The application of project-based learning in English for a Basic Marketing class to enhance Oral presentation skills at Ho Chi Minh City University of Industry and Trade (HUIT)

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to investigate the efficacy of problem-based learning (PBL) and students' perspectives regarding its application in a fundamental marketing course at the Ho Chi Minh City University of Industry and Trade. The experimental class has 41 third-year participants. To achieve the study's goal, a combination of research methods was employed, including pre- and post-course tests, surveys, interviews with ten students, and observations of Basic Marketing classes at the university. The data analysis revealed that students who engaged in PBL demonstrated notable enhancements in their oral presentation abilities, as seen by their post-test scores. Students generally have a favorable view of project-based learning (PBL) in the classroom, largely due to its potential to make lessons more engaging and improve their oral presentation skills; however, obstacles related to time and resources arise during the implementation of PBL activities. This study provided a modest contribution to educational implications for educators and future research in the same domain.

Keywords: Project-based learning, students' perception, effectiveness

Introduction

There is a growing need for English proficiency to access global opportunities (Mahjabeen, 2025). Project-based learning (PBL) has become a favourite approach in English classes worldwide because it builds language skills along with vital 21st-century competencies. Beckett and Pae (2024) note that PBL sharpens students' ability to think critically, collaborate with peers, and deliver polished presentations —habits that employers increasingly demand. Countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia have incorporated PBL into their language courses to enhance learner independence and promote the use of language in real-world contexts (Stoller, 2006). Interest in the method is growing across Asia. Research from Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Indonesia indicates that PBL-style English lessons enhance speaking skills, foster responsibility, and improve overall communication (Aldobekhi & Abahussain, 2024; Al-Bahadli, Al-Obaydi, & Pikhart, 2023; Luhulima, 2023).

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In the Vietnamese higher education context, language acquisition is an emotionally charged learning environment, as English serves not only as a subject but also as a fundamental skill integrated across other academic fields (Le, Pham, Than, & Nguyen, 2025). In Vietnam, though the approach is still new, PBL has already been linked to higher student engagement, greater autonomy, and gains in speaking, listening, and intercultural competence (Ngo, 2014; Nguyen, 2017; Le & Nguyen, 2021). Adapting to the model can be challenging, especially when learners lack background knowledge or are unfamiliar with self-directed tasks. Partly for that reason, English-medium introductory marketing courses at the Ho Chi Minh City University of Industry and Trade now pair the discipline with PBL in an effort to improve students' shaky oral presentation skills. Although the initial findings are promising, further empirical research is needed to determine the efficacy of PBL in improving English communication in this discipline-specific setting.

Literature review

Definitions of Project-Based Learning:

Scholars writing about classroom practice use a mix of names for project-based learning. Beckett (2002) refers to it as project work, a project approach, a project-oriented strategy, and even project-based training; however, he ultimately settles on the phrase "project-based learning" as his core definition. In constructivist PBL, students tackle real-world problems, an idea demonstrated in the work of Barron (1998) and later by Sidman-Taveau and Milner-Boloti (2001). For Miller (2006), PBL is an active, learner-centered approach that rests on goals, teamwork, clear communication, growing independence, worthwhile questions, and thoughtful follow-up in everyday settings. Blank (1997) and Harwell (1997) describe project-based instruction as genuine because learners plan, create, run, and review projects that matter outside the classroom. Mamakou and Grigoriadou (2011) echo this picture. The same group notes that PBL now appears in many fields, including language study. Stoller (2006) prefers project-based instruction, or PBI, yet keeps most PBL ideas, calling it a long-term task with a process and a product that demands mixed skills, links language and content, and closes with group reflection. Regardless of the name, PBL is an effective way to teach pupils a range of subjects in various educational contexts. ESP includes topic selection, questioning, document research, data analysis, report writing, product evaluation, and presentation.

Typical features of PBL: Project-based learning (PBL) originates from constructivist and learner-centered ideas, providing students with a dynamic space to develop both academic skills and practical knowledge. Under PBL, learners are not just passive listeners; they step into the driver's seat, choosing topics, tackling problems, and charting their own goals. This freedom usually sparks deeper commitment, since students know their choices matter. Because the approach is based on action rather than memorization, learners retain lessons as they apply theories in contexts that are meaningful to them (Blumenfeld et al., 1991). What truly sets PBL apart is its steady focus on real-world challenges. Every project begins with an open question and requires clear language as teams gather facts, weigh options, and craft informed answers. Because the work feels relevant, motivation rises, and so do students' cognitive and speaking skills (Stoller, 2006). Collaboration is also crucial for the success of PBL. One child may excel at spreadsheets, while another may draw maps, but both must listen, negotiate, and do their part. This collaborative effort fosters the shared responsibility that students will require for class projects and their future careers (Alan & Stoller, 2005). The payoff is evident in tangible products—reports, videos, displays, and even songs or apps. Teachers can review these public artifacts to see how well each learner blends information, creativity, and critical thinking

(Stoller, 1997). By combining academic rigor with practical application, PBL provides a well-rounded education that extends far beyond test scores. Its blend of authenticity, student choice, and teamwork is slowly reshaping language teaching and many other fields.

Components Influencing PBL Implementation: Three interlinked factors significantly impact the effectiveness of project-based learning (PBL) in classrooms: the teacher's role, curriculum design, and the learning environment. To start with, effective PBL teachers step back from the podium and act more like guides than lecture-givers. They assist learners in picking topics, planning steps, analyzing data, and pausing for honest self-review, all while encouraging sensible independence (Beckett & Slater, 2005; Hattie, 2012). The same instructors must also build a room—or an online space—where curiosity, grit, and teamwork feel safe and natural (Larmer, Mergendoller, & Boss, 2015). Good curriculum design then provides those projects with an academic backbone and a clear purpose. When theory and practice are closely intertwined, students grasp ideas more deeply and sharpen their people skills simultaneously (Beckett & Slater, 2005). The broader environment, including the mood, layout, and rules, plays a significant role, as students learn more effectively in environments where they feel comfortable and have the freedom to adapt. In supportive, flexible spaces that address genuine community problems, motivation soars and resilience grows, enabling young people to tackle real-world puzzles (Haines, 1989).

Types of Projects in PBL: Project-based learning encompasses a diverse range of project types that vary in their organization, student engagement, and data collection methods. Beckett (2002) categorized the project models into organized, semi-structured, and unstructured models based on feedback from professionals, educators, and students (Stoller, 1997). Structured projects give teachers complete control over the project's design, content, methodology, resources, and evaluation. Unstructured projects, on the other hand, are typically student-directed, allowing students to determine how the project will be carried out and what its parameters will be. Semi-structured projects are an example of a collaborative model in which students and teachers work together to design and execute.

Alternative classifications centre on methodological methodologies. Legutke and Thomas (1991) classified projects into five categories based on the range of sources and methods used by students to achieve project goals: research, survey, encounter, text, and communication. Each sort reflects a distinct strategy for content engagement and data collection. Haines (1989) proposed another paradigm that is concerned with the features of the final product. The project is classified as an organizational, production, or performance project based on whether its outcome involves formal planning, the fabrication of a tangible product, or a live exhibition. These various varieties demonstrate how PBL can be tailored to diverse learning objectives and educational contexts, underscoring its importance in developing both academic and practical skills.

Stages of Project-Based Learning: Over the years, researchers and teachers have developed step-by-step guides to help language learners navigate project-based learning (PBL) in the classroom. Early works, such as Fried-Booth's three-part plan from 1985—planning, doing, and product-making—formed a useful starting point, but overlooked the importance of reflecting on what students had learned. Papandreou later added more depth in 1994 by splitting the process into six stages, which gave inquiry and self-evaluation a clearer place to exist; yet, the flow still felt mostly linear and left little room for quickly looping back to earlier tasks.

To fill those holes, Stoller and Myers (2020) developed a five-step guide: get ready, gather and sort information, show the final product, pause to reflect, and then either add a little polish or move on. Looping that set of stages together allows students to think critically as they work,

use English in real-world contexts, and exchange honest feedback with the teacher at each stop. The design also shifts the instructor's role toward that of a guide, allowing learners to take more control and speak up more often as the project progresses. Whether simple or detailed, every one of these roadmaps still clings to the PBL heartbeats of teamwork, ownership, real work, and blending language skills with fresh content. In context-rich classes like Basic Marketing, such blueprints help sharpen practical abilities, especially when students must speak English with confidence during a live presentation.

Project-Based Learning's Advantages: Project-Based Learning (PBL) is an experiential learning methodology that offers students a significant learning experience (Aldobekhi & Abahussain, 2024). Project-Based Learning (PJBL) in higher education has various advantages, beginning with active involvement and student-centred learning. PBL involves students in genuine, real-world projects that enable them to assume responsibility for their education (Woenardi et al., 2022). Project-based learning (PBL) enhances social, emotional, and cognitive skills by treating education as a real-world process, rather than just a list of facts to memorize. A growing body of research indicates that PBL enables learners to connect ideas, resulting in improved grades, better test performance, and increased confidence in applying their knowledge in new situations (Chang & Lee, 2010; Ravitz, 2010). Tough, open-ended problems push them to question assumptions and weigh evidence, while built-in pauses for honest self-review sharpen their metacognitive awareness (Reeve & Svihla, 2016; Lin & Ma, 2011). Globally, PBL enhances the development of communication skills, including enquiry, identifying core ideas, making oral presentations, and engaging in conversations by challenging arguments with data (Owens & Hite, 2022).

Give students authentic ownership through planned, purposeful steps, and passion replaces passivity; motivation soars, attention deepens, and the classroom feels alive rather than scripted (Carrabba & Farmer, 2018). Working in carefully mixed teams, young people hold each other accountable, learning to juggle deadlines, bounce back from setbacks, and share victories instead of guarding credit (Bell, 2010). Meanwhile, teachers shift from lecturing at the front to guiding at the side, asking probing questions, coaching habits, and, as a result, lifting the whole learning atmosphere (Ravitz, 2010). By honoring diverse strengths—PBL allows the artist to sketch, the analyst to model, and the quiet listener to observe—it maps a path toward genuine differentiation, fairness, and belonging. In the end, graduates leave school not just smarter, but ready for jobs and communities that demand bold conversation, careful judgment, and teamwork every single day.

Composition of Oral Presentations: An oral presentation typically consists of three basic parts: an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. The intro's job is to grab the audience's attention, introduce the speaker and the topic, and summarize the main points. It sets the tone of the discussion, tells watchers what to expect, and does all that in a way that feels brief but informative. The speaker spends most of the time in the body, sharing facts, personal stories, quick anecdotes, and using slides or props to keep the audience engaged and reinforce the key ideas. Towards the end, the conclusion aids listeners in connecting the various threads, signals the near completion of the talk, and reiterates the main themes. To wrap things up clearly and maintain high energy, a good conclusion often includes a question, a challenge to act, or an invitation to think more deeply.

Observation in the Classroom: Classroom observation remains one of the most effective qualitative methods for studying the everyday rhythms of teaching and learning in real-time. By sitting quietly among students and teachers, a researcher can observe how desks are arranged, how praise is distributed, or when students fall silent with confusion, gathering rich

details that questionnaires often overlook. When that lens is focused on project-based learning, or PBL, observations show whether, as promised, students choose topics, set goals, spark ideas, stumble, and finally stitch the pieces together. The aim, in short, is to capture a detailed, chronological record of who does what in the classroom, pausing on pivotal exchanges, subtle shifts in motivation, and moments when theory intersects with messy reality.

Criteria for Classroom Observation in PBL: Since PBL is an experiential and learner-centered approach, it can be effectively assessed using clear observation criteria. First, observers focus on active participation in group discussions and project work as a measure of student engagement, which is a sign of knowledge building (Thomas, 2000). Second, the evaluation of teacher facilitation, instead of direct instruction, hinges on the instructor's involvement in inquiry, learning, and autonomy (Blumenfeld et al., 1991). Third, communication and collaboration are studied to learn how students solve problems in the classroom and in the real world, negotiate roles, and co-create meaning (Barrows, 1996). Fourth, De Jong et al. (2009) assess learning activities based on how well students use what they have learned in the classroom. To promote self-awareness and deeper learning, PBL classrooms should integrate reflective thinking and formative evaluation (Hmelo-Silver, 2004). These criteria provide a comprehensive framework for observing and enhancing PBL practice, particularly when the goal is to develop language competency, foster learner autonomy, and acquire transferable skills.

Social Constructivist Theory

Social constructivism was established by educational philosopher Lev Vygotsky in 1968. Social constructivism holds that social interaction, language, and culture all influence cognitive development. According to Vygotsky, knowledge is socially produced through cooperation with instructors, peers, and the culture. Students can learn new ideas and make sense of their experiences with the use of language. According to this theory, learning occurs best in a supportive environment where peers or adults assist pupils with tasks they are unable to complete. Active, group learning is emphasized by social constructivism as a means of fostering cognitive and individual growth.

Aims and Objectives of the Study

This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of project-based learning (PBL) in enhancing students' oral presentation skills in a foundational English marketing course. The study has two main goals: (1) to compare how well students perform in oral presentations in a project-based learning (PBL) setting versus a traditional lecture format, and (2) to understand what students think about project-based learning by looking at the opinions of participants in a Basic Marketing English course at Ho Chi Minh City University of Industry and Trade, especially about how PBL has helped improve their oral presentation skills.

Research Questions

To achieve the study's objectives, the survey aimed to address the following research questions:

1. What is the effectiveness of project-based learning for students in a basic marketing English course, as measured by the quality of their oral presentations, compared to a control group undergoing traditional learning?
2. What are the students’ perceptions of the use of project-based learning in a basic marketing English experimental class?

Methods

Pedagogical Setting

At the research site, students follow a set curriculum that requires them to study all subjects for three 135-minute sessions each week, including general English and English for Specific Purposes. The two-credit, ten-week course on fundamental marketing, which is currently in operation, enrolls students. The training develops critical skills, including communication and problem-solving, while emphasizing both the academic and practical aspects of marketing. The researcher's particular class, where students participated in project-based learning exercises meant to improve their oral presentation abilities, served as the research environment. The lively and captivating nature of the lesson created the perfect environment for assessing how well PBL enhanced students' ability to express their opinions orally with boldness and effectiveness.

Participants

The target population for this study consisted of third-year English-major students at HUIT who were enrolled in the Basic Marketing course that semester. All students must complete general and specialized knowledge, and they are in the sixth semester of the university training program.

Sample size and sample method

Taherdoost (2017) emphasized that determining an appropriate sample size is essential for generating significant inferences about a broader population. This study included 81 student volunteers, all of whom were registered in the researcher's classes. The control group consisted of 41 students, while the comparative group comprised 40 students.

A convenience sampling method was utilized, in accordance with Creswell's (2018) recommendations for exploratory research conducted under resource limitations. Participants were selected based on their accessibility, which enabled efficient data collection in the classroom setting. This approach yielded concrete advantages, including time and cost efficiency, as well as logistical feasibility in an educational context (Thomas & David, 2017). Additionally, selecting students from a single school helped maintain consistency, which supported the study's goal of evaluating the effectiveness of educational interventions in a stable learning environment.

The study's design

This study employed a mixed-methods approach to gather comprehensive data from several sources, thereby increasing the validity of the findings. Moreover, classroom observation collected real-time data, yielding valuable insights into participant interactions and behaviors inside their authentic learning environment. The research employed T-tests, student surveys, student interviews, and classroom observations, all of which contributed to a thorough understanding of the study problem. A group case study was deemed appropriate as it offered a more thorough perspective on the research issue by facilitating an in-depth comparison and analysis of the outcomes from two distinct student cohorts.

Data collection & analysis

Pretest and Post-test

Pre- and post-assessments were utilized to evaluate the effect of project-based learning (PBL) on students' oral presentation abilities. The pretest administered at the course's outset aimed to provide a benchmark for the students' presentation skills, confidence, and comprehension of fundamental marketing concepts. This preliminary assessment provided a definitive overview

of each student's baseline in presenting skills and fundamental marketing knowledge. The course concluded with the administration of the post-test, which evaluated the students' oral presenting competencies after the PBL intervention. The post-test, structured to replicate the pre-test, facilitated a direct comparison of students' competencies before and after engaging in PBL activities. This comparative analysis was essential for assessing if the PBL technique led to substantial enhancements in the students' oral presentation abilities. The study evaluated the extent to which PBL enhanced students' oral presenting skills in marketing presentations by examining the results of both assessments.

Questionnaires

After a project-based learning activity, students in a Basic Marketing English class completed a survey to assess their perception of the program's effectiveness. The survey had three parts. The first part collected information about the students, including their educational background and prior learning experiences. The second part examined what students thought about project-based learning, including its strengths and weaknesses, as well as their overall impressions. The aim was to understand how they thought and felt throughout the learning activity. The last part included an open-ended question to gauge students' interest in incorporating project-based learning into their future classes.

All 41 students in the test group received the online survey, which was written in Vietnamese to ensure everyone understood it. We handed it out right after the project-based learning activity to get opinions while they were still fresh. The survey consisted of 23 questions, each with a five-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree). Questions 1–16 primarily focused on the positive aspects of project-based learning, including enhanced involvement, skill development, teamwork, and learning. Questions 17-23 pertained to concerns, such as obtaining sufficient supplies, inadequate assistance from the teacher, excessive workload, and insufficient time. The survey was based on past studies on how students feel and perform in project-based learning, from Fatmawati (2018), Puangpunsi (2021), and Rusiana, Nuraeningsih, and Hajimia (2023). We modified the survey to align with the objectives of our study and the needs of our students.

Overall, this survey allowed us to quickly assess what students thought about project-based learning in the Basic Marketing English class, highlighting what was effective and where we could make improvements.

Semi-structured interviews

Ten students from the experimental class were interviewed to gain a deeper understanding of their experiences with Project-Based Learning (PBL) in the Basic Marketing English course. These volunteers were selected from across the three performance levels—good, fair, and average—based on their answers to a questionnaire. This method was used to get different views on the PBL. Each interview was approximately 10 minutes long and conducted in Vietnamese to ensure clarity and facilitate participants' ability to express their thoughts and experiences more clearly. The interviews were audio-recorded with the participants' permission, then transcribed into English, and examined for themes. The interview consisted of three open-ended questions designed to gather information about the students' attitudes toward PBL, their experiences with incorporating marketing ideas into assignments, and any challenges they had encountered.

The following were the interview questions:

1. How do you feel about this Basic Marketing class using the PBL method?

2. How has using marketing principles in a practical project enhanced your ability to give oral presentations?

3. What was the biggest challenge you faced during the PBL process, particularly in preparing your oral presentation?

The qualitative data were analyzed using NVivo software, which enabled thematic grouping and systematic coding in accordance with the study's research objectives. The triangulation of responses with quantitative data from the questionnaire enabled greater validity and depth in understanding the students' perspectives. To ensure privacy and clarity, student respondents were assigned pseudonyms ranging from SV1 to SV10. This detailed method enabled a comprehensive evaluation of the perceived advantages, disadvantages, and practical applications of PBL in enhancing students' speaking skills within an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) context.

Classroom observation

The ideas presented in the previous chapter guided the design of the classroom observation component of this study. The study examined project-based learning (PBL) in a basic marketing English class, focusing on aspects such as student assessment, perceptions of learning, its relevance to the real world, collaboration and communication among students, and student engagement.

Because PBL places a strong emphasis on students working together, getting them involved was a key goal. The observations paid close attention to how students talked in groups, solved problems, and worked on projects. In PBL settings that worked well, students provided feedback frequently, took the lead, and appeared enthusiastic. The study aligns with Thomas's (2000) notion that encouraging students to engage in peer discussions is crucial for PBL to be successful.

Working together and communicating effectively were also important to observe. In PBL, students create knowledge by talking and working things out together. The observation data showed how students shared ideas, built upon what others said, and worked together to solve problems as a group. These teamwork actions back up Barrows' (1996) point that being involved in a real way helps groups solve problems and think critically.

Applying what they learned was the third thing they looked at. PBL aims to apply classroom knowledge to real-world scenarios. The study examined how students applied marketing concepts in real-world situations to determine if they could apply what they learned in the classroom in other settings. De Jong et al. (2014) suggest that when students encounter real-world problems, they can acquire valuable skills that will benefit them in future employment. Lastly, the observations incorporated critical thinking and assessment, essential components for long-term learning in PBL. Students scrutinized their work, incorporated feedback from classmates and teachers, and gradually improved their projects. Thinking about what they're doing helps students learn by examining their thinking and applying it to their studies (Hmelo-Silver, 2004).

These observation rules provided the study with a comprehensive view of how PBL was implemented in the classroom. In English for Specific Purposes (ESP), PBL made students more engaged, encouraged them to work collaboratively, prompted them to reflect on their learning, and helped them solve real-world problems, thereby enhancing their skills for both academic and professional contexts.

Weekly Overview of PBL Activities

During the project-based learning activity, students did linked assignments that mimicked a true marketing project. The first week involved prep work.

- In Week 2, students improved a made-up product by finding its key traits, selling points, and intended customers. This is important for marketing.
- In Week 3, the class explored various pricing strategies and developed a plan tailored to market conditions and competition.
- In Week 4, students revised their pricing strategies and devised methods to reach their target customers through various channels.
- In Week 5, students developed plans for distributing their product, considering where clients could access it and how it could be delivered.
- Week 6: The students created posters and social media posts to accompany their marketing plans.
- In Week 7, the students worked to improve by rehearsing practice deliveries and receiving feedback.
- Weeks 8-9: Students gave final presentations of their marketing plans, sharing their theoretical ideas in hypothetical situations that could occur.

This process, which involves repeating tasks and practicing, helped students deepen their knowledge of marketing and enhance their abilities to solve problems, collaborate, and communicate effectively. These things are crucial in school and at work.

Data Analysis Procedure

Following data collection, the study moved to data analysis to reach conclusions. Data analysis is crucial for transforming raw data into meaningful insights. Poor analysis can compromise a study's validity, resulting in inaccurate results and credibility issues. We calculated Cronbach's alpha coefficients to verify the reliability of the survey, which confirmed that the questionnaire accurately measured students' thoughts. SPSS 21 was used for descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) and paired samples t-tests.

PBL data were collected before and after the intervention to assess changes, addressing the first research question. The same subjects participated in both tests, and a paired-samples t-test was used to assess any differences in scores. The second research topic needed data preparation, fixing missing values, and checking answer quality to validate the datasets.

Descriptive statistics assessed students' experiences with PBL based on quantitative questionnaire data. Measures such as mean and standard deviation helped identify student response patterns.

Theme analysis examined qualitative data from interviews and classroom observations, identifying trends, categorizing responses, and comparing student groups based on performance levels (high, medium, or low). NVivo coded replies for theme creation and analysis. Narrative summaries and quotes added context to the results.

The study employed data triangulation, combining interviews, questionnaires, and classroom observations to analyze the impact of PBL on student speaking and attitudes. The findings gained credibility from the combined view of each data source.

Validity and Reliability

The value of a research tool is judged by its reliability and validity. Reliability refers to a measurement tool consistently yielding the same results when used repeatedly (Creswell, 2012). Validity means the tool measures what it should, demonstrating that it is suitable for the study's aims.

This work assessed the coherence of the questions using Cronbach's alpha, a measure of internal consistency. A Cronbach's alpha over 0.6 shows reliability (Siregar, 2014). Here, the value exceeded 0.7, indicating excellent internal consistency and reliability of the questionnaire in measuring student views on PBL (Table 1). The qualitative part of the work focuses on making sure that different coders agree when analyzing themes. Numerous coders scrutinized the interview data, resulting in the development of a set of clear standards and rules. The work decreased subjective opinion and increased the reliability of the results by monitoring and comparing coding patterns in NVivo.

The face and content validity were carefully checked. Face validity was checked as the tool was being developed to ensure each question measured the intended concept. A respected professor and expert in educational measurement independently verified the content validity of the questionnaire. These experts evaluated the comprehensiveness, alignment with the theory, clarity of language, logical sequence, and utility for teaching purposes. Their advice made the tool more exact and complete.

Following the expert review, students from the study group tested the new tool. This step gave feedback on how clear and easy to understand the questions were, which helped shape the final version. Additionally, more experts were consulted for their input to enhance construct and content validity. Their comments ensured the tool aligned with the study's aims and that the words used were clear. To ensure the grading was fair, a second grader—another faculty member—helped grade the student talks before and after the tests. This double-grading method reduced the likelihood of grader bias and made the grading process fairer and more reliable. The study employed robust methods to ensure that the research tool was reliable, valid, and fair. These steps strengthened the study's results.

Table 1.

Reliability of the questionnaires

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Engagement and Interest	.703	4
Skill Development	.708	4
Collaboration and Teamwork	.770	4
Learning Effectiveness	.724	4
Difficulties in implementing PBL	.720	7

Results of the study

***RQ1**. What is the effectiveness of project-based learning for students in a basic marketing English course, as measured by the quality of their oral presentations, compared to a control group undergoing traditional learning?*

Table 2.

Independent Samples T-test: Pre-test Control vs. Experimental

Group	N	Mean	SD	t	df	p
Control	40	7.09	0.39	-0.92	73.32	.360
Experimental	41	7.18	0.53			

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare pre-test scores between the control and experimental groups. The results showed no significant difference in pre-test scores between the control group (M = 7.09, SD = 0.39) and the experimental group (M = 7.18, SD = 0.53); t(73.32) = –0.92, p = .360. This indicates that both groups were equivalent in their initial proficiency levels before the intervention.

Table 3.

Paired Samples T-test: Pre-test vs. Post-test within Each Group

Class	N	Pre-testM (SD)	Post-testM (SD)	Mean Difference	t	df	p
Control class	40	7.09 (0.39)	7.30 (0.44)	0.21	-5.37	39	<.001
Experimental	41	7.18 (0.53)	7.92 (0.45)	0.73	-18.56	40	<.001

For the control class (n = 40), the mean score slightly increased from the pre-test (M = 7.09, SD = 0.39) to the post-test (M = 7.30, SD = 0.44). The paired samples t-test indicated that this difference was statistically significant, t(39) = -5.37, p < .001. However, the mean difference of 0.21 suggests only a modest improvement in performance. In contrast, the experimental class (n = 41) showed a more substantial increase. The mean score rose from the pre-test (M = 7.18, SD = 0.53) to the post-test (M = 7.92, SD = 0.45). The paired samples t-test revealed a highly significant difference, t(40) = -18.56, p < .001, with a mean difference of 0.73. This indicates a remarkable improvement in students' performance.

Table 4.

Independent Samples T-test: Post-test Control vs. Experimental

Group	N	Mean	SD	t	df	p
Control	40	7.30	0.44	-6.27	79	<.001
Experimental	41	7.92	0.45			

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare post-test scores between the control and experimental groups. The results showed that the experimental group (M = 7.92, SD = 0.45) scored significantly higher than the control group (M = 7.30, SD = 0.44); t(79) = -6.27, p < .001.

These findings suggest that the instructional approach employed in the experimental group was considerably more effective in enhancing students' performance compared to the traditional method used in the control group.

In conclusion, the data support that project-based learning improves oral presentation skills. The experimental group did better than the control group after project-based learning. This evidence supports the idea that interactive teaching methods can better help students acquire skills relevant to real-world situations.

RQ2. What are the students' perceptions of the use of project-based learning in a basic marketing English experimental class?

Table 5.

Students' perceptions of Engagement and Interest

Engagement and Interest	n	Mean	S.D.
PBL1.PBL made the Basic Marketing course more engaging and interesting.	41	4.44	.502
PBL2.The practical application of marketing ideas through PBL piqued my interest in the subject.	41	4.34	.530
PBL3. PBL inspired me to participate in class activities.	41	4.24	.699
PBL4.The participatory element of PBL allowed me to remain focused throughout the course.	41	4.51	.506

Table 3 shows that students in the Basic Marketing English experimental class thought project-based learning was excellent for getting them involved and interested in the course. The results show that students generally felt that PBL made the course more captivating (PBL1, M=4.44), got them interested through practice (PBL2, M=4.34), made them want to join in during class (PBL3, M=4.24), and really helped them pay attention because it was so interactive (PBL4, M=4.51). The average scores for the four parts were between 4.24 and 4.51, with small differences (0.502 to 0.699). These results suggest that PBL made learning fun and engaging, which may have motivated students to become more driven and eager to improve their presentation skills. The numbers, along with what we learned about involvement and interest, prove that PBL is beneficial for oral presentation skills. The high interest and involvement suggest that students were more engaged in learning, which may have motivated them to improve their presentation skills through the PBL approach.

Table 6.

Students' perceptions of Skill Development

Skill Development	n	M	S.D.
PBL5. PBL helped me improve my critical thinking skills and tackle marketing-related issues.	41	4.37	.623
PBL6. I improved my research and analytical abilities through PBL assignments.	41	4.39	.628
PBL7. PBL helped me improve my cooperation and collaboration abilities.	41	4.56	.502
PBL8. PBL helped me strengthen my communication and oral presenting abilities	41	4.66	.480

Table 4 shows that students in the Basic Marketing English experimental class generally viewed project-based learning as helpful for skill building. The high average scores for all four skill-related statements (4.37 to 4.66) and the low standard deviations (0.480 to 0.628) indicate that most students agreed that project-based learning significantly enhanced their critical thinking and problem-solving skills (PBL 5, M=4.37), improved their research and analysis skills (PBL 6, M=4.39), helped them work better in teams (PBL 7, M=4.56), and greatly boosted their communication and oral presentation skills. The data suggest that students considered PBL a helpful approach to learning key skills for their academic and career development, primarily enhancing their oral presentation abilities. These results are relevant to the study, as they indicate that students perceived PBL as a method that significantly improved their oral presentation skills (PBL8, M = 4.66). These results, along with the positive views of engagement and interest presented in Table 7, demonstrate that PBL enhanced the learning experience and provided students with important skills, particularly in communication and oral presentation.

Table 7.

Students' perceptions of Learning Effectiveness

Learning Effectiveness	n	M	S.D.
PBL9. PBL helped me comprehend marketing topics more effectively than traditional courses.	41	4.34	.480
PBL10. The PBL method led to a better knowledge of the 4Ps (Product, Price, Place, and Promotion).	41	4.49	.506
PBL11. Applying theoretical information to real-world marketing tasks improved my learning experience.	41	4.27	.633
PBL12. After engaging in PBL activities, I felt more confidence in my ability to use marketing methods.	41	4.59	.499

Table 7 shows that students in the Basic Marketing English trial class thought that project-based learning was a beneficial way to learn. The students' average response was 4.34, with a standard deviation of 0.48. This number indicates that most respondents agreed that PBL was the most effective way to learn marketing concepts. The average score of 4.49 (SD = 0.506) suggests that participants perceived PBL as significantly enhancing their understanding of the 4Ps (product, price, place, and promotion). Additionally, students reported that applying what they learned from books to actual marketing work improved their learning experience (PBL11), which had an average score of 4.27 and a standard deviation of 0.633. The numbers suggest that the hands-on part of PBL helped them learn. After participating in PBL activities, students reported feeling more confident when using marketing methods. This statement had the highest average score of 4.59 and the biggest standard deviation of 0.499 (PBL12). All these numbers suggest that students viewed PBL as a helpful teaching method because it helped them understand, remember, and feel sure about using marketing ideas. Students believed that Project-Based Learning (PBL) enhanced their studying, preparing them for and facilitating public talks. A better understanding of marketing ideas will likely lead to more effective and engaging talks.

Table 8.

Students' perceptions of Collaboration & Teamwork

Collaboration & Teamwork	n	M	S.D.
PBL13. Working in groups during PBL exercises was a valuable learning experience.	41	4.44	.673
PBL14. I increased my responsibility by working on this project.	41	4.49	.637
PBL15. This learning model prioritized joint correction between students.	41	4.15	.792
PBL16. Working in groups fostered an attitude of mutual acceptance and respect between students in the learning process.	41	4.07	.685

According to Table 6, the majority of students in the experimental Basic Marketing English class enjoyed the collaborative nature of project-based learning. Group work facilitated their learning (PBL 13, mean = 4.44), and the project work provided them with a sense of increased personal accountability (PBL 14, mean = 4.49). Additionally, the majority of them concurred that PBL helped students accept and value one another (PBL 16, mean = 4.07) and promoted teamwork in problem-solving (PBL 15, mean = 4.15). On these final two items, however, there was less consensus and a wider range of responses. Overall, the findings demonstrated that PBL allowed students to collaborate in a beneficial learning environment.

Collaborating as a team is frequently a crucial component of organizing and giving public presentations in a PBL context. Students' public speaking abilities are enhanced when they collaborate on projects, as it allows them to share ideas, practice speaking in front of their peers, and receive feedback. PBL probably aided students in developing these abilities by encouraging teamwork and accountability.

Table 9.

Students' perceptions of difficulties in PBL implementing

Difficulties in PBL implementing	n	M	S.D.
PBL17. The PBL exercises weren't well-organized and easy to follow.	41	1.78	.571
PBL18. I did not have adequate time and resources to complete my PBL projects successfully.	41	2.34	.825
PBL19. I lacked sufficient business knowledge.	41	2.29	.642
PBL20. The teacher didn't offer adequate assistance and comments during the PBL activities.	41	1.83	.381
PBL21. I found it challenging to work together productively because I lacked of social skills	41	2.22	.475
PB22. I found it difficult to organize the information in the presentation.	41	2.05	.631
PBL23. The lack of research skills made it difficult to complete the project successfully.	41	2.27	.501

Table 9 illustrates the challenges faced by students during the implementation of project-based learning (PBL). Although the majority of students did not perceive the PBL assignments as inadequately organized (PBL17, M = 1.78), a more intricate issue arose with time and resource availability, resulting in a neutral response to PBL18 (M = 2.34). This research indicates that, whereas certain students encountered resource and time limitations, others did not, leading to a disparate experience. The deficiency in business acumen (PBL19, M = 2.29) suggests that the

two-credit marketing course did not provide sufficient foundational knowledge for the assignment. The relatively low average score of 1.83 for instructor feedback and support in PBL20 indicates a widespread perception of inadequate supervision during PBL activities, which is essential for the successful completion of PBL assignments. The structure of presentation content (PBL22, M = 2.05) was noted; nevertheless, students did not uniformly identify these issues, and their deficient social skills hindered effective collaboration with group members (PBL21, M = 2.22). Ultimately, many respondents recognized a deficiency in research abilities (PBL 23; M = 2.27) as a challenge, emphasizing the necessity for enhanced preparation in research techniques.

Identifying the challenges that students perceive might enhance their comprehension of how project-based learning (PBL) affects their oral presentation abilities. Had the students possessed sufficient time, access to knowledge resources, research competencies, and robust group interaction, they may have found it easier to practice and enhance their oral presentation skills. The majority of positive responses in this section indicated that the difficulties were not significant.

Results from Interviews

Students utilized project-based learning (PBL) in their first marketing course, as indicated by interview data. Student responses fell into a few main areas.

How Students Feel about Project-Based Learning (PBL): The majority of interviewed participants expressed a positive perception of the Project-Based Learning (PBL) approach, describing it as more engaging, enjoyable, and practically relevant compared to traditional lecture-based instruction. Several respondents emphasized that PBL enhanced classroom engagement and sustained their interest throughout the course. For example:

> S1: "*I liked the PBL method a lot. It kept the class more interesting than just listening to lessons. I got bored sometimes in regular classes, but I was interested and involved in the project."*
>
> S3: "*The PBL method interested me a lot. I liked that it was more hands-on. Instead of just memorizing concepts, it made learning seem more useful in real life*."

A recurring theme in the responses was the interactive and collaborative nature of the learning process. As one student noted:

> S5: "*The Basic Marketing class became more active and interactive because of it. Working together to solve a problem was just as important as learning on your own*."

Students also recognized that PBL fostered the development of essential soft skills such as teamwork, problem-solving, and responsibility:

> S8: "*PBL was different from traditional classes. It required more teamwork and problem-solving, which I think are important skills to develop.*"
>
> S7: "*I felt more responsible for my learning and the success of the project*."

While most students responded enthusiastically, some initially expressed reservations due to the unfamiliar structure and perceived workload. However, these concerns generally shifted to positive perceptions as the project progressed:

> S4: "*At first, I wasn't sure about PBL because it looked like a lot of work. But I ended up having fun with it. It was a more active way to learn than just listening to classes and taking notes.*"

Overall, participants viewed PBL as an effective and stimulating pedagogical approach that promoted engagement, learner autonomy, and practical skill development.

Impact of PBL on Presentation Skills

Students consistently reported that PBL contributed to the development of their oral presentation skills. Preparing and delivering real-world project presentations required a deeper conceptual understanding and clearer articulation of ideas:

> S1: "*Using marketing ideas in a real project made me want to explain them. I felt like I really understood the ideas because I had to use them when we presented our project."*
>
> S2: "*Having to present our project made it more real for me… It helped me be more clear and convincing."*

Improvements in presentation structure, clarity, and confidence were recurring themes:

> S4: "*We had to explain our marketing strategies and justify our decisions. This process really helped me organize my thoughts and speak more confidently*."
>
> S7: "*I learned how to organize a show, make good use of visual aids, and answer questions with confidence."*

The integration of teamwork and real-world applications also supported more effective communication:

> S8: "*It also taught me how to make challenging business ideas easy to understand.*"
>
> S9: "*The project helped me present marketing strategies like the 4Ps with confidence."*
>
> S10: "*Using real-world marketing examples helped me present ideas more clearly and confidently."*

Collectively, these reflections suggest that PBL not only enhanced content mastery but also strengthened students' ability to present persuasively, fluently, and with greater self-assurance.

Challenges Encountered During the PBL Process

Despite the reported benefits, students identified several challenges during the PBL process, particularly when preparing oral presentations. One of the most frequently mentioned issues was coordinating group work:

> S1: "*The hardest part was getting my group members to work together at first.*"
>
> S10: "*There were moments when group dynamics made it harder to coordinate and prepare the oral presentation effectively."*

Time management was another recurring difficulty:

> S2: "*The most challenging part was combining all the information we gathered into a concise and engaging presentation within the time limit.*"
>
> S9: *"Balancing the preparation with other coursework was difficult. These variables sometimes affected how much time I could dedicate to refining my oral presentati*on."
>
> S6: "*This was especially true when I was preparing the visual aids and the spoken parts of the presentation."*

Some participants reported language-related barriers and public speaking anxiety:

S4: "*The most challenging aspect of the presentation was overcoming my nervousness about speaking in front of the class."*

Other challenges included limited research experience and adapting ideas during the project:

S5: "*I lacked research experience, which made it somewhat challenging to present all the information concisely*."

S7: "*Changing our first marketing idea was the hardest thing we had to deal with."*

The interview data indicates that students reacted favorably to the inclusion of PBL in the Basic Marketing subject. The strategy promoted active participation, cultivated a sense of accountability, and significantly enhanced oral presentation abilities. Students encountered prevalent obstacles related to group dynamics, time constraints, and performance anxiety. These observations suggest that although PBL is an effective method for enhancing oral presentation skills in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) contexts, additional scaffolding in terms of group management and linguistic support may be necessary for optimal results.

Results from Observation

Weekly notes showed project-based learning (PBL) improved students' presentation skills. Group marketing work blended language skills with learning about the subject. Early on, students worked on communication and understanding the topic simultaneously. Later exercises focused on vocab, making arguments, and convincing others. In the final weeks, they prepped to give excellent presentations that sounded natural, flowed well, and stayed organized. PBL helped students study together and hold each other responsible.

Classroom behaviour indicated that students had a more positive attitude toward PBL. They came to compromises after some early arguments. With some support from the teacher, students offered each other advice to improve, despite initially having limited business knowledge. As time passed, students picked up on marketing ideas and effectively shared them. Some groups struggled but caught up via hard work and team help.

Observation checklists matched what students said, namely that they felt more involved. They also learned more, gained confidence, and improved their presentation abilities. Surveys and interviews confirmed the strengths of the presentation structure, the speaker's knowledge of the material, their delivery, and their ability to keep the audience engaged. Together, this info says PBL improved how students presented in English in Basic Marketing.

Triangulation Results

This study employed surveys, interviews, and classroom observations to gauge students' opinions on PBL in a Basic Marketing English course. Information from all sources agreed that PBL was helpful in getting students involved, developing skills, understanding the topic, and communicating effectively.Students demonstrated strong involvement, with average scores ranging from 4.24 to 4.51. Students viewed PBL as engaging and beneficial, transforming passive learning into active work. Interviews revealed that students felt more invested in the course, demonstrating how PBL's real-world focus and hands-on approach motivated them.PBL made a significant difference in presentation abilities, with the top average score (4.66) indicating improved communication. Students reported increased confidence, speaking freely, and articulating their thoughts clearly, thanks to repeated practice. Giving feedback to one another and practicing in groups helped improve public speaking in a relaxed setting.Those involved scored PBL as helpful for understanding marketing topics (average scores: 4.27-4.59). Using theory in real-world projects made learning clearer and more effective. Observations revealed that students utilized marketing knowledge collaboratively in group tasks.

PBL built more teamwork (average scores: 4.07-4.49). However, there were some early conflicts among group members and instances of unequal participation. With the teacher's help, students built up collaboration skills over time. These results highlight the importance of scaffolding in maintaining a cohesive group dynamic.

Students identified challenges such as time constraints, initial lack of knowledge, and underperformance by some group members. However, low average scores on challenging matters (1.78-2.34) indicate that these were manageable. Many saw these problems as opportunities to grow, which in turn boosted their strength and responsibility.

Discussion

Based on the findings of this study, project-based learning (PBL) has a considerable impact on developing oral presentation skills among third-year English majors. The answer to the first study question showed that members of the experimental group were significantly more proficient at presenting than the control group, as evidenced by their higher average scores. In addition to these findings, a thematic analysis of student interviews, which addressed the second study question, provided insight into their perceptions. Learners reported increased engagement, demonstrating confidence in presenting and a willingness to collaborate, in line with previous studies highlighting the benefits of PBL.

Student interest in Project-Based Learning (PBL) was high, with average scores ranging from 4.24 to 4.51. This evidence supports the notion of Thomas (2000) and Krajcik and Blumenfeld (2006) that connecting work to the real world fosters motivation. PBL's interactive character seemed to hold student interest by focusing on their needs.

Language Skills Development: Language abilities also improved significantly, particularly through oral presentations in English class, as noted by Ngo (2014), Aldobekhi and Abahussain (2024), and Remache Carrillo et al. (2019). These studies found that PBL facilitated speaking and enhanced communication. Le and Ho (2021) note that these abilities prepare students for a job.

Collaboration and Teamwork: Participants reported that group activities helped them enhance their communication, negotiating, and collaboration abilities. This conclusion aligns with the findings of Bell (2010) and Kokotsaki et al. (2016), who discovered that PBL enhances soft skill development through peer involvement, similar to workplace cooperation.

Students demonstrated improved critical thinking skills by completing project assignments requiring analysis, decision-making, and reflection. These findings are consistent with those of Blumenfeld et al. (1991) and Grant (2002), who also found that PBL promotes cognitive engagement and learner independence.

Challenges & Difficulties: Despite the benefits, students faced problems such as irregular group participation, time constraints, and occasional lack of guidance. Marx et al. (1997) express similar concerns, emphasizing that students require rigorous scaffolding and teacher support for the successful implementation of PBL.

Overall, the findings support the idea that PBL enhances language acquisition, life skill development, and learner autonomy—all of which are important aspects of 21st-century education. Future study should focus on how to properly scaffold PBL to enable different learners and promote long-term engagement.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that project-based learning (PBL) is effective in enhancing the English oral presentation skills of third-year English majors. When answering the first research question, students who used PBL performed better in their presentations, earning higher average scores than those in the control group, which suggests that PBL can improve speaking skills. A thematic study of student interviews for the second research question revealed that students felt more engaged, confident in presenting, and collaborative, aligning with other work on the helpful effects of PBL. Some problems arose, such as insufficient time, unequal work distribution, and inadequate language skills, indicating that teachers need to provide additional support. To sum up, using PBL to teach language can enhance speaking ability and foster student independence, so teachers need to guide students as they apply it.

Directions for Further Research

To make the study more relevant to a wider range of people, further research should be conducted over longer periods and in different settings, such as during multiple classes simultaneously, to verify the results and compare them with those of other participant groups. Furthermore, further research can clarify how diverse forms of PBL affect individuals at various levels. The influence of PBL on the acquisition of various linguistic components, including vocabulary, grammar, culture, and content, as well as listening, writing, and reading skills, is a significant subject for investigation.

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