

**THE EFFECT OF THE PBL METHOD IN STUDENTS'
READING COMPREHENSION AT SMPN 07 BENGKULU
CITY**

**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Bachelor of Education in English Language Teaching**



THESIS

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FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF MUHAMMADIYAH BENGKULU**

2024/2025

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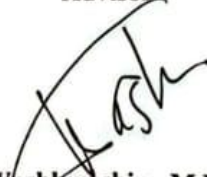
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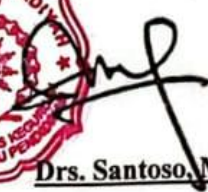
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Adalah karya sendiri. Apabila dikemudian hari ternyata karya tertulis ini berindikasi sebagai karya plagiat, saya bersedia menerima sanksi yang berlaku di fakultas keguruan dan ilmu pendidikan Universitas Muhammadiyah Bengkulu.

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PREFACE

I would like to express my gratitude to Allah SWT, because thanks to His grace and blessings, I was able to complete this thesis entitled "The Effect of the PBL Method on Students' Reading Comprehension at SMPN 07, Bengkulu City."

This thesis was completed thanks to the support and assistance of various parties. Therefore, I would like to express my gratitude to:

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My beloved parents, family, and friends who have provided constant prayers, encouragement, and support.

I realize that this thesis is far from perfect. Therefore, constructive criticism and suggestions are greatly appreciated for future improvements. I hope this thesis is beneficial to readers, especially those in the field of English language learning.

Bengkulu ,Agustus 2025



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This thesis is submitted as one of the requirements to obtain a Bachelor’s Degree in English Education at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Bengkulu.

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The writer realizes that this thesis is still far from perfect. Therefore, constructive criticism and suggestions are highly welcomed for future improvement. Hopefully, this work will be useful for the writer and for readers in general.

MOTTO

Nothing is impossible if you try.

Work, Pray, Strive.

DEDICATION

With gratitude, Alhamdulillahirobbii alamiin, it has truly been a long and difficult struggle to earn this bachelor's degree. I dedicate this gratitude and happiness to the people I love and care about throughout my life:

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the effect of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) method on students' reading comprehension at SMPN 07 Bengkulu City. The research was motivated by the fact that traditional teaching methods, such as lectures and memorization, often make students passive and hinder their reading achievement. A quasi-experimental design was employed, involving two groups: an experimental group taught using PBL and a control group taught with conventional methods. Both groups were given a pre-test and a post-test to measure improvements in reading comprehension.

The findings reveal that students taught through the PBL method achieved significantly higher scores in reading comprehension than those taught through conventional approaches. The experimental group's post-test mean score (79.58) was considerably higher than the control group's mean score (61.25), with a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$. This indicates that PBL effectively enhances students' ability to identify main ideas, draw conclusions, and engage more actively in the learning process.

In conclusion, the PBL method positively influences students' reading comprehension and can be considered an effective alternative for teaching English in EFL classrooms, particularly at the junior high school level.

Keywords: *Problem-Based Learning, Reading Comprehension, EFL, Junior High School*

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui pengaruh metode Problem-Based Learning (PBL) terhadap pemahaman membaca siswa di SMPN 07 Kota Bengkulu. Latar belakang penelitian ini adalah masih dominannya metode konvensional, seperti ceramah dan hafalan, yang membuat siswa pasif dan berpengaruh negatif terhadap hasil belajar membaca. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain kuasi-eksperimen dengan dua kelompok, yaitu kelompok eksperimen yang diajar dengan metode PBL dan kelompok kontrol yang diajar dengan metode konvensional. Kedua kelompok diberi pre-test dan post-test untuk mengukur peningkatan pemahaman membaca.

Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa siswa yang diajar dengan metode PBL memperoleh skor pemahaman membaca yang lebih tinggi secara signifikan dibandingkan dengan siswa yang diajar dengan metode konvensional. Nilai rata-rata post-test kelompok eksperimen (79,58) jauh lebih tinggi dibandingkan dengan kelompok kontrol (61,25), dengan nilai signifikansi $0,000 < 0,05$. Hal ini membuktikan bahwa PBL efektif dalam meningkatkan kemampuan siswa dalam menemukan ide pokok, menarik kesimpulan, serta berpartisipasi aktif dalam proses pembelajaran.

Dengan demikian, metode PBL berpengaruh positif terhadap pemahaman membaca siswa dan dapat dijadikan sebagai alternatif yang efektif dalam pengajaran Bahasa Inggris di kelas EFL, khususnya di tingkat SMP.

Kata kunci: *Problem-Based Learning, Pemahaman Membaca, EFL, SMP*

Table of Contents

APPROVAL SHEET	Error! Bookmark not defined.
SURAT PERNYATAAN KEASLIAN SKRIPSI..	Error! Bookmark not defined.
PREFACE	Error! Bookmark not defined.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vi
MOTTO	vii
DEDICATION	viii
ABSTRACT.....	x
CHAPTER I.....	1
INTRODUCTION	1
A. BACKGROUND	1
1.1 Research Question.....	2
1.2 Research Objective	2
1.3 Limitation of the research	2
1.4 Significance of the Research.....	3
1.5 Definition of Key Terms	3
CHAPTER II.....	5
LITERATURE REVIEW.....	5
2.1 Definition of Reading comprehension	5
2.2 The Purpose of The Study.....	6
2.3 Strategies of Reading Comprehesion	7
2.2 Problem-Based Learning (PBL) as a Reading Strategy.....	8
2.1 Definition of Problem-Based Learning (PBL)	8
2.2 Characteristics of PBL	9
2.3 PBL in Reading Comprehensen.....	9
2.4 Benefits of PBL in EFL Classrooms	10
2.5 Previous Studies	10
2.6 Framework of Thinking.....	12
2.7 Hypothesis	13

CHAPTER III	14
METHODOLOGY	14
3.1 Design of the Research	14
3.2 The design will be illustrated as follows (Creswell, 2018):	14
3.3 The Place and Time of the Research	15
3.4 Objective Of The Research	15
3.6 Data Collection Techniques	16
3.7 Operational Definition of Variables.....	17
3.8 Dependent Variable (Y): Students' English Learning Outcomes	18
3.9 Research Instrument	18
3.10 Data Analysis Technique.....	19
3.11 Research procedure	20
CHAPTER IV	22
RESULT AND DISCUSSION	22
A. Data Collection	22
1 .The Result of Data Collcetion	22
CHAPTER V.....	30
CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION	30
A. Conclusion	30
B. Suggestion	31
REFERENCE.....	32
APPENDIX	35
CURRICULUM VITAE	46

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND

English is an international language that plays an important role in communication, education, and technology. In Indonesia, English is taught as a compulsory subject in schools from junior high school to university. One of the important skills in learning English is reading comprehension, which allows students to understand, interpret, and evaluate written texts effectively (Grabe & Stoller, 2019). Reading comprehension is essential not only for academic achievement but also for lifelong learning. However, teaching reading in the EFL context often faces challenges, such as limited vocabulary, low motivation, and ineffective teaching methods Al Khresheh & Ahmad (2023).

Based on interviews conducted with several English teachers at SMPN 07 Bengkulu City, it is found that the English learning process still relies heavily on lecture and memorization methods. These conventional methods make students passive and less involved in the learning process, which results in low reading comprehension achievement. Students often read texts without truly understanding the meaning, and they have difficulty identifying main ideas or making inferences from the text. This shows that the current teaching approach does not fully meet students' needs in developing deeper reading comprehension skills.

To solve this problem, innovative methods are needed to encourage active participation and critical thinking. One of the effective methods in EFL teaching is the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) method, which emphasizes student-centered learning through problem-solving activities in real-life contexts (Hmelo-Silver, 2004). PBL allows students to work collaboratively, discuss possible solutions, and integrate prior knowledge with new information from reading materials (Bell, 2019). Recent studies confirm that PBL significantly improves students' reading comprehension and motivation because it engages them in

active learning and meaningful interaction (Sari & Wahyuni, 2021; Fitriani et al., 2020).

Although PBL has been widely studied in various educational contexts, its application in junior high schools, especially in Bengkulu City, is still limited. There is a need to investigate how the PBL method influences students' reading comprehension in this specific setting. Therefore, this study aims to examine The Effect of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) Method on Students' Reading Comprehension at SMPN 07 Bengkulu City.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to investigate the effect of using PBL on students' reading comprehension at SMPN 7 in Bengkulu City. It is hoped that these findings will provide insights into more effective teaching strategies for improving students' reading skills.

1.1 Research Question

Is there any significant effect of using the PBL method on students' reading comprehension at SMPN 07 Bengkulu City?

1.2 Research Objective

The objectives of this study are as follows:

1. The research objective is to determine whether there is a significant effect of using the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) method on students' reading comprehension at SMPN 07 Bengkulu City.

1.3 Limitation of the research

The limitation of this research is that it only focuses on the effect of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) method on students' reading comprehension at SMPN 07 Bengkulu City, specifically involving eighth-grade students during the 2025 academic year. Other language skills, grade levels, and schools are not included in this study.

1.4 Significance of the Research

This research is expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions:

1) Theoretical Significance

The findings of this study can enrich the existing literature on the use of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms, particularly in improving students' reading comprehension. It can also serve as a reference for future studies on innovative teaching methods in reading instruction.

2) Practical Significance

a) For English Teachers :

The results can offer an alternative strategy to make reading lessons more engaging, interactive, and student-centered.

b) For Students:

This study can help students improve their reading comprehension skills and encourage them to be more active in the learning process.

c) For Future Researchers

The findings can provide insights and references for conducting further research on PBL or other innovative methods in teaching reading.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation, several key terms used in this research are defined as follows:

a. Problem-Based Learning (PBL)

Problem-Based Learning is an instructional method that uses real-world problems as a starting point for learning, where students work collaboratively to find solutions through critical thinking, discussion, and research (Bell, 2019). In this study, PBL refers to a teaching strategy applied in reading classes at SMPN 07 Bengkulu City to enhance students' reading comprehension.

b. Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the process of constructing meaning from written texts by understanding, interpreting, and evaluating information (Grabe & Stoller, 2019). In this research, reading comprehension refers to the students' ability to understand narrative and descriptive texts as taught in the eighth grade of SMPN 07 Bengkulu City