Application of Problem-Based Learning Model STEM-Based on Biology Lessons for High School Students Communication Skills

Gamar Shamdas^{*1}, Mursito Bialangi¹, Amalia Buntu¹, Ihwan²

¹Program Studi Pendidikan Biologi Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan Universitas Tadulako, Palu, Indonesia. ²SMA Nogori Model Terpadu Madani, Palu, Indonesia.

²SMA Negeri Model Terpadu Madani, Palu, Indonesia.

*Email: gamar.shamdas@gmail.com

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Shamdas, G., Bialangi, M., Buntu, A., & Ihwan. 2023. application of problem-based learning model stem-based on biology lessons for high school students communication skills. *Jurnal Pendidikan Sains Indonesia (Indonesian Journal of Science Education)*, 11(2):345-359. Abstract. Good quality communication skills are not evenly distributed among students in secondary schools. This quantitative study with a quasi-experimental method aims to describe high school students' communication skills through STEM-based PBL learning in Biology, describe high school students' oral and written communication skills through STEM-based PBL learning in Biology, and describe high school students' communication skills through PBLbased learning and STEM in Biology lessons by gender. The research design is a posttest only control design carried out on class XI students of SMAN Terpadu Madani Palu with a population of 7 classes totaling 220 students. The research sample used 2 classes totaling 64 students. Determination of the sample by purposive sampling considering the number of students and cognitive abilities of students in 2 classes are homogeneous. Data on written communication skills were obtained through tests using multiple-choice reasoned given during the post-test. Data on oral communication skills were obtained through observation of student activities during the learning process. The results showed that Biology learning by applying STEM-based PBL had a significant effect on the communication skills of high school students compared to direct STEM-based learning, written communication skills were better than oral communication skills and female students' communication skills were significantly better than male students.

Keywords: communication skills, written, oral

Introduction

Communication skills are indispensable in facing competition in various aspects of life in the 21st century because this ability is one of the four skills needed to build intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and transcendental intelligence (Yuniarti & State, 2016). Communication skills not only facilitate students in their education but prepare them for future careers (Riemer, 2007). Therefore, schools need to prepare their students with communication skills in all fields of study and at all levels of education continuously and sustainable (Fitriani & Ilyas, 2019) through effective training on how to understand, manage and create spoken and written words that can be used to communicate in a variety of forms and contexts (Hill, 2021; Sahin, 2009).

Good communication skills must be considered when training students, especially the quality of writing skills clearly and creatively as well as speaking well and effectively (Ting et al., 2017). Students with good communication skills will demonstrate their ability to deliver presentations, express ideas, listen to, and provide good and appropriate feedback (Kamaruzaman et al., 2020). It will be clear when they express opinions and argue during discussions (Lubis et al., 2020). Communication skills with this quality can be used as direct experience as well as preparation for the social environment after school because good communication skills are needed for an effective work system with various teams in many fields of work and are used for collaboration in improving work skills and career advancement (Erdoğan, 2019).

Students with good communication skills are not evenly distributed in all schools in several countries, including Indonesia. Low communication skills, among others, are found in University of Education students, Winneba (Asemanyi, 2015), Biology class high school students in Madiun Regency (Sasmito et al., 2017), in learning mathematics for junior high school students in Bandung Regency (Mulqiyono et al., 2018), and in science learning in six districts in Lampung Province (Astuti et al., 2020). This situation is also found in high school students in Palu City, especially in learning biology.

The low communication skills still found in students at school reflect that teachers have not maximally implemented the learning process mandated in the 2013 curriculum. The 2013 curriculum emphasizes a student-centered scientific learning approach (Dikdas, 2019), and there have been many research results that report the effectiveness of the scientific approach in improving communication skills (Hast et al., 2019; Rizawati, 2022; Rizki & Sari, 2021; Yulia et al., 2018). However, there are many limiting factors related to efforts to improve good communication as some report that there are factors that affect communication skills, including the willingness of students to communicate (Rihardini et al., 2021), teacher-student relationship (Yunus et al., 2011), teacher communication style in teaching (Duta et al., 2015), learning approach used (Awang & Daud, 2015), and the knowledge and role of the teacher in designing learning (Bashir et al., 2016; Pedro et al., 2004). The skills, abilities and creativity of teachers are needed to design an interactive learning environment that can excite students to learn (Findikoğlu & Ilhan, 2016; Yusof & Halim, 2014). So it has the potential to trigger students to generate ideas and train them to be skilled in oral and written communication (Wang, 2012).

Teachers can create interactive learning by applying innovative models, including problem-based learning (Astuti et al., 2017; Sekarwangi et al., 2021. The effectiveness of PBL in learning has been widely reported. Including helping students develop their insights (Gómez, 2016), improve learning achievement and problem-solving skills (Aslan, 2021; Lidyawati et al., 2017; Rezkillah & Haryanto, 2020), increase self-confidence (Mulyani et al., 2020), improve students' communication skills (Nurbaiti et al., 2016; Setyawan et al., 2021) good oral communication (Sedubun et al., 2019; Wati et al., 2019), reading skills (Seken & Artini, 2013) and writing skills (Durga & Rao, 2018). On the other hand, the presence of technology in learning today is unavoidable. It greatly affects the learning process because technology is not only a provider of unlimited access to knowledge but also a co-creator of information, mentors, and assessors. (Ferdousi & Bari, 2015; Haleem et al., 2022) useful for teaching and learning constructivism targeting effective solutions for pedagogical content and practice (Abdulrahaman et al., 2020; Greve & Tan, 2021). Therefore, it becomes necessary to integrate technology into the PBL learning model to create more meaningful learning.

Technology-based PBL research in STEM in improving communication skills has never been conducted on high school students in Palu City, especially in Biology learning. This kind of research is important because it can inform how to improve students' communication skills about real problems using technology and engineering in an integrated way in Biology learning. In addition, the findings obtained can be used as the basis for development research in Biology learning. Teachers can also use the results in designing lessons for other Biology materials. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to

describe the communication skills of high school students through STEM-based PBL learning in Biology subjects, describe the oral and written communication skills of high school students through STEM-based PBL learning in Biology subjects and describe high school students' communication skills through STEM-based PBL learning in Biology subjects by gender.

Methods

This study uses a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental method. The research design is posttest only control design. This design tests behavior by changing one condition and observing its effect on other things (Arikunto, 2013).

The research was carried out at SMAN Terpadu Madani Palu in Class XI students. The population is all Class XI students, totaling 220 students enrolled in the 2021-2022 Academic Year and spread over seven classes. The sample used two classes, one experimental and one control class, with 64 students. The sample was determined by purposive sampling, considering that the number of samples in each class was the same, namely 32 students, and the cognitive abilities of students in both classes were relatively homogeneous. (data source: school). The experimental class applies the STEM-based PBL learning model, and the control class uses the STEM-based direct learning model.

Data on communication skills were obtained by distributing tests and making observations. Tests in the form of multiple choice reasoned to obtain data on written communication skills were given after learning was applied. Data on oral communication skills were obtained through observation of student activities during the learning process. Based on the data collection technique, the instrument used was a test for the variable written communication skills and an observation sheet for the variable verbal communication skills.

Five indicators of oral communication are modified from Chang et al., (2011), shown in Table 1. The six components of written communication assessment are modified from Mulia & Krisant (2014). Data on oral and written communication abilities in the experimental and control class were analyzed using an independent t-test because according to Sugiyono (2013) that an independent t-test was used to test samples with two treatments. However, it is determined beforehand that the data to be tested is normally distributed through the normality test and homogeneity of variance test for uniformity of data variance. Data analysis using SPPS version 25.0. In addition, the percentage of each indicator of written communication ability is calculated using the following formula.

% of	each indicator =	Total score Maximum scores x 100%	(1)
Table	1. Verbal commun	ication indicators	
No.	Indicator	Observed aspects	
	Communication		
1	Expressing	Able to describe data through multiple representations:	
		a. Can convert raw data into an easy-to-understand for	n

and present it

Representations

Table 1. Verbal communication indicator

2

Evaluating

Able to explain the relationship between data:

b. Can describe data relationships through graphs or signs

Able to view messages through various ways or aspects

Able to understand the meaning of data presented by various

		Able to justify the truth of data or arguments
		Able to distinguish fact and inference
3	Responding	Able to clarify ambiguous messages
		Able to confirm messages from peers (ask for an explana-
		tion of the message that is not clear)
		Able to respond to messages from peers
4	Negotiating	Be able to distinguish the difference between one's ideas
		and those of colleagues
		Able to revise own ideas according to peer opinion
		Able to reach mutual consensus through discussion
		with peers

Results and Discussion

The results and discussion of the application of the STEM-based PBL learning model are presented following the pattern of (a) a description of its effect on high school students' communication skills in Biology, (b) their effect on oral and written communication skills of high school students in Biology and (c) their effect on communication skills. High school students by gender. The STEM-based PBL learning model significantly affects the communication skills of high school students in Biology lessons. The results of the normality analysis of data are presented in Table 2, and the results of descriptive statistical analysis and the results of the t-test analysis are presented in Table 3.

Table	2.	Data	Normality	/ Anal	vsis	Results
IUDIC	_	Dutu	i voi mune	/ / ////	y 313	Results

Class	Ko	lmogorov-Smirnov	/ ^b
Class	Statistic	df	Sig.
PBL + STEM	.126	31	.200*
Direct + STEM	.170	22	.097

The results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test inform that data on communication skills in classes that apply the learning model PBL + STEM [D (31) = 0.126, p = 0.200] as well as direct learning models + STEM [D (22) = 0.170, p = 0.097] normally distribued.

Casua

INO.	Descriptive Measure	s and Results of t-Test Analysis	Score
		Mean	79.7
1	PBL + STEM	Std. Deviation	2.43
		Free degrees	31
		Mean	78.3
2	Direct + STEM	Std. Deviation	1.52
		Free degrees	22
3	t- <i>test</i>		2.32
4	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.02

Table 3.	Results of Descriptive Statistical Analysis and Results of t-Test
No	Descriptive Messures and Desults of the Test Analysis

The results of the analysis using unpaired t-test (Table 3) show that communication skills in classes that apply the direct learning model + STEM (M = 78.3, SD = 1,52) significantly lower than the class that applied the PBL learning model + STEM (M = 79.7, SD = 2,43), t(51) = 2.32, p < 0.02. The results are supported by the two classes' average written and oral communication skills, as shown in Figure 1.

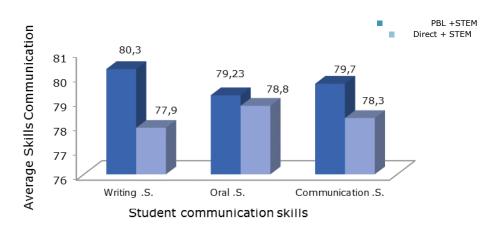


Figure 1. Average Value of Student Communication Skills

The results indicate that the communication skills of high school students in Biology subjects are significantly influenced by learning the STEM-based PBL model. In this learning, students are faced with a challenging situation to do many things in solving the problems identified in the PBL syntax, namely problem orientation. Authentic problems in everyday life, especially in the material on the structure and function of plant tissues, become interesting for students to solve with their group. This situation indirectly trains students to collaborate in verbal communication through discussions with their friends. Not only that, the teacher's guidance on investigation activities in the third PBL syntax seems clear that students are enthusiastic and very happy to carry out library searches to find many solutions to the problems discussed. The role of STEM in this section is also influential; namely, students are helped by their web-based technology facilities to explore as many sources as possible that provide information about the problem being studied. This finding is in line with the opinion of Bellanca & Stirling (2011) that to support learning and maximize the potential of communication skills, necessary to combine collaboration and technology because communication is naturally interwoven with collaboration. Several studies reported that the use of technology strongly supports student-centered learning because this media can facilitate and improve students' communication skills, interact interactively in learning and improve student learning achievements (Ammary, 2012; Bal & Bicen, 2017; Kivunja, 2014; Shieh, 2012). In addition, it is also informed that the STEM approach can develop many skills needed in the 21st century, including communication skills (Peters-burton & Stehle, 2019). The PBL learning model combined with the STEM approach significantly affects students' communication skills in science lessons (Kulsum et al., 2020).

The presence of STEM as a combination of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics integrated with PBL in Biology learning greatly influences students' communication skills in studying the structure and function of plant tissues. The benefits are felt when students are trained to build their experiences by assembling ideas through the knowledge they already know about this subject with new knowledge obtained from extensive searches of a number of information related to the solutions they want to find. It doesn't stop there, the ability of students to summarize a lot of data into a clear and concise short note and then express it in the form of exchanging information in small discussions is a surefire way to train students to use all their potential communication skills. This finding is supported by the opinion of Capraro et al. (2013) that STEM-based PBL learning naturally utilizes students' communication skills to share ideas and information effectively among group members. In addition, several research results inform that the STEM approach can improve communication skills from low to very high

categories (Widiastuti et al., 2022; Yulianti & Handayani, 2021), and PBL can improve communication skills (Batubara et al., 2022; Ernawati & Chotimah, 2022; Lufri et al., 2021). Combining PBL with STEM improves students' communication skills (Oktavia & Ridlo, 2020; Owens & Hite, 2020; Prabaningrum & Waluya, 2020; Suciari et al., 2021; Triana et al., 2020) because, in this learning, students more often participate in discussions. It is caused by the emergence of self-confidence, reduced anxiety, and higher self-efficacy when communicating with peers (Han et al., 2016).

The STEM-based PBL learning model significantly affects high school students' oral and written communication skills in biology subjects. The results of the normality analysis are presented in Table 4, and the descriptive statistical analysis and the t-test analysis results are presented in Table 5.

Table 4.	Data	Normality	/ Analy	vsis	Results
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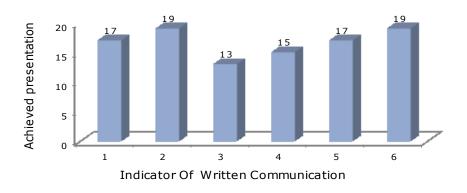
Class	Ko	lmogorov-Smirnov	/ ^b
Class	Statistic	df	Sig.
Write Communication	.154	31	.060
Verbal communication	.137	31	.144

The results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test inform that the data on written communication skills [D (31) = 0.154, p = 0.060] and oral communication skills [D (31) = 0.137, p = 0.144] normally distributed.

 Table 5. Results of Descriptive Statistical Analysis and Results of t-Test

	Descriptive Measures a	and Results of t-Test Analysis	Score
1	Write Communication	<i>Mean</i> Std. Deviation Free degrees	90.5 2.80 31
2	Verbal communication	<i>Mean</i> Std. Deviation Free degrees	79.5 2.64 31
3 4	t- <i>test</i> Sig. (2- <i>tailed</i>)		15.8 0.001

The results of the analysis using unpaired t-test (Table 5) show that oral communication skills (M = 79.5, SD = 2,64) significantly lower than written communication (M = 90.5, SD = 2,80), t(60) = 15.8, p < 0.001, d = 1.78. The results indicate that students' written communication skills in Biology learning with STEM-based PBL is better than oral communication. Investigative activities in PBL while conducting integrated technology-assisted searches can help students to create and develop useful products in the form of new knowledge that can be used as alternative solutions to identified problems. Exploring many references that are related to the problem being studied helps students better understand the concept so that all the collected discourses, pictures, and various contextual conditions become a source of inspiration for students to write them down and make them as a result of work in solving the problems studied. This situation triggers students to write down their creative ideas using the right language based on the correct references, so that accurate and up-to-date information is produced related to the solution of the problem under study to be feasible to implement. Thus, all indicators of written communication related to the use of appropriate language, correct references, creative ideas, the feasibility of implementation, and accurate and up-to-date information are fulfilled, as shown in Figure 2. This finding is in line with other studies that reported that PBL successfully improved students' written communication rather than verbal communication (Maridi et al., 2019), especially mathematics writing communication (Hafely et al., 2018; Madhavia et al., 2020; Nasution et al., 2021). In addition, the use of technology has a positive impact on students' writing quality (Patchan & Puranik, 2016; Wen & Walters, 2022), and STEM-based learning improves written communication in science lessons (Haryanti & Suwarma, 2018).





- Note:1= Correct use of language
 - 2= Correct reference
 - 3= Creative idea
 - 4= Eligibility of implementation
 - 5= Consistency between ideas and sources of information
 - 6= Accurate and up-to-date information

The STEM-based PBL learning model significantly affects the communication skills of high school students based on gender. The results of the normality analysis are presented in Table 6, and the descriptive statistical analysis and the t-test analysis results are presented in Table 7.

Gender	Ko	lmogorov-Smirnov	/ ^b
Gender	Statistic	df	Sig.
Man	.161	12	.200*
Woman	.137	19	.200*

Table 6. Data Normality Analysis Results

The results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test inform that the data on male communication skills [D (12) = 0.161, p = 0.200] as well as women [D (19) = 0.137, p = 0.200] normally distributed.

	Descriptive Measures and Results of t-Test Analysis		Score
		Mean	78.0
1	Man	Std. Deviation	2.41
	Free degrees		12
		Mean	80.7
2	Woman	Std. Deviation	1.79
	Free degrees		19
3	t- <i>test</i>		3.62
4	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.001

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The results of the analysis using unpaired t-test (Table 7) shows that communication skills by gender are male (M = 78.0, SD = 2,41) significantly lower than female gender (M = 80.7, SD = 1,79), t(29) = 3,62, p < 0.001. The results indicate that the communication skills of female students taught by STEM-based PBL in Biology are better than that of male students. This learning succeeded in creating a pleasant learning atmosphere by involving students in several research activities and exploring the widest literature to find alternative solutions to the problem of plant tissue structure and function. This finding is in line with the results of research that informs that in STEM and PBL learning, female students have greater interest, can immediately respond to positive ideas, and like to work in groups because they believe it allows them to work with peers and improve their social skills (Younesa et al., 2020).

In the learning process that applies STEM-based PBL, the teacher indirectly trains students' creativity through learning while working and doing various engineering knowledge using the help of technology media. This learning situation spontaneously invites students to communicate verbally and in writing so that students become involved in meaningful learning, especially female students. This finding is supported by a study that reported that female students' communication skills were better than male students (Guezc et al., 2020) because females tend to be in meaningful learning while males are in rote learning. It is caused by differences in motivation, authority orientation, and responsibility (Jelas et al., 2005; Kılıç & Sağlam, 2010).

Conclusion

This study studied the communication skills of high school students through STEMbased PBL in Biology. The results showed that learning by applying STEM-based PBL had a significant effect on high school students' communication skills compared to direct STEM-based learning. Furthermore, the written communication skills were better than the oral communication skills of high school students in Biology. In addition, the communication skills of female students were significantly better than male students.

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