Implementation of Hybrid and Pure Problem-based Learning in EFL Context: The case of speaking skill and self-confidence of Iranian undergraduate participants

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Abstract
Problem-based Learning (PBL) as one of the newest teaching methods in the area of language teaching in second and foreign contexts, has been used by teachers in the last two decades in different institutes. In the current study, attempts were made to find out the effect of the two PBL subcategories, i.e. Hybrid Problem-based Learning (H-PBL) and Pure Problem-based Learning (PPBL) in comparison to a traditional lecture-based method, on Iranian EFL university learners' speaking skill and their self-confidence, by implementing these two methods in the EFL classroom using eight teacher-made real-world problems. To this purpose, 56 undergraduate participants of Payam Noor university (PNU) in Abadan, Iran, were randomly selected, divided into a control group and two treatment HPBL and PPBL groups. The statistical analysis of the obtained results ff eee aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaettt -posttest scores, through one-way ANCOVA and Man-Whitney U test, revealed that the treatment groups outperformed the control group in speaking skill and self-confidence The findings of the study might bear implications for teachers and university curriculum designers to take more proper approaches towards the instructing university participants.

Keywords: Hybrid Problem-based Learning, Pure Problem-based Learning, self-confidence, speaking skill

Introduction

In order to be able to communicate well, a good means of communication requirements is necessary in the area of speaking. As Larsson (2001) states, the final goal of education is to empower the learners to comprehend the target language successfully, no matter a second language or a foreign language. In a country like Iran, as in many other countries in which English is a foreign language, the urgent need for learning English not only for academic purposes but also for employment, promotion and career success, seems unavoidable. Achieving such goals indisputably requires such language skills as self-confidence, problem-solving and critical thinking which cannot be acquired through direct instruction but "arise from the experience of doing" as Torp and Sage (2002) put it. Actually, to reach such goals, several approaches and methods have come into being, among which is Problem-based Learning (PBL). In this respect, Larsson (2001) states that Problem-based Learning has been used in many studies and places all over the world for the instruction of different skills and sub-skills of language.

In a much different but somehow close line, Kassem (2018) believes that different approaches and methods have been created, such as Project-Based Learning, Task-Based

Learning, Cooperative-Learning, and Problem-Based Learning, in response to the requests for including participants in the learning process. He states that such methods have been established as a response to rote-learning and teacher-centered approaches whose main focus to transfer knowledge from teachers to participants (p. 848). Salari, Roozbehi, Zarifi, and Rohani (2018) mention that lecturing has been the dominant current teaching method in nursery education, which means that the teacher is in the center of attention. In contrast to that, PBL is a strategy in which the attention shifts from teacher to participant. In this approach, the participant is in the center of attention instead of the teacher. Li (2013) believes that this approach encourages the participants in the process of instruction and facilitates the achievement of language skills. Lian (2013) claims that such an approach helps participants whose language skills are poor, and it improves their productive skills. Jonassen (2011) calls it a teaching innovation in the line of history. Tan and Shen (2018) believe that there are several PBL models like pure PBL and hybrid PBL (h-PBL), and state that in pure PBL, TL is totally absent, while in hybrid PBL (h-PBL), in parts of the course TL is used.

PBL Subcategories

In order to provide a clearer picture of the content of the present study, the definitions of PBL, Hybrid PBL and self-confidence are presented here:

Problem-based Learning: All definitions of PBL have this point in common that it is a participant-centered approach in which real-world problems are used for instruction (Mayo et al, 1993; Barrows, 2002; Torp and Sage, 2003; Hmelo-Silver, 2004; Lai 2007; Legg 2007). Among scholars, few call it a research approach, others might call it a method, while some others might not be convinced to use it and still stick to the old traditional methods. Few other studies might have reached the conclusion that it is a very useful innovative method.

PBL is divided into two distinct subcategories, that is, Pure problem-based learning and Hybrid problem-based learning, and thus, the definition of PBL mentioned above is precisely in accordance with Pure problem-based learning (PPBL). Accordingly, PPBL is an approach in which the participants learn by defining the problem and learning on their own with no lectures presented by the teacher who is just acting as the facilitator, without giving direct explanations. In comparison to P-PBL, the Hybrid problem-based learning (H-PBL) has been introduced as the mixture of a bit of traditional lecture-based approach and this new approach. Armstrong (2008) believes that any new approach which comes into existence, does not have to sacrifice the best of the old, it has to encourage creativity in the individuals without inadequacy, and it has to "balance the latest developments in medical science with the age-old values of healing" (p. 137). So, according to Armstrong (2008), the root of this newly-invented approach was based on the fact that just passive presence in the traditional lectures and memorization of material would not lead to learning (p. 138).

Self-confidence: Self-confidence has been defined as a feeling of trust in one's abilities, qualities, and judgment--the belief that one can successfully face day-to-day challenges and demands.

Based on the above-stated definitions and ideas and to achieve the purposes of this study, the following three research questions were addressed:

RQ1. Are H-PBL and P-PBL effective in the improvement of the university participant'' speaking skill?

RQ2. Is H-PBL just effective for university participantee eeœnnng iii ll at preliminary levels?
RQ3. To what extent do H-PBL and P-PBL improve the university participant'' kkoɵ confidence in comparison to the traditional lecture-based method?

Literature Review

After its emergence in the 1960s, PBL at the beginning was used to teach medical and nursing participants, and then made its path into other disciplines such as engineering, chemistry, and geography (Savery, 2006). Savery states that "it stood against the intensive lecture-based courses followed by exhausting sessions in the field of medicine at McMaster University in Canada in 1969" (p. 9). According to Ansarian, Adlipour, Saber and Shafiei (2016), the use of PBL in language classrooms in ESL and EFL contexts was observed only in the last two decades. The evidences for these claims are presented below in chronological order.

Studies Conducted Outside Iran

Some studies have mentioned that applying PBL to language education creates a difficult challenge to whoever attempts it (Larsson, 2001; Karthikeyan, Venkatraj, and Baskaran, 2009), while others have investigated that how well implementation of PBL in a classroom would provide the participants with valuable skills and enhance their learning motivation and efficiency in comparison to those who are taught through the conventional lecture-based method, (Hmelo-Silver, 2004; Tick, 2007; Murray and Summerlee, 2007; Azman & Shin, 2012). Few other studies like Khotimah (2014) have come to the conclusion that participants' speaking ability and achievement have been improved vastly through PBL. In the same line, Ghufron and Ermawati, 2018; and Carrió et al., 2016 have discovered that participantff skills to solve their problems and improve their self-confidence have also been enhance through PBL and H-PBL. Lin (2017) has discovered that foreign language learners' reading could be improved by implementing PBL in an English reading courses, while Zuhriyah (2017) has concluded that PBL improves grammar competence of the participants. Others like Hoidn and Kärkkäinen, 2014, by comparing PBL with traditional approaches to higher education, have come to the conclusion that PBL can be more effective to develop different discipline-specific and transferable skills.

To the best of the researchers' knowledge, there have been very few studies investigating the impact of Problem-based Learning only on the speaking skill of the participants, and there has been no study investigating the impact of Hybrid Problem-based Learning on the participants' productive skills, and on the comparison of this method with Problem-based Learning and traditional lecture-based methods

Hmelo-Silver (2004) after talking about the five goals of PBL, explains the nature of PBL, and scrutinizes the empirical evidence supporting it. He states that PBL is an educational approach that assists the participants to have a flexible comprehension skill which can be of use to them for their whole lifetime. Tick (2007) by stating her belief that PBL and technology afford the chance to nurture and learn together for communities and stating the fact that PBL forms different activities and roles in the class for the learner and the teacher in her study comes to the conclusion that with the implementation of PBL learners become more secure and self-confident. Murray and Summerlee (2007) using surveys, questionnaires, calculated *t*-test and ANOVA, conclude that the participants report expressively enhanced skill development and educational experience in comparison to those under the conventional lecture-based method.

Ng (2008) by defining PBL as a different participant-centered approach from the conventional teacher-centered ones, in an attempt to integrate PBL while designing course curriculum has found it more stimulating for participants to use more English in their speaking

and it develops their critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Karthikeyan, Venkatraj, and Baskaran (2009) by stating that current educational system is mainly concerned with substance and less significance is given to the learning activity, consider PBL as a strategy which puts more concentration on the learning activity and helps participants to be able to tackle and find a suitable solution to their problems. Azman and Shin (2012), having claimed that participants need to be well trained for PBL, state that PBL is not too challenging for first-year participants and in small scales. Coffin (2013) by using Pre- and post-survey questionnaires in a course called Writing 3, at a Thai university, concludes that both teachers and participants favor PBL vastly since it has helped them to find out their learning abilities. Khotimah (2014) studying on the tenth graders of a senior high school, has attempted to find out about the application of PBL in improving participants' speaking ability and achievement through action research, observation sheets, questionnaire, and interviews. She comes to the point that application of this method helps improve participants' speaking ability and success. Bashith and Amin (2017) have attempted to scrutinize the effect of PBL on participants in the 11th grade using a quasi-treatment method and the problems of demography and have conclude that the PBL learning model has positive effects on the participants' critical thinking skills and learning outcome. Finally, Ghufron and Ermawati (2018) in their study have concluded that PBL increases participants' self-confidence.

Studies Conducted in Iranian Context

Considering PBL as a participant-oriented method, all the studies which have been mentioned in other communities have had different findings regarding the use of PBL and its implementation in language classrooms, but none of the findings can be generalized to Iranian participants, considering the fact that Iranian participants and overall community might have different preferences regarding the use of PBL and its efficacy. In Iran, there have been very few studies regarding PBL and its practical impacts. In a study done on 95 Iranian EFL learners' speaking proficiency, using objective-based tasks, Ansarian et al. (2016) they have concluded that PBL improves the speaking proficiency of participants. In another study concerning PBL and vocabulary, Shir Mohammadi (2017), employing authentic problem-based tasks, has attempted to find out the efficacy of PBL on language vocabulary learning of participants and has concluded that PBL improves Ii. fff m mmmmaaacœ vocabulary in terms of retention and recall.

Method

Research Design

Considering the above-mentioned three research questions, the study was conducted in three phases with a quasi-treatment design.

Participants

The participants for this study were chosen through nonrandom convenience sampling, with female participants outnumbering male ones because of more enrollment of female participants in the field of English language. They were all undergraduate participants in the second term of the academic year of 1398 (2019) in Payam Noor University of Abadan. They were divided into a control group with 14 female participants and 4 male participants, a treatment group instructed through H-PBL, with 20 participants (8 male and 12 female participants), and another treatment group instructed through P-PBL, with 18 participants (4 male and 14 female participants). Table 1 below shows clearer details of the participants:

Table 1
Participants of the Study

Place	Abadan Payame Noor University
Field of Study	English literature
Course and Academic Year	Listening and Speaking 1, Fall 2019
Length and frequency of experiment	One semester, 8 sessions (ninety-minute sessions)
Groups	Number of Participants and Age Range
Group 1 Control	18 participants (14 female, 4 male) 19-26 years old
Group 2 H-PBL (treatment)	20 participants (12 female, 8 male) 19-26 years old
Group 3 P-PBL (treatment)	18 participants (14 female 4 male) 19-26 years old

Instruments

For the purposes of the study, the following instruments were used in data collection and data analysis stages.

Pretest (IELTS Speaking Test)

At the beginning of the study, a standard IELTS speaking test was given as the pretest to the three groups of participants to homogenize them in terms of their speaking skill performance. This test got started as a survey speaking interview and took about 15 minutes for each participant. For warm-up, the researchers started with salutations and greetings, and then the participants were asked to talk about themselves for five minutes. The interview had two other parts equal in value focusing on the participants' speaking skills. The overall score of the participants was determined on the basis of their average performance in these three parts.

Posttest (IELTS Speaking test)

In order to make sure about the effectiveness of the treatment and inspecting the improvement in the performance of the control and treatment groups after the treatment, another parallel standard IELTS speaking test was employed. Scoring (0-9) was done by the researchers and an EFL teacher whose IELTS score was above 9. Also, inter-rater reliability was measured to inspect the reliability of the two IELTS speaking tests.

Questionnaire

In order to answer the third research question, Rosenberg Self-Esteem questionnaire was used. This is a four-point Likert Scale questionnaire, ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 4 (strongly disagree). It was given to all the participants before and after implementing the H-PBL and PPBL methods.

Data Collection Procedure

At the beginning of the current study, before starting the data collection procedure, ethical approval was taken from the Department of English Teaching, Abadan Payame Noor University. Then, Problem-based Learning and Hybrid Problem-based Learning were explained to the participants. Next, to homogenize them in terms of speaking proficiency, a standard IELTS speaking test was used as the pretest. IELTS Band Descriptor was used to rate and score their performance. The participants were then grouped into a control group and two treatment groups. The control group was taught according to the traditional lecture-based method which the teacher

usually undertakes in such classes. They were asked to present lectures on each unit of *Topnotch* 1A,1B in each session. As for the two treatment groups, one was taught on the basis of Hybrid Problem-based Learning approach, and the other was taught through Pure Problem-based Learning. In order to see whether or not the level of the participant'' expertise in the Hybrid Problem-based Learning would affect their productive skills improvement, this group was subcategorized into higher level and lower level participants.

It is to be mentioned that during the P-PBL and H-PBL processes, the participants were encouraged to use collaborative learning and cooperate with their group members in the learning process. Their lesson plan included eight problems, with the first four problems have been prepared on the basis of the participants' educational, social, and environmental circumstances (Barrett and Cashman's Seven-step Model, 2010), while the rest of the problems were chosen from Barrell (2010).

At the end of the treatment a parallel standard IELTS speaking test was administered to all the participants and the obtained scores were used to measure the possible effects that treatment could have on the improvement of their productive skills. Finally, at the end of the semester, a questionnaire was given to the participants to check the effect of the three values of the independent variable on the their self-confidence.

Data Analysis Procedure

To analyze the data and find out whether the results have been achieved or not, the necessary statistical analysis was done. For the possible difference between H-PBL, P-PBL, and traditional lecturing method, one-way ANCOVA was used. Man-Whitney U non-parametric test was also used over independent-samples *t* test because of the low sample size in the analysis. Finally, to investigate mean, standard deviation, frequency distribution, and the effect of independent variables on dependent variables, descriptive and inferential statistics were employed.

Results

As stated above, 56 EFL university learners were chosen and placed into the three groups of hybrid problem-based learning (HPBL, $n = 20$), pure problem-based learning (PPBL, $n = 18$), and control group (CG, $n = 18$), and the pretest and posttest scores of speaking and self-confidence, obtained from the participants in the three groups, were statistically analyzed. The results of the analysis are presented in what follows.

Preliminary Analyses (Tests of Normality)

Prior to conducting any parametric analyses, measures had to be taken in order to assure the distributions of scores on both pretest and posttest of the HPBL, LPBL, and CG learners were normal. To achieve this, the Shapiro-Wilk test of normality was conducted:

Table 2

Results of Shapiro-Wilk Test of Normality

Tests/Groups	HPBL			PPBL			CG		
	Shapiro-Wilk			Shapiro-Wilk			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	*df*	Sig.	Statistic	*df*	Sig.	Statistic	*df*	Sig.
Speaking Pretest	.91	18	.14	.93	20	.22	.96	22	.49

Speaking Posttest	.95	18	. 32	.90	20	.10	.96	22	.36
Self-confidence Pretest	.94	18	.31	.95	20	.44	.95	22	.32
Self-confidence Posttest	.93	18	.26	.94	20	.38	.96	22	.41

Casting a look at the *p* values lined up under the Sig. columns above reveal that for all the pretests and posttests of the three groups, the assumption of normality has been met. Having assured the assumption of normality, the researchers could take a step further and conduct the parametric tests to find answers to the research questions of the study.

Speaking Skill: HPBL vs. PPBL vs. CG

The first objective of the current study was to implement Hybrid Problem-based Learning (H-PBL) in an EFL classroom and compare it to a Pure Problem-based Learning (PPBL) and traditional lecture-based method in the teaching of English as a foreign language and to find out their efficacy in improving the speaking skill of participants. In order to reach this aim, the post-test scores of the participants were subtracted from the pre-test scores to get the achievement score and make sure that the results are not due to the probable pre-existing differences among them. Considering the fact that type of instruction was the only independent variable of the study (with the three values of HPBL, PPBL, and traditional instruction), and speaking was the dependent variable, one-way ANCOVA was carried out to find any significant differences that could be accredited to the type of teaching. The results of the analysis are provided in the following tables:

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics for the Learners' Speaking Gain Scores

Skills	groups	Mean	Std. Deviation	*N*
Speaking	HPBL	6.5000	1.15045	20
	PPBL	7.0000	.45883	18
	CG	6.0000	.53452	18
	Total	6.7833	1.18023	56

Table 3 shows that the mean score of the learners who experienced PPBL ($M = 7.0$) was higher than those of the learners in the HPBL ($M = 6.5$) and CG ($M = .53$). To find out if the type of teaching method significantly affected the speaking skills of the participants and the *p* value which is shown under the Sig. column is less than the significance level ($p < .05$) or not, Between-subjects Effects for the Type of Instruction were considered. The results are shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4

Results of Tests of Between-subjects Effects for the Type of Instruction

Source	Type III SumDf of Squares		Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	39.601[a]	3	13.200	218.521	.000	.921	.82

Intercept	1.388	1	1.388	22.975	.000	.291
Speaking Pretest	29.117	1	29.117	482.018	.000	.896
Groups	15.583	2	7.791	128.981	.000	.822
Error	3.383	56	.060			
Total	2565.000	60				
Corrected Total	42.983	59				

a. R Squared = .921 (Adjusted R Squared = .917)

As can be seen in Table 4, the type of teaching method had significant effect on the speaking skill of the participants, considering the *p* values under the Sig. column which is less than the significant level. Moreover, the Eta Squared column reveal that the effect size was very large for speaking skills. To examine the differences between the three groups regarding the speaking scores, the post hoc test was carried out.

Table 5
Results of Post Hoc Test for the Type of Instruction

(I) groups	(J) groups	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.[b]	95% Confidence Interval for Difference[b]	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
HPBL	PPBL	-.028	.083	1.000	-.232	.177
	CG	1.065*	.082	.000	.862	1.268
PPBL	HPBL	.028	.083	1.000	-.177	.232
	CG	1.092*	.076	.000	.905	1.280
CG	HPBL	-1.065*	.082	.000	-1.268	-.862
	PPBL	-1.092*	.076	.000	-1.280	-.905

Based on estimated marginal means
*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.
b. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni.

As seen in Table 5, regarding the participants' ppeaking scores, there was no significant difference between HPBL (*M* = 1.00) and PPBL (*M* = 1.00); however, these two groups had significantly higher speaking scores in comparison to the participants in the CG (*M* = .00).

The Role of Proficiency Level

The second objective of the study was to find out whether the HPBL participant'' proficiency level had any roles in their scores obtained from the speaking skills. To this purpose, the speaking scores of the HPBL participants of the higher and lower levels of proficiency were compared via Man-Whitney U test. The results are presented in tables 6 and 7 below:

Table 6
Descriptive Statistics of the Higher- and Lower-proficiency Participants

	Higher Proficiency Speaking	Lower Proficiency Speaking
N	10	10
Median	1.00	1.00
Mean	1.00	1.25
Std. Deviation	.00	.46

In Table 6, it could be found that with respect to speaking, the medians of the higher- and lower-proficiency groups did not differ as they both equaled 1.00, but there was a slight difference between their mean scores. Table 7 below, show the results for the difference between the higher- and lower-proficiency participants in the HPBL group in terms of speaking scores.

Table 7
Man-Whitney U Test Results of Higher- and Lower-proficiency Participants

	Speaking
Mann-Whitney U	30.00
Wilcoxon W	85.00
Z	-1.63
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.10
Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	.40

Table 7 shows that the difference between the higher- and lower-proficiency participants was not significant.

Self-confidence

The final aim of the present study was to see whether the participants in the HPBL, PPBL, and CG would improve their self-confidence as a result of being exposed to different treatments. In this respect, the data gained from the self-confidence questionnaire were scored, statistically analyzed, and equated using a one-way ANCOVA. The results of the analysis are given in the following tables:

Table 8
Descriptive Statistics of the Learners' Self-confidence Scores

	groups	Mean	Std. Deviation	*N*
Self-confidence	HPBL	28.3333	2.05798	18
	PPBL	26.2000	1.15166	20
	CG	24.4545	0.50965	22
	Total	26.2000	2.06504	60

As can be seen in Table 8, the learners who were instructed through HPBL (*M* = 28.33) could outperform those who were instructed through PPBL (*M* = 26.2), who in turn excelled those learners who underwent traditional instruction (*M* = 24.45). To make sure that the type of

instruction had significant effects on the self-confidence of the participants, the ANCOVA analysis results in Table 9 had to be inspected:

Table 9
Results of Tests of Between-subjects Effects for Self-confidence

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	186.133[a]	3	62.044	53.072	.000	.740
Intercept	123.506	1	123.506	105.646	.000	.654
SCPretest	37.187	1	37.187	31.810	.000	.362
Groups	185.894	2	92.947	79.506	.000	.740
Error	65.467	56	1.169			
Total	41438.000	60				
Corrected Total	251.600	59				

a. R Squared = .740 (Adjusted R Squared = .726)

As seen in Table 9, the type of teaching method employed had statistically significant effects on the self-confidence of the participants owing to the fact that the *p* values under the Sig. column for self-confidence was less than the .05 significance level. Moreover, the Partial Eta Squared index column also revealed that the type of instruction had large effect on the self-confidence of the participants. In order to see where the differences lay precisely among the three groups regarding their self-confidence, the post hoc test table had to be inspected:

Table 10
Results of Post Hoc Test for the Type of Instruction and Self-confidence

(I) groups	(J) groups	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.[b]	95% Confidence Interval for Difference[b]	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
HPBL	PPBL	3.480*	.425	.000	2.431	4.528
	CG	4.753*	.377	.000	3.823	5.683
PPBL	HPBL	-3.480*	.425	.000	-4.528	-2.431
	CG	1.273*	.344	.001	.423	2.123
CG	HPBL	-4.753*	.377	.000	-5.683	-3.823
	PPBL	-1.273*	.344	.001	-2.123	-.423

Based on estimated marginal means
*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.
b. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni.

The results in Table 10, shows that HPBL participants had a significantly higher mean score and were superior (though not significantly) to their PPBL and CG counterparts.

Discussion

The importance of using a Problem--based Learning method lies in the innovation of the current century by Jonassen (2011), who believed that it must be considered by all the teachers in the area of foreign language education. To approve such an opinion, a number of objectives were

set for this study, that is, implementing PBL two sub-categories as PPBL and HPBL in an EFL context classroom to find out their efficacy in terms of eee aaaaaaaaaaaa speaking skill, in comparison to a traditional lecture-based method, finding out I if the participants' eett eee proficiency level has any influence on their speaking skill, and examining which one of the three methods, that is, HPBL, PPBL, or traditional lecture-based method, is more effective in improving the self-confidence of the participants.

Based on the above results, there was no significant difference between HPBL and PPBL, but these two groups had significantly higher speaking scores compared to the participants in the CG, and thus the assumption that there is no eye-catching improvement in the speaking skill of the participants who have undertaken an H-PBL approach instruction in comparison to PPBL and traditional lecture-based method was wrong. This finding is in corroboration with other studies done in the area of PBL regarding participants speaking. The results also confirm the findings of Azman and Shin (2012) who found that PBL improves the participantss kkills, especially their speaking. They are further in line with Khotimah (2014) who found that implementation of HPBL enhances participants' speaking ability and achievement, and with Ansarian et al. (2016) who found that implementation of PBL improves the speaking proficiency of Iranian EFL participants. The results are also in agreement with Baresh et al. (2019) who found that HPBL greatly improves the speaking proficiency of Libyan EFL participants, and being exposed to it also improves intonation, pronunciation, vocabulary, and fluency.

Regarding the second research question, the results of the inferential statistics showed that H-PBL was useful for both of higher level and lower level groups. As for the third question and the effect of H-PBL and P-PBL on the paaaaaaaaa'' self-confidence, in comparison to participants of traditional lecture-based method or P-PBL approach, significant differences were found among the three groups regarding their self-confidence. More precisely, the HPBL participants had a significantly higher mean score than the PPBL participants who were, in turn, superior (though not significantly) to their CG counterparts.. This finding is in line with Carrió et al., 2016; Ghufron & Ermawati, 2018; Baresh et al., 2019, who have discovered that the participants' self-confidence has been improved under PBL and H-PBL curriculum.

Conclusion

The application of H-PBL and P-PBL methods proved to be effective in the development of the EFL leanne''' speaking skill and their self-confidence. These methods by urging the collaborative participation of the learners, and due to the accessibility of additional resources like the multimedia and the internet would be of great use to the learning and skill improvement. At the same time, improving the aaæee''' self-confidence would lead them to make more significant decisions and be more confident in all walks of their lives. The role of the teacher is also significant in implementing such methods in terms of preparing exciting and motivating teaching material and encouraging the learners to participate in learning the material and sharing their knowledge with other participants, which would lead to the improvement of the quality of teaching methods in the area of language education in universities.

Concerning the implications of the study, comparison of a traditional lecture-based method, P-PBL and H-PBL effectiveness on improving the speaking skill of the participants benefit syllabus designers in that it leads them to prepare a classroom schedule for teaching EFL based on H-PBL, which might be a helpful lantern to those who want to design new learning processes and curriculums. This can in turn entail essential factors that determine and guarantee the success of H-PBL implementation. Instructors would also benefit from and be encouraged to use such a teaching approach. Educational systems would also benefit from such an approach, because such

an approach may develop and create independent participants who in a much better way can control their future jobs and tasks, and find more possible solutions to the problems which they may encounter.

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