Enhancing Secondary School Students' English Presentation Skills through Project-Based Learning

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Abstract- The study aimed at investigating the problems that secondary students often have when making a presentation and the effects of project-based learning in enhancing secondary school students' presentation skills. The population samples consist of 33 eighth-grade students. Data collection instruments were questionnaires and observation. The results showed that students' difficulties were mostly caused by their instructors and audience, followed by the lack of oral presentation skills and their personal traits. The research findings also proved the effectiveness of using project-based learning to enhance secondary school students' presentation skills. Thanks to project-based learning, students developed positive attitudes towards presentation and improved their presentation skills.

Index Terms- presentation, presentation skills, project-based learning, secondary school students

I. INTRODUCTION

Effective presenting abilities are a crucial life skill that will aid a person in their future employment and in their further education. A great approach to enhance someone's English language learning experience is through presentations. They allow him or her to practice all aspects of language (including vocabulary, phonology, and grammar) and skills (speaking, reading, writing, and listening). They also help him or her to get more comfortable speaking in front of an audience.

Through the use of practical, meaningful tasks, project-based learning motivates students to learn. It is an inquiry-based, student-centered learning approach. In project-based learning, students collaborate in groups over a predetermined time period on a project that is intended to address a pressing issue or provide an in-depth response. Students demonstrate their knowledge and skills by creating a product or presentation for a public audience.

Deep content knowledge may be developed by students through project-based learning activities. The development of 21st-century abilities like critical thinking, cooperation, creativity, and communication are also supported through project-based learning, which is important. Project-based learning education is used across various learning environments.

With such obvious benefits of project-based learning, we can see that it is necessary to use project-based learning to enhance students' presentation ability. Students can express their ideas, and their options in front of their group, thus, they would have more confidence when they have to present their idea in front of a big audience.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLODY

This research focused on the effectiveness of project-based learning in enhancing secondary school students' presentation skills and the students' attitudes towards project-based learning. It is designed by using classroom action research method.

The respondents were 33 students in a secondary school. They are at 8th grade, and at the same age. The class consists of 17 girls and 16 boys who participated in action research project where project-based learning was applied to enhance their presentation skills.

Students did two questionnaires, a prequestionnaire, and a post-questionnaire. The questionnaires included both close-ended and open-ended questions so that the respondents could provide the information in detail.

The researcher observed and completed the observation sheet at the beginning and at the end of the research process. The observation sheet consisted of the students' performance in terms of structuring, style, presentation, content, personal appearance, verbal interaction, objectives, communication aids, body language, and significance.

III.   FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

1. Finding from pre-questionnaires

The pre-questionnaire aimed to investigate the students' perceptions of presentation skills and difficulties in making presentations. The students responded to the questions by selecting their levels of agreement with each statement based on the scale below:

1 = Strongly disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Not sure
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly agree

Students' perceptions on and difficulties in presentation skills

When surveying the difficulties faced by students, the researcher obtained the following results and classified them according to personal traits:

1.2. Students' perceptions on and difficulties in presentation skills

1.2.1. Difficulties according to personal traits

Table 1: Students' difficulties according to personal traits

Difficulties according to personal traits	1		2		3		4		5	
	No. (Students)	Percentage (%)	No. (Students)	Percentage (%)	No. (Students)	Percentage (%)	No. (Students)	Percentage (%)	No. (Students)	Percentage (%)
1. I don't like the idea of oral presentations	2	6.1	4	12.1	14	42.4	5	15.2	8	24.2
2. I prefer to be assessed by written exams rather than oral presentations.	3	9.1	3	9.1	8	24.2	9	27.3	10	30.3
3. I like to do an oral presentation with a group.	2	6.1	5	15.2	15	45.5	5	15.2	6	18.2
4. I hate oral presentations because of a past negative experience.	11	33.3	13	39.4	4	12.1	2	6.1	3	9.1
5. I find an oral presentation exam difficult because I have low self-confidence.	2	6.1	5	15.2	13	39.4	7	21.2	6	18.2
6. I'm worried because of my low English-speaking ability.	6	18.2	4	12.1	14	42.4	6	18.2	3	9.1
7. I feel very anxious before an oral presentation exam.	3	9.1	4	12.1	15	45.5	6	18.2	5	15.2
8. I feel worried even if I have prepared well beforehand.	6	18.2	3	9.1	12	36.4	7	21.2	5	15.2
9. When I start my oral presentation, I forget everything I wanted to say.	7	21.2	5	15.2	11	33.3	6	18.2	4	12.1
10. I feel shy and embarrassed when I do an oral presentation in English.	3	9.1	5	15.2	13	39.4	5	15.2	7	21.2
11. I'm afraid of making mistakes during oral presentations.	4	12.1	4	12.1	13	39.4	6	18.2	6	18.2
12. I'm afraid of failure in oral presentations.	6	18.2	7	21.2	11	33.3	5	15.2	4	12.1

When surveying the difficulties faced by students, the researcher obtained the following results and classified them according to personal traits:

When it comes to students' preferences for oral presentations, 29.4% of students surveyed said that they did not like this type of presentation; 18.2% of them said the opposite, and the rest were neutral. Since the majority of students gave a neutral opinion on the question of whether they like oral presentations or not, the researcher can draw the conclusion that oral presentations attract the majority of students.

In terms of testing and assessment, 18.2% of the respondents did not prefer to be assessed by written form, and 57% of students gave the opposite opinion, that is, they liked the written test form. The remaining 24.2% gave a neutral opinion. From the above data, we can draw the conclusion that the written test is preferred by most students.

When it comes to the form of oral presentation preparation, 18.3% of the students confirmed that they did not like working in groups, and 33.4% of the students confirmed the opposite. 45.5% of the remaining students gave neutral opinions. From that, we can see that most of the students do not voluntarily participate and help complete the oral presentation.

When investigating whether any bad experiences influenced students' interest in oral presentations, 72.7% of the students confirmed that they were not affected by bad past experiences. Only 15.2% confirmed that they had such experiences affecting their interest in doing an oral presentation. The rest (12.1%) gave a neutral opinion. From this data, we can see that the majority of students are afraid of oral presentations not because they had bad experiences in the past.

39.4% of the students surveyed found it difficult to take the oral presentation test simply because they lacked confidence, as opposed to 21.3% of the total students. The remaining 39.4% gave neutral opinions. From this, we can see that the lack of confidence is not necessarily the main obstacle preventing students from participating in the oral presentation test.

27.3% of surveyed students blamed their weak English-speaking ability for being nervous about oral presentations, 42.4% of students gave a neutral opinion, and the remaining 30.3% did not find it difficult to do so just because their English-speaking ability is poor. This also shows that weak English-speaking ability does not hinder whether or not they want to give an oral presentation.

When asked if they were anxious before oral presentations, 21.2% confirmed that they were not nervous, while 33.4% of the students confirmed that they were before oral presentations. 45.5% of them gave a neutral opinion.

Even having prepared well before each oral presentation, 36.4% of the students surveyed still felt nervous about their presentation. Meanwhile, 27.3% confirmed that they did not feel anxious and the remaining 36.4% of the students gave a neutral opinion. This shows that the oral presentation itself caused anxiety and put some pressure on students.

30.3% of the students surveyed confirmed that they forgot everything they wanted to say in their oral presentation right at the beginning, 36.4% of the students confirmed they did not suffer from this condition, and the remaining 33.3% gave a neutral opinion. This shows students' low performance sometimes results from students' personal traits.

More than a third of students surveyed (equivalent to 36.4%) confirmed that they felt shy when they had to give oral presentations in English, while 24.3% disagreed with this view. 39.4% gave a neutral opinion. This shows that a timid personality also hinders students from giving oral presentations.

36.4% of students surveyed were afraid of making mistakes in their oral presentations. Meanwhile, 24.2% confirmed that they were not afraid of this. 39.4% gave a neutral opinion. Fear of making mistakes is a common psychology of students when they have to present their opinions; as the above data shows, more than one-third of students are afraid of making mistakes.

27.3% of students feared failure in oral presentations, and 39.4% of students are not afraid of this. The remaining 33.3% of students gave neutral opinions. This shows that most students are not afraid to fail in oral presentations.

1.2.2. Difficulties according to oral presentation skills
Table 2: Students' difficulties according to oral presentation skills

Difficulties according to oral presentation skills	1		2		3		4		5	
	No. (Students)	Percentage (%)	No. (Students)	Percentage (%)	No. (Students)	Percentage (%)	No. (Students)	Percentage (%)	No. (Students)	Percentage (%)
13. I need to read from my notes or screens during oral presentations.	5	15.2	4	12.1	11	33.3	8	24.2	5	15.2
14. I prefer to memorize the topic of the oral presentation rather than understand it.	9	27.3	7	21.2	10	30.3	4	12.1	3	9.1
15. I care about grammar more than fluency in oral presentation.	9	27.3	5	15.2	15	45.5	2	6.1	2	6.1
16. I find it hard to find the suitable word to express my meaning.	2	6.1	3	9.1	10	30.3	10	30.3	8	24.2
17. I have a problem with oral fluency and pronunciation during oral presentation.	4	12.1	5	15.2	8	24.2	8	24.2	8	24.2
18. During oral presentations, I think in Vietnamese then translate it into English.	4	12.1	4	12.1	9	27.3	9	27.3	7	21.2
19. I find it difficult to organize my ideas logically during oral presentation.	4	12.1	4	12.1	9	27.3	10	30.3	6	18.2
20. I find it difficult to abide by the time constraints of the presentation.	7	21.2	7	21.2	9	27.3	7	21.2	3	9.1
21. I don't know how to use technology in my oral presentations.	8	24.2	12	36.4	7	21.2	4	12.1	2	6.1
22. Not knowing how to do an oral presentation is the reason behind my poor performance.	5	15.2	4	12.1	9	27.3	9	27.3	6	18.2

23. Not having enough presentation-based activities in classrooms is the reason behind my poor performance.	4	12.1	4	12.1	10	30.3	9	27.3	6	18.2

Regarding the difficulties that students often meet when making oral presentations, through the survey questionnaire, the researcher obtained the data in the table above and analyzed it as follows.

Nearly 40% of the students surveyed needed to read information from their notes during a presentation. 27.3% did not need to do this, and 33.3% were neutral. This shows that students were dependable on their notes when giving oral presentations in English.

Even when they had to give oral presentations in English, 21.2% of the students wanted to memorize the topic they had to say in the oral presentation rather than understand it. This was not true for 48.5% of the students, who gave the opposite opinion. The remaining 30.3 students gave neutral opinions. From the above data, we see that nearly half of the students want to give oral presentations better than just doing the task of memorizing the lesson.

Another difficulty to mention is that 12.1% of the students surveyed focused on correct grammar in their oral presentations rather than on the fluency of the speech. Although accounting for a small percentage, this is also a difficulty that needs to be overcome to help listeners of oral presentations better understand the content of the presentation. 42.5% of students didn't do this, which means they didn't just focus on grammar. 45.5% gave a neutral opinion.

To express ideas, choosing the right words is also important. In the survey, 54.5% of students confirmed that they had difficulty choosing the right word to express their meaning. Only 15.2% said the opposite, meaning that they had little or no difficulty in choosing words. 30.3% of students gave neutral opinions. The data shows that finding suitable words was a great obstacle for students during the presentation.

The challenge with fluency and pronunciation during oral presentations is also stated by 48.4% of the surveyed students. One-third of the students gave neutral opinions. Meanwhile, 27.3% of them disagreed with the idea. These figures show us that most of the students had obstacles in being fluent and pronouncing the words when they had to give oral presentations.

The process of transiting the language from Vietnamese to English is also one of the challenges that many students acknowledged. Among them, 48.5% of surveyed students agreed that they had to change their language from Vietnamese to English before they could make an oral presentation. For the opposite opinion, there are 24.2% of students thought that they did not have to make this transition. The remaining 27.3% gave a neutral opinion.

Presenting ideas logically in oral presentations also caused a major problem for the surveyed students, of which 48.5% confirmed they found presenting ideas logically in the oral presentation was challenging for them. Meanwhile, only 24.2% of the surveyed students did not see any problem with this. The remaining 27.3% gave a neutral opinion.

Abiding by the time constraints of oral presentations also brings many difficulties for students. 30.3% of the surveyed students confirmed that they encountered difficulties in oral presentations due to time constraints. Meanwhile, 42.4% of the surveyed students were not stressed about this time limit. The remaining 27.3% gave neutral opinions.

Limited technological knowledge seemed not to cause a lot of difficulties for students in oral presentations. Only 18.2% of surveyed students agreed that they had limited technological knowledge, which brought some difficulties in oral presentations. 60.6% confirmed they had no technological difficulties in their oral presentation. The remaining 21.2% gave a neutral opinion.

Not knowing the process and how to make an oral presentation was also an obstacle that 45.5% of the surveyed students faced. Meanwhile, 27.3% of surveyed students confirmed that this is not a problem. The same number of students gave neutral opinions.

Besides, 45.5% students claimed that their poor oral presentation due to the lack of presentation-based activities in classrooms. 24.2% of the students confirmed that they did not fall into this situation, which means that the students when giving oral presentations mostly prepared presentation-based activities. The remaining 30.3% gave a neutral opinion.

1.2.3. Difficulties according to audience and instructor
Table 3: Students' difficulties according to audience and instructor

Difficulties according to audience and instructor	1		2		3		4		5	
	No. (Student)	Percentage (%)	No. (Students)	Percentage (%)	No. (Students)	Percentage (%)	No. (Students)	Percentage (%)	No. (Students)	Percentage (%)
24. I feel frightened when a lot of people are watching me.	5	15.2	4	12.1	12	36.4	5	15.2	7	21.2
25. I worry that students will laugh at me when I present in English.	6	18.2	7	21.2	11	33.3	4	12.1	5	15.2
26. Students' reactions affect my performance in oral presentations.	3	9.1	5	15.2	8	24.2	8	24.2	9	27.3
27. When late students enter class or talk to each other during oral presentations, I lose my ideas.	2	6.1	3	9.1	10	30.3	8	24.2	10	30.3

28. The instructor's interruption with questions or criticism affects my performance.	2	6.1	2	6.1	9	27.3	9	27.3	11	33.3
29. I try to avoid the instructor's and students' eyes during oral presentation.	9	27.3	8	24.2	9	27.3	4	12.1	3	9.1
30. I am afraid that the instructor and students will ask me difficult questions.	5	15.2	7	21.2	12	36.4	5	15.2	4	12.1

When giving an oral presentation, being watched and listened to attentively by many people, both the audience and the instructor, also brings a lot of anxiety to the presenter. The following is an analysis of the difficulties presenters often face when giving oral presentations to audiences and instructors.

36.4% of the surveyed students confirmed that they felt frightened when too many people looked at them. This means that more than a third of students will have difficulty giving oral presentations in front of a crowd. Meanwhile, 27.3% of these students did not have similar difficulties. The remaining 36.4% of the students gave a neutral opinion, meaning that they may or may not be frightened of being watched and listened to during their oral presentation.

The second factor that frightened presenters is the fear of being laughed at by audiences when they were giving oral presentations in English. Up to 27.3% of the surveyed students were afraid of this happening. In contrast, 39.4% of the students were not afraid of this feeling. One-third of the surveyed students gave a neutral opinion on this issue.

The audience's reaction also affects the performance of the presenters. Up to 51.5% of the surveyed students confirmed that they would be psychologically affected by the audience's reaction, this is a factor to be considered when making an oral presentation because it would affect the performance of the presentation. Only 24.3% confirmed they were unaffected by audiences' reactions. The remaining 24.2% gave a neutral opinion.

Another factor affecting the performance of the presentation is the late entry of other students, surprisingly 54.4% of the surveyed students confirmed that they lost their ideas when there were students arriving late to class or someone was talking to someone else in the audience. Only 15.2% of them claimed to be unaffected by such events. 30.3% gave a neutral opinion.

The performance of the oral presentation can also be affected by interruptions to the instructor's questions or comments or criticism. With 60.6% of surveyed students agreeing with this idea, this means for many students, being interrupted by the instructor during a presentation affects the quality of the presentation. In contrast, 12.1% disagreed with this view. The remaining 27.3% gave a neutral opinion.

Eye contact is one of the components of communication, but up to 21.2% of surveyed students try to avoid eye contact with instructors or classmates. 51.5% of students did not take this action. The remaining 27.3% gave neutral opinions.

The fear of being asked difficult questions by the teacher and classmates also frightens many presenters. Up to 27.3% of the students surveyed were afraid of being in this situation, but 36.4% were not afraid of being questioned during an oral presentation. The remaining 36.4 gave a neutral opinion.

1.3. Students' interests in applying project-based learning in improving their presentation skills

When asked if they were interested in using PBL in improving their pronunciation skills, the students responded very positively. Their responses were summarized in the following figure:
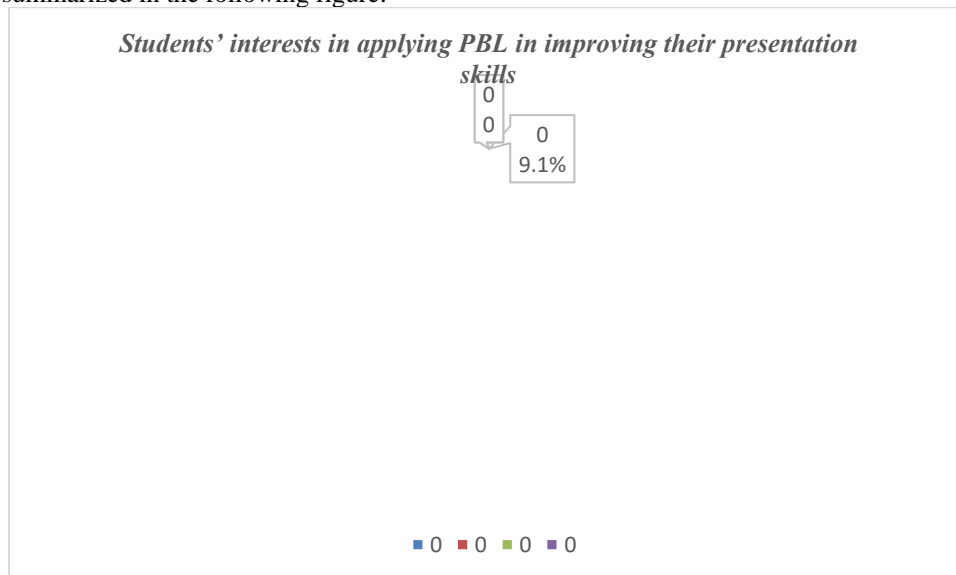

Figure 1: Students' interests in applying project-based learning in improving their presentation skills

It can be seen that PBL was highly welcomed by the students as no one was very uninterested. Only 9.1% did not feel interested in applying PBL in improving their presentation skills. The majority of the students had positive feelings towards the idea, with 36.4% very interested and 30.3% interested. Those who were not sure accounted for 24%.

2. Findings from post-questionnaires

2.1. Students' general impressions on project-based learning activities and their presentation skills

Table 4: Students' general impressions of project-based learning activities and their presentation skills

Opinions	1		2		3		4		5	
	No. (Students)	Percentage (%)	No. (Students)	Percentage (%)	No. (Students)	Percentage (%)	No. (Students)	Percentage (%)	No. (Students)	Percentage (%)
1. I am interested in participating in project-based learning activities.	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	12.1	14	42.4	15	45.5
2. The class has an exciting atmosphere.	0	0.0	1	3.0	6	18.2	16	48.5	10	30.3
3. I found project-based learning activities interesting.	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	21.2	14	42.4	12	36.4
4. The project-based learning activities were suitable for my English level.	0	0.0	1	3.0	4	12.1	15	45.5	13	39.4
5. Project-based learning activities have helped me improved my English presentation skills.	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	9.1	12	36.4	18	54.5

When studying the students' general impressions of their project-based learning activities and presentation skills, the researcher collected the data presented in the table above, and the researcher had the following analyses:

Up to 87.9% of surveyed students were interested in participating in project-based learning activities. The remaining 12.1% gave a neutral opinion and no surveyed students were not interested in such activities. This shows that most of the students are interested in project-based learning activities.

Most of the students who participated in the survey found the classroom atmosphere to be enjoyable in the lessons using project-based learning activities with 78.8% of the students in the survey agreeing with this view, only 1 student disagreed with the above opinion, and the remaining 18.6% gave a neutral opinion.

68.8% of surveyed students found project-based learning activities interesting. No student disagreed with this view. Only 21.2% of the students surveyed gave a neutral opinion.

The appropriateness of the application of project-based learning activities is also important in maintaining student interest and participation in the lesson. Up to 84.9% of students felt these activities were suitable for their English level. Only 1 student felt incompatible with his/her English level. The remaining 12.1% gave a neutral opinion.

The application of project-based learning activities has helped improve students' oral presentation ability in English. Up to 90.9% of surveyed students agreed with this view. Only 3 students (9.1%) gave a neutral opinion and no student found that applying project-based learning activities did not improve their oral presentation in English.

2.2. Students' perceptions of teacher's activities

Table 5: Students' perceptions of teacher's activities

	1		2		3		4		5	
	No. (Student)	Percentage (%)	No. (Students)	Percentage (%)	No. (Students)	Percentage (%)	No. (Students)	Percentage (%)	No. (Students)	Percentage (%)
6. The teacher instructs students in detail on the necessary knowledge and skills for each project-based learning topic.	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	9.1	21	63.6	9	27.3
7. The teacher instructs students in detail on how to complete project-based learning topics	0	0.0	1	3.0	4	12.1	12	36.4	16	48.5
8. The teacher specifies requirement for each project	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	12	36.4	21	63.6

9. The teacher discusses with students the sample presentation.	0	0.0	2	6.1	8	24.2	16	48.5	7	21.2
10. Teachers instruct students on how to present in each part of the presentation (greeting, introduction, conclusion …)	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	18.2	12	36.4	15	45.5
11. The teacher organizes variety of activities to develop students' confidence.	0	0.0	2	6.1	7	21.2	14	42.4	10	30.3
12. The teacher instructs students on how to use visual aids.	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	18.2	15	45.5	12	36.4
13. The teacher encourages students to communicate and interact in English more.	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	12.1	14	42.4	15	45.5
14. The teacher assesses the presentation of each project fairly.	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	9.1	13	39.4	17	51.5

When talking about students' feelings about the teacher's activities. 90.9% of surveyed students agreed that teachers gave detailed instructions on the knowledge and skills needed for each project-based learning topic. The remaining 9.1% of the students gave a neutral opinion, and no student gave an opinion that disagreed with the point of view.

84.9% of students surveyed agreed that teachers had given detailed instructions on how to complete each project-based learning topic. The remaining 12.1% of students gave a neutral opinion, and only 1 student gave an opinion that disagreed with the point of view.

All the surveyed students claimed that the teacher had specified all the requirements for each project.

69.7% of the surveyed students agreed that the teacher had discussed with students about sample presentations of each project-based learning topic. The remaining 24.2% of the students gave a neutral opinion, and only 2 students gave an opinion that disagreed with the point of view.

81.9% of the surveyed students agreed that the teacher guided the students on how to do the different parts of the presentation (greeting, introduction, conclusion, and so on). The remaining 18.2% of the students gave a neutral opinion, and no student gave an opinion that disagreed with the point of view.

72.7% of the surveyed students agreed that the teacher had organized a variety of activities to develop students' confidence. The remaining 21.2% of the students gave a neutral opinion, and 6.1% of the students gave an opinion that disagreed with the point of view.

81.9% of surveyed students agree that the teacher had instructed students on how to use visual aids. The remaining 18.2% of the students gave a neutral opinion, and no students gave an opinion that disagreed with the point of view.

87.9% of the surveyed students agreed that the Teacher had encouraged students to communicate and interact in English more. The remaining 12.1% of the students gave a neutral opinion, and there were no students who disagreed with the point of view.

90.9% of surveyed students agree that the teacher had assessed the presentation of each project fairly. Only 9.1% of the remaining students gave a neutral opinion, and there were no students who disagreed with the point of view.

2.3. Students' perceptions of activities and competences

Table 6: Students' perceptions of their activities and competences

	1		2		3		4		5	
	No. (Stude	Percentage	No. (Students	Percentage (%)	No. (Students	Percentage (%)	No. (Students	Percentage (%)	No. (Students	Percentage (%)
15. I have good teamwork skills.	0	0.0	2	6.1	4	12.1	11	33.3	16	48.5
16. I have good time-management skills.	1	3.0	2	6.1	7	21.2	10	30.3	13	39.4
17. I know how to make a plan and brainstorm ideas for the project.	2	6.1	3	9.1	7	21.2	9	27.3	12	36.4
18. I know how to search for information from various sources.	0	0.0	2	6.1	5	15.2	10	30.3	16	48.5
19. I can be creative in doing the projects.	3	9.1	4	12.1	7	21.2	10	30.3	9	27.3
20. I know how to apply IT applications to complete the project.	0	0.0	2	6.1	4	12.1	9	27.3	18	54.5
21. I speak English more actively and frequently in project-based learning activities.	1	3.0	2	6.1	5	15.2	11	33.3	14	42.4
22. Project-based learning activities enable me to speak and make presentations in English confidently.	1	3.0	2	6.1	6	18.2	11	33.3	13	39.4

After observing students' perceptions of their activities and competencies, the researcher obtained the data in the above table and made the following analysis:

82.8% of surveyed students admitted that they had good teamwork skills. Only 2 students gave neutral opinions and no student confirmed that they did not have good teamwork skills.

69.7% of surveyed students admitted that they had good time management skills. 21.2% of the students gave neutral opinions and there was 1 student who confirmed that he/ she did not have good time management skills.

63.7% of surveyed students admitted that they knew how to make a plan and brainstorm ideas for the project. 21.2% of the students gave neutral opinions and 6.1% of the students confirmed that they did not know how to make a plan and brainstorm ideas for the project.

78.8% of surveyed students claimed that they knew how to search for information from various sources. 15.2% of the students gave neutral opinions and 6.1% of the students confirmed that they did not know how to search for information from various sources.

57.6% of surveyed students reported that they could be creative in doing the projects. 21.2% of the students gave neutral opinions and 9.1% of the students confirmed that they could not be creative in doing the projects.

81.8% of surveyed students confirmed that they knew how to apply IT applications to complete the project. 12.1% of the students gave neutral opinions and 6.1% of the students confirmed that they didn't know how to apply IT applications to complete the project.

75.7% of surveyed students said that they spoke English more actively and frequently in project-based learning activities. 15.2% of the students gave neutral opinions and 9.1% of the students confirmed that they could not speak English more actively and frequently in project-based learning activities.

72.7% of surveyed students agreed that project-based learning activities enabled them to speak and make presentations in English confidently. 18.2% of the students gave neutral opinions and 9.1% of the students confirmed that project-based learning activities couldn't enable them to speak and make presentations in English confidently.

Project-based learning activities have made a great contribution to improving students' skills in oral presentations. The data was collected by the researcher in the table 7 below.

Table 7: Students' perceptions of how project-based learning can improve their presentation skills

	Number (Students)	Percentage
1. Students can select ideas for the presentation.	24	72.7%
2. Students can discuss and support their ideas.	22	66.7%
3. Students can use appropriate language for different parts of the presentation.	26	78.8%
4. Students can reasonably distribute time for every part of the presentation.	25	75.8%
5. Students can deliver the whole knowledge in the presentation.	24	72.7%
6. Students can use appropriate volume in their presentation, and use it to emphasize important ideas.	27	81.8%
7. Students present their ideas clearly and fluently.	20	60.6%
8. Students can make use of body language and maintain eye contact with the audience.	25	75.8%
9. Students are more confident in making presentations in English.	27	81.8%
Others:	2	6.1%

More than half of the surveyed students confirmed that applying project-based learning activities had helped them improve better in selecting ideas for the presentation, discussing and supporting their ideas, using appropriate language for different parts of the presentation, reasonably distributing time for every part of the presentation, delivering the whole knowledge in the presentation, using appropriate volume in their presentation, and using it to emphasize important ideas, presenting their ideas clearly and fluently, making use of body language and maintaining eye contact with the audience and being more confident in making presentations in English. Especially, more than 80% of the students see improvement in using appropriate volume to emphasize important ideas and become more confident in making presentations in English.

3. Findings from observation

Observation sheets were used to evaluate students' performance before and after the action plan. Meaningful numbers were given to illustrate the students' competence (1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = acceptable; 4 = good; 5 = very good)

	Mean Scores		
	Pre-Intervention	Post-Intervention	Difference
I – Structuring			

1. The introduction:	2.7	4.2	1.5
- captures the audience's attention and interest.	3.1	4.4	1.3
- states the purpose and topic clearly.	2.8	4.2	1.4
- indicates time and outlines what is to come.			
2. The presentation is logically organized.	2.4	3.8	1.4
3. The conclusion:	2.7	3.9	1.2
- provides a good summary of the presentation.	2.4	3.8	1.4
- makes recommendations and/or calls for action			
II – Style			
1. Presenter was well prepared and confident.	2.6	4.1	1.5
2. Presenter did not read either from papers or slides.	2.2	4.0	1.8
3. Presenter was comfortable presenting in front of the audience.	2.5	3.8	1.3
4. Presenter could be heard by all.	2.7	4.2	1.5
5. The presentation was paced for audience understanding.	2.3	3.9	1.6
III. Presentation:			
1. Presenter followed clear lines of thought, and projected good knowledge of topic.	2.4	3.8	1.4
2. The presentation kept the audience's attention and interest.	2.0	3.7	1.7
3. The presentation organized to fit within time allotted.	3.1	4.4	1.3
IV. Content			
1. Research project dealt with an important issue in his or her field of study.	2.6	3.9	1.3
2. A person unfamiliar with the specific topic could readily understand what was done and why.	2.3	3.9	1.6
V. Personal Appearance			
Personal appearance was appropriate for the audience and the occasion.	3.6	4.3	0.7
VI. Verbal Interaction			
1. Presenter answered questions clearly.	2.8	4.0	1.2
2. Presenter consistently clarified, restated and responded to questions.	2.3	3.8	1.5
3. Presenter summarized key points when needed.	2.4	4.0	1.6
VII. Objectives			
1. The presentation fulfilled the project objectives as defined by the presenter in the project description.	2.6	3.8	1.2
2. The arguments were supported with reasons and examples.	2.5	3.9	1.4
VIII. Communication Aids			
1. Communication aids enhanced the presentation.	3.0	4.5	1.5
2. Aids were prepared in a professional manner.	2.7	4.3	1.6
3. Font on visuals was large enough to be seen by all.	2.5	4.5	2.0
4. Information was organized to maximize audience understanding.	2.6	3.7	1.1
5. Details were minimized so points stand out.	2.5	3.8	1.3
IX. Body Language			
The presenter projected a professional posture, both in appearance and performance.	2.4	4.3	1.9
The presenter maintained good eye contact with the audience.	2.1	4.3	2.2
The presenter kept smiling when presenting and answering questions from the audience.	3.3	4.5	1.2
X. Significance			
The significance of the project to the discipline was conveyed	2.7	3.9	1.2

Overall, all figures of post-intervention increase in comparison with the figures of pre-intervention. The difference ranges from 0.7 to 2.2.

Firstly, in terms of structuring, the development was from 1.2 or more. In the introduction, students were better at capturing the audience's attention and interest, indicated by an increase of 1.5 points. Besides, there was also improvement in stating the purpose and topic clearly and indicating the time and outlining what is to come. Secondly, the students also know how to organize the presentation logically. Specifically, their skills improved from 2.4 (poor) to 3.8 (approximately good). For the conclusion, students could provide a

better summary of the presentation (a 1.2 increase compared to the post-intervention), and make better recommendations and call for action (a 1.2 increase compared to the post-intervention).

 In addition, students' presentation style was by far improved. After using project-based learning, all items in this section were at least 1.3 points higher. Especially most students did not need to read the notes from papers or slides when presenting. Besides, students knew how to adjust the presentation pace so the audience could understand. They were also better prepared and more confident and used suitable volume during the presentation. Although some students were still uncomfortable presenting in front of the audience, a large number of them

 Through observations, the researcher also sees improvement in students' presentation, particularly they were much better at keeping the audience's attention and interest, indicated by 1.7 points higher than pre-intervention.

 Moreover, relating the content of the presentation, even when they dealt with unfamiliar topics, they were more willing to understand (1.6 points higher) and could deal with them better (increasing 1.3 points).

 Concerning students' personal appearance, if we just looked at the difference of 0.7 points, we could suppose that there was not much change. However, students were highly evaluated at this part before intervention (3.6 points) and they need to dress under the school's regulations.

VI. Verbal Interaction			
1. Presenter answered questions clearly.	2.8	4.0	1.2
2. Presenter consistently clarified, restated and responded to questions.	2.3	3.8	1.5
3. Presenter summarized key points when needed.	2.4	4.0	1.6

Sixthly, in terms of Verbal Interaction of the presentation, the difference is from 1.2 or more, especially the ability that Presenter could summarize key points when needed, increases the most with a difference of 1.6. Seventhly, in terms of the presentation's objectives, the difference is from 1.2 or more, especially the arguments were supported with reasons and examples, increases the most with a difference of 1.4.

 Eighthly, in terms of Communication Aids of the presentation, the difference is from 1.1 or more, especially the ability that Font on visuals was large enough to be seen by all, increases the most with the difference ratio of 2.0.

 Ninthly, in terms of Body Language of the presentation, the difference is from 1.2 or more, especially the ability of the presenter to maintain good eye contact with the audience, increases the most with a difference of 2.2.

 Lastly, the significance of the project to the discipline was conveyed, increases with the difference of 1.2.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

1.1. The students' problems when making a presentation

The data collected students' problems when making a presentation in terms of personal traits, oral presentation skills, and instructor and audience.

Regarding personal traits, the data collected found that students had difficulties at an average level. The data collected students' problems when making a presentation in terms of personal traits, oral presentation skills, and instructor and audience. Regarding personal traits, the data collected found that students had difficulties at an average level. Based on the results of the study, the problems listed in the questionnaires were selected by 15.2% to 39.4% of the students. To be more specific, 39.4% found it challenging to take the oral presentation test simply because they lacked confidence. Besides, 36.4% of the students admitted that they felt uncomfortable giving English-language oral presentations. The same number felt anxious about their oral presentations despite having prepared thoroughly and were concerned about making errors during oral presentations. 30.3% of them said that they completely forgot what they were going to say in their oral presentation right at the start. Other difficulties were faced by less than 30% of the students.

In addition, a large number of students had difficulties in a presentation because of oral presentation skills. More than half (54.5%) of the students had difficulty choosing the right word to express their meaning. Besides, 48.5% of surveyed students encountered problems as they had to translate from Vietnamese to English before they could make an oral presentation. The students also had poor presentations due to the lack of presentation-based activities in classrooms. The same number had difficulties presenting ideas logically in oral presentations, being fluent, and having correct pronunciation. Although students lacked some oral presentation skills, there were good signs that most of them did not care more about grammar than fluency during their presentations and technology was not a big problem for them.

Relating problems caused by instructors and audience, students' psychology was much affected (more than half of the students) by the audience's reaction, by the instructor's interruptions for questions, comments, or criticism, and by late students coming to class. 36.4% of the surveyed students felt frightened when too many people looked at them. Besides, students feared being laughed at by audiences when they were giving oral presentations in English (27.3%), and 21.2% tried to avoid eye contact with their instructors or classmates.

In summary, although students had various challenges making presentations, most of them were affected by their instructors and audience, followed by the lack of oral presentation skills, and their personal traits. As students understood their difficulties in making oral presentations, more than 60% of them were interested in applying PBL in improving their presentation skills.

1.2. The effectiveness of project-based learning in enhancing secondary school students' presentation skills.

Firstly, students had positive attitudes toward using project-based learning. 87.9% of surveyed students were interested in participating in project-based learning activities, 78.8% found the classroom atmosphere to be enjoyable in the lessons using project-based learning activities, and 68.8% found project-based learning activities interesting. No student disagreed with this view. Regarding the appropriateness of the application of project-based learning activities, 84.9% of students said these activities were suitable for their English level. More importantly, more than 90% of the students thought that project-based learning activities helped them improve their oral presentation ability in English.

Secondly, students also highly evaluated the teacher's activities. All the surveyed students claimed that the teacher had specified all the requirements for each project. 90.9% of surveyed students agree that the teacher had assessed the presentation of each project fairly. More than 80% of the students agreed that teachers had given detailed instructions on how to complete each project-based learning topic, teacher guided them on how to do the different parts of the presentation and how to use visual aids, and encouraged them to communicate and interact in English more. Other activities were also appreciated by at least 69.7% of the students.

In addition, students also recognized the improvements in their activities and competencies. Over eighty percent of them said that they had good teamwork skills and knew how to apply IT applications to complete the project. More than 70% claimed that they knew how to search for information from various sources, spoke English more actively and frequently in project-based learning activities, and became more confident in speaking and making presentations in English. Other aspects were also agreed with by more than fifty percent of the students.

Moreover, the researcher, based on her observation, also sees a lot of improvements in the student's presentation skills. Students proved to be improved in many aspects, especially in the way they could maintain eye contact with the audience, demonstrated by the increase of 2.2 points compared to pre-intervention. The second greatest improvement was the font on visuals that students displayed to the audience, with an increase of 2.0 points, followed by professional posture, both in appearance and performance (1.9 points), presenting without reading from papers or slides (1.8 points), and other aspects.

In summary, the use of project-based learning proved to be an effective way to help students in improving presentation skills. Not only did the students improve different aspects of the presentation but they also developed positive attitudes toward presentation skills.

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