

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the researcher presents the findings of the research results obtained from the data collection process, and discusses the findings based on relevant theories. The description of the data is focused on the research objectives and research questions that have been formulated previously.

A. Findings

In learning English as a foreign language, speaking skill is one of the important aspects that need to be actively developed by students. This skill not only requires mastery of vocabulary and language structure, but also involves self-confidence, critical thinking skills, and the ability to communicate effectively in various contexts. One learning approach that is believed to be able to support the development of speaking skills is Project-Based Learning, an approach that encourages students to learn through direct involvement in relevant, collaborative, and result-oriented projects.

In the context of higher education, especially in English education programs, the PjBL approach is increasingly being applied to encourage students to be more active, creative, and skilled in speaking English. However, the effectiveness of this approach in improving speaking skills is certainly inseparable from the various dynamics that occur during the implementation process. Each student has different experiences and challenges, depending on

their background, language skills, teamwork, and other factors that arise during the project work.

This section presents the findings obtained from interviews with 10 respondents who have participated in project-based learning. 1 (S1), 2 (S2), 3 (S3), 4 (S4), 5 (S5), 6 (S6), 7 (S7), 8 (S8), 9 (S9), and 10 (S10). Among the 10 participants, four participants were categorized as having good English Speaking ability, three participants had medium level ability, and the remaining three participants had low speaking ability. This variation allowed the researcher to capture various perspectives on the implementation of Project-Based Learning in developing speaking skills. Each participant provided information based on their personal experience, some shared positive experiences as well as challenges they faced during the project implementation process. There are two problems that will be discussed in this study: 1). How do EFL undergraduate students experience developing their speaking skills through Project-Based Learning? and 2). What challenges are faced by the undergraduate EFL students in developing speaking skills through Project-Based Learning?

1. Students' Experiences in Developing Speaking Skills Through Project-Based Learning

This section presents the findings regarding students' experiences in developing English speaking skills through the implementation of Project-Based Learning, especially in the form of a podcast-making project. These

findings were obtained through in-depth interviews with ten respondents who had participated in the learning activities.

a. Vocabulary Enrichment

Based on the interview results, the majority of students stated that the implementation of Project-Based Learning through podcast creation was very helpful in enriching their English vocabulary.

Q: Does PjBL help you enrich your vocabulary? Why?

One of the students answered:

S1: "PjBL really helped me enrich my vocabulary. In the process of making the podcast, I had to find and use new words relevant to the topic I was discussing, thus broadening my understanding."

Other students explain:

S5: "Yes, because I had to do research to understand the topic to be discussed in the podcast. In the process, I found many new vocabulary words relevant to the topic."

S6: "It's very helpful, because with podcasts, we have to do research first to fit the topic, whether it's terms or vocabulary that I don't know yet."

S1, S5 and S6 emphasized that the research process conducted before creating the podcast encouraged them to find and understand new vocabulary relevant to the topic. They realized that in order to convey information in an appropriate and interesting way, they needed to understand words that were previously unknown to them. This research process not only enriched their vocabulary, but also improved their understanding of the context of the words.

S2: "PJBL helped me to enrich my vocabulary, because I knew and found some vocabulary that was not familiar to me."

S2 felt that PjBL was quite helpful in enriching his vocabulary. She said that he found some new words that were previously unfamiliar to her. Although not too many, there were still benefits felt in terms of adding new vocabulary.

S3: “Yes, it is very helpful, because the topics discussed I think are very in-depth, automatically the vocabulary is also very much and it really enriches my vocabulary. When I prepare the material for the podcast, I have to read various references in English that are relevant to the topic. This process made me discover many new words that I didn't know before. In addition, I was also encouraged to understand the meaning and use of the vocabulary in the right context, so that I could not only memorize, but also use it actively in speaking.”

Other students explain:

S8: “Yes, because I had to find and use new vocabulary to create an interesting podcast. I felt challenged to not only use common or simple words, but also choose vocabulary that could make my delivery more lively and memorable.”

S10: “Yes, because I have to choose the right words to make my delivery more effective. I also often look for synonyms to avoid repeating the same word. I think using a diverse vocabulary can make my speech sound more interesting and professional. In the process of creating scripts or during speaking practice, I often evaluate the words I use, then replace them with other word choices that are more appropriate or more varied.”

S3, S8, and S10 highlighted the importance of selecting appropriate and varied vocabulary in conveying ideas to make the podcast more effective and interesting. They tried to use synonyms and avoid repeating words, which shows an awareness of language style and variety in communication. This also shows that PjBL provides space for students to explore and develop language skills creatively.

A student shared their thoughts by saying:

S4: “Yes, PjBL helps enrich my vocabulary because I often look for new words to convey ideas more clearly. In addition, listening to friends also adds to my vocabulary insight.”

Other students added:

S7: “Yes, PjBL can help enrich vocabulary because I often look for new words to make the conversation sound more interesting and natural. In addition, I also learn from my friends when discussing.”

S9: “Of course! I have to find the right words so that my message is easily understood. In addition, listening to my friends speak also introduced me to new vocabulary that I had not used before.”

S4, S7, and S9 revealed that they did not only learn from the individual process, but also from the social interaction with friends when discussing and listening to other groups' work. Listening to friends speak or convey ideas in English opened up opportunities for them to expand their vocabulary through authentic contexts of use. This shows that PjBL encourages collaborative learning and an environment rich in language exposure.

Based on the interview results, the researcher found that the implementation of Project-Based Learning through the creation of podcasts greatly helped students in enriching their English vocabulary. They also learned to choose the right words, use synonyms, and avoid repetition of words in order to convey ideas more interestingly. Not only from the individual process, students also expanded their vocabulary through discussion and listening to friends, which shows that PjBL supports collaborative and creative learning in an authentic context.

b. Influence on Pronunciation

All respondents stated that their pronunciation had improved during the PjBL implementation process, especially through the creation of podcasts.

Q: Did PjBL affect your pronunciation? Why?

Students shared their thoughts by saying:

S1: “ Of course, PjBL affected my pronunciation. When making the podcast, I was more conscious of the way I pronounce words and tried to improve them to sound clearer”

S4: “Yes, PjBL affected my pronunciation because I was more aware of the correct way to pronounce words. I practiced a lot to sound more natural and also listening to examples from native speakers as a reference”.

S1 and S4 both reported that they became more aware of the pronunciation mistakes they made, and actively tried to correct them. This awareness comes from having to listen to themselves and ensure that their delivery is easy to understand.

S2: “Yes, it is very influential. Because thanks to that, I know the correct pronunciation of the words ‘honorable’ and ‘distinguished’. I also became more aware that pronunciation in English is very important, especially when speaking in public. Previously, I often mispronounced some words because I only relied on reading from the text, without knowing how the word should be pronounced correctly. However, after participating in this project, I am used to finding out first through online dictionaries or native speaker videos”.

S2 indicated that PjBL, especially through the podcast-making activity, directly helped them to improve the pronunciation of certain words that they may not have known before or often mispronounced. Words like “honorable” and “distinguished” are not part of everyday vocabulary, so it is natural that the pronunciation was not accurate before.

S3: “Yes, of course it affects a lot. When I am speaking in English, especially in front of others, I feel compelled to perform to the best of my ability. Therefore, I feel that my pronunciation has to be really precise and fluent. I don't want to sound hesitant or mispronounce words, because it could reduce my confidence and could also affect how others judge my English skills”.

S3 felt that her pronunciation became better because she wanted to give the best results when making podcasts. She realized that for her podcast to sound good, she needed to be able to pronounce words clearly and fluently. The desire to look good made her practice harder in pronouncing each word or sentence. So, this project made her more eager to improve her pronunciation to sound more professional.

One student noted the following:

S5: “Yes, because I had to record my voice and listen back to it for practice. From there, I can evaluate my pronunciation and improve it”.

In a similar answer, other students responded:

S6: “Yes, because if we pronounce a word incorrectly, it might be difficult for the listener to understand or even misinterpret because of the wrong pronunciation. So I practice my pronunciation by repeating words that I think are very difficult to pronounce or hearing them from Google Translate, how to pronounce them”.

S7: “Yes, my pronunciation has improved quite significantly because during the project process, I used to listen to various pronunciation examples from English sources, such as learning videos or native speakers on the internet. From there, I learned to imitate the way they pronounce words correctly. This process made me more aware of intonation, word stress, and proper pronunciation”. This answer was further supported by other students.

S8: “Yes, my pronunciation has improved because I often practice by listening to words from Google Translate. Although it's not my main source, I find it very helpful to be able to hear directly how the word should be pronounced. Whenever I came across a difficult or new word, I would look it up in Google Translate, listen to the pronunciation over and over again, and then try to imitate it. This way, I can correct my pronunciation mistakes and learn to pronounce words more accurately”.

Overall, students from S5 to S8 agreed that the process in PjBL, such as finding references to correct pronunciation from various sources, encouraged them to be more aware and active in improving pronunciation. S6 highlighted that mispronunciations can lead to

misunderstandings, so she regularly practiced difficult words with the help of Google Translate. S7 added that imitating pronunciation from authentic sources, such as learning videos and native speakers, helped her understand intonation and word stress better. Meanwhile, S8 also emphasized that the practice of listening and mimicking pronunciation from Google Translate made her more confident in pronouncing new words accurately.

S9: “Yes, because I became more aware of the way I pronounce words. I also often get corrections from lecturers and friends if there are mistakes in pronunciation, so I can correct them”.

S10: “Yes, because I practice more often and get feedback from lecturers and friends. If there are pronunciation mistakes, I can immediately correct them”.

Furthermore, S9 and S10 highlighted the role of feedback from lecturers and friends as one of the main factors in improving pronunciation. Through the suggestions or corrections they received, they were able to identify mistakes that they did not realize before.

From the answers of all respondents, it can be concluded that they became more aware of pronunciation errors and tried to correct them in various ways, such as listening to examples from native speakers, using Google Translate, and practicing pronouncing difficult words repeatedly.

Feedback from lecturers and friends also plays an important role in helping them recognize and correct pronunciation errors.

c. Influence on English Fluency

Based on the interview results, most of the participants stated that Project-Based Learning had a positive influence on improving their fluency in English. The majority of students, such as S1, S4, S5, S6, S7, S8, S9, and S10, stated that the PjBL method made them more accustomed to speaking spontaneously, without too many pauses, and being able to think quickly in constructing sentences in English.

Q: Did PjBL affect your English fluency?

S1: "Yes, PjBL also affected my English fluency. With frequent speaking and practicing, I feel more fluent and no longer inhibited when speaking".

S1 said that with frequent speaking and practicing through PjBL, she felt more fluent and no longer inhibited when speaking.

S3: "Yes, it is very influential, although when speaking faster it sometimes makes pronunciation a little wrong, but it is an encouragement for me to continue practicing to be very fluent when speaking English".

S3 stated that PjBL greatly influenced his speaking fluency. She felt that the urge to speak actively made her more fluent in conveying ideas, although the increased speaking speed sometimes caused errors in pronunciation. However, she did not see it as an obstacle, but rather as a motivation to continue practicing in order to speak better and more fluently.

S4: "Yes, PjBL improved my fluency in English because this method forced me to speak without too much pausing or thinking, so my speaking ability became more fluent".

Other student added:

S5: “Yes, because I had to speak spontaneously in the podcast, which made me more used to thinking and speaking in English without too many pauses or mistakes”.

S4 and S5 mentioned that they were encouraged to speak without long pauses and became more accustomed to thinking and speaking in English directly. This is also reinforced by the opinions of S9 and S10, namely.

S9: “Yes, because this method forces me to speak without thinking too much or using filler words like ‘umm’ or ‘uhh’. I became more accustomed to constructing sentences quickly. At first, I felt nervous because I was afraid of making mistakes when speaking, but since I was required to convey my ideas directly in this project, I got used to it. Over time, I felt more confident to speak in English, even when the topic was quite complex. This method really helped me to think fast and speak more fluently without much hesitation”.

S10: “Yes, because I had to speak without reading the text, which made me more accustomed to thinking quickly in English and avoiding too long pauses. In the process, I learned how to convey ideas spontaneously and in a flowing manner. I also started to realize the importance of practicing speaking naturally, not just memorizing”.

S9 and S10 both highlighted how Project-Based Learning helped them to think quickly and speak more fluently in English, especially by reducing reliance on text or script when speaking. S9 explained that PjBL encouraged him to speak without thinking too much or using filler words such as “umm” or “uhh”. This suggests that he experienced improvement in fluency of thought and spontaneous speaking, as he was used to constructing sentences directly in situations that required active participation.

S10 expressed the same thing, namely that she had to speak without reading the text during the PjBL process. This condition forced her to get used to thinking fast in English and avoiding long pauses in speech. In other words, she learned to be more confident and flexible in conveying ideas orally. Both underlined that the practice of spontaneous speaking through projects such as unscripted podcasts helped them to improve their speaking fluency significantly, as they focused more on natural delivery of ideas and communication rather than on memorization or rigid language structures.

S6: Yes, with PjBL, I was required to speak fluently, and with that I trained myself to speak in English regularly.

This point was also emphasized by other students:

S7: My fluency improved because I got used to speaking without thinking too much. I'm able to put sentences together more quickly and I don't stop as often when speaking.

S8: Yes, because speaking in podcasts trains my fluency in English.

S6, S7 and S8 all felt that Project-Based Learning contributed significantly to their improved fluency in speaking English. S6 explained that through PjBL, she was required to speak fluently, thus encouraging her to regularly train herself to speak English. S7 added that her habit of speaking without thinking too much made her faster in constructing sentences and less pausing when speaking. This shows an increase in spontaneity in speaking. Similarly, S8 also said that speaking activities in the podcast practiced fluency and made her more accustomed to communicating in English. All three emphasized the importance of direct

practice and consistency in speaking as the main factors that strengthen fluency through the implementation of PjBL.

However, not all students felt a significant increase in fluency. S2 for example, asserted:

S2: “As for affecting fluency, I personally don't think it has been very significant so far. Although I have participated in several projects in English learning, I feel that my ability to speak fluently has not developed as I expected. I still often feel nervous and stammer when speaking, especially when I have to express my opinion spontaneously in English”.

S2 said that she felt that PjBL had not had a significant impact on her fluency. She admitted that she still does not feel fluent in English, so she has not felt a real improvement from the project-based learning process. This could reflect that the effect of PjBL may vary depending on the individual's readiness, level of confidence, or habits in practicing speaking outside of project activities. Although the method is designed to encourage speaking skills, in S2's case, the results were not very noticeable, possibly because she was still in the early stages of developing her speaking skills or was not fully accustomed to active learning methods such as PjBL.

It can be concluded that most students felt that PjBL had a positive influence on improving their fluency in English. They became more accustomed to speaking spontaneously, thinking quickly, and constructing sentences without too many pauses or filler words. Activities such as creating unscripted podcasts encouraged them to be more confident and fluent in conveying ideas. However, some students

have not felt significant improvement, such as S2, who still feels nervous and stammers when speaking. This shows that the effect of PjBL can vary depending on the readiness and confidence of each student.

d. Increasing Self-Confidence

Learning using the Project-Based Learning method generally contributes positively to increasing students' confidence in speaking English, although the impact is not equal for each individual.

Q: How did this method help improve your confidence in speaking English?

One of the students answered:

S1: "This method helped improve my confidence in speaking English. Through feedback from friends and lecturers, I feel more confident in my ability although sometimes I still feel shy when speaking".

Similar view came from different students:

S6: "Usually the lecturer will give me feedback on what I say, so with the feedback it will be an input so that I can improve my confidence".

S7: "This method helps to increase my confidence because I am used to hearing my own voice in the recording and getting feedback from friends and lecturers. I became more comfortable speaking in English over time".

S1 stated that the feedback from the lecturer made her feel more prepared because she knew which parts needed to be improved. Similarly, S6 and S7 revealed that comments and encouragement from classmates also provided motivation and comfort, as the collaborative atmosphere made them not feel judged when they made mistakes. This shows that a supportive environment and openness to feedback can help students build confidence in speaking.

In addition to feedback, the frequency of speaking practice is also an important factor. S5 and S9, for example, felt more confident because they often had the opportunity to speak in front of the class.

S5: “Because I have to speak in real situations and perform podcasts in class, it makes me get used to speaking in front of many people. This helps me feel more confident in using English”.

S9: “I became more accustomed to public speaking, so I was no longer afraid of speaking in English. The live speaking exercises also taught me how to manage my tone of voice and expressions to make it more interesting”.

S5 explained that the more she spoke, the more familiar she became with English sentence structure and pronunciation. She also felt calmer as she began to recognize her own voice and speaking style. Similarly, S9 mentioned that hearing her own voice when speaking helped her to adjust her intonation and articulation, making her more confident when expressing her opinions.

Some other students also reported that the Project-Based Learning method had a positive impact on increasing their confidence in speaking English, especially through hands-on experience and the habit of self-reflection. S3 and S10, for example, emphasized the importance of their involvement in speaking tasks in front of a real audience.

S3: “Because speaking at length in the podcast made me feel used to speaking English and performing in front of my friends no longer caused anxiety or embarrassment”.

S10: “I feel that this method has played a big role in increasing my confidence in speaking English. One of the main reasons was because I had to speak in front of a real audience, which initially felt very nerve-wracking. However, after doing it a few times, I started to feel more comfortable and confident”.

S3 explained that speaking at length in a podcast format helped her get used to expressing herself in English, so she felt less anxious or shy when performing in front of friends. Similarly, S10 said that she initially felt very tense when she had to speak in front of an audience, but over time and after several experiences, she began to feel more comfortable and confident.

Meanwhile, S8 highlighted the benefits of the reflective aspect in this method.

S8: "This method makes me more comfortable speaking because I am used to correcting myself".

S8: "felt that the habit of correcting herself made her more aware of mistakes and increased her comfort when speaking. In other words, S8 found that the repeated process of self-evaluation helped build confidence gradually".

In contrast to the previous opinions of participants. S2 and S4 still show shyness and worry when they have to speak in public.

S2: "With the podcast learning at that time, at first I felt nervous because I was not used to and not fully fluent in speaking English. However, because of the method I felt challenged to face it and speak English and made me start to be confident especially when speaking in front of the class".

S4: "This method helps to increase my confidence because I am more used to speaking in English. But sometimes I am still a little shy to speak English because the pronunciation is sometimes wrong".

S2 admitted that she was afraid of making mistakes that could be embarrassing, especially because she felt that her English skills were not good enough. S4 also had similar fears, and tended to be more silent in group discussions because she felt less confident than her peers. This

shows that although the PjBL method provides space for self-development, its success is also influenced by internal factors such as personality, previous experience, and a sense of security in learning.

Based on the interview results, the researcher found that this method generally helped improve students' confidence in speaking English through feedback from lecturers and friends, opportunities to speak in front of the class, and the habit of self-reflection. Students feel more comfortable and confident because they often practice, get constructive feedback, and get used to listening and correcting themselves. However, not all felt the same improvement, as some still felt shy or afraid of being wrong, which shows that confidence is also influenced by personal factors such as individual experience and character.

e. Project-Based Learning Compared to Other Methods in Developing Speaking Skills of EFL Students

The results of interviews with respondents regarding their views on the effect of Project-Based Learning in developing speaking skills showed that most stated that PjBL was more helpful than other learning methods.

Q: Do you think PjBL is more helpful than other learning methods in developing speaking skills? Why?

S1: "In my opinion, PjBL is more helpful than other learning methods in developing speaking skills. It provides direct and relevant experience which makes learning more interesting".

S2: “I think so, especially if it is combined with other projects such as role play, MC, and others. In addition to developing speaking skills, I think PjBL in the form of podcasts back then also developed creativity”.

S1 and S2 emphasized that PjBL provides hands-on and relevant learning experiences. They mentioned that this method is not only interesting, but can also develop other aspects such as creativity, especially when applied in projects such as creating a podcast. They felt more encouraged to speak up as the activity actively involved them.

S3: “I don't think it's more helpful than other methods, but it really helps my speaking skills, because there are some other methods too that really help me”.

S3 had a slightly different view. She did not directly state that PjBL was better than other methods, but acknowledged that PjBL was very helpful in developing speaking skills. However, she also added that there are other methods that also have an important role in improving these abilities, so she thinks a combination of various methods will be more effective.

S4: “I think PjBL is more helpful because it provides real experience in using English. Compared to other methods that are more theoretical, PjBL makes me more active and directly involved”.

S5: “Yes, because PjBL is practical and provides direct experience in speaking. Unlike passive methods such as lectures or written exercises, this method allows me to actually use English in real situations”.

Other students added:

S6: “PjBL can indeed help me by being directly involved in learning, also more active speaking than other methods”.

S7: “I think PjBL is more helpful because I can directly practice English in real situations. Compared to other methods that are only theoretical, this is more effective for improving speaking skills”.

This view was further supported by another participant:

S8: "Yes, because I learn through hands-on practice, not just theory".

S9: "In my opinion, yes. PjBL is more effective because it provides hands-on experience. If I only learn theory or practice speaking individually, I won't get the experience of speaking in front of a real audience".

This point was also emphasized by another student:

S10: "In my opinion, yes. Compared to other learning methods, PjBL provides more opportunities for hands-on practice. If I only learn theory or read texts, I might understand the concept, but I won't get used to speaking in real situations. With PjBL, I really got to experience speaking first-hand and got feedback that helped me improve".

S4 to S10 had almost the same opinion. They felt that the Project-Based Learning method was very helpful because it was practical and hands-on. With this method, they can use English in real life, not just learning theory in class. For example, when they make a project like making a podcast they feel more involved and can directly practice their speaking skills.

They said PjBL is better than other methods that only focus on theory, such as lectures or doing written exercises. When participating in the project, they have to organize the material, choose the right words, and speak in front of their friends. From there, they can get direct feedback from teachers or friends, such as suggestions on pronunciation or how to convey the message. This makes them more confident and accustomed to speaking in English.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that most respondents stated that Project-Based Learning is more helpful in developing speaking skills than other learning methods. They felt that

PjBL provided a real learning experience, actively involved them, and made the learning process more interesting. The podcast-making project helped them to directly practice English in real situations, so they were more confident and used to speaking. Although there was one respondent who mentioned that other methods were also useful, in general, PjBL was considered more effective because it was practical and supported the development of creativity and speaking skills directly.

f. Students' Feelings When Learning Using Project-Based Learning

From the interview data, in general, the respondents showed a positive attitude towards the application of the Project-Based Learning model in developing English speaking skills.

Q: How do you feel when learning using the PjBL method?

One student noted the following:

S1: "I felt very enthusiastic when learning using the PjBL method. The process was fun and gave me many opportunities to be creative and try to interact".

In a similar view, other students responded:

S5: "I felt more motivated and engaged in learning because this method made me actively speak and think in English".

S7: "I feel more challenged and more active in learning because this method is not boring. Although it was difficult at first, I enjoyed it for a long time".

S1, S5, and S7 revealed that they felt enthusiastic and happy when participating in project-based learning. They considered that this approach brought a new atmosphere in the teaching-learning process that was different from the conventional method which tended to be passive and monotonous. All three also highlighted that the interaction between

students became more intense, resulting in strong collaboration within the group. They felt more encouraged to actively contribute because each member had an important role in completing the project.

S2: "My feelings are happy as well as challenged and curious, on the other hand also anxious and afraid because it involves speaking. Honestly, for public speaking, I am still lacking".

S4: "I feel more challenged but also enjoy the learning process more because this Project-Based Learning method makes the classroom atmosphere more interactive and less boring. Unlike traditional learning methods that tend to be one-way, PjBL encourages me to be more actively involved, both in discussing, cooperating with group mates, and in conveying ideas verbally. The challenges I felt became my own motivation to keep learning and improving my speaking skills because I felt more responsible for the project we were working on together".

S6: "I feel challenged by the PjBL method, it gives me the opportunity to learn while honing my creativity".

S2, S4, and S6 stated that although the implementation of Project-Based Learning posed its own challenges, they still felt satisfaction in undergoing the learning process. The challenges faced are not considered as obstacles, but rather as part of the learning process that actually provides valuable experience. The sense of challenge that arose during the implementation of PjBL turned out to be the main driver in increasing their learning motivation. They felt encouraged to be more active, creative, and responsible for their learning process.

According to them, active involvement in every stage of project implementation from planning, information gathering, and group discussions to task execution and the presentation of the final results, is a key factor that enriches the learning experience. The process requires

not only theoretical understanding of the material, but also practical skills such as teamwork, problem solving, effective communication, and time management. This gives deeper meaning to the learning process as they are not only passive recipients of information, but also active actors who are directly involved in the creation and delivery of knowledge.

A student shared her thoughts by saying:

S3: I actually feel very excited, because with this method I can express myself more freely. Usually when learning to speak I feel pressured, afraid of making mistakes, and embarrassed to speak in front of others. But with the project-based approach, I feel more relaxed. I can express my ideas more freely, both in group discussions and during presentations.

Other view came from different students:

S8: I feel more motivated and enjoy the learning process this way. Previously I often felt bored if I was only told to memorize or read texts, but with project-based learning, I feel like I have a clear goal in learning.

S9: I feel more enthusiastic because this method is more interesting than just learning theory. I also feel more motivated to continue improving my speaking skills.

S10: I feel this method is more interesting than the traditional method. I am more enthusiastic about learning because I can immediately see the results of my practice.

S3, S8, S9, and S10 showed a high level of learning motivation during the learning process using the Project-Based Learning model. The four participants agreed that the implementation of PjBL provided a more real, meaningful, and enjoyable learning experience compared to traditional learning methods. They considered that direct involvement in contextual projects, such as group discussions and podcasting, made the learning process more lively and relevant to real communication needs in English. According to them, learning through projects not only

encouraged them to be physically and mentally active, but also provided more space to express themselves, collaborate, and practice speaking skills directly in a supportive environment.

From the respondents' answers above, the researcher found that most students had positive feelings about project-based learning in developing English speaking skills. They felt more enthusiastic, motivated, and actively involved during the learning process. Although some felt anxious about speaking in public, they still enjoyed the challenges given and felt that learning was more fun, interactive, and meaningful. PjBL also helped them to be more confident and creative, so that learning did not only focus on theory but also on relevant practices.

g. Students' Motivation in Learning Using Project-Based Learning

The majority of students showed high motivation towards project-based learning. Most of them stated that this method increased engagement and provided a real learning experience.

Q: Are you more motivated to learn using project-based learning? Why?

S1: "I am a little motivated to learn using project-based learning. This method gives me the opportunity to see real results of my hard work but I feel a little stressed with the preparation".

S1 stated that she was only slightly motivated because even though he could see the real results of his hard work, he felt stressed with the preparation. This shows that the pressure or workload felt in the project can be a barrier for some students in feeling the optimal benefits of this method.

S2: “Yes, I am motivated, because I can explore many new things to improve my English skills”.

S2 feels more motivated to learn because in project-based learning, she has the opportunity to explore many new things that he has never learned before, such as making different projects, searching for information independently, and using English in more real situations. That way, she felt that her English language skills could improve because she did not only learn from books or theories, but also practiced them directly. The opportunity to try new things made the learning process feel more interesting and not boring.

S3: “That's right, I am very motivated because this method provides a real learning experience”.

Other students answered:

S4: “Yes, I am more motivated because I feel that the skills I learn are really useful in real life”.

S5: “Yes, because this method is not only fun but also gives me real experience in using English, which makes the learning process more meaningful”.

S3, S4, and S5 stated that they felt very motivated when participating in project-based learning. According to them, this method provides a real learning experience, where they not only learn theory, but also practice it directly in the projects they are working on. This makes them feel that what they learn is really useful and relevant to everyday life, especially in improving English speaking skills.

S6: “Yes, I am more motivated because it is more interactive and makes me more active”

In a similar view, other students said:

S7: "I am more motivated because this method is more interactive and makes me feel more involved in learning than just listening to theory in class"

S8: "Yes, because this method is more interesting than conventional learning"

S6 and S7 feel more motivated when learning using the project-based learning method because this method is interactive and makes them more actively involved in learning activities. They do not just sit still listening to the lecturer's explanation, but also play a direct role in the learning process. For example, they can discuss with friends, create projects together, and practice English in real situations. Activities like this make them more enthusiastic because they feel like they are taking part and not just being passive listeners in class.

In addition, S8's opinion conveys almost the same thing. She feels that this project-based learning method is more interesting and fun compared to conventional learning methods which usually only contain lectures or theoretical explanations. When learning feels more interesting, students do not get bored easily and are more willing to be involved in the process.

S9: "Yes, because I can see the development of my speaking skills directly. In addition, this method makes me more active in learning".

S10: "Yes, because I feel my development is more real and I am more actively involved in learning".

S9 and S10 highlighted that through PjBL they can see the development of their speaking skills directly, which makes them feel more involved and motivated in learning. This shows that feelings of

progress and active involvement are important factors in increasing motivation.

From the interview results, most students feel more motivated to learn using project-based learning because this method makes them more active, involved, and provides real learning experiences. They feel that PjBL helps improve English speaking skills directly because they not only learn theory, but also practice it in more interesting and relevant situations. However, some students feel less motivated because they feel burdened by project preparation.

h. The Influence of Project Based Learning on Critical Thinking Skills

Based on the interview results, in general, all respondents stated that the implementation of PjBL encouraged them to think more critically.

Q: Does PjBL make you think more critically? Why?

S1: "PjBL makes me think more critically because I have to analyze information and present it in an interesting and easy-to-understand way".

S2: "Yes, PjBL makes me think critically. During the podcast project, we thought about what topic we wanted to bring up, from that topic we developed the discussion based on our respective opinions"

S1 and S2 emphasized the importance of the information analysis process and topic development through personal opinions. S1 said that she had to analyze information and present it in an interesting and easy-to-understand way, while S2 highlighted the process of

selecting topics and developing discussions based on the opinions of each group member.

S3: “Yes, PjBL makes me think a little more critically because I have to organize the ideas that will be conveyed and also makes me consider several different perspectives when discussing”.

S4: “Yes, PjBL makes me think more critically because I have to formulate arguments or opinions clearly, to exchange ideas with friends and understand other perspectives, and present them in a way that is easy to understand”.

S3 and S4 associate critical thinking with the process of formulating ideas and arguments and being open to different perspectives. S3 stated that PjBL makes her think a little more critically because she has to formulate ideas to be conveyed, and consider different perspectives when discussing. S4 emphasized that critical thinking is needed in formulating arguments or opinions clearly, exchanging ideas with friends, and understanding other perspectives.

S5: “Yes, because I have to choose interesting topics, formulate arguments, and ensure that the podcast content is relevant and informative for listeners”.

This answer was confirmed by other students:

S6: “Yes, because before I speak I will prepare a script so that my speech is focused and in accordance with the topic. I also need to select information and present it in an interesting way”.

S7: “PjBL makes me think more critically because I have to formulate ideas, choose the right words, and ensure that my opinion is clear and interesting to hear”.

S5, S6, and S7 emphasized that critical thinking in Project-Based Learning is very necessary, especially when they are preparing what they will convey in the project. All three mentioned the importance of writing

a script, designing a flow of ideas, and choosing the right words before speaking, so that the message conveyed becomes clearer, more focused, and more interesting. S5 said that he had to choose an interesting topic and ensure that the content of the podcast he created was relevant and informative. S6 said that he needed to write a script before speaking so that the content of the conversation would not go off topic and remained focused. S7 added that he had to choose the right words so that his opinion could be understood and was interesting to hear.

S8: "Yes, because I have to think critically to create interesting content"

S9: "Yes, because I have to make sure that the arguments or information I convey are logical and easy to understand. I also have to think quickly if there are questions from the audience".

Another student also said the same thing:

S10: "Yes, because I have to make sure that the information I convey is logical and easy to understand. I also have to be able to think quickly if there are questions from the audience"

S8, S9, and S10 showed that critical thinking is very important in creating content that is logical and easy to understand for listeners. They realized that when creating and delivering projects such as podcasts, they are not only required to convey information, but also to ensure that the information is delivered in a clear, coherent, and reasonable manner.

S9 and S10 added that in addition to creating logical content, they also have to be able to think quickly when faced with spontaneous situations, such as answering questions from the audience. They stated that it is important for them to ensure that the arguments or information

conveyed are easy to understand and make sense. On the other hand, when there are questions from other people, they have to immediately process the questions, think quickly and accurately, and then provide appropriate answers. This process reflects the application of critical thinking skills in real and direct situations.

It can be concluded that Project-Based Learning encourages students to think more critically in various aspects. Respondents mentioned that they had to analyze information, organize ideas, choose the right topics and words, and express opinions in a logical, clear, and interesting way. They also learned to consider different points of view, formulate arguments, and respond to questions quickly during discussions.

2. Challenges Faced by the Undergraduate EFL Students in Developing Speaking Skills Through Project-Based Learning

a. Difficulty Working in a Team

From the respondents' answers, it shows that the majority of participants experienced various challenges in working in groups during the project implementation.

Q: Do you find it difficult to work in groups? If so, what kind of problems arise?

S1: "Yes, I find it quite difficult to work in a group because not all members show the same enthusiasm for the project. There are some who are passive and only follow decisions without contributing ideas or efforts. This makes the workload feel uneven, because the active ones have to do more things to keep the project running well".

Other students answered:

S7: "I feel frustrated because there are group members who are not serious about participating in project activities. They rarely attend group meetings and do not complete the tasks given. This affects the final results of the project because we have to fix or rework their parts so as not to disrupt the overall quality".

S8: "The main difficulty I face is that some group members are inactive, which makes other group members do tasks that should be their responsibility".

S1, S7 and S8 revealed that in group work, there is an imbalance in terms of participation and contribution between members. S1 stated that some group members show a passive attitude, do not contribute ideas, and only follow decisions that have been made, causing the workload to be uneven and more borne by active members. Similar statements were also expressed by S7 and S8, who felt frustrated with group members who were not serious about participating in activities, rarely attended meetings, and did not complete assigned tasks.

S2: "One of the biggest challenges was unifying the schedules between group members. Because we all have different courses and other activities, it was very difficult to find a suitable time for discussions or presentation practice together. As a result, cooperation was less than optimal and we were often forced to work individually, even though this project should be collaborative".

S2 said that the main difficulty in group work was in unifying the schedules between members, because each had different courses and additional activities. The impact was the lack of time to discuss or practice presentations together. As a result, collaboration was less than optimal, and projects that should have been group-based ended up being worked on individually.

S3: "I found it difficult because when the assignments were divided, many were not confident in taking part in speaking. They were afraid of making mistakes or being embarrassed by their pronunciation. This made me and several other friends have to take over that part, which was certainly unfair and made group work unbalanced".

S4: "The difficulty I face is the difference in English ability among group members. Some have good speaking skills, while others still have difficulty forming sentences or expressing opinions. This difference creates awkwardness and sometimes makes less confident members reluctant to speak at all".

S3 highlighted that many group members were reluctant to take part in presentations because they felt insecure, afraid of making mistakes in pronunciation, or embarrassed to speak in front of others. As a result, presentation tasks were often assigned only to more confident members. In line with S4, she emphasized the differences in speaking ability among members. Some have good speaking skills and good communication, while others still have difficulty constructing sentences. This imbalance creates awkwardness in group interactions and hinders contributions from less confident members.

S5: "There are conflicts that arise in our group because everyone has different ideas about the topic and how to deliver the presentation. Each member wants their idea to be used, so discussions often turn into debates. This makes the work process take longer and the group work atmosphere becomes uncomfortable".

S5 highlighted that conflicts in the group are often caused by differences in ideas about the topic and presentation method. Each member wants their idea to be used, which results in discussions turning into debates. This condition slows down the work process and creates an uncomfortable work atmosphere.

S6: "I experience obstacles in communication between group members. When we use a chat group to discuss, often my messages are not replied to or only one or two people actively respond. This makes coordination difficult, especially when approaching a deadline and everything must be decided quickly"

S6 expressed difficulties in communicating through a chat group, where only a few members actively respond to messages. This lack of communication made coordination difficult, especially when the project was approaching a deadline and decisions had to be made quickly.

S9: "I personally did not experience much difficulty, but I noticed that some group members seemed stressed when they had to speak in front of their peers. They were afraid of being judged or laughed at, so they often asked for sections that did not involve presentations. I felt this was a challenge in creating equitable and fair group work"

S9 said that although she did not experience any difficulties directly, she observed that some group members felt stressed when they had to speak in front of their peers. The fear of negative judgment made them avoid presentation tasks and preferred sections that did not require active involvement in speaking.

S10: "One problem that often arises is the issue of dividing the task among the students. Although at the beginning we agreed to divide the tasks fairly, in practice, some felt that their tasks were harder or more important than others. This caused tension and sometimes made some members feel unappreciated"

S10 highlighted the problem of division of tasks, where the initial agreement on the division of responsibilities did not always go according to plan. Some members felt that their tasks were harder or more important than others.

From the respondents' answers, it can be concluded that one of the challenges of students in developing speaking skills using PjBL is the difficulty of working in teams. Many students find it difficult because group members are not active or not responsible for the tasks given, so the workload is not evenly distributed. In addition, unifying the schedule for discussions is also an obstacle because everyone has their own busy schedule. Another problem that arises is the difference in speaking skills between members, which makes some students feel inferior, afraid of making mistakes, or embarrassed to speak. This makes them avoid presentation tasks, and finally only certain members are actively speaking. Some respondents also experience conflicts of opinion, difficulties in communicating via group chat, and division of tasks that are considered unfair. All of these challenges make group work less effective and hinder the main goal of PjBL, which is to encourage students to actively communicate and develop their speaking skills in a collaborative atmosphere.

b. Feeling Nervous

Anxiety or nervousness is a psychological factor that is quite dominant in influencing students' fluency in speaking English, especially in the context of presentations or public speaking activities. Most participants admitted that anxiety has become a significant obstacle in conveying ideas fluently.

Q: Does anxiety or nervousness make it difficult for you to speak fluently?

S1: “Yes, I often feel nervous before speaking in front of the class. It feels like my heart is beating very fast and my mind is blank, even though I have practiced beforehand. Because of nervousness, I often forget what I want to say”.

S4: “I feel nervous every time I have to present. Because of that, I speak in a hurry and am not focused. Sometimes I even forget some important points that I have prepared”.

S1 and S4, said that nervousness makes them rush when speaking and eventually forget what they have prepared. They feel their hearts are beating fast, their minds are blank, and ultimately they cannot convey the material fluently.

S2: “Yes, I feel very anxious when I have to speak in English, especially in front of friends. I am afraid of saying the wrong thing or my grammar is wrong, so I end up stopping a lot in the middle of a sentence or speaking too fast”.

S3: “My anxiety makes it difficult for me to speak fluently. Sometimes I know what I want to say, but my mouth feels locked. I feel insecure about my English ability”.

S2 and S3 also experienced problems with fluency due to anxiety, especially because of the fear of making mistakes in pronunciation or grammar. S2 explained that she felt very anxious when she had to speak English in front of friends, because she was afraid of saying the wrong thing or using the wrong sentence structure. S3 also stated that anxiety made her lose confidence. She admitted that she often knew what she wanted to say, but when she was about to speak, her mouth felt locked and she had difficulty getting the words out.

S6: “Yes, I feel anxious, especially if the topic being discussed is difficult or there are many terms that I have not mastered. When I am nervous, I often use the wrong words or forget the correct sentence structure”.

S7: "Nervousness makes me lose focus. I often repeat words or pause too long in the middle of a sentence because I think too hard about my grammar or pronunciation"

S6 and S7 also mentioned that nervousness made them unable to control their language use well. S6 said that she felt anxious especially if the topic being discussed was quite difficult or contained many terms that she had not mastered. S7 admitted that nervousness made her lose focus, and she often repeated words or paused too long in the middle of sentences because she was too busy thinking about whether her grammar and pronunciation were correct.

S8: "I'm usually not too nervous, but when I have to perform in front of the class, the pressure becomes big. My anxiety arises because I'm afraid of being judged by my friends and lecturers".

S9: "At first I was very nervous, to the point that my voice was shaking and my hands were sweaty. But after practicing and presenting a lot, I started to get used to it. Now I still get nervous sometimes, but not as bad as before".

S8 and S9 linked their anxiety to social pressure. S8 said that she usually wasn't too nervous, but when she performed in front of the class, the pressure became big because she was afraid of being judged by her friends and lecturers. Meanwhile, S9 shared that at first she was very nervous to the point that her voice was shaking and her hands were sweaty when speaking in public. However, after frequent practice and presentations, she began to get used to it and her nervousness decreased, although sometimes she still felt anxious.

S10: "Nervousness makes me use body language or gestures more often because I can't express everything with words. I realize it's less effective, but I can't fully control my nervousness".

S10 showed a different form of response to anxiety. She said that when she was nervous, she tended to use body language or hand gestures more often to convey messages because she found it difficult to express ideas in words. She realized that this was less effective, but she could not fully control her nervousness.

Different from other participants, S5 actually viewed nervousness as something positive. She admitted that she still felt nervous, especially when speaking in public.

S5: "Nervousness is definitely there, especially when I have to speak in public. But for me, nervousness actually makes me more careful. Even though I feel a little stiff, I still try to convey the material well".

For S5, nervousness is an encouragement to be more careful and focused when delivering the material. Even though she feels a little stiff, she still tries to convey the contents of the conversation well. This shows that anxiety does not always have a negative impact; in some cases, anxiety can be a trigger to prepare yourself more thoroughly and appear more serious.

From the respondents' answers above, the researcher concluded that most students feel nervous when presenting their podcast results in front of the class. This anxiety makes it difficult for them to focus, rush, forget the material, be afraid of making mistakes in pronunciation or grammar, and even have difficulty getting words out. Some of them also

show physical symptoms such as a trembling voice and sweaty hands. However, there are also those who consider nervousness to be a positive thing because it encourages them to be more careful and serious in delivering the material.

c. Difficulty in Choosing an Interesting Topic

In implementing a speaking project using the Project-Based Learning approach, one of the main challenges faced by participants was when choosing a topic to focus on in their group assignment. Based on the results of interviews with the ten participants, almost all of them revealed that they had difficulty in determining a topic that was interesting and acceptable to all group members.

Q: Did you and your team have difficulty in choosing a topic that was interesting to all members?

S1: “Yes, we had difficulty in determining a topic that was agreed upon by all group members. This is because each member has different interests and knowledge backgrounds. For example, one member is more interested in environmental issues, while others want to discuss things related to technology. It took several discussions and considerations so that we could find a topic that was not only interesting, but also relevant and understandable to all members”.

In a similar view, other students responded:

S2: “Choosing a topic together as a team was quite challenging. Each of us had different preferences, and that made the discussion process a bit long. In addition, we also had to consider the extent to which the topic was in accordance with our English language skills. We finally decided to choose a neutral and general topic, so that all members could contribute equally”.

S3: “Our main difficulty in choosing a topic was the difference in interests between members. Some of us wanted to raise hot social issues, while others preferred lighter and easier-to-understand topics. We needed time to discuss openly, and after considering input from all

members, we chose a topic that felt quite balanced between being interesting and in line with our abilities”.

S1, S2, and S3, explained that the difference in interests between group members was the main reason for the difficulty in determining a topic. S1 stated that each member had an interest in different issues, some were more interested in environmental issues, while others preferred topics about technology. S2 also mentioned that the different interests made the discussion process quite long and challenging, because each member had their own views that they wanted to defend. In addition, they also had to consider the suitability of the topic to the English language skills of all members. S3 added that his group was confused between choosing a social issue or a lighter and easier-to-understand topic. The fairly long discussion process was an important part of their efforts to find a topic that could be accepted by all members.

S4: “Yes, we had some difficulties because there were differences of opinion among the group members. Some wanted a challenging topic, but some preferred a simple topic to make it easier to present. The process was quite long, but in the end we realized the importance of cooperation and compromise. We tried to find a middle ground so that everyone could feel comfortable and confident with the chosen topic”.

This point was also emphasized by other students:

S5: “Difficulty in choosing a topic is unavoidable in group work, especially because we all come from different backgrounds. We had to go through several stages of discussion, and even changed the topic because there were members who felt unable to explain their part. Finally, we chose a topic that was general but still interesting, so that no member would have difficulty delivering the material”.

S6: “My team and I did experience challenges in determining a topic that was suitable for everyone. The initial discussion was quite difficult because each of us brought our own ideas, and everyone felt that their ideas were the most appropriate. However, after going through a long

discussion and trying to understand each other; we chose a topic that was flexible enough and could be shared fairly with all members”.

S4, S5 and S6 emphasized the importance of the discussion process in determining the right topic. S4 said that some members wanted to discuss challenging topics to make them look more interesting, but there were also those who preferred simple topics to make it easier to deliver their presentations. Finally, they realized that cooperation and compromise were very important in this process. S5 said that his group even changed the topic after previously choosing a topic that turned out to be difficult for one of the members to understand. After going through several stages of discussion, they chose a general but still interesting topic so that all members felt comfortable and confident when delivering their part. S6 also said that initially each member insisted on maintaining their own ideas. Everyone felt that their idea was the most appropriate. However, after a long discussion and understanding each other's perspectives, they agreed to choose a flexible and fair topic to be shared with all group members.

S7: “One of the difficulties we faced in this speaking project was agreeing on a topic that was acceptable to all members. We spent quite a long time just brainstorming, because it was not easy to find a topic that was interesting and suited our English skills. We finally agreed on a topic related to student life because everyone felt it was relatable and felt more confident discussing it”.

S10: “There was indeed a difficulty, especially because we wanted to choose a topic that was not only interesting, but also allowed all members to speak fluently. There were members who felt that certain topics were too difficult, so we had to find other alternatives. After discussing and considering each member's abilities and interests, we finally chose a topic that was easy enough but still relevant to everyday life”.

S7 and S10 highlighted the importance of choosing a topic that was not only interesting, but also suited the English skills of the group members. S7 said that it took his group quite a long time just to brainstorm, because they had difficulty finding a topic that all members could understand and speak fluently. After considering various options, they finally chose a topic related to student life because it was considered more relatable and easy for all members to master. S10 also mentioned that some members felt that certain topics were too difficult to explain in English, so they had to look for alternative topics that were simpler but still relevant to everyday life.

S8: "Choosing a topic that was interesting to all members was quite challenging, especially because we have different perspectives. Some members felt that academic topics that were too serious were not interesting, while others felt that light topics were too simple. We discussed and decided to choose a topic that had a personal element but was still informative".

S8 mentioned that some members felt that academic topics were too serious, while others felt that light topics were not challenging enough. Finally, they chose a topic that had a personal element but was still informative, so that all members would feel interested in discussing it.

S9: Yes, at first we had quite a hard time because not all members dared to express their opinions. This made the topic selection process less effective. However, after we tried to be more open and give everyone the opportunity to speak, we were finally able to find a topic that was mutually agreed upon and made all members feel involved".

S9 revealed that at first, the discussion process was not effective because not all members dared to express their opinions, which made topic selection difficult. However, after they tried to be more open and give each other opportunities, they finally managed to find a topic that was mutually agreed upon.

The interview results above show that one of the challenges in making a podcast is choosing a topic that is suitable for all group members. Many participants found it difficult because each member had different interests and ideas. For example, some liked topics about the environment, technology, or social issues, while others preferred light or general topics. Different English language skills were also an important consideration, because not all members felt confident discussing difficult topics. Some groups also face obstacles because not all members dare to express their opinions.

B. Discussion

This section presents the discussion of the research findings described in the previous section. The analysis in this chapter is guided by the themes that emerged from the participants' responses during the interview process. These themes are interpreted and discussed in light of existing theories and previous studies relevant to speaking skills development and Project-Based Learning in EFL contexts. The purpose of this discussion is to gain a deeper understanding of how PjBL contributes to students' speaking development as well as to

identify the obstacles that may hinder their progress. By connecting the findings with theoretical perspectives and empirical evidence, this chapter aims to provide meaningful insights that support the role of PjBL in enhancing speaking proficiency, while also highlighting the practical challenges encountered in its implementation.

1. Students' Experience in Developing Speaking Skills through Project-Based Learning

a. Vocabulary Enrichment

In creating a podcast, it is important to choose appropriate and varied vocabulary to make the delivery more engaging and professional. They try to use synonyms and avoid repeating words, which shows an awareness of language style and variety in communication as experienced by S3, S8 dan S10. This is supported by research Hermida (2025) who found that PjBL can improve students' vocabulary mastery through activities that demand proper word selection and varied language use.

S4, S7 and S9 revealed that their learning did not only come from individual processes, but also through social interactions with peers, such as during discussions and listening to presentations of other groups' work. When they listened to their friends speak or express ideas in English, it gave them the opportunity to enrich their vocabulary through real and relevant contexts. This statement relates to the theory

from Joseph et al. (2025) who stated that PjBL encourages collaborative learning and creates an environment rich in language exposure, which is helpful in developing students vocabulary acquisition. Marfuah et al. (2024) confirmed that the implementation of project-based learning with podcast media in teaching English speaking skills was successful and ran smoothly. The students responded enthusiastically and experienced significant improvements in speaking skills, pronunciation, and vocabulary.

b. Influence on Pronunciation

Most of the participants reported that they became more aware of how to pronounce words in English. This is due to the demand to convey information clearly and easily understood by the audience. For example, S3, S8, and S10 stated that in delivering the podcast they tried to pronounce the words correctly so that the message conveyed could be understood. This illustrates that pronunciation is not only practiced through memorization, but through meaningful practice. In the context of live podcasts, students are not only accountable to the lecturer's judgment, but also to their teammates and listeners, which creates a sense of responsibility for the quality of their pronunciation. Students become more reflective of pronunciation errors and actively self-correct before delivering the podcast in front of an audience.

This findings in in accordance with the findings of a research conducted by Derakhshan and Shakki (2021) which states that students'

pronunciation improves significantly when they are involved in collaborative oral projects that require them to speak in a real context. Similarly, Subekti (2020) states that involvement in projects such as podcasts allows students to increase phonological awareness and correct pronunciation errors on an ongoing basis.

c. Influence on English Fluency

Nartiningrum & Nugroho (2021) explain that speaking exercises in the form of projects, such as podcasts, will help students develop automaticity in speech, namely the ability to speak fluently without interruption. The process of speaking in a face-to-face podcast allows students to practice using English in conditions that resemble real-world communication. They are not just speaking to complete a task, but actually conveying a message to the listener.

The theory above relates to the statements of S1, S4, and S9 who stated that they felt more fluent in speaking English after participating in the live podcast project. They explained that repeated practice and real interaction with their peers made them get used to expressing ideas without too much thought or hesitation. In fact, S4 said that he felt faster in responding and expressing opinions in discussions after getting used to the recording process. Said & Aliweh (2020) assert that podcast-based projects provide space for natural and repetitive practice, which is key in progressively shaping speaking fluency.

d. Increasing Self-Confidence

Most of those interviewed noted that their confidence levels have increased when speaking English after participating in the podcast project. For example, S2, S6, and S10 initially stated that they would feel hesitant and nervous when they were called on to speak in English, especially because they feared making mistakes. However, after undergoing the process of creating and delivering the podcast, they now feel more comfortable, accustomed, and confident. The collaborative and fun learning environment is safe enough to allow one to try and fail without too much pressure. Their statement is in line with a study by Cao (2024) who explained that the implementation of PjBL not only improved students' collaborative skills, but also strengthened their confidence and self-regulation ability in language learning. Through projects that demand active participation, students become more confident in using English in real contexts.

Students also reported that their confidence increased because they felt they had control over the content and delivery of the podcast. For example, S6 said that he felt calmer because he could choose his own words and discuss them with the team. The hands-on process of making the podcast encouraged them to prepare well. Project-based learning has a significant role in developing learners' target language for real life purposes. It is most likely motivating, empowering, and

challenging to language learners, it usually results in building learners' confidence and self-esteem (Juniarti et al., 2022).

e. Project-Based Learning Compared to Other Methods in Developing Speaking Skills of EFL Students

According to Setia Dewi (2020) Project-Based Learning is effective for developing students' skills through activities that are integrated and meaningful, because this learning can connect with real-world problems and allows students to apply their knowledge in a fairly practical and simple way. This theory is in line with the experiences of S1, S5, and S9 who mentioned that when they were asked to create and perform live podcasts, they were encouraged to speak more naturally, convey ideas coherently, and take responsibility for the content delivered. Students felt that this activity was more interesting and not as boring as the previous learning methods that tended to be one-way.

One of the main reasons why PjBL is considered superior is that it places students as active subjects in the learning process. In activities such as podcasting, students not only speak to complete a task, but also to convey a meaningful message to an audience. As S2 and S8 expressed, they feel more challenged and motivated to speak well because the results of their project will be assessed by more than one party. Sirisrimangkorn (2021) confirmed that PjBL helps in developing EFL students' speaking skills. Through projects, students engage in

realistic and meaningful tasks, which enable them to use English actively and improve their communication skills.

f. Students' Feelings When Learning Using Project-Based Learning

The use of PjBL creates a more interactive learning atmosphere and triggers students' excitement, which leads to increased motivation in learning to speak English. In this context, emotional engagement, such as pride, satisfaction, and pleasure, is instrumental in achieving better learning outcomes (Benlaghrissi & Ouahidi, 2024). The theory above is related to the statements of S1, S4, and S7 who revealed that they felt happier, motivated, and excited when learning using this approach. They felt that learning became more enjoyable because they were not only learning theory, but also applying it in real life through meaningful projects.

Students also said that they felt valued and more respected because the work they did was considered real and could be enjoyed by others. S9 even said that he felt proud that his podcast was heard by friends and lecturers. This feeling of pride encouraged them to do their best, improve the quality of their communication, and dare to appear more confident. This is in accordance with research by Tu (2024), who revealed that the PjBL approach incorporating local content provides positive emotional impacts, such as enthusiasm and pride, as students feel the learning process is relevant to their lives.

g. Students' Motivation in Learning Using Project-Based Learning

Some participants such as S1, S3, and S7 said that they felt more enthusiastic and purposeful when learning to speak English through the podcast project. They are interested because this method is different from conventional learning which often emphasizes memorization, written exercises, or repetition. In PjBL, they found the learning process more challenging and fun at the same time, as they were directly involved in making a real product. This finding is in line with a study by Sirisrimangkorn (2021), which states that PjBL significantly increases students' intrinsic motivation because it gives them freedom, responsibility, and ownership of their learning. When students have control over how they learn and what they produce, their motivation naturally increases. In line with this, Yuliani et al. (2020) highlight that Project-Based Learning improves students' speaking performance by integrating content, language use, and communication strategies in a contextualized way. They note that when students engage in project-based activities such as presentations, podcasts, or videos, they practice speaking in a purposeful and engaging way, which increases their motivation and participation.

h. The Influence of Project-Based Learning on Critical Thinking Skills

In the process of composing podcast content, students not only speak, but also have to select information, formulate arguments, and determine the best way to convey the message to the audience. For

example, S5 said that he had to decide what information should be included in the podcast so that it was not too long but still meaningful. S10 added that she had to construct an argument that was logical and easy for listeners to understand. This process requires students to systematically analyze, evaluate, and organize ideas, which is the core of critical thinking skills.

This finding is supported by the research of Nuraini et al. (2021) which shows that PjBL can improve critical thinking skills because students are involved in the problem-solving process, exploration of ideas, and decision making during the project. In the study, students were asked to complete a collaborative project that encouraged them to develop arguments and account for their thoughts in front of other groups. Rohmaniyah and Asih (2024) highlight that PjBL is considered an innovative approach that is effective in developing 21st century skills, such as critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration.

2. Challenges Faced by the Undergraduate EFL Students in Developing Speaking Skills Through Project-Based Learning

a. Difficulty Working in a Team

Mai and Trang (2022) in their research, it was found that unfair division of tasks in projects causes high-achieving students to work more, while others contribute less. The uneven distribution of tasks, differences of opinion, and lack of commitment from some team

members became obstacles in completing the podcast project optimally. For example, S6 stated that in his group, there were team members who did not actively contribute, only present during the podcast without being involved in the discussion or planning of the podcast content. This finding is in line with the research of Benmoussat and Benamar (2024) who mentioned that in PjBL, teamwork is often a challenge especially if there is no clear leadership system or division of roles. In their study, they found that conflict, dominance of one member, and lack of active contribution were the main obstacles in collaborative projects. In addition, Hussein (2021) emphasizes that the success of teamwork in PjBL depends on students' ability to manage themselves and collaborate effectively.

Students also face challenges in managing time and aligning the vision between team members. Differences in working styles, activeness, and individual abilities make the group work process not always smooth. As expressed by S9, he felt uncomfortable when he had to remind his friend to complete the task on time, for fear of causing conflict. This situation shows that although PjBL encourages collaboration, implementation in the field does not always run ideally without good team management skills. According to Munianti and Syukri (2022) Matching schedules to allow for discussions amidst each person's busy schedule is a challenge in working together in a team.

b. Feeling Nervous

Feelings of nervousness arise especially when students have to perform live speaking in front of group mates or an audience, and lecturers who listen to their podcasts. As S1 said that she felt nervous when she started speaking for fear of forgetting words, while S6 revealed that she felt nervous if she had to speak without a script directly. These feelings of nervousness were also reinforced by social pressure from friends and high expectations of the quality of the project. Students felt that the podcast project was something that would be heard by many people and judged in person, so they felt anxious about the judgment or criticism they might receive. However, despite this nervousness, most students reported that with repeated practice and support from their groupmates, the nervousness could be gradually reduced. As S8 explained, she felt calmer after several rehearsals and found teamwork helpful.

The results above are supported by Putri et al. (2025) who states that the use of podcasts in English language learning can cause nervousness at first because students feel afraid of making mistakes, but over time and with the support of a supportive learning environment, their confidence begins to increase. Repeated speaking practice is key to reducing anxiety. In addition, Syafryadin et al. (2024) asserted that students often feel unconfident and anxious when having to speak in English, which negatively impacts their engagement in the project. To

overcome this, it is important for educators to create a supportive learning environment and provide opportunities for students to practice speaking in a safe and supportive situation.

c. Difficulty in Choosing an Interesting Topic

The topic selection process can be an initial obstacle as students have to consider factors such as audience, learning objectives and content appeal. If the topic is not interesting enough or too difficult, students' motivation to develop ideas and convey them orally may decrease. Therefore, topic selection skills are an important part of project-based speaking skills (Sirisrimangkorn 2021). This theory relates to the experiences of S2, S7, and S10, who revealed that they felt confused when they had to choose a topic that not only fit the learning objectives but also appealed to the audience.

Students admitted that determining an interesting topic requires a long process of discussion and careful consideration. Not only do they have to think about what they like, but they also have to consider whether the topic is appropriate for an academic context, can be developed in an oral form, and is interesting enough for the audience. This challenge was compounded by the fact that not all group members shared the same interests. Some students also lacked confidence in their ability to explore certain topics, especially complex ones. In addition, Mai and Trang (2022) noted that differences in interests and learning

styles among students can cause difficulties in determining project topics that are suitable for all group members.