
MUĞLA UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

THE ATTITUDES OF ELT STUDENTS TOWARDS PROBLEM BASED
LEARNING IN
EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS CLASSES

MA THESIS

AHMET ŞAHBAZ

ASST.PROF.DR. ŞEVKİ KÖMÜR

JUNE 2009

MUĞLA

MUĞLA ÜNİVERSİTESİ

SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ

İNGİLİZ DİLİ EĞİTİMİ ANABİLİM DALI

THE ATTITUDES OF ELT STUDENTS TOWARDS PROBLEM BASED
LEARNING IN
EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS CLASSES

AHMET ŞAHBAZ

Sosyal Bilimleri Enstitüsünde

“Yüksek Lisans”

Diploması Verilmesi İçin Kabul Edilen Tezdir.

Tezin Enstitüye Verildiği Tarih : 17/07/2009

Tezin Sözlü Savunma Tarihi : 18.06.2009 / 14:00

Tez Danışmanı :Yrd. Doç. Dr. Şevki KÖMÜR
Jüri Üyesi :Yrd.Doç.Dr. Eda ÜSTÜNEL İmzası
Jüri Üyesi :Yrd. Doç.Dr. Selami OK İmzası

Enstitü Müdürü :Prof. Dr. Nurgün Oktik

TEMMUZ 2009

MUĞLA

TUTANAK

Muğla Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü'nün 27.05.2009 tarih ve 452/9 sayılı toplantısında oluşturulan jüri, Lisansüstü Eğitim-Öğretim Yönetmeliği'nin 25/maddesine göre, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı Yüksek lisans öğrencisi Ahmet Şahbaz'ın "Etkili İletişim Becerileri Dersinde İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Öğrencilerinin Probleme Dayalı Öğrenmeye karşı Tutumları" adlı tezini incelemiş ve aday 18.06.2009 tarihinde saat 14.00'da jüri önünde tez savunmasına alınmıştır.

Adayın kişisel çalışmaya dayanan tezini savunmasından sonra 50 dakikalık süre içinde gerek tez konusu, gerekse tezin dayanağı olan anabilim dallarından sorulan sorulara verdiği cevaplar değerlendirilerek tezin başarılı olduğuna oybirliği ile karar verildi.

(Kabul)

Tez Danışmanı

Yrd. Doç.Dr. Şevki KÖMÜR

Üye

Yrd. Doç. Dr. Eda ÜSTÜNEL

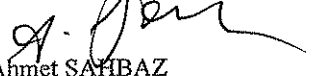
Üye

Yrd. Doç. Dr. Selami OK

YEMİN

Yüksek lisans tezi olarak sunduğum “ Probleme Dayalı Öğrenmeye karşı İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Bölümü Öğrencilerinin Etkili İletişim Becerileri Dersindeki Tutumları ” adlı çalışmanın, tarafımdan bilimsel ahlak ve geleneklere aykırı düşecek bir yardıma başvurulmaksızın yazıldığını ve yararlandığım eserlerin Kaynakça’da gösterilenlerden oluştuğunu, bunlara atıf yapılarak yararlanmış olduğumu belirtir ve bunu onurumla doğrularım.

17.07.2009


Ahmet ŞAHBAZ

İMZASI

YÜKSEKÖĞRETİM KURULU DOKÜMANTASYON MERKEZİ
TEZ VERİ GİRİŞ FORMU

YAZARIN

MERKEZİMİZCE DOLDURULACAKTIR.

Soyadı : ŞAHBAZ

Adı : AHMET

Kayıt No:

TEZİN ADI

Türkçe : Etkili İletişim Becerileri Dersinde İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Öğrencilerinin Probleme Dayalı Öğrenmeye Karşı Tutumları

Y. Dil : The Attitudes of ELT Students Towards Problem Based Learning in Effective Communication Skills Classes

TEZİN TÜRÜ: Yüksek Lisans

Doktora

Sanatta Yeterlilik

●

○

○

TEZİN KABUL EDİLDİĞİ

Üniversite : MUĞLA ÜNİVERSİTESİ

Fakülte : EĞİTİM FAKÜLTESİ

Enstitü : SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ

Diğer Kuruluşlar :

Tarih : 17.07.2009

TEZ YAYINLANMIŞSA

Yayımlayan :

Basım Yeri :

Basım Tarihi :

ISBN :

TEZ YÖNETİCİSİNİN Soyadı, Adı, Ünvanı : KÖMÜR, Şevki, Yrd. Doç. Dr.

TEZİN YAZILDIĞI DİL : İNGİLİZCE

TEZİN SAYFA SAYISI:84

TEZİN KONUSU (KONULARI) :

1. The Attitudes of ELT Students Towards Problem Based Learning in Effective Communication Skills Classes
2. Etkili İletişim Becerileri Dersinde İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Öğrencilerinin Probleme Dayalı Öğrenmeye Karşı Tutumları

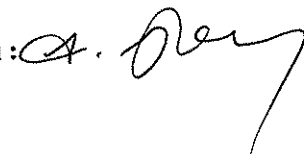
TÜRKÇE ANAHTAR KELİMELER:

1. Öğrenme
2. Oluşturmacı Yaklaşım
3. Probleme Dayalı Öğrenme

İNGİLİZCE ANAHTAR KELİMER:

1. Learning
2. Constructivist Approach
3. Problem Based Learning

- 1- Tezinden fotokopi yapılmasına izin vermiyorum
- 2- Tezinden dipnot gösterilmek şartıyla bir bölümünün fotokopisi alınabilir
- 3- Kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla tezin tamamının fotokopisi alınabilir

Yazarın İmzası : 

Tarih : 17/07/2009

ABSTRACT

Learning can be considered as the most important mental function of human beings. Although learning was always very important throughout human history, it has been given much more importance recently. Today the knowledge is changing very fast and as a result the terms "learning to learn" and "life long learning" have become very popular. It is necessary to update the knowledge regularly in today's world; otherwise what was learned five years ago can be useless today.

After behaviorist and cognitivist learning theories, constructivist learning theory has gained popularity in the late of 20th century. For constructivist philosophy, knowledge is not independent from humans, they construct knowledge as a result of interaction with each other and the environment, and that knowledge is subjective. PBL (Problem Based Learning) which is a subpart of Constructivist Approach was applied in Medicine first and then it began to be applied in other disciplines of science. It is very new in Language Learning and Teaching. In PBL students reach and internalize the knowledge as a result of a process. In this process, students are given problems from real life and they reach and internalize the intended knowledge after solving the given problem with their group-mates.

The present study aimed at finding freshmen's attitudes towards PBL in Effective Communication Skills Classes in English Language Teaching (ELT) department of Muğla University. Application of PBL in Effective Communication Skills was thought to work well because during the day we encounter a lot of communication problems. Bringing those real life problems into the classroom and internalizing the intended knowledge after solving those problems would be very compatible with the philosophy of PBL.

The data used in this study were collected from 38 First Grade Students' at ELT Department of Muğla University. Qualitative and quantitative data collection tools were used. In the quantitative side a questionnaire consisting of 44 items was used and the data was analyzed by using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences

(SPSS 11, 0) .The same questionnaire was applied to the students in different times of the term and t-paired sample test was used to see if there is any significant change.

In order to get qualitative data from the study, students were asked a question before and after their presentations. The question was “What do you think about the use of PBL approach in Communication Skills Classes?” The students wrote their thoughts and attitudes. The content analysis of their thoughts was made and outstanding and repeated expressions were shown in the figures. At the end of the term to get qualitative data, students were given a semi-structured questionnaire and again content analysis of their comments was made. The outstanding, repeated expressions were shown in the figures, and they were discussed in connection with PBL.

The interesting final result obtained from this study is that there is a change from negative to positive in students’ attitudes towards PBL.

Key words: Learning, Behaviorism, Cognitivism, Constructivism, language teaching, Problem Based Learning (PBL)

ÖZET

Öğrenme insanların en önemli zihinsel fonksiyonlarından birisi olarak değerlendirilebilir. Öğrenme insanlık tarihi boyunca hep çok önemli olmasına karşın, son zamanlarda daha fazla önem kazanmaya başlamıştır. Günümüzde bilgi çok hızlı değişmekte olduğu için “ öğrenmeyi öğrenme” ve “ hayat boyu öğrenme” gibi kavramlar daha sık karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Bu durum bilgilerin devamlı olarak güncellenmesi gerektiği gerçeğini ortaya çıkarmıştır.

Davranışçı ve Bilişsel öğrenme teorilerinden sonra 20. yüz yılın sonlarına doğru Oluşturmacı öğrenim teorisi önem kazanmaya başlamıştır. Oluşturmacı yaklaşıma göre bilgi bireyden bağımsız değildir, bireyler bilgiyi çevresiyle etkileşimde bulunarak oluşturur ve bu bilgi kişinin kendisine aittir; yani öznedir. Oluşturmacı yaklaşımın alt dallarından birisi olan PDÖ (Probleme dayalı öğrenme) önce tıp dalında daha sonra da bilimin diğer alanlarında da uygulanmaya başlamıştır. PDÖ son zamanlarda dil eğitim ve öğretiminde de kullanılmaya başlanmıştır. PDÖ de öğrenciler bilgiye gerçek hayattan bir problemi çözerek ulaşırlar ve bu sürecin sonucunda ulaştıkları bilgiyi özümserler.

Bu çalışmada, Muğla Üniversitesi İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Bölümündeki 1. sınıf öğrencilerinin Etkili İletişim Becerileri Dersinde PDÖ ye karşı tutumlarını ortaya çıkarmak amaçlanmıştır. Etkili İletişim Becerileri dersinde Probleme Dayalı Öğrenmenin çok iyi işleyeceği düşünülmüştür. Gün boyunca birçok iletişim sorunu yaşanması nedeniyle, bu sorunları Etkili İletişim Becerileri dersinde kullanmak ve istenilen bilgiye bu problemlerin çözümü sonucunda ulaşmak PDÖ nün felsefesi ile örtüşmektedir.

Bu çalışmada veriler 38, 1. sınıf öğrencisinden veri toplanmıştır. Nitel ve Nicel veri toplama yöntemleri kullanılmıştır. Nicel veri toplama yönteminde öğrencilere 44 sorudan oluşan bir anket verilmiş ve veriler SPSS11,0 kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Bu anket öğrencilere yarıyılın farklı dönemlerinde verilmiş ve kayda değer bir değişimin olup olmadığını anlamak için çiftli t testi uygulanmıştır.

Nitel veriyi toplamak için ise öğrencilere sunumlardan önce ve sonra PDÖ'nün Etkili İletişim Becerileri dersinde uygulanması ile ilgili ne düşündükleri sorulmuştur. Öğrencilerin bu konudaki görüşleri alındıktan sonra verilen cevapların içerik analizi yapılmış ve elde edilen sonuçlar şekillerle gösterilmiştir. Buna ilave olarak nitel veri toplamak amacı ile öğrencilere yarı açık uçlu sorular sorulmuş, öğrencilerin verdiği cevapların içerik analizi yapılarak öne çıkan eden ifadeler tekrar tablolarla gösterilmiştir.

Çalışmadan elde edilen en kayda değere sonuç, öğrencilerin PDÖ'ye karşı tutumlarında olumsuzdan olumluya doğru çok ciddi bir değişimin gerçekleşmiş olmasıdır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Öğrenme, Davranışçılık, Bilişselcilik, Oluşturmacılık, Probleme Dayalı Öğrenme (PDÖ)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my thesis advisor Asst.Prof. Dr. Şevki K m r, who has always been the most important supporter of this study. His positive reinforcements and encouragements always helped me to cope with the problems I met during the study.

I would like to pour out my thanks to my graduate teacher Asst.Prof.Dr. Eda  st nel and graduate friends.

I would also like to extend my deepest gratitude to Associate Prof. Dr. Mustafa Kinsız for his support during the study and every member of Sıtkı Koçman School of Foreign Languages.

I am thankful to my friends Ali Geer and Ass.Prof.Dr. Umut Avcı for their assistance.

I am also grateful to all freshmen who participated in this study. They are the stars of this study, without their patience, willingness and contribution and support this study would have never come true.

Finally I would like to thank to my dearest wife Şahinde Şahbaz, my lovely daughter Yağmur Şahbaz and my mother Aziziye Şahbaz for their patience and support throughout the study.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	i
OZET	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vi
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION	
1.1. Introduction.....	1
1.2. Background of the study	1
1.3. Statement of the problem	2
1.4. Research question.....	3
1.5. Significance of the problem	3
1.6. Operational Definitions	4
1.7. Conclusion	5
CHAPTERII: LITERATURE REVIEW	
2.1. Introduction.....	6
2.2. Learning	7
2.3. Theories of Learning	8
2.3.1. Behaviorism.....	8
2.3.2. Cognitivism	8
2.3.3. Constructivism	9
2.3.4. Problem Based Learning	9
2.3.4.1. What is PBL	9
2.3.4.2. Learning and Teaching Process in PBL.....	10
2.3.4.3. The Role of Teacher in PBL	11
2.3.4.4. The Role of Student in PBL.....	11
2.3.4.5. Advantages of PBL	11

2.3.4.6. Assessment and Evaluation in PBL.....	12
2.3.4.7. PBL in Language Learning	13
2.3.4.8. Communication Skills and Problem Based Learning.....	14

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction	16
3.2. Setting.....	16
3.3. The Participants of the Study.....	16
3.4. Instruments.....	17
3.5. Procedures.....	18
3.6. Data Analysis.....	23

3.7. CHAPTER IV: DATA ANALYSIS

4.1. Introduction.....	24
4.2. Students' Attitudes Towards Problem Based Learning	24
4.3. Results and Discussions	45

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

5.1. Introduction	50
5.2. Results and Discussions	51
5.3. Implications of the study	53
5.4. Limitations of the Study	54
5.5. Conclusion.....	54

REFERENCES	55
APPENDIX A:.....	58
APPENDIX B:	61
APPENDIX C:.....	62
APPENDIX D:.....	64
APPENDIX E:.....	69
APPENDIX F:.....	70
APPENDIX G:.....	72

APPENDIX H:.....	82
APPENDIX I:.....	84

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

They know enough who know how to learn "Henry Brooks Adams"

Ability to learn is not unique to humans, our cats, dogs; birds have the ability to learn. Humans are better learners than animals. It can be considered as the most significant mental function of humans. Thanks to this ability we are not living in the caves as our ancestors did. As a result of this ability we have computers, comfortable houses, cars and etc. We build that modern world through that ability and now modern world expects us to be life-long learners. We are in age of information changing rapidly, so we need to be very fast in order to reach that speed. Reaching is not enough, that knowledge should be internalized and used in order to be a competent person.

Many scientists have tried to understand how people learn; some of them came in to being with new theories as result of countless observations and experiments. These learning theories can be categorized under three headings namely "behaviorism, cognitivism, and lastly constructivism" each of which has sub-parts.

Problem Based Learning (PBL) is a sub-part of Constructivist approach and was first applied in medicine in the late 1960s in Canada. Gradually it began to be applied in other areas of the science such as law, engineering and education. Recently it has gained some popularity in language learning and teaching.

1.2. Background of the Study

Learning theories can be classed under three headings which are "behaviorism, cognitivism and constructivism". The most outstanding theorists are known as Pavlov and Skinner in the Behaviorist side, Ausbel, Gagne in the

Cognitivist side and Piaget, Vygotsky, Bruner, Dewey and Rogers in the Constructivist side.

For behaviorism learning takes place as long as there is an evident change in behavior. They don't care about what is happening between stimulus and response. There are two main theories involved in behaviorist approach which are classical conditioning and operant conditioning.

As a reaction to behaviorism, a new approach -cognitivism- flourished because cognitivists thought that learning can not be explained by looking at the overt behavior of the organism. There must be something happening between stimulus and response process in the human brain. They believe that learning can not be explained only by observing the overt behavior of the organism. Unlike behaviorists they care about what is happening between stimulus and response.

In the second half of the century a new approach called "constructivism" gained popularity. For constructivist theory humans construct knowledge as a result of interaction with each other and the environment. Constructed knowledge is subjective; it is not independent from the individual.

PBL is a sub part of constructivist approach which was first used in medicine in Canada in 1960-70s. Later it began to be conducted in other disciplines of the science such as law, education, and engineering. PBL is an approach in which students are faced with an ill structured problem and they solve this problem in order to acquire the knowledge with group mates in a given time by the teacher. This approach is very new in language learning and teaching.

1.3. Statement of the problem

There is not much research about the application of PBL in language learning. Since the PBL approach worked well in other disciplines, its philosophy is thought to be suitable with the language learning especially for the students who are

above the beginner level. Through PBL, students will have a chance to develop their four skills as a result of problem solving process.

1.4. Research question

The study aimed at finding the answer to the question: *What are the attitudes of students towards the use of PBL in Effective Communication Skill Classes in ELT Departments?*

1.5. Significance of the problem

In our country as teachers, we mostly complain about the following issues;

- Students memorize everything before the examination and they forget afterwards, they do not internalize the knowledge.
- Students do not conduct research, they just come and note down what is given them in the classroom.
- Our classes are usually teacher-centered, students just listen to their teacher and they do not get involved in learning process.
- They do not interact with their classmates during teaching and learning process.
- They are mostly not able to express themselves in front of other people.
- As foreign language teachers we are not very successful at integrating four skills.

The above mentioned issues can be considered as the most problematic ones in conventional education system. Problem Based Learning can be a solution for these problems.

In PBL students do not have a chance to memorize the knowledge because there is a real life problem which must be solved by them. In order to present their solutions to the classroom they need to internalize the knowledge. Furthermore

information gathering process is observed and guided by the teacher so the teacher knows how students gather information and internalize the knowledge before they present their end products.

In PBL students must search the necessary information from different sources in order to find a solution to their problems. In this way students' research skill is fostered.

In PBL, students form groups and they solve the problem with their group mates and this leads them to interact with their group and classmates not only in the classroom but also outside. In PBL students have to present their end products or solutions in front of the classroom which will help them to improve their presentation skills in front of other people.

PBL integrates all the skills of language. In order to find a solution to given problem they need to read books, articles from different sources and listen to people who experienced such a problem before or materials from the internet and they have to present their final product or solution not only in written form but also orally.

1.6. Operational Definitions

Learning:

The term "learning" is a very broad concept so it was defined in many ways. Brown (2000, p.7) states that "contemporary dictionaries define learning as acquiring or getting of knowledge of a subject or a skill by study, experience or instruction". Additionally, Kimble & Garnezy (1963, p.133) defined learning as "a relatively permanent change in a behavioral tendency and is the result of reinforced practice" as cited in Brown (2000, p.7)

Problem-based learning (PBL):

PBL is a sub part of constructivist approach which was first used in medicine in Canada in 1960-70s. Later it began to be conducted in other disciplines of the science such as law, education, engineering, etc. PBL is an approach in which students are faced with an ill structured problem and they solve this problem in order to acquire the knowledge with group mates in a given time by the teacher. This approach is very new in language learning and teaching.

1.7. Conclusion

In this chapter, the introduction, the background of the study, the statement of the problem and the significance of the study were included. Literature review of this study is in the second chapter. The third chapter is about the methodology, participants, instruments and data analysis procedures of the study. The fourth chapter presents the finding of the study by analyzing the data. The fifth chapter is dedicated to the discussion of the analysis, implications and the limitations of the study as well as suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

Learning in today's world is very significant and modern world expects to have life-long learners. Learning is seen as an ongoing process which never stops. Involving this ongoing process is not enough alone, besides learners should be aware of learning how to learn. Why is how you learn important? At this point Spence (n.d p.2) states that:

Today the world of work, citizenship, and daily tasks require more knowledge and thinking skills than ever. The days of going to work and having someone tell you what to do are disappearing fast. We call our times the age of information. It means that we all need to be experts, leaders, managers, creators, and innovators. The necessary knowledge to do these things changes rapidly. What you will learn in college quickly will be obsolete when you graduate.

Additionally Spence (n.d, p.1) indicates that to get and hold a good job according to leading companies requires that you be able to do seven basic things;

- Learn to learn
- Communicate and collaborate with others
- Think creatively to solve novel problems
- Be technically competent
- Understand the opportunities and constraints of global economy
- Lead as well as follow, always taking initiative
- Manage your career to develop new skills and knowledge

The main aim of education at universities is creating the best learning atmosphere in which students are trained suitable with the expectations of the modern world. As it is known by every educator, there are many factors affecting

this atmosphere such as motivation, socio-economic status of learners, the performance and the role of each individual in the classroom and so forth.

The question or problem is that “How should learning and teaching take place at schools?” It is not very easy to answer this question. Every philosophy and method has different approaches and answers to this question. In this study, we tried to create a suitable learning atmosphere by using PBL in Communication Skills Classes.

In the first part of the chapter, “learning” was defined. In the second part different theories of learning were outlined. Finally, PBL was elaborated.

2.2. Learning

Brown (2000, p.78) asks following questions regarding learning “How do human beings learn? Are there certain basic principles of learning that apply to all learning acts? Is one theory of learning “better” than another? If so, how can you evaluate the usefulness of a theory?” Many branches of science have tried to answer the questions above because learning is the most crucial mental function of humans.

The term “learning” is a very broad concept so it was defined in many ways. Brown (2000, p.7) states that “contemporary dictionaries defines learning as acquiring or getting of knowledge of a subject or a skill by study, experience or instruction”. Additionally, Kimble & Garnezy (1963, p.133) defined learning as “a relatively permanent change in a behavioral tendency and is the result of reinforced practice” as cited in Brown (2000, p.7).

The main focus of this part is general description of learning, and in the next part, behaviorist, cognitivist and constructivist theories will be evaluated through the eyes of different psychologists.

2.3. Theories of Learning

2.3.1. Behaviorism

For behaviorism, learning takes place as long as there is an evident change in behavior. They do not care about what is happening between stimulus and response. There are two main theories involved in behaviorist approach which are classical conditioning and operant conditioning.

Pavlov's experiment with dogs, which is counted as the most popular example of classical conditioning, is known by everyone. For classical conditioning behaviors can be conditioned by pairing stimuli with responses.

Another type of behaviorism is Skinner's operant conditioning. In operant conditioning stimulus is deemphasized and it mainly focuses on the consequences of the response. If the response is reinforced, behavior is repeated by the organism; if it is punished that behavior vanishes in time. Responses are voluntary in operant conditioning.

2.3.2. Cognitivism

As it was explained above, behaviorism just focused on the overt behavior of the organism, they did not care about what is happening between stimulus and response. Unlike behaviorism, cognitivism mainly focused on the process between stimulus and response. They believe that human behavior can not be explained only by looking at stimulus and response process. There must be something happening in human brain during stimulus and response process. As a result cognitivism became the dominant learning theory in psychology .

As it is in behaviorism, there are different approaches to cognitivist theory. Ausubel's Meaningful Learning and Gestalt psychology could be considered as the most important approaches of cognitivist theory.

2.3.3. Constructivism

As a philosophy of learning, Constructivism has gained popularity in the second half of the 20th century after Behaviorism and Cognitivism. For constructivist philosophy knowledge is not independent from the humans. Humans construct knowledge as a result of interaction with each other and the environment and that knowledge is subjective.

For constructivism learning is a social process. McMahon (1997) states that:

Learning is not a process that only takes place inside our minds, nor is it a passive development of our behaviors that is shaped by external forces and that meaningful learning occurs when individuals are engaged in social activities.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constructivism_\(learning_theory\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constructivism_(learning_theory))

Learning theories “Behaviorism”, “Cognitivism” and “Constructivism” have been emphasized so far. In the next section of this chapter PBL, which is an important in-class application of Constructivist Theory will be handled from different perspectives.

2.3.4. PBL

2.3.4.1. What is PBL?

Generally, PBL can be defined as an instructional method in which learners face with real life problems and acquire knowledge about the subject by solving given problems in a collaborative work in a given time by the teacher.

Duch et al., (2001) indicates that “PBL is an instructional method that challenges students to learn to learn, working cooperatively in groups to seek solutions to real world problems” as cited in Kirkgöz (n.d, p.1).

2.3.4.2. Learning and Teaching Process in PBL

Teaching and learning process in PBL is very different from traditional classes in terms of learning philosophy, roles of the participants involving this process, assessment and evaluation and etc.

In PBL teacher presents an ill structured problem to students from real life, and in groups students try to find a solutions for this problem. They present their solutions to their classmates under the guidance of their teacher in different formats.

In his work Spence (n.d, p.4) explains this process step by step as follows:

Step 1: Explore the issues: What do I already know and believe about this topic and how can I share that with my teammates?

Step 2: Define the problem: What do I think is the problem we have to solve and how can my team agree on a problem statement?

Step 3: Investigate solutions: What do we have to know and do to solve this problem? This step requires much discussion. Play around with the problem statement and your knowledge and experience. Search for links, uncover assumptions, and identify what your team knows and what it needs to know. Make sure you agree on a solution.

Step 4: Research the knowledge and data that supports your solution. Your team needs to plan the work, assign tasks, and set deadlines.

Step 5: Write your solution and submit: Use your best communication skills to state your solution clearly and support it with relevant arguments and evidence. Leave enough time for reviews of organization, lively writing and proofreading. Do not mess up good thinking and research with a sloppy presentation.

Step 6: Review your performance: This step is easy to overlook, but it is crucial to improving your problem-solving skills. When you get an evaluation of your solution go over it individually and as a team to see what you did well and what mistakes you made. Mistakes are opportunities for learning. Discuss them to plan improvements on the next problem.

2.3.4.3. The Role of Teacher in PBL

The role of the teacher is very different when compared to traditional teacher-centered classes. In a PBL setting teachers do not come in front of the class and teach directly. Instead they prepare problems suitable with students' interest and cognitive levels and they guide students during problem solving process. They act as facilitators, guides and cognitive coaches.

2.3.4.4. The Role of Students in PBL

In PBL approach students do not sit and receive the given information in a passive way, instead they actively engage in the learning process. The responsibility of learning is mainly on students so they need to work harder than in usual classrooms.

2.3.4.5. Advantages of PBL

PBL has many advantages. Spence (n.d, p.2) asserts that:

Problem based learning gives you opportunities to examine and try out what you already know; discover what you need to learn; develop your skills for achieving higher performance in teams; improve your writing and speaking abilities, to state and defend with sound arguments and evidence your own ideas.

On the other hand, Larson (2001, p.2) states that “Students are known to develop greater communicative, thinking and problem solving skills with PBL than with regular lecture based education.” Furthermore, Suzuka (n.d, P.2) points out that:

PBL helps students to study not only one topic, but also two or three topics together. They need to combine pieces of knowledge together as well as to link one issue with another issue to find more suitable answers. Therefore, they eventually know how to integrate different information together. Furthermore, PBL gives students opportunities to learn extra skills through research. Through the PBL method, students can find more appropriate answers with creativity and motivation through discovering alternative solutions.

2.3.4.6. Assessment and Evaluation in PBL

Assessment and evaluation should be regarded as an active part of the learning process. Since PBL is very different from traditional approaches of learning from many perspectives, assessment and evaluation of the course is challenging and it is an ongoing process during the course. Waters & McCracken (1997, p.1) state that “traditional assessment techniques such as the familiar multiple-choice and true-false examinations do little to truly assess a student’s understanding and far-transfer of the PBL learning experience”. In addition to these, Waters & McCracken (1997, p.4) indicate that:

Formative and summative evaluations are applicable to PBL process. Formative evaluation is a part of the developmental or ongoing teaching-learning process. It includes delivery of feedback to the student, with the aim of improving teaching, learning and the curriculum. Summative evaluation occurs at the end of a term or course and is used primarily to provide information about how much the student has learned and how well the course was taught.

2.3.4.7. PBL in Language Learning

As explained in the previous parts of this chapter, PBL has recently gained popularity in some disciplines other than medicine. However, it is a really new approach in the area of language learning. Learning theories have had a great impact on language learning as well. For example, Audio Lingual Method gets its roots from behaviorist learning theory. Mathews (2007, p.1) state that:

Problem-based learning, which is an application of constructivist theory purposefully, combines cognitive and metacognitive teaching and learning. Within the area of second language learning and teaching, problem-based learning aligns with approaches in which students learn the target language by using it, rather than being presented with and then practicing predetermined language structures.

Besides the findings above Mathews (2007, p. 5) cited from Mackey (1999) Nakahama, Tyler, & Van Lier (2001) that:

When there is a focus on real-world issues and problems, the interactions that take place have been found to be more meaningful and authentic than interactions produced during activities such as assigned role plays or repetition of dialogues, and the expectation is that such interactions promote second language acquisition.

Furthermore, Mathews (2007, p. 5) cited from James (2006) that “because problem-based learning shifts the emphasis on learning activity from teachers to students, it can also help students become more autonomous learners who will transfer the skills learned in the classroom to their lives outside of the classroom”.

Although PBL has a lot of advantages and benefits in terms of language learning, there are some challenges and constraint of it. Mathews (2007, p.5) states the challenges in this way:

One challenge is that students who share a common first language may use that language rather than English when working in groups on the assigned problem. A second concern is that problem-based learning may not be appropriate for beginning- or literacy-level students whose English oral and reading skills are minimal.

In addition to his views about the challenges of PBL, Larson (2001, p.8) also states that

Applying PBL to language education would constitute a formidable challenge to whoever might choose to attempt it. It would not seem too radical to suggest that PBL might indeed be beneficial in a language classroom, especially if integrated with other, non-language disciplines.

In his study Ok (2005) concluded that students in PBL group seem to use the reading, speaking, listening skill more frequently than the students in the regular group. It can be concluded from these findings that before planning a syllabus students' reading, speaking and listening skills should be developed enough to solve the problems given during the course.

2.3.4.8. Communication Skills and Problem Based Learning

Communication is a very broad concept and it covers just about any interaction with another person. It includes sharing information, ideas and feelings between people. Communication is a 'two-way' process.

As detailed in the previous parts of this chapter, in PBL students are faced with an ill structured problem from real life and students solve this problem with their group mates in a given time by the instructor. During communication, we live many problems caused by many factors. Bringing those communication problems into the classroom will not only comply with the philosophy of PBL but also the aim of this course.

In PBL, students need to work in groups, search the required knowledge, internalize it and present it to other members of the class in order to solve the given problem. During this process students interact with their classmates, interact with the experts of their areas before presenting their solutions. In the problem solving process, students gain lots of experience and it helps them to be more effective communicators. In Effective Communication Skills classes through PBL approach, theory and practice are brought together. Theoretical side is the knowledge acquired and internalized during the problem solving process and practical side is the presentation of the acquired knowledge to classmates.

In PBL and language learning section of this chapter above, it was emphasized that PBL has many benefits for second language learning. During the process students need to read texts in English use it when interacting with classmates and present the solution in English. In this way, PBL combines the four skills of language learning together which is rarely found in second language learning and teaching.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This study is descriptive, and the purpose is to find out the attitudes of students towards the use of PBL in Effective Communication Skill Classes in ELT Departments, since students in ELT department at Muğla University might never hear about PBL before. It is a new approach for them. As it was emphasized in literature review section, in PBL students are faced with an ill structured problem from real life and they acquire the knowledge while they are solving the given problems by the teacher. When communicating, we face with many problems depending on various factors. Bringing these main problems into the classroom and solving them will not only comply with the purpose of the Effective Communication Skills Class but also with the main philosophy of PBL.

In this chapter information will be given about the participants of the study, the instruments to obtain the data. Subsequently, the data collection procedure and the data analysis strategies will be provided as well.

3.2. Setting

This study was conducted at Muğla University English Language Teaching Department of Education Faculty during the first term of 2007-2008 academic year.

3.3. Participants

38 freshmen of ELT department participated in this study in Effective Communication Skills Classes. The age of the participants ranged from 17 to 22 years. Twenty seven of the participants were females and eleven of them were males. They graduated from different high schools of Turkey such as Anatolian High School, Super High School, and Anatolian Teacher Training High School.

3.4. Instruments

Qualitative and quantitative data collection tools were used. In the quantitative side questionnaire technique was employed the questionnaire (see Appendix A) consisted of 44 items. This online questionnaire was prepared by Faculty of Health Engineering and Science, Victoria University in Australia to learn students' attitudes towards PBL. The original questionnaire consisted of 50 items but six of them were removed as they do not serve our purpose.

The aim of this questionnaire was to gather quantitative data from the students about their attitudes towards Problem Based Learning. Five point Likert scale was used by the researcher. Participants were asked to mark the items from "*strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree*". The data collected in this part of the questionnaire were intended to help to obtain the answer to the research question. The questionnaire was conducted twice, in the fourth and the 11th week of the course.

The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed by using reliability scale from SPSS 11.0. When the questionnaire was applied for the first time, the reliability value was:

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS - SCALE (ALPHA)

Reliability Coefficients

N of Cases = 38,0

N of Items = 44

Alpha = ,8732

At the end of the term the same questionnaire was applied again. The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed by using reliability scale from SPSS 11.0. The reliability value of it was:

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS - SCALE (ALPHA)

Reliability Coefficients

N of Cases = 38, 0 N of Items = 44

Alpha = ,7982

In the qualitative side, students were asked to answer the question "What do you think about the use of PBL approach in Communication Skills Classes?"(See Appendix B) in the fourth week of the course which was before the presentation. The same question was asked again to students in the sixth week of the course which was after the presentation in order to understand if there is any difference about the students' attitudes towards PBL after the presentations. At the end of the term students were given a semi- structured questionnaire consisting of 14 questions. (See Appendix C)

3.5. Procedures

In the following part, the procedures of this study will be outlined step by step:

1. Before starting the course and study, the content and the purpose of "Effective Communication Skills" course were examined. Articles, books and various resources from the internet about communication skills were examined and read in order to constitute knowledge base for the course.
2. A syllabus (see Appendix D) was prepared and the first problem (see Appendix B) was written.
3. There were two classes at ELT department, each of which nearly consists of 20 students predominantly females. The course of class A was on Friday afternoons and

the course of class B was on Monday mornings. The students were grouped randomly by delivering the male students equally in each group. Each group consisted of four or five students. (See Appendix E) This study was carried out for 12 weeks in Class A and Class B. During the study notes were taken about the process, reflections, reactions and attitudes.

4. In the first week, in Class A and B; Students were informed about the philosophy of PBL, of which they have never heard before. Their questions about the course-content and PBL were answered. They were given the prepared syllabus in which everything was explained in detail. Their questions were answered about the syllabus. After then they were delivered log sheets (see Appendix F) in which students were supposed to complete the processes they went through when solving the given problem. Their questions about the process sheets were answered. They were not informed about the exams because assessment and evaluation is very different from traditional approach. In both groups students looked nervous and scared of the new approach. A student from Class B reported that "she had preferred teacher centered classes to student centered classes"

5. In the second week of the course, in class A, PBL was retold for the new comers and the first problem was delivered to students. They still had problems with the content of log sheets, they were still not aware of how to complete the log sheets while solving the problem. The problem and new approach seemed quite strange to them. They were guided when completing the log sheets and they were provided with different points of view by the instructor to solve the problem. At the beginning of the class students were really confused but towards the end the picture of the course content and philosophy became clearer.

In class B, there were only four students in the classroom because of the Eve. The same explanations and guidance were made to students. Students in the classroom were assigned to email the first problem scenario to absentees.

6. In the third week, in class A, it was observed that the students brought their materials to solve the problem. But they were raw materials, they got prints related to their research question but the knowledge on the papers was not internalized. Since the knowledge was not internalized, it couldn't be shared among the group members. Students were guided by the instructor and their questions were answered about the course in general. Finally everybody in the class was warned to come to class prepared next week.

In the third week, in class B, students were still having problems about PBL and how to solve the problem. They were again informed about these topics. It was because; last week there were only four students in the classroom. Although the first problem was emailed to them, it was observed that they didn't work on this problem and they still had many deficiencies about the PBL approach, log sheets, and course content. They looked really scared, nervous and confused. Students were informed about how they would make their presentations.

7. In the fourth week, in class A; since students were not well-prepared for the presentations of their solutions, they were postponed for next week. Their log sheets were checked and their mistakes were corrected. They were guided on how to make their presentations their works were examined by the instructor. Most of the students planned to make their presentation through drama. A paper was delivered to learn students' attitudes toward PBL approach in communication skills classes. The question of the paper was "What do you think about the PBL approach in communication skills classes?" At the end of the lesson, students were given presentation evaluation form and their questions about the presentation evaluation form were answered by the instructor.

In the fourth week in Class B, the students in this group looked more scared and nervous than the other group because they knew that they were not ready enough to make their presentations. By the way, it was observed that presentation process laid too much stress on students, it can easily be seen that they were really scared of the presentation process.

During guidance period to the students, it was obvious that they did not like PBL approach and they were questioning that approach very much. One of the students asked me a question which is "Are there any other universities which apply PBL?" Students' negative attitudes, feelings, opinions and ideas towards PBL laid too much stress on us.

8. In the fifth week in Class A, students made their presentations; their performances were really excellent and fascinating. Their performances were evaluated depending on the presentation evaluation forms (See Appendix G). Log sheets were collected because they were used to give the students midterm marks together with their performances during presentation. One of the students reported that "she had self confidence problems, after the presentation she felt herself more self confident".

In the fifth week, in Class B, students made their presentations but their presentations were not as good as class A. Their performances were not criticized badly; instead they were encouraged and appreciated because they were really having self confidence problems.

9. In the sixth week, in class A, after evaluating the first phase of the study with the consultant, we decided that groups could prepare their problems depending on their interests. In this week, with the whole class we brainstormed what kind of communication problems would help us to reach the intended purpose of the course. We decided on some problems and wrote them on the board. Groups chose which problems to solve and they began to study to complete the KND (Know, Need to Know, and Need to Do) chart which was delivered to them in this session because students had some difficulties with the log sheets. They were explained how to complete the KND charts. (See Appendix H)

At the end of the lesson students were delivered and they were told to write their opinions, ideas, and attitudes about PBL approach in Communication Skills classes. After the first presentation it was observed that students had positive attitudes toward PBL. In the sixth week, in class B, the same procedures were followed.

10. In the seventh week, in class A, groups began to analyze the given problem and they completed KND chart, they determined the responsibilities and shared them. In the second phase of the course student looked more self confident, happier and less nervous. That is to say, everything seemed to change from negative to positive toward PBL approach in communication skills classes. In the seventh week in class B, the same procedures were followed. It could easily be seen that students' attitudes towards PBL changed from negative to positive.

11. In the eight week, in class A; Students brought their materials and tried to find possible solutions to the problem. They shared their knowledge with their group mates. In the eight week, in class B, the same procedures were followed.

12. In the ninth week, both in class A and B students went on studying with their group mates. They were guided by the teacher. They planned how to make their presentations and they determined responsibilities for the presentation.

13. In the tenth and eleventh weeks, in both classes students made their presentations. Because they were more experienced about PBL approach, their presentations were really better than the first one. Each performance was evaluated by the instructor. Their materials were collected and put in each group's file in order to evaluate their work to give them final exam grades. At the end of the 11th week students were given questionnaire to find out students' attitudes toward PBL approach. They completed the questionnaire and returned the questionnaire to the instructor.

14. In the 12th week of the term, in class A and B; PBL, Effective Communication Skills Course were evaluated orally. They were thanked by the instructor because of their effort and good performances. At the end of the lesson students were again given a semi-structured questionnaire through which students reflections, attitudes

and opinions about PBL were taken. Each group's files were checked, evaluated to give the students final grades.

15. At the end of the term students' mid term exam grades had already been given depending on their first presentation in the mid term exam week but students were not informed about their marks not to affect their performance. By taking each group's file and second presentation into consideration, students' final exam grades were given.

3.6. Data Analysis

Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS 11, 0) was used to analyze the quantitative data in this study. The same questionnaire was applied to the students in different times of the term so t-paired sample test was used to see if there is any significant difference between their attitudes.

In order to get qualitative data from the study, students were asked a question "What do you think about the use of PBL approach in Communication Skills Classes?" in the fourth and sixth weeks of the course which was before and after the presentation. Students wrote their opinions and attitudes. The content analysis of their thoughts was made and outstanding and repeated expressions were shown in the figures.

At the end of the term to get qualitative data, students were given semi-structured questionnaire and content analysis of their comments was made, and the outstanding, repeated expressions were shown in the figures.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

4.1. Introduction

In this study the collected data are concerned with the attitudes of the freshmen's towards the application of PBL in Effective Communication Skills Classes at ELT department of Muğla University. The findings of both the questionnaires and interviews will be analyzed to answer the following research question: *What are the attitudes of students towards PBL in Effective Communication Skills Classes?*

The quantitative data acquired through close-ended questionnaire which was conducted twice in different times of the term and t-paired sample test was used to see if there is any significant change.

The qualitative data were obtained from open ended and semi structured questionnaires. The content analysis of qualitative data was made and the results were shown in the tables. Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS 11.0) was used to compute the frequencies of the questionnaire.

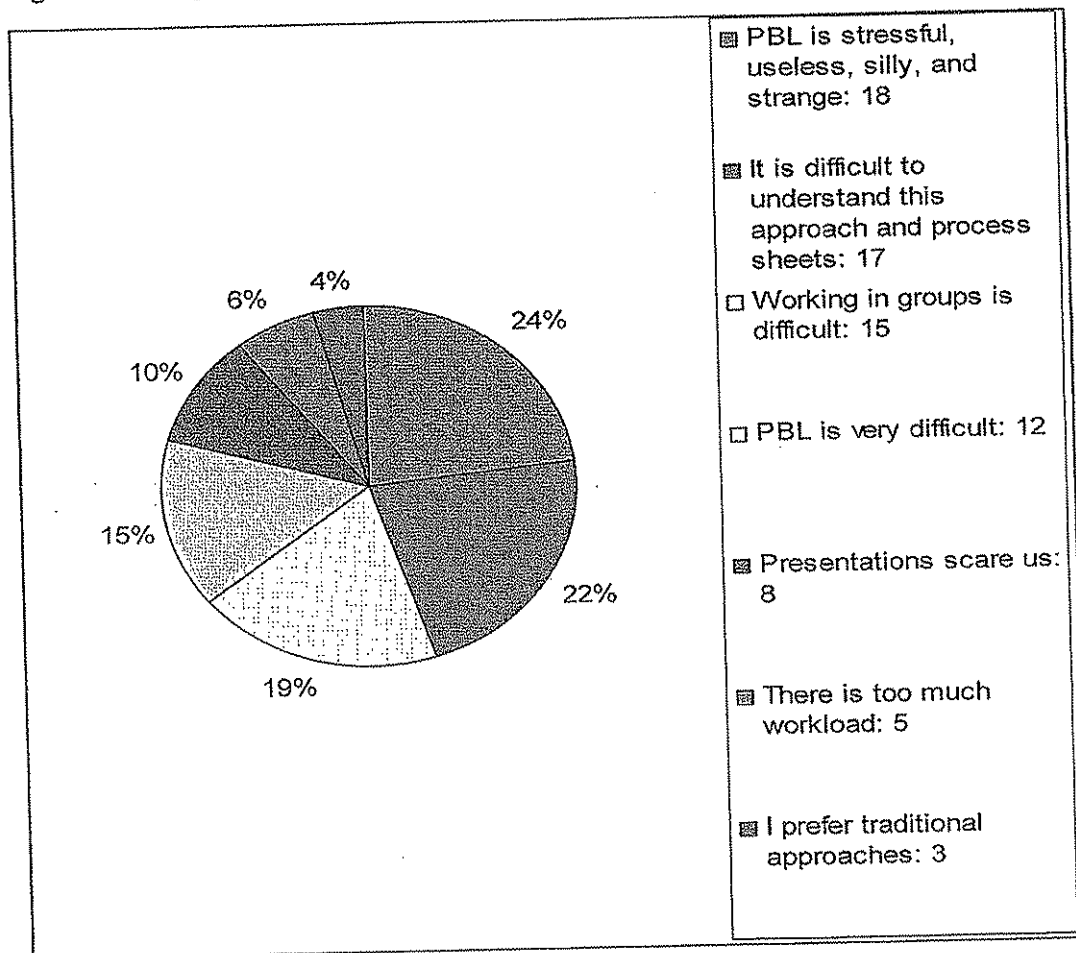
4.2. Students' Attitudes towards PBL in Effective Communication Skills Classes

As it was mentioned above quantitative and qualitative research was conducted to gather data. In order to get quantitative data 44 Likert-scale type items were conducted. Participants were asked to mark the items from "*strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4), and strongly agree (5)*". The questionnaire was conducted twice in the same term and t-paired sample test was used to see significant changes. The results of these two questionnaires were also analyzed with respect to the mean scores, standard deviations, and paired samples t-test results

Significance value is greater than .05 in questions *8, 10, 14, 15, 18, 19, 21, 28, 29, 35, and 38* (see Appendix A), which mean that there is no significant difference. On the other hand, significance value in other questions is less than .05, which means that there is a significant difference between the same questionnaires applied in different times of the term.

For the qualitative data, students were asked an open ended question and then the content analysis of the comments was made. Finally, the following figures were prepared to show the results. In the fourth week of the course, before students presented their final products they were asked to answer the question "What do you think about the use of Problem Based Learning in Effective Communication Skills Classes? " The aim of it was to learn students' attitudes towards Problem Based Learning. Students wrote their comments for this question and their answers were analyzed. Students' attitudes were categorized under two headings; Negative Aspects of PBL and Positive Aspects of PBL.

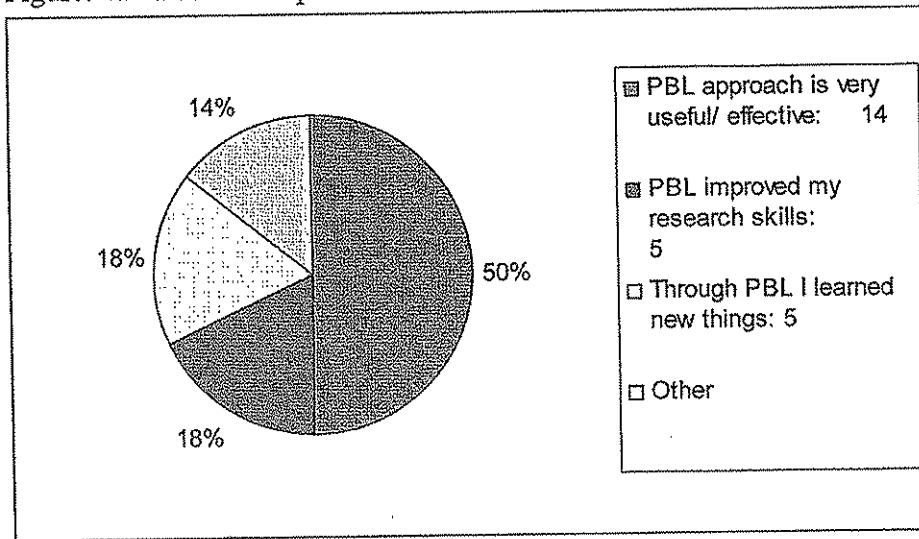
Figure: 4.1: Negative Aspects of PBL before Presentation



24 % (18) of students' comments point out that "PBL is stressful, useless, silly, and strange". 22 % (17) indicate that "It is difficult to understand this approach and process sheets" 19 % (15) point out that "Working in groups is difficult". 15 % (12) point out that "PBL is very difficult". 10 % (8) state that "Presentations scare us". 6 % (5) point out that "There is too much workload". 4 % (3) point out that "I prefer traditional approaches".

As it can be seen from these results students' attitudes towards PBL were highly negative before presentation. The number of the negative comments was 78.

Figure 4.2: Positive Aspects of PBL before Presentation

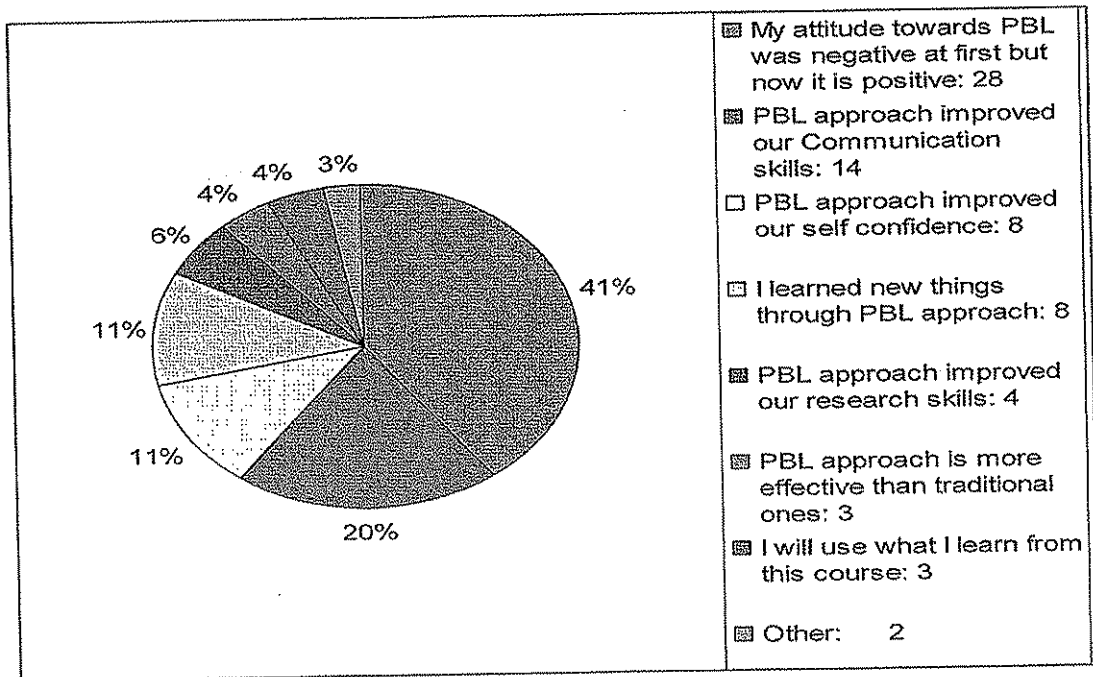


Students' negative attitudes were expressed above. Their positive attitudes towards the use of PBL can be seen in Figure 4.2.

24 comments were made as for the positive aspects of PBL. 50 % (14) of the students' comments point out that "PBL approach is very useful/ effective". 18% (5) state that "PBL improved my research skills". Again 18 % (5) report that "Through PBL I learned new things". The percentage of other comments is 14 % and the number of it is 4. These comments are as follows "I take responsibility through PBL", "PBL prepares us to real life", "What I learn through PBL is easily remembered", "It is good to work in groups".

Before the presentation students attitudes towards PBL were mainly negative as can be seen in the figures above.

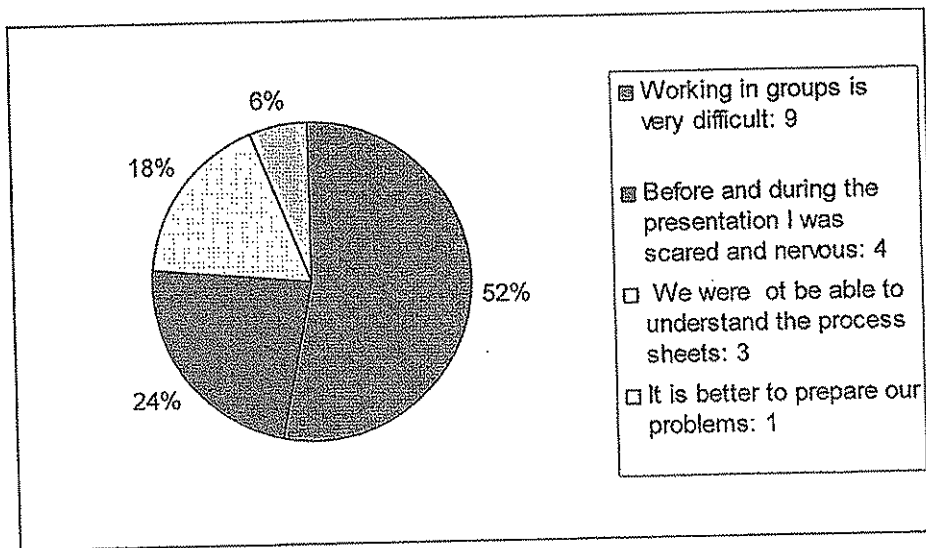
Figure: 4.3: Positive Aspects of PBL after Presentation



After the presentation students were asked the same question again: “What do you think of the use of PBL in Effective Communication Skills?” After the analyses of the given answers show that students’ attitudes towards PBL mainly changed from negative to positive” In the Figure 4.3 Positive Aspects of PBL for students are shown and they can be summarized as follows:

70 comments were made and they highlighted Positive Aspects of PBL after Presentation. 41% (28) of the students’ comments report that “My attitude towards PBL was negative at first but now it is positive” 20 % (14) point out that “PBL approach improved our Communication skills”. 11% (8) show that “PBL approach improved our self confidence”. Again 11 % (8) point out that “I learned new things through PBL approach”. 6 % (4) state out that “PBL approach improved our research skills”. 4 % (3) indicate that “PBL approach is more effective than traditional ones”. 4 % (3) point out that “I will use what I learn from this course”. The percentage of other comments is 2 % the number of which is 2 reports that “I used the communication strategies I learned from this course in the speaking exam” and “PBL approach improved our creativity”

Figure: 4.4: Negative Aspects of PBL after Presentation

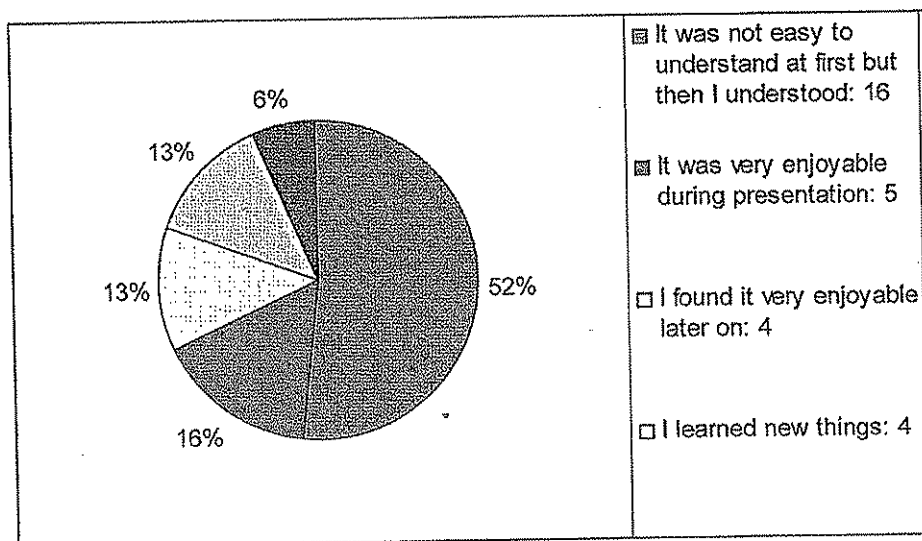


Negative Aspects of PBL after presentation for students can be summarized as follows: For the negative aspects of PBL 17 comments were made. 52 % (9) of students' comments report that "*Working in groups is very difficult*". 24 % (4) say that "*Before and during the presentation I was scared and nervous*". 18 % (3) point out that "*We were not able to understand the process sheets.*" 6 (1) % express that "*It is better to prepare our own problems*".

As it is seen in the figure above the number of negative aspects lowers after the presentation.

In order to get more qualitative data from the students, they were asked semi-structured questions to learn their attitude towards PBL at the end of the term. Content analysis was made and the outstanding repeated expressions were shown in the figures.

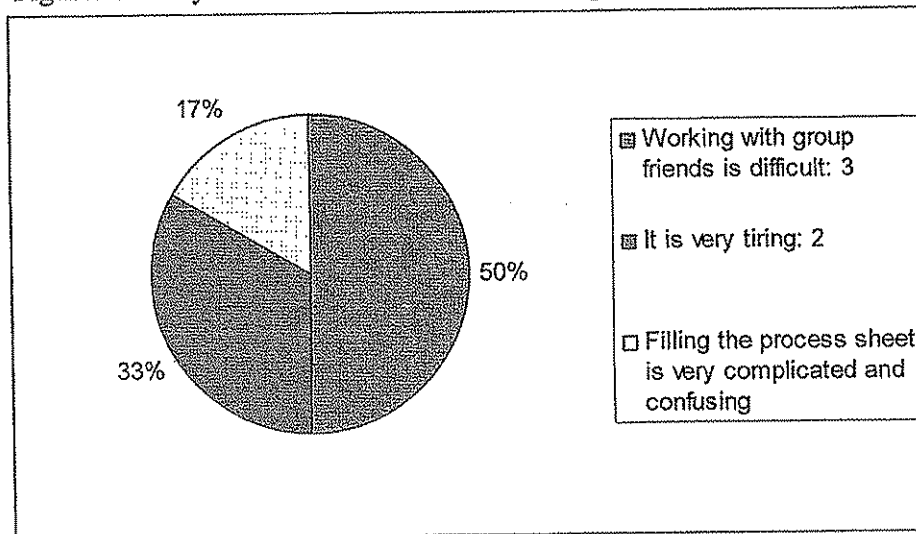
Figure: 4.5: My attitude towards PBL has changed from negative to positive



The first expression that students were asked to complete is “My attitude towards PBL has changed from negative to positive because.....”

Through the content analysis the results in Figure 4.5 were obtained. 52 % (16) of students’ comments report that “*It was not easy to understand at first but then I understood.*” 16 % (5) point out that “*It was very enjoyable during presentation.*” 13% (4) point out that “*I found it very enjoyable later on.*” Again 13 % (4) of the students say that “*I learned new things.*” Finally, 6 % (2) of the students’ comments report that “*I realized that PBL improved my communication and presentation skills.*”

Figure: 4.6: My attitude towards PBL has changed from positive to negative

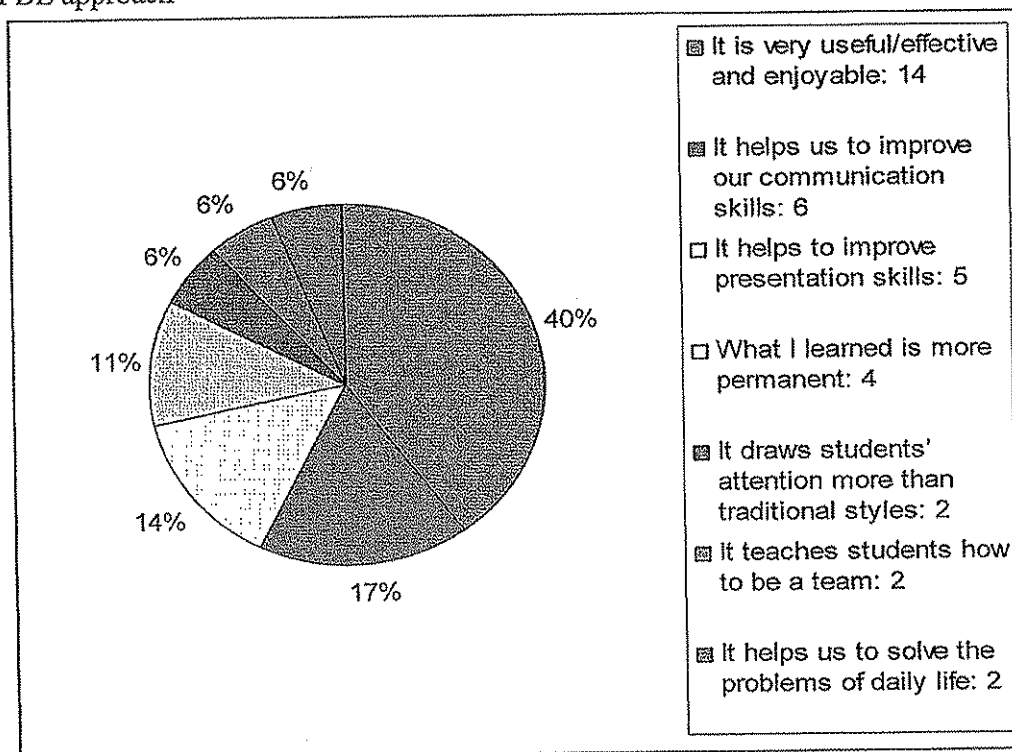


The second expression that students were asked to complete is “My attitude towards PBL has changed from positive to negative because.....”

Students’ opinions for this expression are shown in Figure 4.6. 50 % (3) of the students’ comments report that “*Working with group friends is difficult.*” 33% (2) point out that “*It is very tiring.*” 17% (1) point out that “*Filling the process sheet is very complicated, confusing.*”

When Figures 4.5 and 4.6 are compared it can easily be seen that students’ attitudes towards PBL mainly changed from negative to positive.

Figure: 4.7: Next year effective communication skills classes should be studied with PBL approach

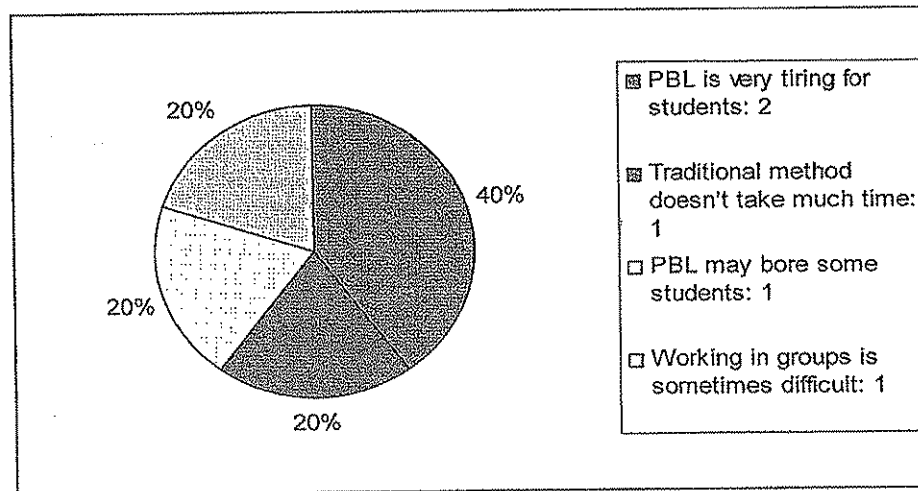


The third expression that students were asked to complete is “Next year Effective Communication Skills Classes should be studied with PBL approach because.....”

Comments made for this expression are more varied than the first and second expressions. 40 % (14) of the students' comments report that “*It is very useful/effective and enjoyable.*” 14 % (5) indicate that “*It helps us to improve our communication skills.*” 11% (4) stress that “*What I learn is more permanent*”. Again 11 % (4) point out that “*It helps to improve presentation skills*”. 6 % (2) point out “*It helps us to solve the problems of daily life.*” 6 % (2) point out “*Students can learn effective communication skills in a group environment.*” 6 % (2) say “*It teaches students how to become a team*”. 6 % (2) point out that “*It draws student attention more than traditional styles*”.

Based on these results it can be concluded that students strongly believe that this course should be studied with PBL approach in the years to come.

Figure: 4.8: Next year effective communication skills course should be studied with traditional approach

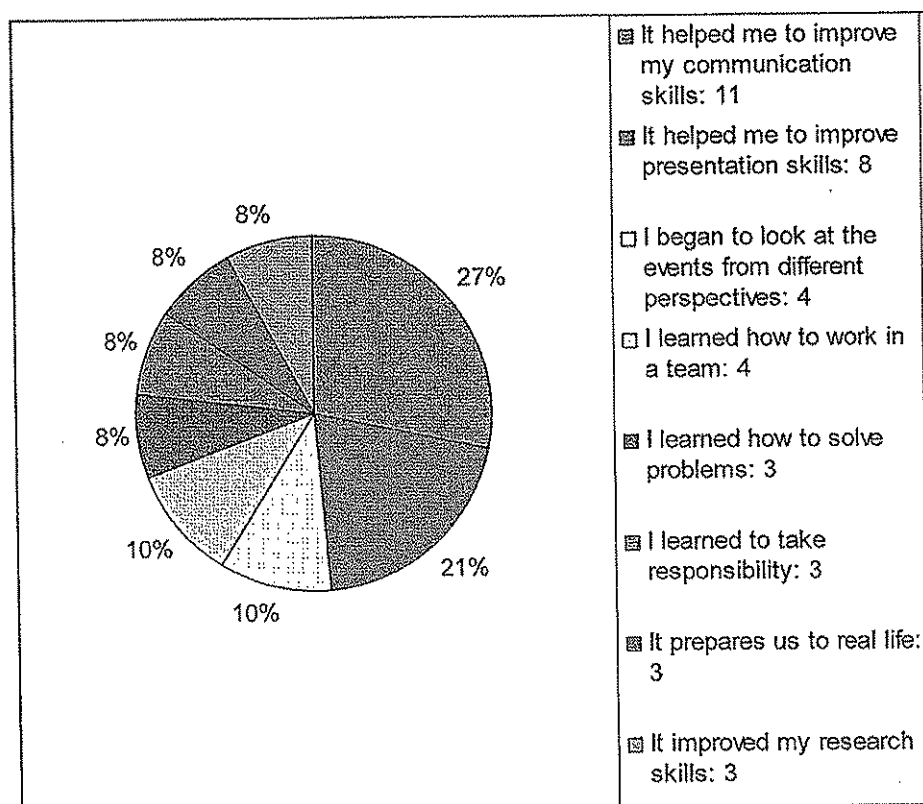


The fourth expression that students were asked to complete is “Next year Effective Communication Skills Classes should be studied with traditional approach because...”

Students’ comments are shown in Figure 4.8. The results can be summarized as follows. 40 % (2) of the students’ comments point out that “*PBL is very tiring for students*”. 20% (1) points out that “*Traditional method doesn’t take much time*”. Again 20 % (1) of the point out that “*PBL may bore some students*”. Finally 20 % (1) points out that “*Working in group is sometimes difficult*”.

When figure 4.8 compared to figure 4.7, it can easily be seen that most of the students want this course to be studied with PBL approach next year.

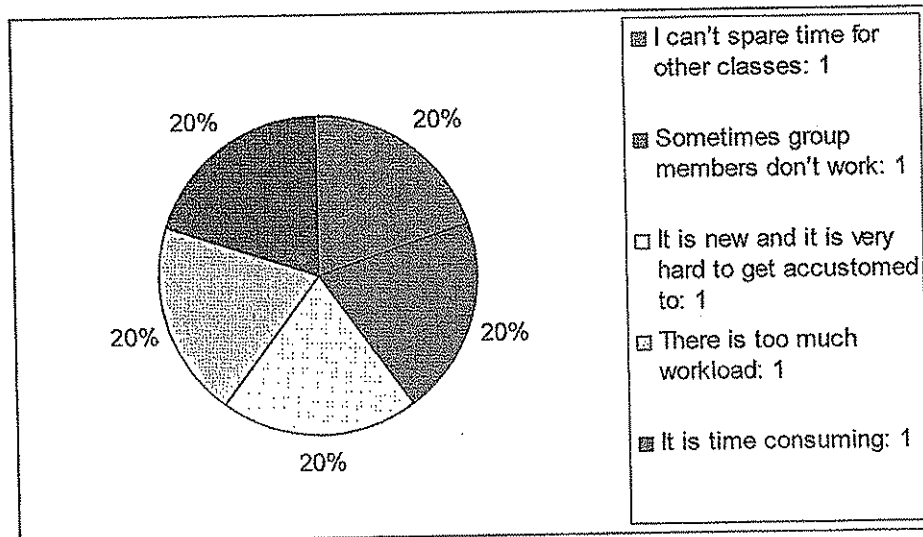
Figure: 4.9: This course with PBL approach was beneficial for me



The fifth expression that students were asked to write their opinions is “This course with PBL approach was beneficial for me because...”

27% (11) of the students’ comments indicate that “It has helped me to improve my communication skills” 20 % (8) state that “It has helped me to improve my presentation skills” 10 % (4) say that “I have begun to look at the events from different perspectives”. 10 % (4) point out that “I have learned how to work in a team”. 7 % (3) respectively show that “I have learned how to solve problems”. “I have taken responsibility”. “It prepares us to real life”. “It has improved my research skills” Finally 5 % (2) put forth that “I learned by living”.

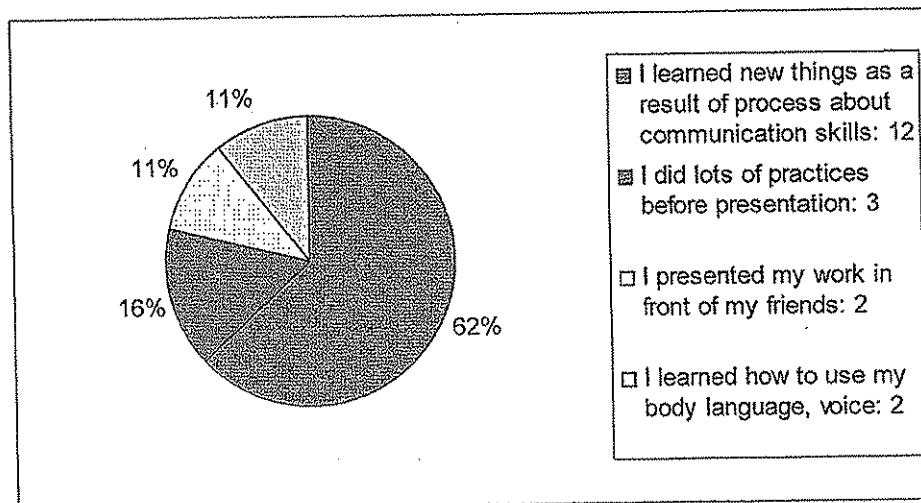
Figure: 4.10: This course with PBL was not beneficial for me



The sixth expression that students were asked to complete is "This course with PBL approach was not beneficial for me because....."

This expression was equally commented by students. It is shown in Figure 4.10. 20 % (1) of the students' comments respectively point out that "I can't spare time for other classes". "Sometimes group members don't work". "It is new and it hard to get accustomed to ". " There is too much workload". "It is time consuming" When figure 4.9 compared to 4.10 it can be concluded that this course with PBL approach was very beneficial for the students.

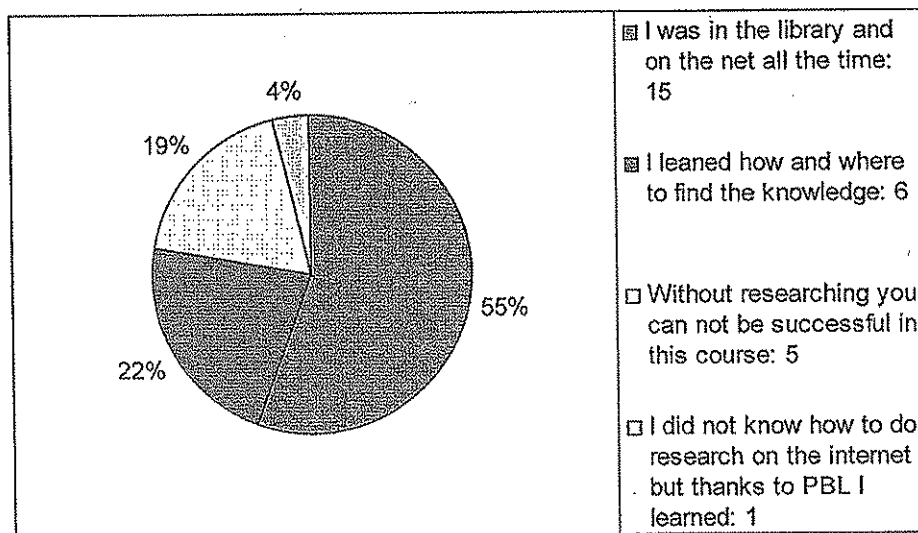
Figure: 4.11: Thanks to PBL my communication skills have developed



The seventh expression that students were asked to complete is “Thanks to PBL my communication skills have developed because

62% (12) of the students’ comments report that “*I learned new things about communication skills as a result of the process*”. 16 % (3) assert that “*I did a lot of practices before presentation*”. 11 % (2) point out that “*I presented my work in front of my friends*”. Again 11% (2) show that “*I learned how to use my body language and voice*”

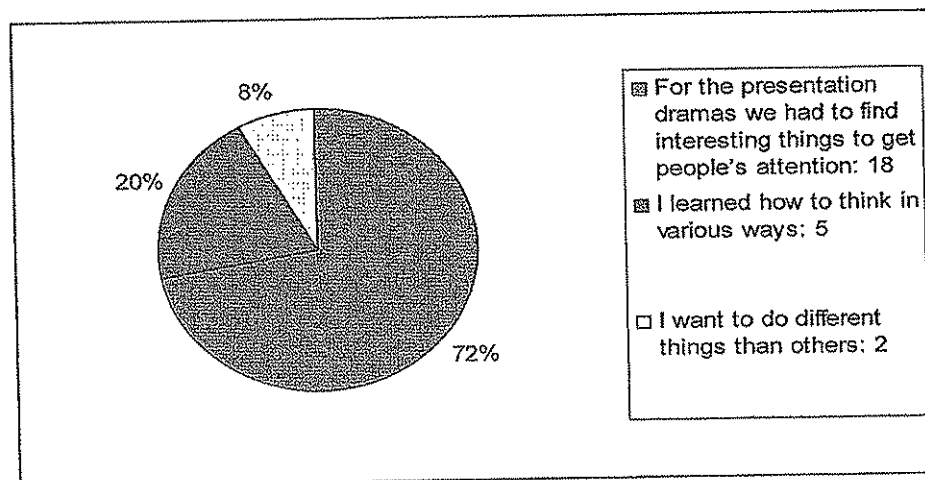
Figure: 4.12: Thanks to PBL my research skills have developed



The eighth expression that students were asked to write their opinions is “Thanks to PBL my research skills have developed because

55% (15) of the students’ comments report that “*I was in the library and on the net all the time*” .22 % (6) convey that “*I learned how and where to find the knowledge*”. 19 % (5) report that “*Without researching you can not be successful in this course*”. 4 % (1) of the point out that “*I did not know how to make a research but thanks to PBL I learned*”.

Figure: 4.13: Thanks to PBL my imagination and creativity have developed

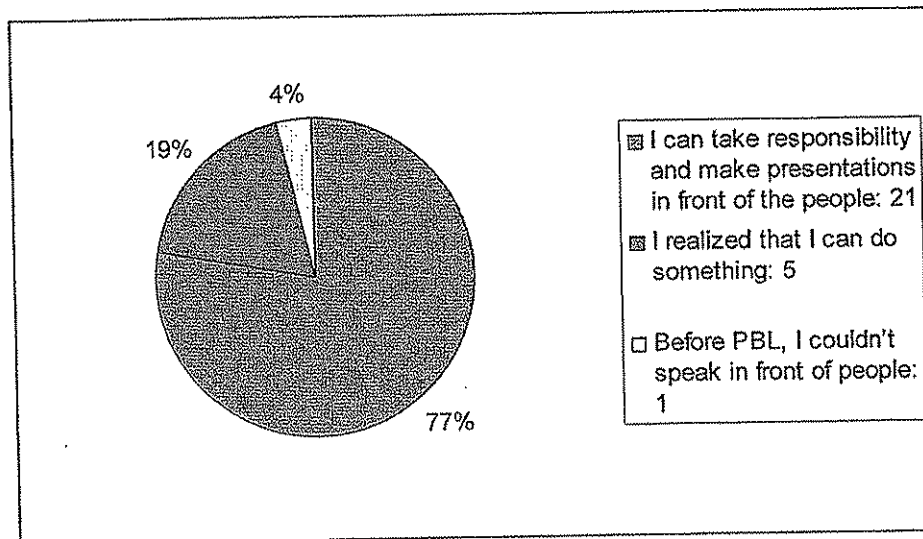


The 9th expression that students were asked to complete is “Thanks to PBL my imagination and creativity has developed because”

72 % (18) of the students' comments report that “*For the presentation and dramas we had to find interesting things to get people's attention*”. 20 % (5) show that “*I learned how to think in various ways*”. 8 % (2) point out that “*I want to do different things from others.*”

When the Figures 4.11, 4.12 and 4.13 are taken into consideration it can be seen that students' communication, research skill and creativity have developed.

Figure: 4.14: PBL boosted my self confidence

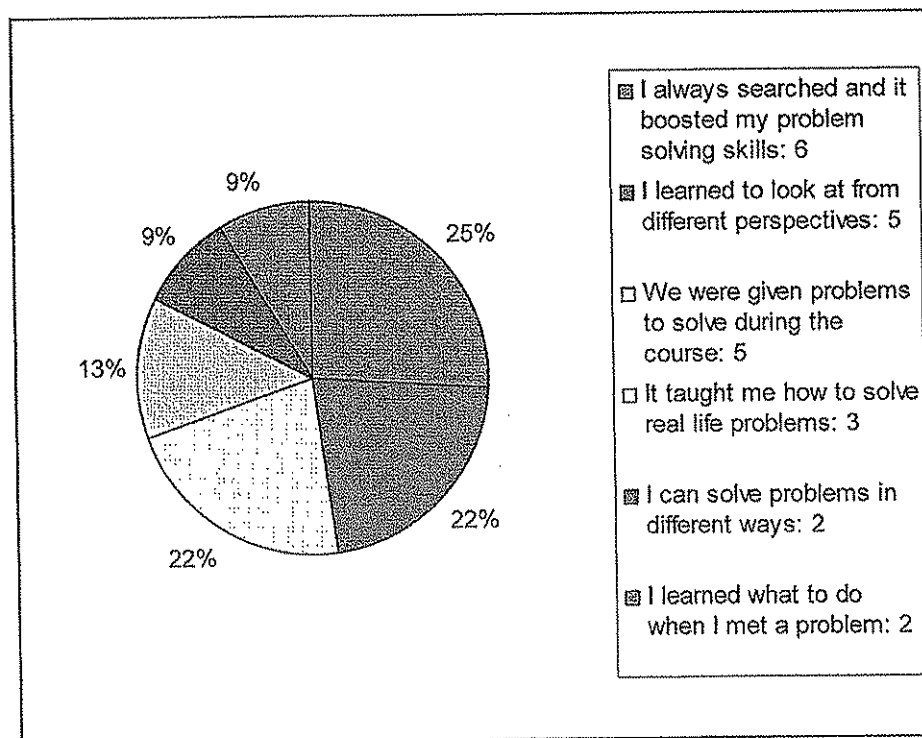


The tenth expression that students were asked to complete is “PBL boosted my self confidence because

77 % (21) of the students’ comments report that “*I can take responsibility and make presentations in front of the people*”. 19% (5) point out that “*I realized that I can do something*”. 4 % (1) point out that “*Before PBL, I could not speak in front of other people*”.

By looking at Figure 4.14, it can be said that PBL has positive contribution to students’ self confidence. As it is seen, taking responsibility and making presentations boosted their self confidence.

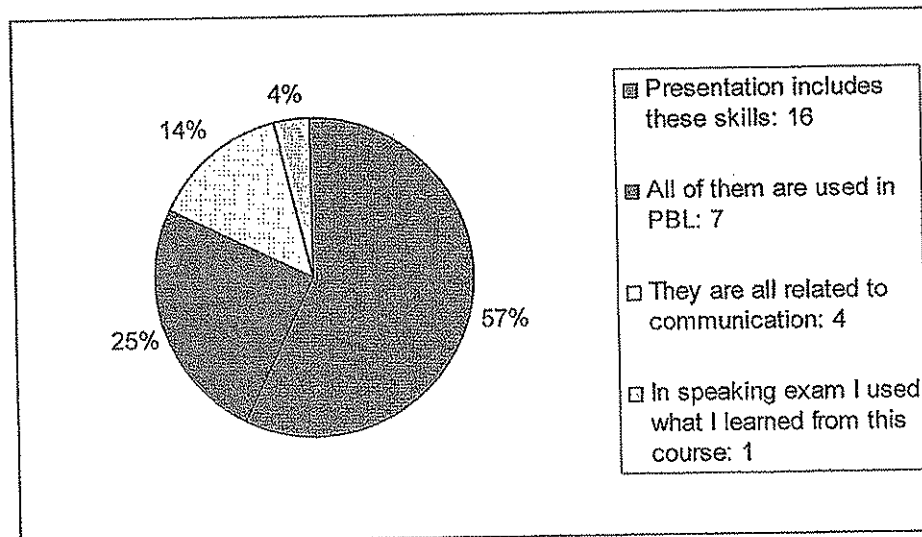
Figure: 4.15: PBL boosted my problem solving skills



The 11th expression that students were asked to complete is “PBL boosted my problem solving skills because ...”

25 % (6) of the students’ comments report that “*I always searched and it boosted my problem solving skills*”. 22 % (5) point out that “*I learned to look at from different perspectives*”. 13 % (3) report that “*We had many problems to solve during the course*”. Again 13 (3) % point out that “*It taught me how to solve real life problems*”. 9% (2) of the students’ comments respectively indicate that “*I can solve problems in different ways*”. “*I know what to do when I met a problem*”. “*In this course there is a problem which we have to solve otherwise we fail.*”

Figure: 4.16: This course with PBL approach has positive contribution to other courses such as speaking, listening, writing and reading

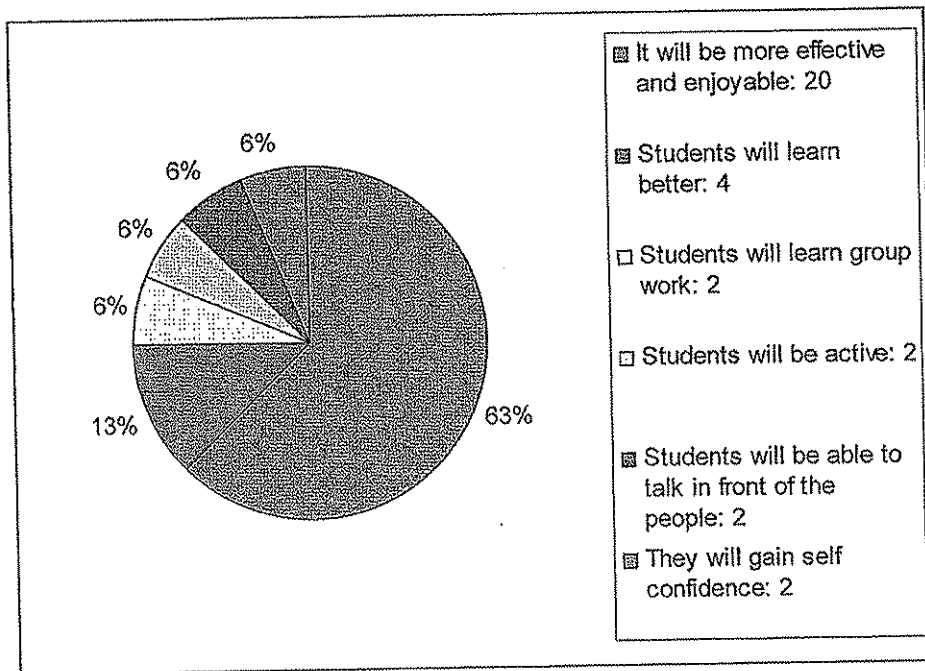


The 12th expression that students were asked to complete is “This course with PBL approach has positive contribution to other courses such as speaking, listening and etc because.....”

57 % (16) of the students’ comments report that “*Presentation includes these skills*”. 25 % (7) point out that “*All of them are used in PBL*”. 14% (4) state that “*they are all related to communication*”. 4 % (1) point out “*In speaking exam I used what I learned from this course*”.

According to students’ comments, it can be concluded that this course made positive contribution to other courses in the program.

Figure: 4.17: When I become a teacher, I will PBL in my classes

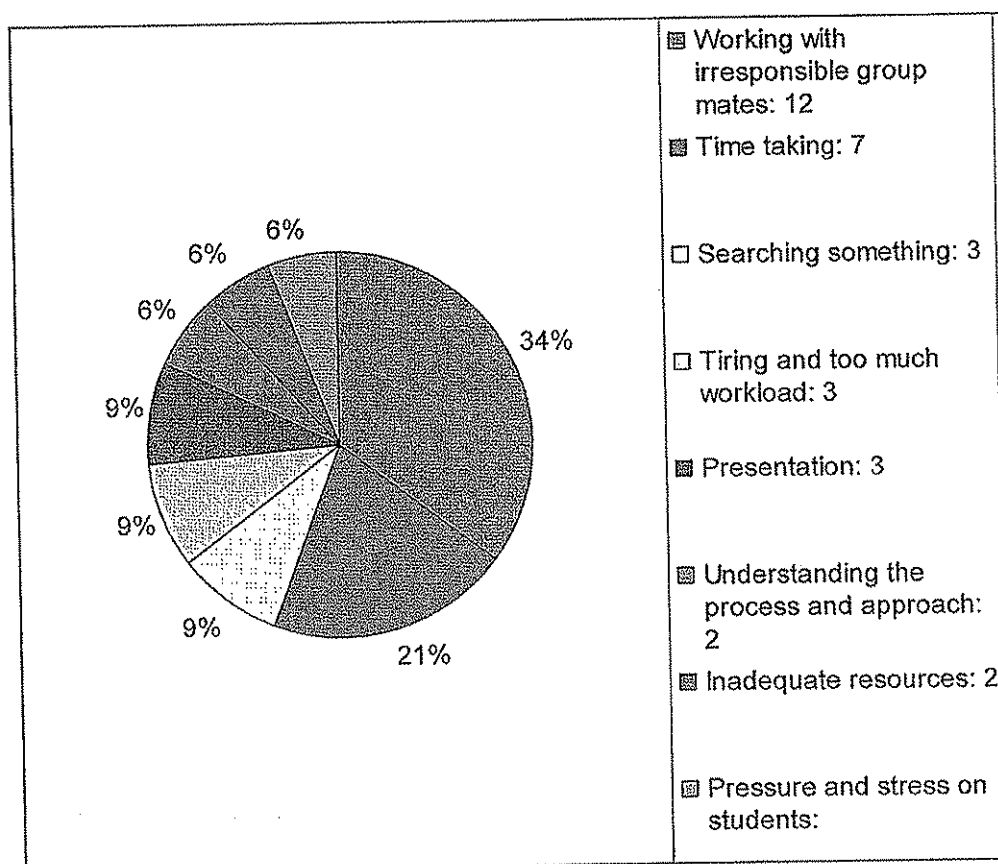


The 13th expression that students were asked to complete is “When I become a teacher I will use PBL in my classes because.....”

44 % (14) of the students’ comments report that “*It will be more effective*”. 19 % (6) point out that “*It is enjoyable*”. 13 % (4) say that “*Students will learn subjects better*”. 6 % (2) of the students’ comments respectively indicate that “*Students will learn group work*”. “*Students will be active*”, “*Students will be able to talk in front of the people*”, “*They will gain self confidence*”.

By looking at the Figure 4.17, it can be concluded that most of the students will use PBL when they become a teacher.

Figure: 4.18: The most problematic side of PBL

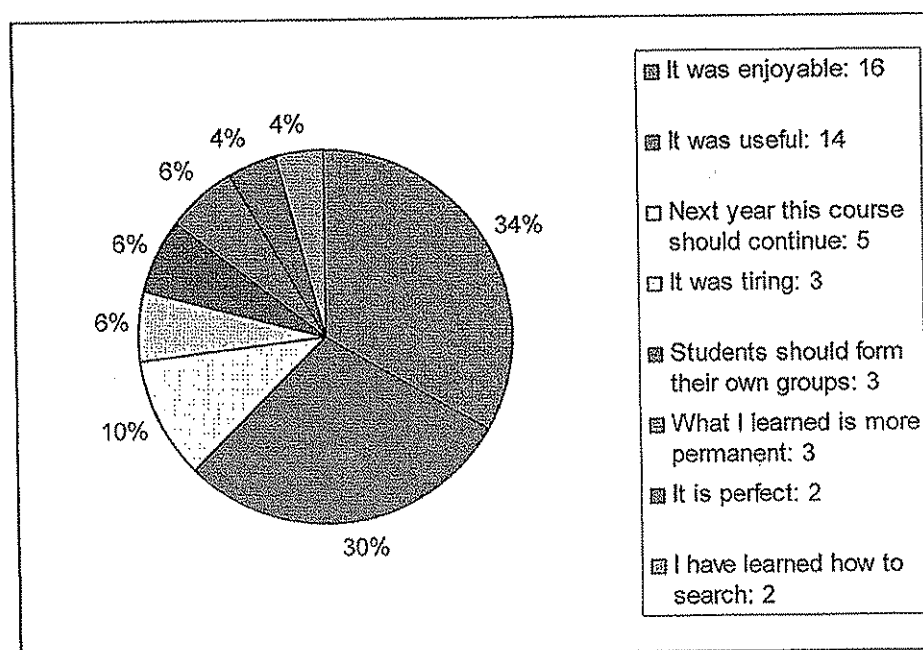


The last expression that students were asked to write their opinions is “The most problematic side of PBL is

34% (12) of the students report that “*Working with irresponsible group members*”. 21% (7) of the students say “*It takes too much time*”. 9 % (3) of the students respectively report that “*Searching something*”. “*It is tiring and there is too much work load*”. “*Presentation*”. 6 % (2) of the students respectively say that “*Understanding the process and approach well*”. “*Inadequate resources*”. “*Pressure and stress on students*”.

During the research process students mostly complained about the irresponsible group friends. As can be seen in the figure above, that is the most problematic side of PBL.

Figure 4.19: Your own comments about PBL



The last question asked students to express their own comments about PBL in general. The above results were obtained after the content analysis was made.

34 % (6) students' comments say that "PBL was very enjoyable for them", 30 % (14) report that "PBL was very useful for them". 10 % (5) point out that "Next year this course should continue". 6 % (3) of the students' comments respectively point out that "It was tiring", "Students should form their own groups", "What I learned is more permanent". 4 % (2) of the comments respectively report that "It is perfect", "I have learned how to search"

By looking at the Figure 4.19, it can be said that students' positive comments are higher than the negative comments.

As a result of qualitative part of this study, it can be concluded that students' attitudes towards PBL changed from negative to positive. Although there is a change from negative to positive in all aspects of PBL, students still don't like working with irresponsible group mates. Group work can be seen the most problematic side of PBL as can be seen in the figure above.

4.3. Results and Discussion

As it was stated above, quantitative and qualitative data collection tools were used in order to obtain data.

In order to get quantitative data a questionnaire consisting of 44 items was given to students. The same questionnaire was conducted twice in different times of the semester. Paired samples t-test was applied for the questionnaire in order to see significant differences.

The results were analyzed and the significance value was greater than .05 for the questions *8, 10, 14, 15, 18, 19, 21, 28, 29, 35, and 38* (see Appendix A) which mean that there is no significant difference. For the rest of the questions the significant value was less than .05 which means that there is a significant difference between the same questionnaires applied in different times of the term.

As for qualitative data research, students were asked to write their opinions, attitudes, thoughts etc. about the application of PBL in Effective Communication Skills Classes. The content analysis of their comments was made and the results were shown in the figures. The question "What do you think about the application of PBL in Effective Communication Skills Classes?" was asked in the fourth and sixth weeks of the semester which were before and after their presentations. As it could easily be seen in the figures above, their attitude towards PBL changed from negative to positive in two weeks. The number of the positive comments was 24 before the presentation it went up to 70 after presentation. In the same way, the number of the negative comments was 78 before presentation and it came down to 17 after presentation. The results are really surprising, what is the reason of that change in two weeks? The first and the most important factor that changed their attitude towards PBL is that they realized and experienced that they could do good works. The second important factor that changed their attitude from negative to positive is that during the preparation process and after the presentation they were never given

negative feedback about their performance by the instructor. All the criticism was constructive, which leads them to feel self confident and important in the classroom.

At the end of the term students were given semi-structured questions to answer. The outstanding and the repeated expressions were shown in detail in the tables above. It can be concluded that students' attitudes towards PBL was largely positive. When the negative comments were compared to the positive, it is seen that the difference is great.

In this part of the qualitative data analysis questions were written down one by one and the outstanding expressions were evaluated;

1. My attitude towards PBL has changed from negative to positive because.....

The number of comments made for this question is 31. Half of the comments report that PBL was not easy to understand first but then they understood it well. It can be deduced from this comment that PBL is a new approach for all the students and it took time to understand it. The other comments made for this question were shown in the table above.

3. My attitude towards PBL has changed from positive to negative because.....

The number of comments made for this question was six. Three of which say "working with group friends difficult", two comments say "it is very tiring", "Filling the process sheet is very confusing". During the study it was observed that working in groups was seen as an important problem in the application of PBL.

4. Next year this course should be studied with PBL approach again because.....

The number of comments made for this question was 35. The most noteworthy comment made for this question was "It is very useful, effective and enjoyable" Nearly half of the students think that PBL was very enjoyable, effective and useful for them. The detailed comments made for this question were shown in the figures above.

5. Next year this course should be studied with traditional approach because.....

The number of comments made for this question was five. Two of which say "PBL is very tiring for students." Comments can be seen in detail in the table above. As it is seen in this question negative comments were made for PBL is really low.

6. The course with PBL approach was beneficial for me because.....

The number of comments made for this question was 42. 11 of the comments say that "It has helped me to improve my communication skills". Eight of the comments say that "It has helped me to improve my presentation skills". Other comments made for this question were shown in figure above.

7. This course with PBL was not beneficial for me because.....

Five comments were made for this question, each of which was shown in the figure above.

7. Thanks to PBL my communication skills have developed because.....

19 comments were made for this question and the most outstanding one is "I learned new things about the communication skills as a result of this process."

8. Thanks to PBL my research skills have developed because.....

27 comments were made for this question. 15 of them say that "I was in the library and the net all the time. Six of them say that "I learned how and where to find the knowledge"

9. Thanks to PBL my imagination and creativity have developed because.....

The number of comments made for this question is 25. 18 of them say "For the presentation and dramas we had to find interesting things to get people's attention"

10. PBL boosted my self confidence because.....

27 comments were made and 21 of them say that "I can take responsibility and make presentations in front of other people"

11. PBL boosted my problem solving skills because.....

23 comments were made and the top two comments say that "I always searched and it boosted my problem solving skills" and "I learned to look at from different perspectives."

12. This course with PBL approach has positive contribution to other courses such as speaking, listening, writing and reading because.....

28 comments were made and the noteworthy one says that "Presentation includes these skills" and "All of them are used in PBL"

13. When I become teacher I will use PBL in my classes because.....

32 comments were made outstanding ones say that "It will be more effective" and "It is enjoyable"

14. The most problematic side of PBL is.....

34 comments were made. The most problematic side of PBL is seen "working with irresponsible group mates" and students think that "PBL takes too much time."

15. The last question was about students own comments about PBL.

Totally 42 comments were made for this question and these comments can be classes under positive and negative comments. The number of positive comments was 42 on the other hand the number of the negative comments was 6. All of these comments were shown in detail in the figure above.

Qualitative research results for each question were shown in detail in the figures above.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1. Introduction

The purpose of this study is to find out the attitudes of students towards the use of PBL in Effective Communication Skills classes in ELT department of Muğla University. This study was conducted during the first term of 2007-2008 academic year.

During the study students were given problems by the researcher and students found solutions for the problem in a collaborative work. They mostly presented their solution with drama technique. In order to find out students attitudes towards PBL, qualitative and quantitative research techniques were carried out. In the quantitative side questionnaire consisting of 44 items was used. In the qualitative side, students were asked to answer the question "What do you think about the use of PBL approach in Communication Skills Classes?" twice which were before and after the presentation. Moreover, at the end of the term students were given a semi structured questionnaire consisting of 14 questions. The content analyses of students' answers were made and the outstanding and repeated expressions were shown in the tables.

This study was conducted in ELT department of Muğla University because students' English level is above Intermediate that is enough to read the materials and present solutions. As it was stated in the literature review chapter by Larson (2001) problem-based learning may not be appropriate for beginning- or literacy-level students whose speaking and reading skills are minimal.

The second reason for the application of PBL in Effective Communication Skills Classes is that everyday we experience communication problems and these problems are easy to transfer to classroom atmosphere.

The third reason is that, although we did well in the lesson, our performance could be too boring or dull for most of the students. This is one of the biggest drawbacks of traditional classes which are mainly teacher-centered. However, in PBL the main responsibility is on students which make classes student-centered. Students need to involve themselves in the process actively to learn something.

The fourth reason is that while teaching and learning English we have difficulty in bringing four skills together. In PBL approach, students have to read and listen to the materials from different sources, write their solutions and present their final product. As a result of that process students have to read, listen, write and speak.

5.2. Results and Discussion

The results drawn from this study can be outlined as follow;

1. The number of the positive comments was 24 before the presentation it went up to 70 after presentation. In the same way, the number of the negative comments was 78 before presentation and it came down to 17 after presentation. When the positive and negative comments of students are compared, it could easily be seen that there is a change from negative to positive. After the students realized that they can do good works and their performances were criticized in a constructive way, their attitude change from negative to positive. If the students are given positive feedback after they present their final products, their attitude towards PBL is likely to change from negative to positive. It is because PBL is very new approach for them and during this process students really need positive feedback, support and high motivation.

As stated above students were given semi structured questions at the end of the term. The number of positive comments towards PBL was 331; on the other hand the number of negative comments was only 21 which show that students really liked PBL.

2. Since PBL is a very new approach for students, it should be explained in detail. Students should know what to do beforehand.
3. Students found log sheets difficult and confusing instead they preferred KND which is simpler than log sheets. KND charts can be given to students instead log sheets.
4. Students were grouped by the instructor randomly towards which student showed negative attitude. They don't want to work with irresponsible friend that's why they would like to form their own groups. Instead of instructor students can form their own groups.
5. Students presented their final products by using drama technique which worked well during the study. Instead of presenting the final product orally, students can do their presentations using drama in which responsibilities are delivered by the students.
6. Students learned using technology when presenting their products. Making use of technology is considered as an important qualification of a student in technology age.
7. In this study, the second problem was created by the students. In communication skills classes, it is easy to create a problem because we experience many communication problems during the day. When students created their own problems they were more motivated and positive towards PBL approach.
8. Students reported that their self confidence developed with the help of PBL. Seeing their valuable products make them feel more self confident, motivated, satisfied. If the students are given positive feedback and reinforcement they have the potential to do good things.
9. Files should be kept for each group and all their work should be put into those files. Since those files are helpful to review the process afterwards.

5.3. Implications of the Study

In our study, depending on the data gathered from students it could be said that the application of PBL in Effective Communication Skills worked well. However, it has some conditions which can be outlined in this way;

- As PBL is a new approach for students, the philosophy of PBL has to be explained in detail by the instructor. Students' minds should be clear beforehand about the new approach.

- Before the course starts students should be informed about the syllabus, process and evaluation. They had better know what to come across; they should not be confronted with surprises during the implementation process.

Although PBL is a student-centered approach, the workload of teacher is heavier than the traditional approach. Before the term starts, syllabus, evaluation method and problems to be studied should be determined by the instructor. Teacher is a counselor, facilitator and guide in PBL which requires patience and calmness. During the problem solving process students come across not only course related problems, but also they have to deal with affective problems mostly occurring before presentations. In addition to being facilitator and counselor, teachers should be a good organizer, mentor and psychologist.

- Problems should be compatible with students' interests.

- During the process, students should always be given positive feedback especially after they have presented their final product. The negative aspects of their work should be criticized in a constructive manner.

- The progress and performance level of each group can be kept and it would be highly useful to keep reflective journals for the instructor. Keeping them enables the instructor to go to next class more prepared and confident.

- Students should be supported well by the instructor during the process to make them more motivated and interested.

- PBL can be applied in other courses of ELT departments if planned well. It can be suggested that it is employed especially in Methodology Courses.

- PBL can also be applied to occupational English courses of faculties Engineering and Technical Education.

- It can also be applied in the Prep School at A2 and B1 levels to develop students' language skills. Students can be grouped and given a problem and during problem solving process their receptive skills will develop, in the presentation process their productive skills writing and speaking will develop. Students should not be at beginner level because they are not competent enough to use the language

5.4. Limitations of the Study

The study was conducted in ELT department of Muğla University. 38 first year students participated in the study. The results show that the first grade students of ELT department at Muğla University have mostly positive attitudes towards the application of PBL in Effective Communication Skills Classes. It would not be appropriate to generalize this situation to all first grade ELT students of Turkey.

5.5. Conclusion

The data collected from students through qualitative and quantitative research techniques has been analyzed. After the analysis it can be concluded that the attitudes of participants were mostly positive towards PBL.

KİŞİSEL BİLGİLER

Adı Soyadı : Ahmet Şahbaz

Doğum Yeri : Muğla

Doğum Yılı : 1978

Medeni Hali : Evli

EĞİTİM VE AKADEMİK BİLGİLER

Lise : 1991-1995 Aydın Anadolu Teknik Lisesi

Lisans : 1995-2000 Gazi Üniversitesi İngiliz Dili Eğitimi

Yabancı Dil : İngilizce

MESLEKİ BİLGİLER

2000-2009 : Muğla Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu

REFERENCES

- Benson, P & Nunan, D. (Eds.). (2005). *Learners' stories: Difference and diversity in language learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Brown, D.H. (2000). *Principles of language learning and teaching* . San Francisco: Longman.
- Burnett, G. (2002). *Learning to learn*. Norwalk: Crown House Publishing Company
- Can, T. (2004). *Yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğretmenlerinin yetiştirilmesinde kuram ve uygulama boyutuyla oluşturmacı yaklaşım* . Unpublished Master's Thesis: Istanbul University, Istanbul, Turkey.
- Deveci, H. (2002). *Sosyal Bilgiler dersinde probleme dayalı öğrenmenin öğrencilerin derse ilişkin tutumlarına, akademik başarılarına ve hatırlama düzeyine etkisi*. Unpublished Doctoral Thesis: Anadolu University, Eskişehir, Turkey
- Elizando, L. (2004). Formative and summative assessment of problem based learning tutorial session using a criterion-referenced system. Retrieved 12.07.2007, from [www.iamse.org/member/article/volume 14-1/14-1-8-14.pdf](http://www.iamse.org/member/article/volume%2014-1/14-1-8-14.pdf)
- Forrester, V., & Chau, J. (1999). Current developments in problem based learning within the Hong Kong institute of education. Retrieved 25.07.2008, from [www.teaching.polyu.edu.hk/datafiles/R 100.pdf](http://www.teaching.polyu.edu.hk/datafiles/R_100.pdf)
- Friedman, S. R.& Deek, P. F. (2002). The integration of problem-based learning and problem solving tools to support distributed education environments. Retrieved 25.07.2008, from [www.fie.engr.pitt.edu/file 2002/papers/1208.pdf](http://www.fie.engr.pitt.edu/file%202002/papers/1208.pdf)

- Hayati, M. A. (1998). Problem based learning in language instruction: A constructivist model. Retrieved 20.06.2007, from www.ericdigests.org/1999-2/problem.htm
- Kirkgoz, Y. Evaluating the effectiveness of problem-based learning tasks. Retrieved 25.08.2008, from www.tblt.org/download/kirkgoz.doc
- Larson, J. (2001). Problem-based learning: A possible approach to language education. Retrieved 20.07.2007, from www.nada.kth.se/jla/docs/PBL.pdf
- Lighthown, P. & Spada, N. (2006). *How languages are learned*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ling, A., & Jee, K., L. (2007). Students' perceptions of good PBL facilitation. Retrieved 18.07.2008, from www.pbl.tp.edu.sg/PBL-Resources
- Mathews, J. (2007). *Problem-based learning and adult English language learners*. Retrieved 12.08.2008, from www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/briefs/Problem-based.pdf
- Ok, S. (2005). *The analysis of an English preparatory program based on the needs assessment of problem based learning and regular groups in a foreign language-medium Institution*. Unpublished Doctoral Thesis: Dokuz Eylül University, İzmir, Turkey.
- Savoie, M. J., & Hughes, S.A. (1994). Problem based learning as classroom solution. *Educational Leadership*, 54-57.
- Spence, D., L. Problem based learning: Lead to learn, learn to lead. Retrieved 10.06.2007, from www.studygs.net/pblhandbook.doc
- Suzuka, A. A simple task: How could I apply the PBL approach in a foreign language classroom? Retrieved 13.07.2007, from [www.pbl.tp.edu.sg/PBL-Resources/articles/PBL subjects/AkikoSuzuka.pdf](http://www.pbl.tp.edu.sg/PBL-Resources/articles/PBL_subjects/AkikoSuzuka.pdf)

Waters, R., & McCracken, M. Assessment and evaluation in problem-based learning.

Retrieved 20.06.2007, from www.succeed.ufl.edu/papers/fie97/fie97-010.pdf

Williams, M. & Burden, R.L. (1997). *Psychology for language teachers: A social constructivist approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

WWW

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constructivism_\(learning_theory\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constructivism_(learning_theory)) 27/02/2009

<http://www.me.udel.edu/meeg304/06/oral-rubric.pdf> 18.05.2007

http://www4.nau.edu/eeop/aqcp/assets/docs/pbl_problem_log_sheets.doc 5.05.2007

http://www.uc.edu/pbl/docs/CLSA_Syllabus.pdf 01.09.2007

APPENDIX A**PROBLEM BASED LEARNING QUESTIONNAIRE**

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Your feedback is very valuable to us. It assists us to evaluate your attitudes towards Problem Based Learning in Communication Skills Classes. Please be assured that your responses will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. Unauthorized staff will not be able to access or identify individual feedback. For the validity and reliability of this data, your evaluations should reflect your personal observations and perceptions. Please do not exchange your opinions and perceptions with your friends.

Please put a cross (x) to each box beside each statement that most accurately reflects the extent to which you **agree or disagree with the statement.**

Note: In the statements below PBL stands for "Problem Based Learning"

Gender

Male()

Female()

Age

.....

Come from

.....

Graduated From

.....

SD: Strongly Disagree/ D: Disagree / N: Neutral /A: Agree / SA: Strongly Agree		SD	D	N	A	S
1.	PBL approach has helped me to cope up with real life problems					
2.	PBL approach has helped me develop my ability to work as a team member					
3.	PBL approach administration is effective in supporting my learning					
4.	PBL approach has sharpened my analytic skills					
5.	PBL approach has improved my skills in written communication					
6.	PBL approach has stimulated my enthusiasm for further learning					
7.	PBL approach has developed my problem-solving skills					
8.	PBL approach has helped me to develop the ability to plan my own work					
9.	PBL approach is developing my capacity for research and inquiry					
10.	PBL approach is encouraging my development of relevant ethical, social and professional perspectives					
11.	PBL approach is developing my ability to use oral, written, and visual communication					
12.	PBL approach is fostering my personal and intellectual independence					
13.	PBL approach motivated me to do my best work					
14.	PBL approach makes me a better thinker than the traditional style					
15.	PBL approach prepares me to life better than traditional style					
16.	PBL approach has increased my language skills					
17.	PBL approach has increased my presentation skills					
18.	PBL approach has helped me to internalize the knowledge					
19.	PBL approach has increased my creative thinking skills					
20.	PBL approach has helped me to take responsibility.					
21.	Through PBL approach I engaged in inquiring into aspects of teaching and learning					
22.	Through PBL approach I feel part of a group of students and staff committed to learning					

	SD: Strongly Disagree/ D: Disagree / N: Neutral / A: Agree / SA: Strongly Agree	SD	D	N	A	S
23.	As a result of PBL approach, I feel confident about tackling unfamiliar problems					
24.	I found my studies intellectually stimulating in PBL approach					
25.	I have learned to explore ideas confidently with other people					
26.	I have learned to be more resourceful through PBL approach					
27.	I had a clear idea of where I was going and what was expected of me in the PBL approach					
28.	I've come across ideas in PBL approach that have helped me understand how I learn					
29.	I learned the material more throughoutly in PBL approach than in the traditional way					
30.	I prefer the PBL approach of learning rather than traditional teaching.					
31.	I feel that I am better at making decisions after PBL.					
32.	I would recommend PBL for other students					
33.	I found PBL approach enjoyable					
34.	I was satisfied with the quality of the PBL approach					
35.	I think it is best for students to set up their own teams					
36.	I have collaborated with other students to engage in research and inquiry					
37.	I feel I benefit from working on problems in teams					
38.	The use of PBL approach is very much like what I will face at work					
39.	PBL approach has not increased my communication skills					
40.	PBL approach takes up much more time than the traditional style					
41.	The workload was too heavy					
42.	There was a lot of pressure on me as a student in PBL approach					
43.	It has often been hard to discover what is expected of me in PBL approach					
44.	PBL does not cover much depth in the subject					

APPENDIX B

What do you think about the use of Problem Based Learning in Effective Communication Skills Course so far?

Note: If you have difficulties in expressing your ideas in English, you can write in Turkish

APPENDIX C**STUDENT'S ATTITUDES TOWARD PBL**

Thank you for taking the time to complete this attitude paper sheet. Your feedback is very valuable to us. It assists us to evaluate your attitudes towards Problem Based Learning in Communication Skills Classes. Please be assured that your responses will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. Unauthorized staff will not be able to access or identify individual feedback. For the validity and reliability of this data, your evaluations should reflect your personal observations and perceptions. Please do not exchange your opinions and perceptions with your friends.

Please write your reasons in the blanks under each statement

Note: In the statements below PBL stands for "Problem Based Learning"

Gender

Male ()

Female ()

Age

.....

Come from

.....

Graduated From

.....

- 1- My attitude towards PBL has changed from negative to positive because.....
- 2- My attitude towards PBL has changed from positive to negative because
- 3- Next year "Effective Communication Skills" course should be studied with PBL approach because.....
- 4- Next year "Effective Communication Skills" course should be studied with traditional method because
- 5- I believe, this course with PBL approach was beneficial for me because.....
- 6- I believe, this course with PBL approach was not beneficial for me because.....
- 7- I believe, thanks to PBL my communication skills have developed because.....
- 8- I believe, thanks to PBL my research skills have developed because.....
- 9- I believe, thanks to PBL, my imagination and creativity have developed because...
- 10- I think, PBL approach boosted my self confidence because.....
- 11- I think, PBL approach boosted my problem solving skills because.....
- 12- This course with PBL approach has positive contribution to other courses such as speaking, listening and etc because.....
- 13- When I become a teacher, I will use PBL in my classes because.....
- 14- The most problematic side of PBL is because.....
- 15- You own comment about PBL.....

APPENDIX D**Effective Communication****Skills Course Syllabus**

Class Time: Fridays, 13:30 - 16:20 p.m

Instructor: Asst.Prof. Şevki KOMUR

Required Materials: Students will be given or informed by the instructor

Goals of the Course:

You will:

1. learn the importance of body language in communication .
2. learn to use your body effectively when communicating with people not only in classroom settings but also outside.
3. learn the importance of eye contact and voice in communication.
4. learn how to use your voice effectively and how to have a better eye contact with students in classes.
5. learn the how listening is important when communicating with people
6. learn how to be a good listener
7. learn the importance of empathy in communication.

Course Attendance and Participation Policy:

Your attendance in every class period is extremely important due to the nature of group work that will be utilized as a learning method in this course. Each student group will establish a set of rules regarding grading and attendance. Members of your group will be relying on you to be in class and to contribute to the work of the group. As in any work situation, your absence will affect those with whom you work.

Special Needs Policy:

If you have any special needs related to your participation in this course, including identified visual impairment, hearing impairment, physical impairment, communication disorder, and/or specific learning disability that may influence your

performance in this course, you should meet with the instructor to arrange for reasonable provisions to ensure an equitable opportunity to meet all the requirements of this course. At the discretion of the instructor, some accommodations may require prior approval by Disability Services

Assignments:

Reasonable due dates will be provided for all assignments including group worksheets and problem solutions, peer evaluations, and individual assignments and position papers. All work must be submitted **on the announced due date by the beginning of the scheduled class time.** If you do not submit the assignment by the beginning of class on the due date, the grade will be deducted the equivalent of 20%. No late assignments will be accepted beyond 48 hours after the due date. A grade of 0 will be assigned for work that is not submitted within this time frame.

Teaching & Learning:

You will be exposed to a variety of learning experiences in this course. You will be held responsible for learning the course material. I will take responsibility for providing an appropriate environment to guide your learning and will serve as a resource for you. I will be utilizing an approach for a large portion of the course called Problem Based Learning (PBL).

Problem Based Learning (PBL) is a collaborative process where small groups work together to solve complex, real world type problems. In PBL, you and your group are responsible for identifying and researching concepts and principles as needed to progress through and solve the problems presented. Questions will be provided to guide you through the problem solving process. One group member will be required to report out to the class on a portion of each problem's solution. Any group member may be requested to report out at any time. The group worksheet provided must be submitted for each problem in addition to the group's solution of the problem. All problems will be discussed in class in full following completion.

<i>WEEK</i>	<i>DATE</i>	<i>TOPIC</i>	<i>REAL</i>
1	September 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Topic</i>— Giving information about Problem Based Learning and Effective Communication Skills Class. Talking about how communication and learning is important in modern world. Students form a group with which they will work at the end of semester. 	
2	October 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Topic</i>— Body Language /Eye Contact and Use of Voice in Communication • <i>Problem #1</i>— Why the teacher was ineffective in his/ her teaching process ? • <i>Individual Assignment</i>— Each group member tries to identify the given problem. After they identify it each of them take responsibility and tries to find a solution to the given problem. 	
3	October 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Class- Holiday 	
4	October 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Topic</i>— Body Language /Eye Contact and Use of Voice in Communication • <i>Problem #1</i>— Why the teacher was ineffective in his/ her teaching process? • <i>Individual Assignment</i>— Each group member bring his/her material in order to find a solution to the given problem. Materials are checked and examined by the instructor and he guides their learning and serve as source for them. 	
5	October 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Topic</i>— Body Language /Eye Contact and Use of Voice in Communication • <i>Problem #1</i>— Why the teacher was ineffective in his/ her teaching process? • <i>Individual Assignment</i>— Each member will be ready to present his/her group's solution to the problem in front of the classroom 	
6	November 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Evaluation of Solutions as a Whole Class Activity 	

7	November 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Topic</i>— Listening in Communication • <i>Problem #2</i>— Why people can't understand each other in this conversation. • <i>Individual Assignment</i>— Each group member tries to identify the given problem. After they identify it, each of them take responsibility and tries to find a solution to the given problem
8	November 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Topic</i>— Listening in Communication • <i>Problem #2</i>— Why people can't understand each other in this conversation • <i>Individual Assignment</i>— Each group member bring his/her material in order to find a solution to the given problem. Materials are checked and examined by the instructor and he guides their learning and serve as source for them.
9	November 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Topic</i>— Listening in Communication • <i>Problem #2</i>— Why people can't understand each other in this conversation? • <i>Individual Assignment</i>— Each member will be ready to present his/her group's solution to the problem in front of the classroom
10	November 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Evaluation of Solutions as a Whole Class Activity
11	December 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Topic</i>—Empathy in Communication • <i>Problem #3</i>— Why are they always quarreling? • <i>Individual Assignment</i>— Each group member tries to identify the given problem. After they identify it each of them take responsibility and tries to find a solution to the given problem •
12	December 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Topic</i>—Empathy in Communication • <i>Problem #3</i>— Why are they always quarreling? • <i>Individual Assignment</i>— Each group member bring his/her material in order to find a solution to the given problem. Materials are checked and examined by the instructor and he guides their learning and serve as source for them.
13	December 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Class- Holiday

14	December 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•<i>Topic</i>—Empathy in Communication•<i>Problem #3</i>— Why are they always quarreling?•<i>Individual Assignment</i>— Each member will be ready to present his/her group's solution to the problem in front of the classroom•General Evaluation of Solutions as a Whole Class Activity
----	-------------	--

Adapted from http://www.uc.edu/pbl/docs/CLSA_Syllabus.pdf 01.09.2007

APPENDIX E

The First Problem

After that terrible experience, Ayşe has become very shy and quiet person, she has lost her self confidence and she is afraid of speaking in front of other people. When she was at university, her teacher assigned her class to make a presentation on any subject they would choose. When it was Ayşe's turn, she couldn't breathe, she could not say even a word, she couldn't move, and she couldn't look at other students and her teacher. It was a big failure for Ayşe.

She is not a student anymore, she has been assigned as an English teacher to a school in Muğla but Ayşe is very nervous about that and she is always thinking the first day of school. She can't sleep at nights because she is still afraid of speaking in front of other people and she still remembers her terrible experience She always ask other people what to do, she is really helpless. One of her friend told her that there is a very famous teacher trainer and body language expert who helps people like you. Three weeks later schools will open, Ayşe has very short time.

You are the famous teacher trainer and body language expert who will help Ayşe. How would you prepare Ayşe for the first day of school in 3 weeks?

APPENDIX F**Group A**

<i>Group 1</i>	<i>Group 2</i>	<i>Group 3</i>	<i>Group 4</i>	<i>Group 5</i>
1-Mesut İşlekkol	1- Çınar Karahan	1- Kadir Karabacak	1- İlyas Gökren	1- Sefa Özkan
2-Kürşat Özdemir	2- Yusuf Parlar	2- Ali Yeniocak	2- Aşkın Arslan	2- Başak Turgut
3-Sinem Başaran	3- Dilek Aydın	3- Emine Tiriç	3- Pınar Bigün	3- Gülşen Ünalın
4-Meryem Sabancıođlu	4- Canan Kanlı	4- Meliha Bilgen	4- Esra Sine İlhan	4- Neriman Tunç
5-Mevlüdiye Çelen	5- Zeynep Karan	-----	----- -	-----
In charge group member: Mesut İşlekkol	In charge group member: Canan Kanlı	In charge group member: Meliha Bilgen	In charge group member: İlyas Gökren	In charge group member: Gülşen Ünalın

Group B

<i>Group 1</i>	<i>Group 2</i>	<i>Group 3</i>	<i>Group 4</i>	<i>Group 5</i>
1- Merve Ay	1- Halil Karakuş	1- Muhammet Türkyılmaz	1- Murat Yılmaz	1- Mustafa Arıkan
2- Hanife Handan Karakaş	2- Yakup Bıyıklı	2- Yalçın Yılmaz	2- Akkız Sıla Candan	2- Büşra Karakaya
3- Derya Şule Gür	3- Emine Falay	3- Esra Erbağlı	3- Fatma Karaca	3- Gülden Aman
4- Sekan Tatar	4- Hülya Gölbaşı	4- Hülya Uzal	4- Hüstra Işık	4- Melike Yandı
5- Halil İbrahim Tütüncü	5- Semra Elitok	5- Tuba Topal	5- Tuğba Yıldırım	5- Yurdanur Atıcı
In charge group member: Merve Ay	In charge group member: Halil Karkuş	In charge group member: Yalçın Yılmaz	In charge group member: Hüstra Işık	In charge group member: Büşra Karakaya

2. Beginning Your Investigation

You need a deeper understanding of the issues in the problem before you can recommend solutions. These questions can help you think about possible issues.

List four questions you should answer in order to get a better understanding of the problem.

QUESTION	ACTION	RESOURCES	WHO?
1:			
2:			
3:			
4:			

3. Action Plan for Research

Successful investigators make a plan of action to investigate a case. That way they do not leave anything out, or spend time looking for things that do not help solve the problem.

Next to each of your questions in Step # 2 above, list the actions you need to take, the resources you could use, and who in the group will take responsibility for each of those actions.

PROBLEM LOG B – Beginning the Search for Information**1. Deepening Your Understanding of the Problem**

To begin your investigation, choose one of the questions you identified in Problem Log A. Clearly state the question you want to answer. If the question seems big and complex, break it into smaller questions. Answering the smaller questions might answer the bigger question.

Your question:

Smaller questions:

Organizing the Information from Your First Internet Search

At the top of a sheet of paper, write the three lines found below. Copy the exact URL for the site you are visiting after the line “Internet site.” Then record information that helps to answer your question after “Important information.” If you visit more than one Internet site, use a separate sheet of paper to record information from each site.

Internet site URL:

Important information:

2. Searching the Library

Another more traditional source of information is to be found in the library. Using the same keywords or phrases identified in the Internet search section to search by subject in the library catalog and databases. Try to find at least one magazine or journal article, one newspaper article, and one book that provide information. Ask a librarian for help if you need it.

At the top of a sheet of paper, write the four lines found below. Use a separate sheet of paper for each reference (magazine or journal article, newspaper article, book).

Title:

Author(s):

Publisher and date of publication:

Important information:

3. Contacting experts or other knowledgeable individuals.

Many times, a quicker and more efficient way to find information is to contact experts or other knowledgeable individuals directly, via telephone calls, email, or in person. Brainstorm a list of who might be able to assist you with the problem; then find the contact information for that person. Your teacher can suggest ways to find out how to get in touch with these experts.

Before you make the contact, list the specific questions you are going to ask below, using the other box to write down the answers given. Keep a separate log sheet for each expert or knowledgeable person you contact.

QUESTION**ANSWER**

QUESTION	ANSWER

4. Summarizing What You Learned

After collecting relevant information, summarize what you have learned by answering the question or questions you wrote down at the beginning of your search.

Your question (s):

Your information so far:

5. Thinking about Your Thinking (Metacognition)

Expert problem solvers make sure the information they use is *relevant* and *reliable*.

“Relevant” means that the information directly applies to or answers your question(s).

How did you decide if the information you discovered was relevant?

“Reliable” means that you can depend on the information to be true and without bias.

How did you decide if it was reliable?

What clues at a Web site or in printed sources can help you decide if the information was relevant and/or reliable?

Problem Log C – Refining the Investigation

1. Further Defining Your Problem

New information from your first search efforts probably helped to answer some of the questions. It is likely that new questions also occurred to you as you investigated. In the space below, build a new question based on information you have learned so far. Below the question, write keywords or phrases that are likely to lead you to information that will help you answer the question.

New question:

Keywords or phrases to guide your refined or new search:

2. Defining the Final Product or Solution

Before trying to provide a solution to a problem, how the evidence will be presented must also be decided. (Your teacher may have some requirements for you in this area.) What is the problem you and the other investigators need to resolve?

We need to: _____

2. Thinking about Your Thinking (Metacognition)

It is likely you still do not understand some issues in the problem. But you must give your recommendations very soon. Experts are often asked to solve problems that contain unresolved issues or arguments.

What issues or questions about the case are still unclear to you?

How can you make recommendations if some issues still need to be answered?

How did you decide which evidence is most important and must be included in your solution, and which evidence is of less importance?

PROBLEM LOG E – Building Solutions

1. Thinking about Your Thinking (Metacognition)

Before you give your recommendation or solution, think about what the stakeholders (the people who are effected by the problem) in the case will be looking for in your work. What do you think they would expect as to:

CLARITY: How will you make your work clear and understandable?

DEPTH OF UNDERSTANDING: What will you do to show them how well you understand the problem? How will you make sure the stakeholders in the controversy have confidence in your recommendations?

FAIRNESS: How will you show that you've considered all sides or issues in the case?

2. Plan for "Publishing" Your Results

Many steps are involved in preparing a final report, product, or exhibition (refer to your plan in Problem Log C # 2). Make a list of the requirements, how each is to be done, and who is responsible for doing each part.

Be sure to give credit (as references) in the final product for:

- *ideas that came from other scientists, authors, or experts*
- *photographers or sources (URLs) of pictures*

Adapted from
Stepien, Senn, & Stepien
2000

Problem Log
Page 81 of 85
07/23/09

APPENDIX H

Oral Presentation Rubric

Presentation Evaluation Form

1. Technical Explanation (10 points)

Effectively explains new information to audience.
 Demonstrates understanding of how topic is important for audience
 Is able to understand, interpret, and apply learned materials and concepts
 Uses references properly

2. Oral Presentation (20 points)

a. Preparation (5)....

Speaks comfortably without
 note cards
 Uses proper English
 Uses visual aids effectively
 Makes smooth presentation

b. Effectiveness of presentation (5)....

Presents well "mechanically" (does not block screen, doesn't exhibit
 nervous behaviors, etc.)
 Makes eye contact
 Can be heard easily
 Finishes on time
 Explains slides effectively

c. Organization (5).....

Plans and delivers an oral presentation effectively
 Well organized
 Introduction is oriented to help audience understand the
 general topic
 Goals of talk are explained clearly
 Flow of thought: Items presented in logical order
 Summary and Conclusions: summarized main points

d. Group Cooperation (5).....

Material divided among group members appropriately
 Smooth transitions between group member's presentations

3. Professionalism (5 points)

Professional
appearance

Professional
language

Professional
attitude

Team Number:

TOTAL POINTS

Assessed by:

COMMENTS:

<http://www.me.udel.edu/mee304/06/oral-rubric.pdf> 18.05.2007

