge. These depictions are intimately connected with the prior research finding generated by Nurhayati et al., (2019) revealing that problem-based learning activities will ease Indonesian EFL learners to yield more high-quality writing products due to the full possession of writing learning competencies continuously ingrained by them. In the same way, Praba et al., (2018) also proclaimed that Indonesian EFL learners could significantly nourish their positive L2 writing learning behavior in the support of problem-based learning activities tangibly resulted in the striking enhancement of writing competencies.

Table 3: More confident and high-quality L2 speakers are breed in intensive Problem-based learning activities

Theme 3	Authors
More confident and high-quality L2 speakers are breed in intensive Problem-based learning activities	Dewi (2020); Hussein (2014); Kurniawati et al., (2019); Anggiati, Riswandi, and Sugiman (2018); Sholikhah (2019); Suhroh et al., (2020); Sukerti and Susana (2019); Wahyudin (2017); Wuryantari et al., (2019).

More crucially, the further implementations of problem-based learning activities are also proved to lessen Indonesian EFL learners' negative feelings, pessimistic perspectives, and demotivated writing learning behavior toward writing subject. The minimum presence of these unsavory learning behaviors are affected by challenging, encouraging, and captivating writing learning enterprises brought about by problem-based learning activities. When the negative writing learning attitudes are gradually supplanted by the aforementioned writing learning behaviors, Indonesian EFL learners can also attain more fruitful writing learning outcomes, experience more significant writing learning achievements, and implement their acquired writing learning skills in the real-time academic events. These findings are in line with the specific research findings unmasked by Toba et al., (2019) unveiling that the presence of problem-based learning activities supportively helped Indonesian EFL learners to degrade their writing anxiety, apprehension, and negative feelings to be superseded by more commendable writing

learning behaviors. In similar tone, Wachyu and Rukmini (2015) also adduced that if implemented accurately and constructively, problem-based learning enterprises would amplify Indonesian EFL learners' admirable writing learning behavior in a journey to attain more satisfying writing learning achievements.

Substantially, problem-based learning activities also play a crucial role in breeding confident and high-quality L2 speakers since more positive, supportive, and meaning-making atmosphere are continuously resided within speaking learning vicinities. In Indonesian EFL speaking learning contexts, it has been a communal belief that excessive speaking apprehension, anxiety, and negative feelings can substantially hinder learners to develop their L2 communicative competencies into the fullest potentials. As a result, learners cannot exhibit their best speaking performances, particularly while interacting with other learning community members and expounding various laborious conceptions to their teacher or other learning companions. Kurniawati et al., (2019) found out that problem-based learning activities do not merely shift Indonesian EFL learners to be more competent L2 speakers but also assist them to develop other speaking learning components such as critical thinking, innovative learning attitudes, creativity, and collaborative skills. In addition, Indonesian EFL learners can also be more proactive learning participants in speaking since they have ingrained more potent willingness to hone their communicative skills in the light of intimate interactions with other trusted learning counterparts resulted in the efficient problem-solving skills. This finding can be tailored with the major research result unearthed by Dewi (2020) propounding that Indonesian EFL learners can improve their communicative competencies more efficiently in the manifestation of meaningful classroom interactions established with other trusted interlocutors. When this supportive speaking classroom learning atmosphere is infused strongly within learning community members, learners will be more able to utter their ideas, thoughts, and opinions more confidently even though their speaking competencies still resided in developing levels. In accord with this matter, the major duty for Indonesian EFL teachers is to preserve this positive speaking learning behavior everlastingly to expedite them to attain more gratifying speaking learning outcomes as well as achievements. Anggiati, Riswandi, and Sugiman (2018) unpacked that since Indonesian EFL learners have been more accustomed to hone their L2 communicative competencies interactively with other learning counterparts, a higher degree of self-confidence is also simultaneously grounded within them. Further, Sholikhah (2019) suggested Indonesian EFL teachers to implement problem-based learning activities at the beginning of speaking learning activities since this student-centered approach is proved to predominately heighten their targeted L2 speaking learning competencies as well as outcomes.

One of the most impactful effects brought about by problem-based learning activities toward the overarching Indonesian EFL learners' L2 speaking competencies development is they will be fully ready to embrace various future working challenges by exhibiting more wondrous communicative skills in interacting with other learning members. Through the continual nourishment of this real-world learning context, learners can also confidently invigorate their self-confidence and revolutionize 2 paramount target language elements significantly governing their speaking performances; vocabulary as well as grammar. These ultimate findings are endorsed by Sukerti and Susana (2019) prompting Indonesian EFL teachers to set aside the traditional speaking learning activities to be fully replaced by problem-based learning trajectories to activate their learners'

readiness to face the real working world vicinities in their future lives. Anchored on this finding, Wahyudin (2017) also exclaimed that Indonesian EFL learners have successfully constructed a higher degree of self-confidence through problem-based learning activities since they are sustainably motivated to foreground more positive speaking learning endeavor to maximize their highest speaking potentials. Keeping abreast with all of these conceptions, Wuryantari et al., (2019) mentioned that the utilities of problem-based learning internalization can be subsumed into threefold namely allowing Indonesian EFL learners to be more confident L2 communicators, bringing them closer to the more gratifying speaking learning achievements, and lighten their exaggerated speaking apprehension dramatically.

CONCLUSION

Taken as a whole, it can be inferred that the further striking advancement of Indonesian EFL learners' productive language skills; speaking and writing is cogently determined by the appropriate internalization of problem-based learning activities, particularly in varied adverse second language learning situations. It is worth accentuating here that problem-based learning activities do not merely transfigure Indonesian EFL learners into more proficient L2 speakers as well as writers but also resilient L2 academicians strongly determining to hone their productive language skills sustainably in the daily routines as life-long knowledge seekers. Nevertheless, some particular limitations of this present qualitative study need to be pondered more exhaustively for future researchers aiming to conduct identical studies in this area. First, a substantial number of relevant literatures delving the positive influences of problem-based learning activities toward L2 productive language skills; speaking and writing should be grounded within stronger seminal theoretical framework delineating this student-centered approach to yield more reliable, robust, and generalizable findings for worldwide educational stakeholders. Second, since this present qualitative study only heed more profound investigation of the positive influences of problem-based learning activities toward Indonesian EFL learners' speaking and writing skills, it is worth suggesting for future researchers to channel their profound exploration concerning the rewarding effects of problem-based learning activities for the further progression of Indonesian EFL learners' receptive language skills; reading and listening since these two competencies are undeniably essential to enormously assist our learners to master the overarching target language skills fully.

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