

# Непрерывное образование в течение жизни. Образование разных уровней Lifelong learning. Different levels of education

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## PERCEPTIONS OF PROJECT-BASED LEARNING BY RUSSIAN NON-LINGUISTIC STUDENTS' IN DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILLS IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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**Abstract.** In the context of higher education, one of the main goals of teaching English is to enhance students' ability in oral communication. Therefore, in order to study the language thoroughly, it is important to provide students with opportunities for regular practice outside of the classroom. An effective solution could be the use of project-based learning. Over the past decades, empirical studies in various countries have focused on the positive impact of project-based learning. However, there is little attention in the theoretical literature to the study of Russian students' perception of project-based learning.

The article explores key aspects of teaching a foreign language using project-based learning at the Institute of Natural and Exact Sciences at the South Ural State University. The research studies Russian students' perception of project-based learning in non-language majors in developing oral English skills. The following tasks were set: to develop a model of project-based learning, to evaluate students' perception of this model when implemented in practice.

The following theoretical and empirical methods were applied in the research: analysis of modern pedagogical and methodical literature, questionnaires, individual interviews, mathematical processing of the obtained data.

The results showed that a majority of Russian students viewed the integration of English language classes and project-based learning positively. The interviews revealed some problems that students faced in project preparation, which require further investigation. The findings can help English language teachers effectively implement project-based learning for the development of speaking skills.

**Keywords:** Learner-centered approach, non-linguistic students, project-based language learning.

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## ВОСПРИЯТИЕ ПРОЕКТНОГО ОБУЧЕНИЯ РОССИЙСКИМИ СТУДЕНТАМИ ПРИ ФОРМИРОВАНИИ НАВЫКОВ ГОВОРЕНИЯ НА ИНОСТРАННОМ ЯЗЫКЕ

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**Аннотация.** В контексте высшего образования одной из основных целей преподавания английского языка является повышение способности студентов к устной коммуникации. Следовательно, для основательного изучения языка важно предоставить обучающимся возможности для регулярных занятий за пределами аудиторий. Эффективным решением может быть использование проектного обучения. За последние десятилетия эмпирические исследования в разных странах были посвящены положительному воздействию проектного обучения. В то же время вопросу изучения восприятия проектного обучения российскими студентами уделяется мало внимания в теоретической литературе.

В статье раскрываются ключевые аспекты преподавания иностранного языка с использованием проектного обучения в Институте естественных и точных наук Южно-Уральского государственного университета. Целью данного исследования является изучение восприятия российскими студентами неязыковых специальностей проектного обучения при формировании навыков владения устной речью на английском языке. Были поставлены следующие задачи: разработать модель проектного обучения, оценить восприятие данной модели студентами при ее реализации на практике.

В исследовании были применены следующие теоретические и эмпирические методы: анализ современной педагогической и методической литературы, анкетирование, индивидуальные интервью, математическая обработка полученных данных.

Результаты показали, что большая часть российских студентов положительно отнеслась к интеграции занятия по английскому языку и проектного обучения. Данные интервью выявили некоторые проблемы, с которыми столкнулись студенты при подготовке проектов, что требует дальнейшего изучения. Полученные результаты могут помочь преподавателям английского языка эффективно применять проектное обучение для развития навыков говорения.

**Ключевые слова:** личностно-ориентированный подход, студенты неязыковых специальностей, проектное обучение

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### Introduction

In the context of higher education, one of the primary goals of English teaching programs is to enhance the students' ability to communicate orally. In fact, there are some problems in teaching speaking skills, especially in the context of English as a foreign language (EFL). For example, students are unmotivated in learning and lack confidence in English communication in class due to low level of English proficiency [23]. Furthermore, students have fewer opportunities for regular practices of English beyond the class [30]. To enhance the effectiveness of English-speaking, consequently, it is essential to provide

students with great opportunities for the regular practices beyond classrooms. In line with the discussion, the use of project-based language learning (PBL) might be an effective solution. Over the past decades, various empirical studies have been devoted to the positive impacts of PBL. In the Thai context, the students believed that PBL helps them to apply both their specific-majoring knowledge of Information Science and English skills to deal with real-world problems [29]. From the perceptions of Malaysian students of English, the implementation of PBL activities enhances their oral communicative competence [1]. In the Russian context, learning Eng-

lish through PBLL not only enables engineering students to apply the engineering knowledge in the learning process but also significantly improves their oral and written communication [20, 22]. In a most recent study by Slabodar [31], the teachers recognize that students can enhance their self-confidence and English-speaking skills.

In addition to the positive effects, we suppose that the implementation of PBLL in real-life classrooms will have some problems. For example, students might have some difficulties interacting with other teammates when doing projects, and they could not work independently to complete their main task in the project. Furthermore, students might have some problems due to their low level of English. Although many scholar studies have examined the positive effects of PBLL, fewer ones have investigated its problems in real-life classrooms, especially in Russian contexts. Consequently, the present study was to explore the Russian non-linguistic students' perceptions of PBLL for teaching speaking English as a foreign language. This study aimed to address the possible answers to the research question: What are the Russian non-linguistic students' perceptions of project-based language learning for teaching English-speaking skills?

In today's contexts of English education, developing the students' speaking skills is increasingly becoming the center of learning outcomes in most schools [10]. In order to enhance the students' English-speaking skills in the EFL context, it is essential to implement pedagogical approaches that effectively maximize the meaningful use of English in each lesson and help students to maintain the regular practices of English beyond classrooms [26, 27]. In response to this pedagogical requirement, learning activities should be focused on group work (GW). As stated by Chappell [12], GW might regularly prompt interactions in person among students. In the language classrooms, as commented by Richard [30], students in GW are profoundly engaged in the meaningful use of target language (L2). In line with the discussion, the use of the communicative language teaching approach (CLT) seems to be an ideal choice. Throughout its history, the use of CLT is mainly for developing the students' communicative competence. As mentioned in most scholar research in the terms of CLT (e. g., Littlewood [23], Richards [30]), communicative competence is the overlap between grammatical competence (i. e., knowledge of language rules) and sociolinguistic competence (i. e., the use of

language in society) with aspects of cultural competence. However, it is also necessary to consider contributing factors that influence the effectiveness of CLT implementation in real-life classrooms.

Regarding the implementing sequence of CLT activities, the functional communication activities should be firstly undertaken in classrooms of English-speaking skills. For instance, after lessons of English grammatical structures, students should practice English through pair activities (information gaps, interviews, picture comparison, etc.), mingling activities (any number of participants: e. g., signature game), or roleplays (any number of participants, depending on the situation). Littlewood [23] suggests that these activities enable students to use the language they know to understand meaning as effectively as possible. Subsequently, students need to practice English through social communication activities. These kinds of activities help students to effectively explore meanings and how to suitably use language in the social context. In most situations, communicative activities in teaching English speaking skills should be organized as a process of information transfer. To be more specific, an effective speaking activity should contain an information gap. As defined by Richard [30, p. 17], an information gap "refers to the fact that in real communication people normally communicate in order to get information they do not possess". To illustrate this, teachers should organize small group activities (e. g., debates in groups, decision-making, or consensus activities) for students to use English meaningfully and purposefully.

Because of the varieties of English in a world context, it is important to consider the issues of what language contexts should be provided for students to effectively use in real-life social interactions. For the educational practices, the instructionalization of language social interactions might be acceptably compatible [21]. In our research, this term is defined as modeling common language structures of social interactions in learning materials for English-speaking classrooms. In other words, the teachers firstly introduce some verbal communicative strategies to students, which include common language structures in the native speakers' daily conversations. Besides, students need to regularly practice these strategies through communicative activities, i. e., working in small groups or pairs, inside classrooms.

Another aspect of English-speaking teaching in the EFL context is to focus on fluency or accuracy in the process of oral communication. As we may know, theories of CLT emphasized originally on the fluency of using language. However, it is criticized that speaking fluently without a certain amount of accuracy is not fluent at all. Indeed, in real-life communicative interactions, lack of accuracy might affect the comprehensibility and intelligibility that students of the English language express. Nevertheless, the teacher should not focus mainly on accuracy when teaching speaking English. To be more specific, the teachers' intention should be "good" enough, which probably reflects the balanced focus of accuracy and fluency in classrooms of English speaking. In this sense, error correction in speaking English should be also focused on the errors that seriously affect understanding [17]. In the pedagogical practices, students can be more fluent in speaking in case that teachers use material that is familiar to them [6]. From this perspective, the teacher should design appropriate learning materials which include grammar or vocabulary they have already learned.

Project-based language learning (PBL) is commonly mentioned as a student-centered approach of instruction. In the PBL, students in group work are profoundly engaged in the meaningful use of target language to deal with real-world issues [3, 4]. To successfully implement in real-life classrooms, it is important to carefully consider theoretical aspects of PBL related to teaching English-speaking skills. As previously mentioned, the main purpose of doing a project in language teaching is to provide students with great opportunities to regularly use language outside the classroom. In EFL contexts, therefore, students need to acquire enough "language inputs" before they can apply them into doing a project. In addition, it is necessary to identify the contributions of the teacher and students when implementing PBL. According to Bell, "students develop a question and are guided through research under the teacher's supervision" [5, p. 39]. To clarify this perspective, applying PBL enables students to be more active in their learning with appropriate strategies. Meanwhile, the teacher should be an inspiring instructor who facilitates advantageous conditions for students to produce learning outcomes and gain knowledge [7]. More importantly, the teacher inspires the students to acquire knowledge by presenting them with a problem they have an interest in solving.

Moreover, the teacher supported the students to deal with the possible problems to complete their projects on time.

To effectively assess the students' performances in PBL, in addition to focusing on English-speaking skills, the teachers should examine the students' qualities that they need for their future jobs (e. g., creativity, productivity, cooperation and flexibility in problem solving). Apart from the normal types of learning assessment, Huerta-Macias [16] suggests a list of appropriate assessment procedures which include checklists of student behaviors or products, self-evaluation questionnaires, work samples, and teacher observation. As proposed by Brown & Hudson [9], a few more authentic assessments (e.g., portfolios, conferences, diaries, self-assessments, and peer assessments) that totally require students to perform, create, produce, or do something are compatible with English classrooms with PBL.

A significant body of literature has mostly reviewed the positive effects of PBL in various aspects of language education. As Richard [30] stated, using projects outside the classroom gives students the opportunity to use their language resources for authentic communicative purposes. In a similar situation, Beckett [3, 4] concludes that students tend to use English to learn expertise and sociocultural knowledge. In the multicultural contexts, doing projects in small groups also helps students to enhance intercultural competence. To explain this, interactions among group members to complete learning projects help them deeply understand characteristics or abilities of each other, thereby having appropriate behaviors based on the diversity of cultural backgrounds. In relation to the discussion, Yamada [32] states that integration of PBL generates a collaborative learning environment where students could learn something new from other teammates through constructive feedback or group discussion. In terms of students' perceptions, Beckett [2] reviews that the students are satisfied with the project-based instruction because they can develop research work, writing skills and communicate effectively. In line with the teachers' perceptions, Slabodar [31] found that the teachers have favorable perceptions of PBL on the students' ability to make presentations in English in front of the audiences.

In spite of positively outstanding effects, the use of PBL is negatively viewed in some scholarly studies. Regarding group interactions, doing projects sometimes contains conflicts

among teammates, or some students might have difficulties interacting with others [28, 33]. When implementing PBL in real-life classrooms, doing projects is considered a time-consuming process for both the teachers and students [15]. Likewise, classrooms of mixed-level English students are popular in the EFL context, which becomes one of the challenges for implementing the CLT approach in general, and PBL in particular in real-life contexts. In this sense, some of the students feel unconfident to express their ideas when working in small groups or pairs due to their low level of English. Most frequently, students with lower levels of English could not complete their tasks in the projects. As a consequence, the teachers should have particular guidelines for suitable distributions of main tasks to each member in groups.

### Materials and Methods

We used methods of convenience sampling to choose a research sample for the experimental teaching and data collection.

Table 1

Students' background information

Categories	Frequencies	Percentages
<b>Gender</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>
Males	32	80%
Females	08	20%
<b>Year of study</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>
Year 1	40	100%
<b>Academic major</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>
IT and Mathematics	40	100%
<b>Year of English learning</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>
More than 05 years	30	75%
Less than 05 years	10	25%
<b>English proficiency</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>
A1 – A2	0	0%
A2 – B1	0	0%
B1 – B2	40	100%
C1 – C2	0	0%

The convenience sampling is defined as a sampling method that allows researchers to select appropriate participants who are willing, volunteer, or easily recruited to include in a sample [11, 13].

A sample consists of forty Russian non-linguistic students, who are studying at the Institute of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, South Ural State University (National Research University), Chelyabinsk, Russia. The participants enter at an B1 level and they are expected to leave the class at an B2 proficiency level, corresponding to

the Common European Framework Reference for languages (CEFR). The participants' information background is presented in Table 1.

Ethical approval was obtained to enroll these participants in the present study. All participants consent to participate in the research project by signing a form indicating their agreement.

### Results and discussion

Along with the pedagogic intervention, questionnaires and online individual interviews were deployed to collect data for the present study. A period time of five weeks was for the data collection, which consists of one week for designing learning materials and activities, three weeks for the pedagogic intervention, one week for investigating the students' perceptions, and transcript analysis.

The pedagogic intervention was implemented in five weeks. In the present study, the researchers themselves were the teachers who naturally interacted with the students, designed the learning activities, and carried out these activities in the classrooms. Accordingly, the students attended the English-speaking lessons with the learning activities, including role-plays, picture descriptions, discussion questions, and interview practices in the classroom. In the role-plays, the teacher assigned students different roles and communicative situations to act out. For the picture descriptions, the students are provided with pictures or images to describe what they saw in detail. Additionally, the students in pairs or small groups discussed open-ended questions which were related to current events, controversial topics, or personal experiences. In the activities of interview practices, the students developed their ability to ask and answer questions through playing the roles of interviewers and interviewees with a list of questions about interesting topics. Most importantly, the students spent two weeks doing their projects, in which they must perform their English-speaking skills in particular products (e. g., speeches in video projects or oral presentations and interviews). Consequently, they needed to have group interactions and maintain the use of English outside the class.

In order to investigate the students' perceptions of PBL in English-speaking lessons, we employed a questionnaire of five-point Likert scales. Boynton & Greenhalgh [8] define the questionnaire of five-point Likert scales as a standardized one, in which all participants are asked exactly the same questions in an identical format and responses recorded in a uniform manner to increase its reliability. To design the question-

naire, we considered the two-related issues, including the general format characteristics and the maximum length of completion time. In this sense, the researcher firstly drafted the questionnaire, covering the investigation-needed variables (i. e., students' perceptions of the inside-classroom learning activities in English-speaking lessons, or the positive and negative effects of PBL). To prevent the draft version from ambiguous words or measuring irrelevant information [14], the piloting test was conducted with a sample of ten learners who are from a similar background to the target sample in the present study.

The questionnaires were conducted online (using Google Forms) to investigate: (I) the students' information backgrounds; (II) The Russian non-linguistic students' perceptions of the inside-classroom learning activities in the English-speaking lessons; (III) The Russian non-linguistic students' perceptions on the positive effect of PBL in teaching speaking English, (IV) The Russian non-linguistic students' perceptions on the negative effect of PBL in teaching speaking English; and further comments on effects of PBL or possible solutions in two open-ended questions. In addition, there were five objective question items in each section (II–IV), using the five-point Likert scale and featuring the following choices: (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Uncertain, (4) Agree, and (5) Strongly Agree. In order to enable the students to answer question items more accurately in their native language thinking mode and improve the reliability of the data, the questionnaires are designed in both English and Russian. Finally, a total of thirty-eight respondents gave their answers to the questionnaires.

We conducted individual interviews of 50 minutes in length to have the students' detailed information about how they responded to the questionnaire (e. g., opinions, interests, or beliefs) and

their further explanations for the performances or errors in their projects. A total of ten students were interviewed. All of the individual interviews were implemented in English. The interviewees' responses were recorded. During the individual interviews, we noted the interviewees' emerged ideas or thoughts for both referred purposes and data collection.

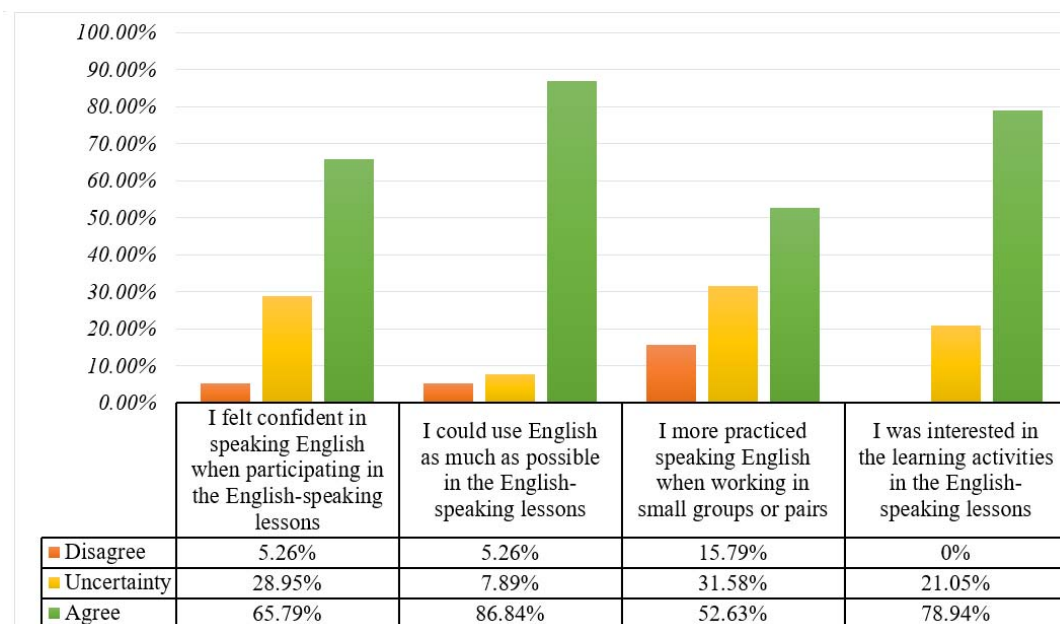
For the data collected from questionnaires, we deployed a frequency distribution (descriptive statistics), in which data values were systematically rank-ordered and the frequencies are provided for each of these values [11]. To illustrate this, the investigated variables in the questionnaires (section II–IV) were labeled in items and numbered from 6 to 20, and the percentages of the students, who responded to the questionnaire items with the five-point Likert scales, were provided for referred purposes. To make the data analysis more convenient, we divided the five-point Likert scales into “*Agree* (Strongly Agree & Agree); *Uncertainty*; and *Disagree* (Strongly Disagree & Disagree)”. For the data collected from the individual interviews, the researchers firstly transferred the audio scripts to textual data. Subsequently, the researchers categorized the textual data into specific headings or subheadings according to the investigated variables (i. e., the Russian non-linguistic students' perceptions on the effectiveness of PBL for English-speaking lessons, or the Russian non-linguistic students' perceptions on the problems of PBL for English-speaking lessons, or the improvements of students in speaking English through PBL) (Table 2).

The students provided a positive evaluation of the inside-classroom activities for teaching English speaking skills in the present study. As shown in Fig. 1, nearly 80% of the students (30/38) were interested in learning activities in the English-speaking lessons.

Table 2

The samples of coding process

Headings	Example Coded items
The positive effects of project-based language learning for English-speaking lessons	[I found doing projects funny and I enjoyed it...] [I think doing projects helps me to improve my English-speaking skills because before I make videos and speak in English, I need to practice a lot to be fluent and good at pronunciation...]
The problems of project-based language learning for English-speaking lessons	[It is difficult to gather group members to do projects...] [It is difficult to find free time for doing projects...] [One of the difficulties is that there are many different assignments to do at the same time...]
The improvements of students in speaking English through PBL	[Doing projects in English-speaking lessons was interesting...; Also, doing projects improved my English-speaking skills, but not so much...]



**Fig. 1. The percentage of students reflecting their perceptions of the inside-classroom learning activities for teaching English-speaking skills**

Arguably, learning activities related to pairs or group work frequently enhance the students' motivations and interests. Furthermore, these activities could foster students' talking time through practices of speaking English with their partners or teammates. In this study, about 53% of the students (20/38) responded with the same ideas. At the same time, a major percentage of the students (86.84%) argued that they could use English as much as possible in the English-speaking lessons. Additionally, approximately 66% of the students (25/38) were to the point that they felt confident in speaking English when participating in the English-speaking lessons.

*The positive effects of project-based language learning in English-speaking lesson*

Generally, the Russian non-linguistic students had positive perceptions of PBLL for English-speaking lessons (Table 3). As can be seen in Table 3, about 63% of the students (24/38) agreed that the project-based language learning activities were useful for English-speaking lessons. Accordingly, they had more opportunities to practice speaking English regularly when participating in the project-based language learning activities, approximately 50% of the students (18/38) presented the agreements with this perception. In addition, 52.63% of the students (20/38) responded that they had generally improved English-speaking skills. This finding was consistent with that of Bakar [1]. After completing their projects, stu-

dents presented their ideas and products in front of the class. Relating to this activity, there were about 42% of the students, who thought that they had felt more confident to make the presentation in English in front of the class. This finding aligns with the teacher's perception in a study conducted by Slabodar [31] where the students are believed to improve their ability to make presentations in English in front of the audiences through PBLL. More interestingly, over 65% of the students (16/38) could learn something new in English from other students when participating in the project-based language learning activities.

Based on the content analysis of individual interviews, six of the interviewees were satisfied with doing projects in English-speaking lessons. In particular, three interviewees indicated that they could learn something when doing projects (e.g., vocabulary, graphic design, or digital skills) (Extract #1)

Extract #1

Interviewee 1: [...] I found doing projects funny and I enjoyed it.

Interviewee 2: I think doing projects helps me to improve my English-speaking skills because before I make videos and speak in English, I need to practice a lot to be fluent and good at pronunciation [...].

Interviewee 3: Doing projects in English-speaking lessons was interesting...; Also, doing projects improved my English-speaking skills, but not so much [...].

Table 3

## Frequency distribution of student positive perceptions of PBL for English-speaking lessons

Items	Statements	Disagree	Uncertainty	Agree
11	I found the PBL activities useful for English-speaking lessons	18.42%	18.42%	63.16%
12	I had more opportunities to practice English regularly when participating in the PBL activities	15.79%	36.84%	47.37%
13	I generally improved my English-speaking skills after participating in the PBL activities	13.16%	34.21%	52.63%
14	I could learn something new in English from other students when participating in the PBL activities	10.53%	23.68%	65.78%
15	I felt more confident when making the presentation in English in front of the class	13.16%	44.74%	42.11%

*The negative effects of project-based language learning in English-speaking lessons*

Despite many positive effects, the use of PBL in English-speaking lessons also contained some problems. As can be seen in Table 4, about 53% of the students (20/38) admitted that they had paid less attention to doing projects due to some different reasons. In their responses, there were still about 32% of the students (12/38) who could not perform well in the project because of their low level of English. Interestingly, as opposed to the initial hypothesis, the majority of the students (22/38) disagreed that they found some difficulties interacting with other teammates when doing projects, while a minor percentage of them (23.68%) was for this point.

A reasonable explanation is that the teacher allowed them to select teammates who they had good interactions with before. Also, they had a cooperative-learning group to work with each other. This might help them to prevent conflicts due to differences in backgrounds. Relating to the learning assessment, 50% of the respondents (19/38) disagreed that peer evaluations were not fair enough to correctly examine the projects among groups, whereas around 24% of them (9/38) agreed with this point. In addition, 60%

of them (22/38) were not convinced that they could not independently complete my main tasks in the project.

In accordance with the questionnaire data, content analysis of individual interviews showed detailed explanations for the responses in the questionnaires. In particular, lack of time for doing projects was the most popular reason why students did not take doing projects into account (Extract #2). This finding aligns with the literature where being time-consuming is mentioned as a major problem when implementing PBL in real-life classrooms [15, 31].

Extract #2:

Interviewee 1: It is difficult to gather group members to do projects [...].

Interview 2: It is difficult to find free time for doing projects [...].

Interview 3: One of the difficulties is that there are many different assignments to do at the same time [...].

*The proposed model for teaching English-speaking skills*

*through project-based language learning*

Following the aforementioned discussion, we suggest a model for teaching English-speaking skills through PBL (Fig. 2). In the classroom,

Table 4

## Frequency distribution of student negative perceptions of PBL for English-speaking lessons

Items	Statements	Disagree	Uncertainty	Agree
16	I found some difficulties to interact with other teammates when doing projects	63.16%	13.16%	23.68%
17	I could not independently complete my main tasks in the project	81.58%	13.16%	23.68%
18	I could not perform in the project well because my low level of English	57.89%	10.53%	31.58%
19	I paid less attention to doing projects due to some different reasons	23.68%	23.68%	52.63%
20	I found peer evaluations not fair enough to correctly examine the projects among groups	50%	26.32%	23.68%



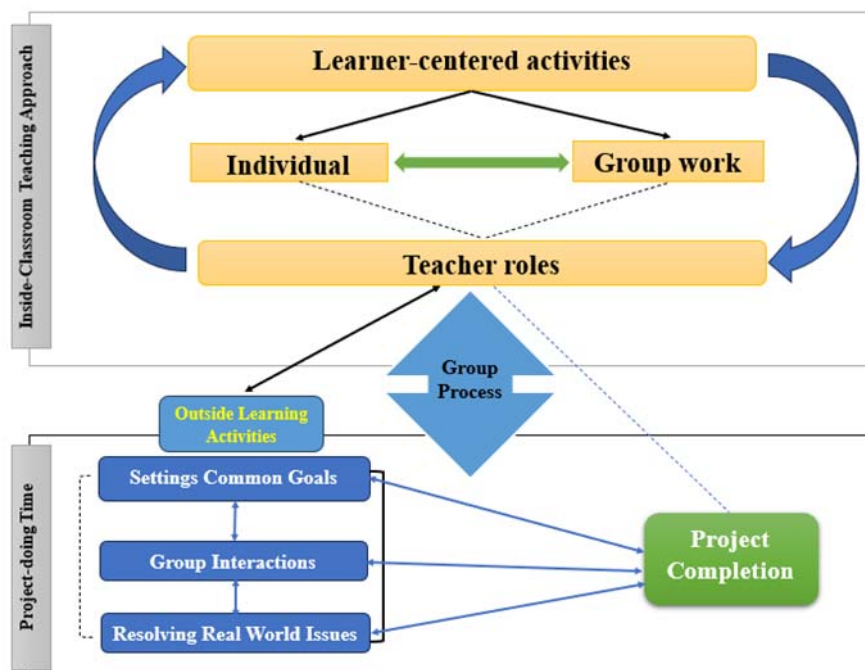


Fig. 2. The model for teaching English-speaking skills through PBL

learner-centered activities (e.g., roleplays, making conversations and discussion in groups or pairs) should be appropriately implemented to motivate students and prompt the use of English in the class [18, 25].

In response to the diversity in learning styles, the inside-classroom teaching approach also tended to balance between activities for individuals and small groups [19]. In addition to working in groups, the ability to work independently is also one important characteristic needed for successful learning through project-based learning. To explain this, each student is responsible for a certain task to complete their group's project. In the project-doing time, students worked in small groups to complete their projects. To do this, the students firstly set up common goals, in which they effectively distributed main tasks to group members. To complete the projects, they needed to have group interactions and effectively resolved real-world issues.

### Conclusion

By integrating the pedagogic intervention into mixed-methods procedures, the present study was to investigate the Russian non-linguistic students' perceptions of PBL for teaching English-speaking skills. The findings revealed that the students positively viewed the effectiveness of PBL in English-speaking

It is possible to state that PBL is useful for teaching English, especially in the EFL context.

In the present study, doing projects provides students with more opportunities for the regular practices of English speaking beyond class. Beckett [2–4] suggests that PBL prompts the meaningful use of target language in doing-project time. Additionally, some projects in this study require students to make videos of their speaking, which might help them to improve their pronunciation. To explain this, students frequently rehearsal their speeches many times when making videos. Nevertheless, students also agree that there are some problems with PBL in English-speaking lessons. Due to lack of time, they often pay less attention to doing projects. At the same time, some of the students have some difficulties interacting with other teammates when doing projects. In terms of project assessments, some students have thought that peer evaluations are not fair enough to correctly examine the projects among groups.

The present study has several pedagogical implications. First of all, PBL should be effectively implemented in teaching speaking English as a foreign language to engage students in the meaningful use of English beyond the class. In addition, the teacher should apply learning projects that intersect with the students' expectations and interests. To avoid problems in carrying out projects, students should be encouraged to regularly study in small groups (cooperative learning) and they might choose suitable team-

mates to complete the learning project effectively. As proposed by Myers [24], students who self-select their teammates perform higher levels of relational satisfaction than students who are randomly assigned to classroom work groups. Besides, students with higher levels of English might support lower ones through cooperative learning in small groups. More importantly, it is necessary to make a reasonable schedule for project time, depending on the particular mainstream educational curriculum. This helps students to have enough time to effectively complete their projects.

Although the present study provides mean-

ingful findings, it also has some limitations. Since the pedagogic intervention was implemented in five weeks and students only completed a project, they had not many experiences in doing projects. This might little or much impact the perceptions of students on the effects of PBL for English-speaking lessons. Additionally, this study had no investigation into the perceptions of teachers who are expertise in project-based learning. Therefore, future studies should be empirical ones which will investigate the effects of PBL in a longer time, and examine the perceptions of experienced teachers for better understanding about PBL.

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