APPLYING PROJECT-BASED LEARNING TO ENHANCE ESL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILL

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Abstract

This study aims at explaining the process of the application of Project-Based Learning (PBL) to enhance ESL students' speaking skills through an action research approach and then receiving the learners' feedback. The research followed a cyclical action research process including planning, implementation, observation, and reflection over one academic semester. Data were collected using speaking tests, classroom observations, questionnaires, and interviews, and were analyzed through descriptive statistics and qualitative analysis. Students participated in collaborative, speaking-focused projects that required authentic language use. The results show noticeable improvements in students' speaking fluency, accuracy, confidence, and classroom participation. The study concludes that Project-Based Learning is an effective instructional approach for improving ESL students' speaking skills.

Keywords: Action research, communicative competence, ESL students, Project-Based Learning, speaking skills.

1. Introduction

Speaking skill is widely recognized as a core component of communicative competence in English as a Second Language (ESL) learning. However, many ESL students, particularly in tertiary education contexts, experience difficulties in developing effective speaking ability due to limited opportunities for authentic communication, low confidence, and teacher-centered instructional practices. Traditional speaking activities often emphasize accuracy over meaningful interaction, resulting in passive learning and minimal student engagement.

In response to these challenges, learner-centered approaches such as Project-Based Learning (PBL) have gained increasing attention in language education. PBL emphasizes active learning through collaborative projects that require learners to use language meaningfully to solve problems, conduct research, and present outcomes. By integrating real-world tasks and sustained speaking practice, PBL is believed to promote fluency, interaction, and learner autonomy. Despite growing interest in PBL, empirical evidence on its effectiveness in enhancing ESL students' speaking skills remains limited, particularly in classroom-based action research contexts. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the impact of applying Project-Based Learning on ESL students' speaking performance through an action research approach, providing practical insights for language teachers and curriculum designers.

2. Literature Review on Speaking Skill and Project-Based Learning

2.1. Speaking Skills

Speaking skills are one of the four core language skills of foreign language learners and are considered a measure of practical communication competence. Richards (2022) argues that speaking is the process of transforming thoughts into purposefully organized and contextually relevant words. Burns (2023) adds that speaking is a complex process involving phonetics, vocabulary, grammar,

discourse, and social elements, performed in real time to achieve communicative purposes. According to Benlaghrissi et al. (2024), English speaking competence reflects the ability to apply linguistic knowledge, thinking, and social skills to create effective messages. In the context of globalization, possessing proficient speaking skills is considered a factor that helps students improve their ability to integrate and be confident in academic and professional environments (Kurniawan, 2025).

Speaking skills in foreign language teaching are often divided into two types: interactive speaking and transactional speaking (Richards, 2022). Interactive speaking emphasizes maintaining social relationships through short exchanges, while transactional speaking focuses on conveying accurate content in academic or professional contexts. Developing these two types of skills in parallel helps learners use the language flexibly and naturally in different contexts.

2.2. Project- Based Learning

Project-Based Learning (PBL) originates from modern educational theories that emphasize the active role of learners in the knowledge construction process. The three main theoretical foundations of PBL include Constructivism, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), and Experiential Learning Theory.

Constructivism, initiated by Piaget and Vygotsky, posits that knowledge is not a one-way transmission from teacher to student but rather the result of learners constructing it themselves through experience and social interaction. Illeris (2023) emphasizes that learning is only effective when learners are actively involved in meaningful activities, in which they connect new knowledge with personal experiences. PBL clearly reflects this idea by placing students in real-world situations, requiring them to independently research, collaborate, and create specific learning products.

Communicative Learning (CLT) is also an important foundation of PBL in language teaching. Richards (2022) argues that CLT focuses on using language as a communication tool, rather than just learning grammatical structures and rules. PBL, characterized by learning through practical tasks, helps learners apply English to achieve specific goals such as presentations, interviews, video design, or event organization. According to Zhong (2025), continuous interaction during the project helps learners develop more natural communication skills, increasing confidence and fluency.

Kolb's (1984, updated by Illeris, 2023) Experiential Learning Theory suggests that knowledge is formed through the cycle of "experience - reflection - generalization - application". In PBL, students not only receive information but also participate in the process of learning, experimenting, and drawing lessons from practice. This helps learners develop language skills along with critical thinking and problem-solving abilities - two key elements in academic and professional communication (Benlaghrissi et al., 2024). Thus, PBL is considered a combination of the three theories above: knowledge construction through experience and practical communication, helping learners develop comprehensively in language, thinking, and social skills.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Action Research

3.1.1. Definition

There are many definitions of action research given by scholars in the field of language research and teaching. Elliot (1991) stated that "action research is a method of studying classroom situations to improve the quality of teaching and learning activities". According to Van Lier (1996), action research is research within a small scope to solve a practical problem. Meanwhile, O'Brien (2001) argues that action research should be undertaken in parallel with teaching activities. Carr & Kemmis (1986) define action research as a process of self-reflective inquiry undertaken by teachers to enhance the rationality and legitimacy of the pedagogical methods and situations they encounter in their teaching.

Through these definitions, it is seen that action research is conducted to improve teaching, enhance understanding of teaching, and improve educational situations during the teaching process.

3.1.2. Action research process

The steps in conducting action research are analyzed in various ways. According to Kemmis and

Mc Taggart (1988), action research is conducted in four steps: planning, action, observation, and reflection. In another approach, Susman (1983) indicated five stages conducted in each research cycle: (1) Diagnosis: identifying or defining a problem, (2) Action planning: considering alternative action options, (3) Action execution: selecting actions, (4) Evaluation: studying the results of each action, and (5) Identifying learning outcomes: identifying common findings. Furthermore, Burn (1999) considers the action research process as a cyclical series of 10 steps: discovery, identification, planning, data collection, analysis, hypothesis formulation, intervention, observation, reporting, writing, and presentation.

Nunan (2001) proposes an action research model with 6 steps: initiation, preliminary investigation, hypothesis, intervention, evaluation, and dissemination. In this study, the authors used Nunan's (2001) action research model because it is easy to implement in a classroom where one of the three authors directly teaches within a limited timeframe. Moreover, the 6 steps of this model are clear and easy to understand.

3.2. Data Collection Methods

The data collection methods were combined as follows:

Method of collecting available data (secondary data): This method was used to understand, analyze, synthesize, statistically describe, and describe data and information from various documents, articles, or scientific research papers on English speaking skills and project-based learning methods conducted by different authors, experts, or educators.

Survey research method using questionnaires: Survey questionnaires were printed and distributed to 72 students from two courses, EAB121 - Academic and Business English 2, to participate in the survey. Both courses were taught by the author in the first semester of the 2024-2025 academic year. The results obtained from the questionnaire helped the authors identify the current state of English speaking skills and evaluate the effectiveness of project-based learning on students' English speaking skills. The first questionnaire was distributed to students before the project-based learning method was implemented. Its purpose was to survey students' attitudes and perceptions about learning to speak through PBL; to understand the level of interest, attitude, and feelings of students regarding improving their English speaking skills through project-based learning; and to determine how students evaluated the effectiveness and level of confidence when applying PBL. The second questionnaire was distributed after students presented their completed projects to the class. This second questionnaire was designed and adapted based on the theoretical framework of project-based learning to assess the actual process and results of learning to speak through projects. Collect student feedback on their speaking learning experiences at each stage of the PBL, their level of participation, and the actual effectiveness of their speaking skills; this will be used after students complete at least one English speaking project.

In-depth interview survey method: Student information is further clarified through in-class interviews during breaks or at the end of the class to assess the reliability of the data source.

3.3. Data Processing Methods

Quantitative data were collected from questionnaires focusing on understanding the current state of English speaking skills and evaluating the effectiveness of project-based learning in improving English speaking skills for students at the Foreign Trade University. The questionnaire used a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = unsure; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree). Quantitative data was compiled, analyzed in Excel, and converted into percentages, tables, and charts.

Qualitative data were collected from in-depth interviews conducted during breaks or at the end of class to assess the reliability of the quantitative data obtained through the questionnaire survey method. Qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis. These data were analyzed in combination with the aim of clarifying the current state of English speaking skills, evaluating the effectiveness of project-based learning in improving English speaking skills, and subsequently proposing solutions to enhance English speaking skills for students at the Foreign Trade University through project-based learning.

The research is based on the project implementation steps of Jelodari et al. (2025) assigned tasks to faculty and students according to the table below:

Tasks of the lecturer and students in the project implementation process

Lecturer	Students
- Divide into groups - State the project topic - Guide the implementation process and presentation format - Guide the planning of implementation, remind students to assign tasks to members - Provide knowledge orientation and reference materials - Instruct on the method and time for presenting the product - Monitor, check progress, remind and support students - Provide feedback and revise the project draft for the groups - Remind students to prepare visual aids and equipment for the project - Comment on and evaluate the product, rate for the groups	- Form groups, elect group leader and secretary - Students draw lots for the topic - Choose a suitable presentation format - Receive tasks to work in groups - Hold group meetings, plan implementation, develop an outline, and assign tasks to members. - Independently research lesson content and gather information about the project. - Finalize the project draft and submit it to the instructor for feedback. - Revise the project based on instructor feedback, practice, and work with members. - Prepare all necessary equipment for the project. - Present the project in class.

4. Projects Completed in The Course

In the English 2 Business Partner B2 course, the following projects were completed corresponding to two lessons in the program.

4.1. Topic: Finance

4.1.1. Project Name: "Money - From Paper to Power"

a) Project description

Stemming from the ever-changing and dynamic nature of money in economic life, finance always plays a core role in all activities of individuals and organizations. The project "Money - From Paper to Power" is designed to explore how money is formed, circulated, and creates value in various industries. The project is presented in a documentary format, inspired by the presentation style of "Breaking News" broadcasts, offering a visual and lively perspective while maintaining academic rigor and expertise. The research focuses on analyzing the operation and role of Finance in five typical industries: F&B, Entertainment, Technology, Fashion, and Tourism. By delving into each area, the project will clarify how finance operates, impacts, and shapes business decisions.

In addition, the project uses practical case studies to illustrate its points, helping viewers not only understand financial theory but also see how it is applied in practice, thereby improving their ability to grasp and retain knowledge.

b) Steps to follow

Step 1. Identify the content of Unit 3: Finance.

Step 2. Develop initial ideas for the project (presentation format, preliminary content).

Step 3. Research different fields and select suitable fields to present in the project: Entertainment, Technology, Fashion, Tourism, and F&B (relation to Finance).

Step 4. Assign tasks to team members + create an outline for the video script.

Step 5. Finalize the script (revise and refine the initial draft).

Step 6. Begin the video filming process.

Step 7. Complete the scenes and begin the video editing phase => Complete the project.

4.1.2. Improved speaking skills:

Communication and interviewing in English.

Expressing personal opinions, public speaking.

Storytelling, naturally expressing stories.

Developing communication skills.

Gain confidence when speaking in front of the camera, improve pronunciation and intonation in English. Enhance academic vocabulary and specialized terminology on the topic of Finance.

4.2. Topic: Performance in The Field of E-commerce

4.2.1. Project Name: Honoring performance, rewarding excellence

a) Project description

Performance Review & Development Orientation for a company operating in the e-commerce sector. A quarterly performance review meeting for company employees, organized and managed by HR, to evaluate the level of work completion of each employee based on results, attitude, and contribution level to recognize the dedication of each employee. From there, develop appropriate reward/training and support plans for each individual.

Purpose: To evaluate and improve quality, promote company development, and provide a basis for adjustments and rewards/disciplinary actions to enhance labor productivity. Message: Every effort should be properly recognized, motivating each employee to work more actively and effectively.

b) Steps to follow

Step 1: Identify the core content of topic: Performance: Performance and rewards, Rewarding culture, Performance development.

Step 2: Develop a project presentation idea.

Step 3: Research industries + Choose the industry to present.

Industries: E-commerce, Logistics, Information Technology, Law.

=> E-commerce

Reason for choosing:

E-commerce is becoming an inevitable trend and a highly potential business method in the digital age. Growth Rate: The explosion of e-commerce platforms and online business models => a promising field that needs research and exploitation.

A clear and specific performance evaluation system.

Familiar to students => relatable and easy to role-play.

Helps students apply a variety of vocabulary and structures in Unit 5.

Step 4: Drafting a preliminary scenario.

The scenario includes 4 characters: 1 manager from the HR department and 3 employees with three different performance levels (A - exceeding expectations, proactive, innovative; B - basic, lacking stability, no breakthrough in ideas; C - not meeting expectations, inconsistent productivity). Each employee will receive feedback from the manager on their strengths and areas for improvement. From this, employees understand their position and future development direction.

Step 5: Creating a detailed script + Modifications and additions.

Step 6: Assigning roles.

Step 7: Set the scene.

Step 8: Film the scenes.

Step 9: Post-production.

4.2.2. Improved speaking skills

Using specialized vocabulary to analyze data and communicate in an e-commerce environment, such as: "performance incentives," "pay rise," "rise through the ranks," etc.

Expressing information about e-commerce jobs and personal skills in English.

Developing presentation skills by incorporating charts and illustrative slides.

Confident in communicating and conveying messages logically and coherently.

Pronouncing and using vocabulary related to the topic correctly and appropriately in context.

Improving natural expression skills and applying a variety of grammatical structures.

Effectively using body language, controlling eye contact and gestures to project a professional, confident demeanor and make a strong impression on the audience.

Becoming familiar with communicating in English in a professional work environment.

5. Analysis Results on Enhancing English Speaking Skills for Students Through Project-Based Learning

5.1. Students' Perceptions of English Speaking Skills

Table 1. Students' Perceptions of English Speaking Skills

How do you perceive English speaking skills?	Completely disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Completely agree
1. Demonstrates the importance of English speaking skills for learning and career development.	0%	9.5%	14.3%	66.7%	9.5%
2. Demonstrates the level of influence on the communication and international integration abilities of Vietnamese students.	0%	14.3%	9.5%	61.9%	14.3%
3. Speaking skills should be prioritized over other skills (listening, reading, writing) in the process of learning English.	4.8%	4.8%	38.1%	42.9%	9.5%
4. Contributes to increased job opportunities or future career advancement.	4.8%	4.8%	9.5%	52.4%	28.6%

(Source: Survey results of the authors)

The results in Table 1 show that the majority of first-year students are aware of the importance of English speaking skills. Most students agree on the importance of English speaking skills for their studies and career development. Point 3 (Speaking skills should be prioritized over other skills (listening, reading, writing) in English language learning) received the agreement of 81% of students, followed by 76.2% agreeing with definition 1 (Showing the importance of English speaking skills for learning and career development) and 2 (Showing the impact on the communication and international integration abilities of Vietnamese students), and 52.4% agreeing with point 4 (Contributing to increased job opportunities or future career advancement). However, many students were unsure or disagreed with the questions raised. Specifically, 38.1% of students felt skeptical about point 3, 14.3% were unsure about point 1, while 9.5% felt uncertain about points 2 and 4. The number of students who disagreed with points 3 and 4 was quite modest at 4.8%. In addition, not many students agreed with points 1 and 2, with figures of 9.5% and 14.3% respectively.

5.2. The Effectiveness of Project-Based Learning on English Speaking Skills

5.2.1. Positive aspects of Project-Based Learning

Table 2. Student Evaluation of the Advantages of PBL

What is your opinion on project-based learning?	Completely disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Completely agree
1. I find that project-based learning stimulates students' motivation and interest in learning, thereby helping them to be more enthusiastic, confident, and learn more effectively.	0%	0%	19%	66.7%	14.3%
2. I can develop self-reliance and responsibility in learning through setting goals, planning, and organizing the implementation of group projects.	4.8%	4.8%	4.8%	71.4%	14.3%
3. I can improve my collaboration skills and teamwork responsibility during the project.	0%	0%	4.8%	66.7%	28.6%
4. I have the opportunity to develop problem-solving skills and critical thinking during the group project.	0%	0%	19%	66.7%	14.3%
5. I can enhance my creativity by presenting the project in various formats.	0%	0%	14.3%	52.4%	33.3%

(Source: Survey results of the authors)

According to the results in Table 2, most students gave positive evaluations of the projects they

completed. Over 80% of students agreed that project-based learning stimulates interest in learning spoken English and leads to more effective learning, while only 19% expressed uncertainty, and notably, no students disagreed. This result is consistent with the findings from the interviews. "I feel that project-based learning makes me more interested in English speaking lessons. Normally, lessons are based on textbooks, which can be a bit boring and distracting, but when working on a project, I focus on researching information to complete the group's assignment and feel more responsible for my part."

With PBL's learner-centered approach, students found they could develop self-reliance and responsibility in their learning through setting goals, planning, and organizing group projects (85.7% of students chose "agree" and "strongly agree"). "I find that project-based learning helps me become more responsible because students have to work in teams and perform a part of the work." A high percentage of students (93.5%) agreed with point 3 (I can improve my collaboration skills and teamwork responsibility during the project), while only 4.8% were skeptical. "Project-based learning helps me improve my teamwork skills, allowing me to learn a lot from other team members, such as skills and knowledge…" Point 4 (I have the opportunity to develop problem-solving and critical thinking skills during the group project) received support from over 80% of students because "these are all very important and useful skills that will benefit my future career." Similar to the above, 85.7% of students agreed that they could enhance their creativity by presenting projects in various formats (point 5). Overall, the data obtained from surveys and interviews yielded quite similar results: the majority of students participating in the experience found that project-based learning brought them many benefits in learning to speak English in particular and developing skills in general.

5.2.2. Limitations of Project-Based Learning

Table 3. Student Evaluation of the Disadvantages of PBL

How do you feel about project-based learning?	Completely disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Completely agree
6. I find that the project takes a lot of time to invest in design and implementation.	0%	14.3%	33.3%	42.9%	9.5%
7. Finding ideas for the project topic is not easy because there are many different opinions within the group.	0%	0%	42.9%	42.9%	14.3%
8. I find that choosing the presentation format is also a big challenge in order to increase the attractiveness of the project.	0%	4.8%	9.5%	76.2%	9.5%
9. I believe the project evaluation was not objective or it was difficult to evaluate accurately.	0%	19%	42.9%	33.3%	4.8%
10. I found that some members did not actively participate in the project implementation.	0%	19%	19%	47.6%	14.3%

(Source: Survey results of the authors)

Although appreciating the practical benefits of project-based learning, student groups still faced certain difficulties during implementation. More than half of the students (52.4%) found the project to be time-consuming in terms of design and implementation, and only a small number of students (14.3%) disagreed. In addition, many students (57.2%) also had difficulty finding ideas for the topic due to differing opinions within the group. However, "During the discussion, the groups demonstrated teamwork skills, so the group's topic was quickly agreed upon." Furthermore, over 80% of students agreed with point number 8 (I found that choosing the presentation format was also a major challenge to increase the project's attractiveness). "To have an engaging project, it's necessary to combine various presentation formats, so the whole group had to invest a lot of time preparing the visual aids very meticulously and carefully." Very few (9.5%) students felt skeptical or expressed disagreement with this point. In addition, 38.1% of students agreed that the project evaluation was not objective or difficult to evaluate accurately; the number of students unsure was 42.9%, and the percentage of students disagreeing was quite modest at 19%. Regarding point number 10 (I noticed that some members were not actively involved in the project), over 60% of students expressed agreement, 19% were unsure, and

19% disagreed. Furthermore, due to the diverse project content and novel presentation format, students may find it unfamiliar. In summary, the data obtained from the survey and interviews demonstrate that while project-based learning is useful and practical, students still face certain difficulties such as time management, presentation format, member participation, etc.

5.3. The Effectiveness of Project-Based Learning on English Speaking Skills

5.3.1. The connection

Table 4. Student Evaluation of the Connection When Learning Through Projects

What connection did you have when learning through projects?	Completely disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Completely agree
11. I found the content of the project related to things I already knew.	0%	0%	28.6%	57.1%	14.3%
12. I think I can apply what I learned from doing the project in English to other projects.	0%	0%	23.8%	66.7%	9.5%
13. I found doing the project in English very useful and practical in improving my English skills.	0%	0%	9.5%	61.9%	28.6%
14. The project content is not suitable for my knowledge level.	33.3%	31%	19%	7.1%	9.5%

(Source: Survey results of the authors)

According to the results from Table 4, the majority of students found a connection between what they already knew and the activities they participated in during the project. More than 70% of students agreed that the project content was related to what they already knew, while only 28.6% were unsure. In addition, regarding point 15 (I think I can apply what I learned while doing the project in English to other projects), 76.2% of students expressed agreement, and notably, no students disagreed with this. "I hope that the project-based learning method can be replicated in many other courses so that we have the opportunity to experience and apply theory to practice, making learning more interesting and less boring." In addition, a high percentage of students (over 90%) agreed with point (I found completing the project in English very useful and practical in improving my English speaking skills). "Through completing the project, I feel my English skills have improved significantly, especially my speaking skills, because I had to practice my content regularly. Therefore, I had to learn how to present and express myself clearly and coherently. Previously, due to a lack of a learning environment, goals, or guidance, my English ability was limited, and I lacked any motivation to improve." Regarding item (The project content is not suitable for my level of knowledge), over 60% of students disagreed, 19% expressed skepticism, and 16.6% agreed. This data demonstrates that the project content was not tricky or confusing for students. Because it was appropriate for the students' knowledge level, "during the implementation process, we did not feel bored or stressed."

5.3.2. Confidence

Table 5. Student Assessment of Confidence in Project-Based Learning

How confident are you in project-based learning?	Completely disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Completely agree
15. I find doing the project in English not too difficult for me.	0%	9.5%	23.8%	38.1%	28.6%
16. I am confident that doing different projects in English provides me with a lot of useful knowledge.	0%	0%	23.8%	61.9%	14.3%
17. I can improve my English speaking skills if I regularly do projects in English.	0%	4.8%	19%	66.7%	9.5%
18. A well-designed project in English helps me confidently improve my English speaking skills.	0%	0%	19%	57.1%	19%

(Source: Survey results of the authors)

The results from Table 5 show students' assessment of their confidence in project-based learning. 66.7% of students believe that undertaking projects in English is not too difficult for them, while the number of students who are "unsure" is modest at 23.8%. For item (I am confident that undertaking

various projects in English provides me with valuable knowledge), the number of students agreeing is quite high at over 75%, and notably, no students chose to disagree. In reality, students undertook two different projects, each with its own topic and diverse presentation formats, thus giving them the opportunity to accumulate more useful knowledge. Furthermore, over 75% of students agreed that they could improve their English speaking skills by regularly working on projects in English, a relatively small number (19%) expressed skepticism, and very few students disagreed (4.8%). Over 75% of students agreed with statement (A well-designed project in English helps me confidently improve my English speaking skills), while none chose to disagree. Clearly, a well-designed English project, both in terms of content and format, will create interest and boost students' confidence in developing their English speaking skills. In summary, the data obtained from the survey shows that the project-based learning method built confidence among the majority of participating students. A clear finding in this table is the significant decrease in the number of students who chose "disagree" and "strongly disagree," mostly reaching 0%, indicating that students are quite confident in learning to speak English through project-based learning.

5.3.3. Satisfaction

Table 6. Student evaluations of satisfaction with project implementation

How satisfied are you with project-based learning?	Completely disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Completely agree
18. I felt excited to have the opportunity to practice my English speaking skills during the project.	4.8%	4.8%	33.3%	57.1%	4.8%
19. I felt excited to have the opportunity to work and cooperate with my classmates during the project.	0%	19%	9.5%	61.9%	9.5%
20. The instructors always helped me during the project.	0%	0%	4.8%	57.1%	38.1%
21. The instructors evaluated the project fairly and objectively.	0%	0%	4.8%	61.9%	33.3%
22. The instructor was willing to give feedback and encourage me during the project.	0%	0%	0%	52.4%	47.6%

(Source: Survey results of the authors)

According to the results from Table 6, the majority of students felt satisfied when learning to speak English through projects. More than 60% of students felt excited about having the opportunity to practice English skills during the project. "Doing the project in English was really useful because I had the opportunity to practice English skills such as speaking and presentation skills, which made me very enthusiastic." In addition, the number of students who agreed with point (I felt excited about having the opportunity to work and cooperate with my classmates during the project) accounted for more than 70%. Project-based learning requires students to work in groups; therefore, to produce a quality product, students need to coordinate and agree with each other. The role of the instructor is also extremely important and receives high praise from the students. Specifically, the majority of students (95.2%) agree that the instructor always helps them throughout the project. "We often call, text via Zalo, or email the instructor to ask for feedback on our group's work throughout the project. Each time we asked for advice, the instructor was always ready to support the group promptly, and she also gave very careful and close feedback on each stage of the group's work." In addition, over 95% of students agreed with point (Instructors evaluate projects fairly and objectively), and no students chose "disagree". Notably, 100% of the students expressed satisfaction with their instructors, as they consistently received feedback and encouragement throughout the project. "Our English teacher regularly inquired about the progress of our projects. She also encouraged us on the steps to take and addressed any difficulties our groups encountered."

5.4. Discussion of Research Results

Students' Perceptions of English Speaking Skills: Students at the Foreign Trade University generally have a certain understanding of the role of Project-Based Learning (PBL) in learning to speak English. Most students are interested in learning to speak English thanks to novel English activities and

engaging and diverse teaching methods. However, challenging English lessons pose a significant challenge for them. Students also gave positive feedback on the connection between learning to speak English. They felt a connection between English speaking activities through projects and real-life situations, although some students commented that the lessons were too difficult for their English abilities. In addition, students showed confidence in learning to speak English through regular practice and training. However, some students still felt insecure due to the difficulty of the lesson content and the lack of sufficient appeal in the curriculum. Finally, many students expressed satisfaction with the instructors and the opportunities to practice their English speaking skills. Therefore, the authors decided to implement a project-based learning method with projects of clear content and diverse formats to investigate the effectiveness of this method on students' English learning skills.

6. Conclusion

Project-based learning has a positive impact on students' English speaking skills, problem-solving skills, and creative thinking. The research reveals that the students all feel enthusiastic and happy when learning to speak English through projects, thus gradually achieving progress at their own pace in an encouraging and supportive learning environment. Through project-based learning, learners also learn how to plan, learn collaboratively, and manage time. Students gain more new ideas, present their own viewpoints, and discuss to find solutions when learning collaboratively. Furthermore, project-based learning creates a disciplined, practical, and challenging learning environment where students learn to design, implement, and evaluate projects, fostering self-reliance and accountability. English speaking skills are enhanced through the competitive nature of the project. Students participate in a friendly competition with multiple project teams, and they strive for success.

Additionally, project-based learning fosters enthusiasm, enjoyment, and satisfaction, leading to more effective learning. The innovative and engaging content, along with diverse and interesting activities, helps students improve their focus. Students also perceive a connection between project completion and their experiences. They believe that project-based learning should be expanded not only to English courses but also to other subjects. Students' confidence is also boosted as they have more opportunities to practice their English speaking skills. Most students expressed satisfaction and enthusiasm with this method, especially the guidance, feedback, and encouragement from the instructors, as well as the group work.

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