

Chapter I: Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

Compassion accounts for promoting prosocial behavior and mindfulness toward others. Although often discussed alongside empathy and sympathy, these concepts remain distinct. Breyer (2020) and Sinclair et al. (2017) differentiate that sympathy is a pity-based response or a concern to others' sufferings, whereas empathy is an effective response in understanding others' suffering. In contrast, compassion is not only emotional recognition but also motivational and volitional commitment to alleviate it. Gilbert & Gordon (2023) emphasized the urgency in developing compassion to prevent future conflicts caused either self-interest, trial, or personal. Despite being an innate capacity for humans, compassion cultivation requires thoughtful care and a supportive environment (Rashedi et al., 2015). Gilbert (2005) argued that compassion is a complicated multidimensional process that is expressed by warmth and has qualities of prosocial behaviors. In addition, according to Gibb (2017), the issue of compassion, its intricacy, its primordial humanity, and its function on prosocial behavior has yet to find its potential in the written policy. Thus, there is an urgency to promote compassion which in this paper will be focused on education, especially higher education.

Addressing the urgency of cultivating compassion requires educational approaches that foster not only the cognitive development but also socio-emotional development. Nussbaum (2010) argues that education should cultivate students' capability to understand the suffering of others. This perception complements Education for sustainable development (ESD) by UNESCO. UNESCO (2020) provides frameworks of ESD for 2030 that advocate for 17 sustainable development goals that address global challenge such as poverty, quality education, gender equality, climate action, and peace and justice. In this context, compassion becomes relevant disposition as it motivates students to be aware of suffering, alleviate the suffering, and eventually act responsibly toward themselves, society, and the environment. Supporting this view, Ludwik et al. (2023) argued that compassion has the potential to strengthen both ESD

and Global Citizenship Education by fostering students' concern for others, social responsibility, and commitment to collective well-being. From these perspectives, compassion support the transformative aims of ESD by promoting humane responsible action during learning activities.

Traditionally, compassion was studied in the early 21st century and is still relatable until now. Fien (2003) addressed the urgency of compassion in higher education as a key factor in promoting sustainable education. Maxwell (2017) proposed an emphatic development critical examination of ethical teaching in higher education. He believed that rather than helping students acquire a simple emphatic habit, empathy pedagogy would be more productive for what he would refer to as 'perfectionnement' of a deep-rooted emphatic disposition. Waddington (2017) added that there was a compassion gap in universities and the way to fill it is to create conditions for compassion to thrive. In a review, Rashedi, et al., (2015) showed that despite plenty of studies focusing on compassion fatigue for social workers and students, compassion cultivation is not explored for undergraduate careers. Hence, compassion in higher education should be instilled in the learning process to raise awareness of our behavior toward others and the environment and also as a way to prevent compassion fatigue for the learners.

Inevitably compassion would be an issue for the next educational research. Maginess & MacKenzie (2018) suggested the engagement between global universities by having moralized compassion. Conklin (2008) proposed a compassion model for teacher education that would push prospective teachers toward critical, justice-oriented teaching. Clouston (2017) suggested that a wider structural level of compassion and caring values should be supported in higher education. Jazaeri (2017) believed that empirical studies are required to determine the feasibility of incorporating compassion into classrooms at various educational stages. Despite the significant roles of compassion throughout the years, the gaps in instilling it in education still need to be achieved.

The problem-based learning (PBL) model is one of the most commonly used learning models in the 21st century. PBL is a teaching method that enables students to

learn through complex problems with multiple solutions (Ali, 2019). Yew and Goh (2016) discussed the effectiveness of PBL for the ability to retain and apply the knowledge overtime. Kök & Duman (2023) also found out the advantage of PBL in problem-solving skills. Another positive impact of PBL was also stated by Mohammed & Ali (2024), who found that psychologists have a good attitude and perception toward the effectiveness of PBL. From these studies, the effectiveness of PBL is worth researching.

The recent studies of the problem-based learning model in higher education for English language teaching (ELT) shows positive findings in its implementation. Rahman et. al. (2016) showed that PBL has shown positive impacts and is suitable to students' learning styles in third-semester students. Ghuron and Ernawati (2018) also supported the positive impact of PBL in boosting students' motivation and confidence. Another study by Hadi & Izzah (2018) found that PBL is appropriate and effective for teaching and promoting critical thinking. Othman & Shah (2013) found that PBL showed students' improvement in both course content and language development classes. These studies show that PBL in ELT of higher education is progressive and has a positive implication for development.

PBL will soon be an issue for further research in ELT scope due to its effectiveness in students' self-learning. Othman & Shah (2013) suggested the implementation of the PBL course module, the use of learning materials, authentic material, and the role of native language in the discussion as further future research on PBL. Tawfik et.al. (2021) also pointed out a future study on PBL between novice, emerging practitioners, and more seasoned teachers. Hence, research development of PBL in ELT is still needed to be explored.

Teaching speaking skills is significant in ELT as out of the four skills, speaking skills are one of the skills used directly in real-life situations. Rao (2019) believed that speaking sounds complicated due to the sudden language production. He also added that speaking skills relied on many careers which pointed out the importance of teaching speaking. However, speaking is more than spontaneous language production for it requires active listening, negotiation skills, and meaningful engagement with the

interlocutors. Mercer (2024) argues that empathic skills are essential competencies for learners who communicate in global contexts because they enable curiosity and genuine interest in others' experiences. Likewise, Sofer and Haan (2023) emphasized that communication shapes the quality of interpersonal relationships, while Hamilton et al. (2020) contended that contemporary conversations require individuals to appreciate diverse perspectives, listen attentively, and respond thoughtfully to experiences of injustices. These communicative behaviors aligned with compassion, which involves recognizing others' experiences and responding with care (Gilbert, 2005; Sinclair et al. 2017). Therefore, speaking courses should provide appropriate context in cultivating compassionate communication alongside the communicative competence.

Learning models are implemented to enhance speaking skills in the learning process. Maulana & Suparmadi (2024) investigated project-based learning for improving speaking skills and found that it could enhance students' creativity and interaction engagement. Another study on learning models to improve speaking was researched by Khotimah (2014) with the implementation of problem-based learning, the results showed positive impacts on students' speaking abilities in an enjoyable way that improved speaking components that covered grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, pronunciation, and intonation. Additionally, problem-based learning model implementation on speaking ability was researched by Fahmi et al. (2024) and showed similar results, however with improvement only in pronunciation and vocabulary components. Shin (2019) indicated that both project-based learning and problem-based learning significantly enhanced students' problem-solving, communication, creative thinking, and cooperation skills. These findings show how student-centered learning models could help students with their speaking skills ability and their soft skills simultaneously.

The studies mentioned the effectiveness of compassion and PBL respectively, however, the study of the integration of compassion in PBL has yet to be explored. The only study that specifies their correlation was presented by Barret and Naughton (2015) who discovered that PBL covers the fostering of person-centeredness, empathy, and

compassion in nursing and postgraduate course case studies. Thus, this research aims to fill in the knowledge gap of compassion, and PBL in higher education context on English speaking skills. Hence, the researcher conducts this research entitled “Infusing Compassion in Problem-based Learning Model for Speaking Skills of ELESP”. This research is divided into 5 chapters: the first chapter discusses the introduction, the second chapter discusses the literature review, the third chapter discusses the methodology, the fourth chapter discusses the results and findings, and the last chapter discusses the conclusion.

1.2. Research Questions

By the novelty stated above, the researcher formulates the main problem of this research as:

How is the Problem-Based Learning model infused with compassion for the speaking skills Course of the English Language Education Study Program?

The study focused on developing a compassion-infused speaking skill problem-based learning model. Accordingly, three sub-questions were proposed by the researcher for the study:

1. To what extent do the existing learning models implement problem-based learning models infused with compassion for the speaking skills course of the ELESP?
2. How is the process of designing a problem-based learning model infused with compassion for the speaking skills course of the ELESP?
3. How is the design of a problem-based learning model infused with compassion for the speaking skills course of the ELESP?
4. How is the feasibility of a problem-based learning model infused with compassion for the speaking skills course of the ELESP?

1.3. Objectives of the Research

Based on the research question, the objectives of the study were:

1. To determine whether the existing learning models implement problem-based learning models infused with compassion for the speaking skills course of the ELESP.
2. To describe the procedure for designing a problem-based learning model infused with compassion for the speaking skills course of the ELESP.
3. To design a problem-based learning model infused with compassion for the speaking skills course of the ELESP.
4. To prove the feasibility of a problem-based learning model infused with compassion for the speaking skills course of the ELESP.

1.4. Scope of the Research

This research focuses on developing the Problem-Based and compassion skill-infused learning model in the English Language Education Study Program speaking skills course. The product of this research is a speaking skill problem-based learning model infused with compassion skills for ELESP. This research employed the SAM method. This research used the data of the existing models of learning obtained from class observation, lesson plans, and syllabus documents from (3) different universities. Furthermore, the data from the existing models of learning were analyzed to describe how far the use of Problem-Based learning is infused with compassion skills in the existing learning models of speaking-skill content courses of the English Language Education Study Program.

By employing the problem-based learning model frameworks, and other theories related to compassion skills. The researcher formulated the compassion skills indicators, as well as the problem-based learning indicators. Furthermore, this research is expected to provide and prepare an appropriate problem-based learning model for ELESP that infuses compassion for speaking skills course of the ELESP.

1.5. Significance of the Research

According to the objectives of the study mentioned earlier. Hopefully, this research will help lecturers, students, and other practitioners in English language

teaching to be aware of compassion in problem-based learning. Theoretically and practically, the researcher expects that this study would promote not only character-building but also critical thinking through compassion and a problem-based learning model.

Theoretically

This research provides theories discovery and justification through developing the Problem-Based and compassion skill-infused learning model in the English Language Education Study Program for speaking skills which could be beneficial for lecturers, and researchers who intend to implement this learning model.

Practically

The practical significance of the study is expected to implement compassion-infused Problem-Based Learning model for speaking skills of ELESP. It also expects that students will be enthusiastic and motivated with compassion in the classroom and in real-world situations. Specifically:

1. This research promotes and encourages the use of the problem-based learning model infused with compassion for the speaking skills of the English Language Education Study Program.
2. This research promotes the implementation of a problem-based learning model in the teaching process.
3. This research is intended to elevate pedagogical activity with the infusion of compassion.
4. This research reinforces English teachers' and lecturers' perspectives on infusing compassion during the ELT process.

1.6. Clarification of Related Terms

1. Compassion: Compassion is demonstrated by noticing distress and committing to take actions to alleviate it (Gilbert, 2005).
2. Problem-Based Learning (PBL): The Problem-Based Learning model is an active learning approach that enables students to develop problem-solving skills, build

competence with academic content standards, and recognize the practical relevance of applying subject knowledge (Kilbane & Milman, 2014).

3. English Speaking Skills: Speaking skills refer to the ability to express opinions, thoughts, and feelings verbally to an individual or group, either in-person or at a distance (Mishra, 2017).

4. English Language Education Study Program (ELESP): ELESP is a bachelor's degree study program that aims to prepare prospective English teachers or practitioners.

1.7. State of the Art

This research aims to develop compassion skills-infused problem-solving learning models for English speaking skills at a higher education level. The study of compassion has often been implemented mostly in medical research since it is required in dealing with patients. In their review, Patel, et al. (2019) found compassion behaviors in 75% of curricula that require them to communicate with empathy when the physicians deal with their patients. However, a review conducted by Sinclair et al. (2021) portrayed that compassion dealt with in healthcare only on a single domain of compassion and mostly in the curricula used for nurses and physicians training. Since the significance of compassion in service-induced careers is high, its study in education also gained a field of interest. McClain et al. (2014) believed that instilling kindness, joy, equanimity, and compassion could transform education for the better. Rashedi et al. (2015) discussed how compassion can be measured during undergraduates' career courses. They believed that implementing compassion invests in mental and emotional resources for others' happiness. Maxwell (2017) argued that emphatic development is a priority in ethics teaching in higher education, and it encourages learners to be more perceptive in the compassion aspect toward others. As most of the subjects of compassion in higher education are learners who will need to maintain their social and emotional cues, they also should be protected from emotional distress that causes compassion fatigue. Merriman (2015) suggested an intervention on compassion fatigue for interns that can aid them with self-care planning. These studies supported the

implementation of compassion and showed its significance in prosocial behaviours which should also be implemented in higher education.

The studies in problem-based learning showed mostly good results in their implementation. Safitri et al. (2023) found that problem-based learning boosted students' motivation which mirrored their learning outcomes. Rahman et al. (2016) found that PBL was suitable and beneficial for teaching and enhancing critical thinking skills. Othman & Shah (2013) showed great improvement in the post-writing activity in course content that implemented PBL. Mohammed and Ali (2024) supported the implementation of PBL in the university for Sudanese physiologists for its effectiveness in student learning. These findings help broaden the significance of PBL which can also be implemented in this research context.

Problem-based learning's significance is also shown in teaching speaking. A study by Khotimah (2014) found that students enjoy activities such as sharing, discussion, and cooperative learning that improve their speaking abilities through PBL. Shin (2019) concluded that adopting a project-based and problem-based convergent learning in English class showed positive results in the speaking practice test. Another study that implemented PBL in speaking was investigated by Fahmi et al. (2021) also resulted similarly, quoted that PBL may be one of the appropriate teaching methods to enhance speaking ability that provide issue and problem-solving skills that are relatable to the learners. Thus, this research aims to focus the implementation of PBL in a speaking course that is expected to result in positive outcomes.

Regardless of PBL's significance, its implementation that infuses compassion is very limited. However, Barret & Naughton (2014) explored the person-centeredness in PBL which is actually associated with concepts of empathy and compassion. They believed the integration of the three could be implemented with the cases or problems presented in the PBL process. Hopefully, this research will give new knowledge on the infusion of compassion in PBL. By developing a compassion infused problem-solving learning model for English speaking skills course at a higher education level, the research expects to provide insight into its theories and practicality.