

## **PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE ACQUISITION**

Problem-based learning is a model that emphasizes the use of task-based problems to engage students in active and multidisciplinary learning. Students work in teams to develop solutions to the problem. This approach is widely used in Economic Education, Business Education, Medical Education, and in other situations where "case study" methods provide a useful focus in learning.

Problem-based learning is a process that guides exploration in numerous directions with positive outcomes. The value of this method includes exposing students to real-world challenges, higher order thinking skills, interdisciplinary learning, independent learning, team work and communication. It aims to improve the writing, speaking, listening and reading skills of students to enhance their professional competency in a global business environment. Students engage in collaborative decision-making and team-building skills as they learn to be creative in solving problems through group negotiations.

It is important to note that there are some challenges with problem-based learning. Some students are initially unwilling to discuss their thoughts about the problem with other members during group discussions. Problem-based learning may not be appropriate for beginning- or literacy-level students whose English oral and reading skills are minimal. They experience difficulties with communicating as they feel they do not have the language ability to express their views. One way to address this concern is to place students with stronger and weaker language skills in the same group, thus allowing those with weaker skills to hear the language and observe the learning strategies of the stronger students.

More often, students ask a question like "why do I have to learn this information and how will I ever use it in the future?" Problem-based learning contributes to learner motivation and active engagement. From student's point of view, problem-based learning:

- a) is learner centered and intrinsically motivating;
- b) encourages collaboration and cooperative learning;
- c) is designed so that students are actively engaged in "doing" things rather than in "learning about" something;
- d) is challenging, focusing on higher-order skills.

Problem-based learning is a model that meets the needs of our global society by enabling learners to make positive contributions through a collaborative, multilevel approach to learning that focuses on problem-solving and communication through self-directed learning strategies and teamwork.