# EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF VIDEO-MAKING PROJECTS ON ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES LEARNING: A CASE STUDY

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**Abstract**

Active applications in EFL learning, such as video-making projects, enable students to apply and engage with the target language, thereby enhancing the motivation of non-English major students to learn a foreign language. The purpose of this study was twofold: (i) to develop a course by using teamwork video-making projects; and (ii) to investigate students' attitudes towards video-making within a project-based English course. 45 second-year tourism students, enrolled in a mandatory English for Tourism Purposes (ETP) course for a semester at a private university in northern Taiwan, served as the participants. To enhance their motivation to learn, this study included a video-making project, which required students to work in groups, using English predominantly, to produce their videos. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected, together with the results of survey questionnaires and selected interviews. The results indicated that students' learning performances and attitudes towards English learning benefited from the teamwork process, especially for those with lower levels of English proficiency. Learner motivation was found to be significantly correlated with their perceptions of the videos, regardless of their various levels of English proficiency. The majority of students expressed enjoyment in the video-making process but acknowledged the need for improvement in their time management skills, problem-solving abilities, use of various technologies, and capacity for social interaction and group work. Nevertheless, this study provided valuable indicators for future applications despite these shortcomings.

**Keywords:** Video-making project, self- and peer-evaluation, learner motivation, English for Specific Purposes

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## Introduction

In an era of information technology, learners have become increasingly exposed to videos; hence, using digital devices, either to capture or share videos on social networks such as Facebook or Instagram, is only a touch away for most people, and these applications are now playing important roles among students. Consequently, technology offers a variety of platforms for organizing teaching and learning; as Keamey and Schuck (2006) believed, a student-made digital video project can offer a practical and authentic means to facilitate students' autonomy and freedom in choosing what, when, where, and how to learn (Kulsiri, 2018; Huang, 2015). Computers, together with mobile devices and networks, offer a real-world learning environment that has many advantages that are lacking in traditional settings. Thus, incorporating such technologies into English learning offers different teaching and learning styles, allowing language learners the freedom to study not only at their own pace and in their preferred way (Sun, 2014), but also, as Park and Jung (2016) pointed out, it can improve attitudes towards English learning.

Previous studies (Hung, 2011; Mahardika, Widiati, Bhastomi & Suryati, 2021; Nikitina, 2011) have reported positive outcomes and found that video-making projects improve speaking skills and aid in public speaking presentations (Hung & Huang, 2015). gauge literacy by creating multimodal materials (Yeh, 2018); and, alongside the learning and speaking aspects of second language acquisition, they also enhance other, more technical aspects of students' experiences and challenges (Khojasteh, Mukundan & Shokrpour, 2013; Yanti & Mulyono, 2020). Furthermore, research has shown that the production process enhances teamwork and creativity skills (Hafner & Miller, 2011; Goulah, 2007), develops intracultural development (Yang & Yeh, 2020), and improves digital literacy (Hafner, 2014; Yeh, 2018).

The literature has widely discussed the potential benefits of video production for developing speaking skills, but it has not given much attention to its impact on the motivation of non-English major students to learn English, or the challenges they may face in collaborating with their peers and navigating technical difficulties during their implementation. Previous studies have primarily focused on English specialist learners (Hung, 2011; Hung & Huang, 2015; Yeh, 2018) or intermediate EFL students

taking general English courses (Huang, 2015; Mahardika et al., 2021); however, few have examined video production's effects on students' majors, particularly those who have lower English proficiency levels. Thus, to provide practical experience in using English as it applies to their major courses, this study will utilize a teamwork-based video-making project in the English for Tourism Purposes (ETP) course with a class of tourism-major students.

This study, therefore, will investigate students' experiences with their group-based video production tasks and their perceptions regarding working collaboratively with their peers. Hence, it drew on the concept of teamwork projects that were intended to provide flexible learning opportunities relevant to the students' levels of language proficiency, their problem-solving skills, and their propensity to collaborate with other students (Mahardika et al., 2021). Thus, it had three major aims: (i) to examine non-English major students' perceptions of using video-making projects in an ETP course; (ii) to study the effects of students' self- and peer-evaluations regarding their video productions; and (iii) to observe the challenges and difficulties the students encountered during the video-making implementation.

## Literature Review

### Project-based Learning (PBL)

Generally, project-based learning (PBL) in language teaching consists of a series of extended, meaningful activities requiring different language skills (Grant, 2017). PBL instructors use a series of tasks to create experiential learning processes that allow students to construct knowledge through concrete experiences and interactions with their surroundings (Slater, Beckett & Aufderhaar, 2006). Previous studies have investigated the benefits of integrating PBL into English classes, highlighting how this approach can promote learners' language skills and develop their soft skills, including problem-solving, decision-making, collaboration, communication, and negotiation skills, along with improved confidence (Beckett & Slater, 2005; Guo & Yang, 2012). Thus, PBL offers a meaningful context for using authentic language (Grant, 2017; Stoller, 2006), while also providing opportunities to increase student motivation and develop learner autonomy (Dörnyei, 2005).

Although PBL has demonstrated its effectiveness in language teaching, its implementation can be challenging. For instance, Beckett (2002) found that students may become frustrated by the lack of language structure involved in PBL, which may ultimately lead to discrepancies regarding teachers' and students' perceptions of PBL instruction. She also highlighted how cultural factors could reduce the effectiveness of PBL in most Asian contexts; for example, students who prefer traditional teaching methods involving teacher-dominated learning may not be suitable for this type of learning. To successfully implement PBL, Beckett and Slater (2005) suggested focusing on authentic resources, balancing group and individual work, and having a visible project product. More importantly, perhaps, PBL requires both teacher and student involvement throughout the whole process. In a study conducted in Korea, Kim (2015) found that project-based courses often begin with confusion and lead to frustration regarding implementation since low participation rates increase the workload for the more active members. Kim also pointed out that issues such as plagiarism, machine translation, limited English proficiency, and large classes can also be problematic during implementation. Thus, both teachers and students may find it challenging to apply PBL principles in ETP courses, especially in classrooms where English is a foreign language.

**Utilizing Video-making as a Project in Learning Second and/or Foreign Languages**

Video projects (VPs) provide language learners with unique pedagogical opportunities to interact with authentic materials to construct real-life learning environments in the target language (Meyer & Forester, 2015). By searching for and collecting relevant information, learners can generate their interpretations, write scripts, express their ideas, work collaboratively, film, and finally edit their videos. Thus, students are given excellent opportunities to learn by doing and to take ownership of their learning (Nikitina, 2011). Such technology-enhanced projects provide a constructivist learning environment, which reinforces target language learning, enhances students' motivation, and provides both an independent learning experience and a sense of achievement (Huang, 2015; Mahardika et al., 2021).

Research into such projects by Nikitina (2011) in Malaysia and Mahardika et al. (2021) in Indonesia found positive learning outcomes for both

linguistic and non-linguistic learning, in that students were found to be more actively involved and confident in their target languages when reading, writing, and speaking the scripts within them. Regarding non-linguistic aspects, students, when working on their projects, showed themselves to be more comfortable by developing broader social skills, increasing their motivation levels, and learning more about their local cultures.

Two Taiwan-based studies found positive results in English learning video projects. Firstly, Hung (2011), who involved 17 English major students in a business course, found they displayed favorable attitudes towards them in that they learned the target language successfully and also saw advantages in peer learning, improving their technical skills, and enhancing both their time management and self-evaluation abilities. Secondly, Huang (2015) examined students' perceptions and their motivational changes during video projects, which utilized 43 intermediate EFL learners in a Freshman English class. Each student produced a two-minute video covering the stages of choosing a topic, searching for and reading online material, integrating ideas, and writing scripts. Her results support video-making projects as a feasible means to achieve successful outcomes, especially for students with lower language proficiency levels. Huang also found that by assessing the videos, students' capabilities in peer learning, self-reflection, personal motivation, self-confidence, and technological abilities were all improved.

Similar findings were also found in Kulsiri's (2018) large-scale Thai study, with 450 freshmen students, all with pre-intermediate English levels, who were asked to produce a video by working in groups of four or five. Her findings echoed the previously cited researchers' findings that video-making projects create feasible environments that offer students authentic opportunities to learn their target language meaningfully. Apart from the improvement in language learning, after participating in the projects, they reported positive feedback regarding both working with group members and using technological tools.

Because teamwork video projects are not only learner-centered, the findings from the previously mentioned studies found that, not only did they cover a variety of learning styles, but, more importantly, they gave the students opportunities to interpret the world from their perspectives. However,

what remains to be investigated are the effects of integrating teamwork-based video-making projects on students' technical abilities. Hence, based on the notion of creating an authentic learning environment for ETP learners, this study adopted a video-making project into a PBL framework to examine students' perceptions regarding both their language-acquiring abilities and their technical challenges throughout the implementation process.

## Methodology

### Participants and Research Setting

This study was carried out at a private university in Taiwan on an ETP course that was a compulsory requirement for second-year tourism majors. Originally, the course included 45 students whose English proficiency was at the upper-beginner to lower-intermediate levels, with TOEIC scores ranging from 300 to 650. Although forty-five students completed the preparation phase for the assigned video projects, by the end of the course, 12 groups involving 39 students (10 males and 29 females) had finished it and presented their videos.

### Video-making Procedures

The groups, which consisted of a maximum of four students, chose their own topics to promote a particular tourism site in Taiwan. Before finally deciding their topic, the students searched for relevant information, discussed its various merits, and then narrowed their choice down to a specific topic for their videos.

There were three parts to each project: (i) its content, (ii) the language used, and (iii) the skills required to produce the videos. Each student contributed their own knowledge about their tourism-oriented subject as the content, used English as the language in every case, and applied their own skills, including what they learned from their peers during implementation. The students were encouraged to visit the sites of their topics to observe, or sample, the experiences or services on offer to the public and to be able to make their videos as authentic as possible. At the end of the project, they were required to present their videos to the instructor and their classmates for assessment.

The project required students to work in groups to identify and resolve any problems arising from their chosen topics using only English; however, they were all tourism-major students and not English majors; thus, their limited English proficiency proved to be handicaps of varying intensities. Therefore, the instructor had to assist them in making grammatical corrections to their scripts and in locating, gathering, and interpreting pertinent information from the Internet sessions. They also introduced a communications app to facilitate face-to-face discussions.

The video topics covered different districts and regions in Taiwan. Students were required to use their smartphones to make their videos. In the editing phase, they were free to choose any free editing application or computer software, such as Microsoft Movie Maker or Power Director, as they wished to finalize their videos. Ultimately, 12 videos were created and presented for evaluation at the end of the project.

**Data collection and analysis procedures**

The data collection regarding students' perceptions of group video-making projects in their ETP course involved a post-task questionnaire and individual reflections based on face-to-face interviews. Also, to evaluate students' projects, both qualitative and quantitative analyses were adopted. The instructor used grading rubrics to evaluate the videos at the end of the process. Students received the evaluation criteria in advance to comprehend the grading process and their project goals.

On completing their videos, the students completed self- and peer-evaluations to measure both the effort they had put into them, how well they had conducted their work, and to describe the difficulties they had experienced and how they had overcome them. On the day of their presentation, their peers viewed and evaluated their videos in class. At the end of the semester, a questionnaire was distributed for them to explore their perceptions of the project, the language-learning opportunities they had received, their levels of motivation, and the difficulties they had encountered.

At the end of the semester, semi-structured interviews were employed to encourage students to provide more in-depth information about their projects' implementations, with the data also serving as a source designed to meet the notion of "triangulation," as proposed by Dörnyei (2007). They were also invited to participate in further interviews voluntarily after being

reassured that their responses would not affect their course grades. As a consequence, eight students participated in the interviews, which were conducted individually and in their first language, Mandarin Chinese, to make sure they understood the questions. To ensure anonymity, they were given numbers to be used instead of their names.

The quantitative data and descriptive analysis, together with the calculation of frequencies and percentages, were conducted using SPSS. The qualitative data, which included the interviews, the open-ended questionnaires, and the teacher's notes and reflections, were analyzed to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the study.

## Results

### Students' perceptions of the Video-making Project course

Table 1 shows the results of an examination of student perceptions concerning the video-making process throughout the semester. Some interesting trends emerged from the statistical analysis of the questionnaires. Their responses to the open-ended questions and interviews are presented qualitatively to allow for a more detailed examination.

Table 1. Student perceptions of the Video-making project implementation in general

| Perceptions of Video-making Project (VP) | Agree | Not sure | Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|
| VP offered active learning opportunities and a different way to present my professional knowledge. | 73.7% | 13.2% | 13.1% |
| A group project is better than individual work. | 63.2% | 31.6% | 5.3% |
| VP provided learning opportunities from group members. | 68.4% | 10.5% | 21.1% |
| VP project took too much time. | 75.6% | 21.6% | 2.7% |
| Learning English via VP is effective. | 50% | 34.2% | 15.8% |

Table 1 shows that almost 74% reported positive attitudes towards the VP implementation, and they considered it to have been a different learning experience. Approximately 63% reported that they liked the group work, as it allowed them to learn from their team members (68.4%); however, 75.6% felt that the project work was too time-consuming, as they had to start from scratch, including finding relevant sources, organizing and rearranging the information, writing scripts, and communicating and working with group

members. Regarding learning English through project work, although the figure shown in Item 5 is the lowest of the five items—that is, only half of the students responded positively—15.8% expressed negative attitudes towards this as an English learning method, which indicates a positive outcome.

To examine whether or not students' perceptions of the VP implementation differed according to their English proficiency, a t-test was applied. The results indicate that their levels of English made no difference to their perceptions of VP instruction; only learning from team members (Item 3) reached a significant level ($t = 2.91$, $p = .009$), suggesting that lower-level students experienced significantly positive effects from peer learning.

**Table 2.** Student responses in relation to their VPs

| Video-making Production | Very challenging | Somewhat challenging | A little challenging |
|---|---|---|---|
| Difficulties of video production | 50% | 44.7% | 5.2% |
| | Very successful | Successful | Not successful |
| Satisfaction with video production | 8.3% | 66.7% | 25% |

Table 2 illustrates perceptions regarding the VP task. Item 6 shows that most students experienced different levels of difficulty in completing them. With regard to satisfaction levels, most expressed positive opinions, with 75% being satisfied with their video product (Item 7).

**Table 3.** Student perceptions of their VPs in regard to motivation and English learning

| Motivation and English learning | Agree | Not sure | Disagree | English Levels | N | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| It was motivating because of being able to decide the topic and to participate in the production progress. | 65.8% | 21.1% | 13.2% | Low | 25 | 3.68 | 0.99 |
| | | | | Intermediate | 13 | 3.54 | 1.13 |
| Helped me with English learning. | 65.8% | 23.7% | 10.6% | Low | 25 | 3.68 | 0.95 |
| | | | | Intermediate | 13 | 3.54 | 1.05 |

Table 3 displays the motivation and English learning outcomes from the VP projects. Although this study did not compare students' overall motivation

levels before and after the project, nearly 66% displayed positive motivational effects after completing it. Moreover, 65.8% agreed that their project had helped them to improve their English. Also, for those who, because of their project work, experienced higher motivation levels, their score significantly correlated with their perception of learning ($r = 0.881$, $p<.001$).

An independent-samples t-test was conducted in order to assess whether students' perceptions of their English proficiency differed. Table 3 shows that, although there was no significant difference between perceptions of motivation and English learning, those with lower levels of English proficiency generally demonstrated more positive attitudes towards VP implementation compared to those with intermediate proficiency levels.

In their responses to the open-ended questionnaire items and their reflections on future projects, 18.42% of students expressed satisfaction with their experiences. However, 15.79% suggested simplifying the English project, citing their limited English proficiency as a barrier to fully understanding the process. A further 5.26% suggested the length of the video could be extended, as they would have liked extra time to prepare and revise their work more thoroughly; however, 10.53% suggested that the project should have been an oral presentation rather than a video production. About 13% complained about some of their group members not being sufficiently active, and 10.53% expressed a preference for individual work, while 7.89% held negative attitudes towards project learning in general by stating that a traditional teacher-centered learning method was much more effective for them.

The student interviews provided detailed insights into their perceptions of project implementation. Those who were positive about VP learning saw it as a different way to practice their English, alongside the more theoretically based presentations, because they were able to share their videos with the class, thereby learning from their peers. They also liked the further options of using media resources to present their ideas, rather than simply reciting them in front of the class:

*"I like the idea of making videos. I am nervous about speaking in public. I feel embarrassed when no one is listening, but it is also awkward when everyone is staring at me. The video project gave me a chance to escape from being awkward.*

*Also, I can get a better understanding by watching other groups' videos. Just listening to the English presentation is difficult for me. Reading the subtitles is really helpful." (Student #5)*

Several interviewees reported that they were able to practice their video-making skills. Despite not being familiar with video editing software, they worked hard to find different sources and select the best elements to visualize their ideas most attractively. Although the process was time-consuming and they had problems with time management, they felt a sense of achievement upon completing their videos:

*"In general, I do like this type of learning, with two different types of videos-making … I quite enjoyed the process of video editing, it did take me a lot of time, though … One major problem was that I didn't start my work as early as possible, the script wasn't finished until three days ago, so I needed to work very fast to meet the deadline. I did my best to make the video perfect. I was proud of myself when the video was made." (Student #1)*

Regarding reading and speaking English, one intermediate-level student stated that she learned a lot simply by gathering information and studying related sources; she especially enjoyed the writing process, as demonstrated here:

*"I like the screenwriting part. You have to know how to write the script first, and then you have a clear picture of how to integrate pictures and music into the narrative to present your ideas. I've learned a lot through the writing process, not only improving my writing skills, but also enhancing my speaking skills, because you had to make your writing comprehensible. Of course, I also have a better understanding of my own culture, so this is a good learning experience." (Student #2)*

Practicing speaking through video dubbing received positive feedback. Constant practice of their scripts and voice recordings offered different speaking experiences, although the numerous rehearsals were frustrating, as evident in the following excerpts:

*"In order to match the video with my voice, my team members and I practiced a lot before recording. We helped each other to check unknown words, pronounce the words correctly and even memorize the sentences to get the best results. It was quite time-consuming. I am not good at English, but this is a good opportunity to practice my speaking skills." (Student #4)*

*"The voice recording was a challenge. I did similar projects before, so making a video wasn't difficult for me, but recording my voice to match the video was. I kept trying to be perfect. I almost gave up, because I couldn't get the best result I wanted. My voice sounded weird with the video, so I did it again, and again." (Student #7)*

Some also encountered frustration during implementation; however, most persevered with project learning, while others did not become actively involved, which made them even more frustrated. This is made clear in the following excerpts, which also indicate leadership challenges concerning her team members' lack of problem-solving skills:

*"…I didn't quite understand the idea of making a video project at first. …we began with what we knew but it turned out to be the wrong direction. After we consulted the teacher, we had a better understanding about what to do … there were five members in the group, but two members had completely disappeared and the other two weren't really helping. That really frustrated me." (Student #8)*

*"My group members were not active during the preparation phrase. They said they were not good at English, and even if I assigned them work to do, they might not be able to do it well. So I only asked them to do picture gathering, and if I wasn't satisfied with their work, I just took over and did it myself. I really think it was too much for me, and my group members may not learn anything at all, but I learned a lot from the project making." (Student #2)*

*4.2 Results of self- and peer-evaluation of the video productions*

Table 4 shows the results of the students' self-assessment after completing their video productions (rating scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is the least effort and 5 is the best effort). Overall, students rated themselves positively by stating that they had tried their best during the creation of the videos.

**Table 4.** The overall self-rated mean scores of the video productions

| Video-production | Number of students | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 39 | 4.27 | 0.59 |

Concerning the eight items in the self-evaluation list, Table 5 below shows the results of the VP, which were self-rated by the students according to how much effort they put into completing the project. Generally speaking, students appeared confident about their efforts during the process. When it comes to group cooperation, students rated offering help to teammates when needed the highest (mean = 4.56), followed by asking for help (mean

= 4.41) and contributing to VP ideas (mean = 4.38). Items directly related to VPs, such as writing the script (item 7, mean = 3.95) and creating the video (item 8, mean = 4.15), scored the lowest.

Table 5: Results of self- and peer-evaluation within the group after project completion

| Evaluation Items | Self-Evaluation | | Peer-Evaluation | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD |
| Completed my part of the task | 4.36 | .811 | 4.25 | .92 |
| Looked for help when needed | 4.41 | .677 | 4.27 | .84 |
| Happy to offer help when teammates needed it | 4.56 | .641 | 4.33 | .94 |
| Worked with teammates to complete the task | 4.21 | 1.06 | 4.16 | 1.03 |
| Contributed ideas during the preparation phase | 4.38 | .747 | 4.05 | 1.05 |
| Did my best in finding relevant information | 4.15 | .933 | 4.18 | 1.05 |
| Did my best in writing scripts | 3.95 | .826 | 3.94 | 1.03 |
| Did my best in making the video | 4.15 | .904 | 3.91 | 1.13 |

Table 6 below gives the class ratings of other groups' videos on presentation day. Overall, students were positive (mean = 3.82), and they were mostly satisfied with those containing a clearly introduced topic (mean = 3.94) and well-presented main points (mean = 3.82). They also rated positively regarding understandable language (mean = 3.78) and the integration of multiple sources (mean = 3.77). Another finding from the Kruskal-Wallis test results shows that narrators' language, including pronunciation, intonation, volume, and speed, differed significantly across the videos ($\chi^2$ = 28.59, p = 0.003). Although all videos used compelling visuals and appropriate background music, a clear voice quality was considered an important factor. Regarding gender differences, an interesting result was that males scored significantly higher than females when evaluating other groups' projects, showing that, in this study, females tended to be less generous.

Table 6. Results of peer-evaluation for other groups' video productions

| Evaluation Criteria | Mean | SD | Gender | N* | Mean | SD | t | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The video introduced the topic clearly. | 3.94 | 0.76 | M | 110 | 4.06 | 0.77 | 2.0 | 0.46 |
| | | | F | 303 | 3.89 | 0.76 | | |
| The main points are well-presented and easy to understand. | 3.82 | 0.71 | M | 110 | 3.98 | 0.84 | 2.48 | 0.14 |
| | | | F | 303 | 3.77 | 0.66 | | |
| The voice of the narrator is audible. | 3.78 | 0.86 | M | 110 | 3.95 | 0.84 | 2.44 | 0.15 |
| | | | F | 303 | 3.72 | 0.86 | | |
| The gathered information is well-organized and edited. | 3.77 | 0.84 | M | 110 | 4.04 | 0.80 | 4.03 | <0.001 |
| | | | F | 303 | 3.67 | 0.84 | | |

*N=responding rates

*4.3 Students' Comments on Peer-Evaluation*

Of the 413 open-ended comments, 40% related to language, including speaking speed, volume, and pronunciation, while 10.1% related to the presentation of English subtitles, including font size and color. Many students commented that some videos featured more than one narrator, resulting in speech being unclear due to changes in tone and different rates of delivery. Regarding the two videos rated most highly, the narrators' clear pronunciation, steady speaking pace, effective delivery, and the inclusion of English subtitles, which helped for a better understanding of their content, were the main reasons given for this. Conversely, those videos that had unclear subtitles, small font sizes, inappropriate colors, and typographical errors affected their comprehension. Apart from general comments (23.8%), such as "Well done!" or "Not bad," the remaining comments, including both positive and negative, related more to technical issues, such as the visual flow (13%), and the use of background music (13.4%).

## Discussion

This study was designed to develop and evaluate the implementation of video project-based learning in an ETP course. Some features of PBL were considered to be helpful in improving English learning; however, peer evaluation and group support in a collaborative learning environment presented challenges concerning implementation.

Overall, though, the study's results support the contention that a video-making project offers students an opportunity to learn from each other and to motivate themselves to improve their English skills, especially for those who have lower levels of English and not a great deal of motivation to learn it. This not only aligns with Dörnyei's (2005) premise that projects increase a learner's motivation but also with Huang's (2015) finding that a well-designed video project may assist students who have low proficiency levels by stimulating their language production.

This study found that, during the video production process, English speaking was the most positively affected skill. This aligns with previous research, which found that students had positive perceptions of improving their pronunciation by repeatedly using unfamiliar words and sentences (Mahardika et al., 2021), while other studies have shown significant improvements in students' reading and writing skills through video-making projects (Hung, 2011; Mahardika et al., 2021; Yeh, 2018). This study, though, did not replicate those findings, although intermediate-level students reported some positive outcomes in this regard during the script-writing process.

It is important to note, however, that most participants in this study had quite low levels of English proficiency, and they found reading and writing English in a short time frame to be frustrating. Nevertheless, many felt they had improved their language skills during the implementation of their projects, thereby echoing Huang's (2015) results.

Specific problems, such as low English language proficiency, large group size, and inconsistent cooperation among peers, were challenges experienced by the students in this study. Additionally, the sole use of English for the projects made it challenging for them to meet the requirements. Hence, according to the instructor's notes, many used the Google Translate facility without cross-checking, which often resulted in poor language quality, particularly during the script-writing phase. As Beckett (2002) observed, students trying to create a complex project entirely in English with little in the way of language structure and limited vocabulary must find it very challenging. Also, students in this study were grouped based on their choices, and many worked with their friends; thus, being able to work together effectively became a crucial element in the project.

It was perhaps to be expected that students with higher English language abilities would take on more responsibility for their groups, while those with lower proficiency levels would contribute to other, non-language-dependent aspects of the project. However, this proved not always to be the case, as some of the less proficient students played little active part in the implementation process. Consequently, those group members with higher proficiency levels tended to take on almost all the work, leading them to report unfavorable project experiences, which might make them reluctant to become involved in future projects; this finding is in line with Kim's (2015) study.

A few students expressed a preference for traditional EFL teaching, which focuses primarily on test preparation. Those students expressed a wish to make progress on their proficiency tests; therefore, PBL may not provide them with the information or knowledge for TOEIC or IELTS preparation. Hence, although the VP project employed in this particular ETP class tried to create a meaningful learning experience, it seems it was a real challenge for those who find comfort in what Simpson (2011) identified as 'the easy life of passive learning'.

Students' perceptions of project implementation can be complicated and culture-dependent (Beckett, 2002). The project learning environment engages students in a meaningful learning process that focuses on the use of authentic language (Grant, 2017; Mahardika et al., 2021). Consistent with the results of previous studies such as Kim (2015) and Kulsiri (2018), students in this study were generally positive about being involved in the video projects, even though the process was challenging and time-consuming. Because the project was student-cantered, student participation was critical; however, this approach was new to them, and some were initially confused by and became upset with their fellow group members, especially when they appeared to be uninterested in being active. Kim's (2015) Korean study revealed a similar situation, which she attributed to a confusion of roles, such as when learners were being expected to play more active parts in the learning process than they were prepared to accept.

Unlike teacher-centered learning, project-based learning requires learners to take responsibility for their learning, creating an environment that expects unquestioning engagement (Grant, 2017; Mahardika et al., 2021). Therefore, as Kim (2015) pointed out, low levels of engagement by some

group members increase the workloads of the more active members; hence, the fully active learners in this study stated they would prefer to work individually in any future project implementation.

It is, of course, extremely difficult to ensure that everyone is able to contribute equally to such projects, since particular team members tend to dominate others by ignoring their ideas and contributions. This is why members in this study were given within-group peer evaluation guidelines regarding how to assess their teammates' performances. Interestingly, although some complained about passive group members, when evaluating each other's performances, they seemed reluctant to give lower marks. Studies relating to culture and peer feedback offer explanations for this: Asian students care more about relationships within their group and value interpersonal harmony by avoiding embarrassing their peers and also by mitigating internal conflicts (Beckett, 2002; Yu, Lee & Mak, 2016). Other self-evaluation studies involving video production projects, which were reported by Huang (2015) and Hung (2011), showed that peer evaluations improved both interactions and product quality through self-reflection and learning from others; hence, by sharing and commenting on each other's videos, students can discover how to improve their own videos.

As mentioned earlier, this study discovered a gender difference in evaluating peer video productions, whereby females tended to be less generous in their numerical ratings (Table 6). However, since males only accounted for 28.2% of the total number of participants, it may have been due to a gender imbalance in the group membership.

In terms of gender differences, in the area of technical tool usage, the findings of this study echo previous studies in which students reported positive attitudes (Huang, 2015; Hung, 2011; Kulsiri, 2018; Mahardika et al., 2021). In particular, this study echoed that of Huang (2015) by showing that females enjoyed learning technical skills more than did their male counterparts. Even given their predominance in this study, females also showed more confidence in, and a greater preference for, using technological tools than were the males.

Students' video-making projects, in general, improved their presentation skills, as shown in Kearney and Schuck's (2006) and Hung and Huang's (2015) studies. Similarly, Grant (2017) found that this also applied to language use with regard to opportunities for constructive feedback.

During project preparation in this study, a communication app enabled teacher-student interactions by providing a channel for participants to ask questions, send drafts for correction, receive constructive feedback, and send and receive video scripts. Such feedback also included language structure, vocabulary usage, and grammar, all of which played an important role when incorporated into their projects. However, not all groups used such formal assessments properly, since few students submitted their scripts before they were due, which resulted in failures to consult with their instructor for language feedback. Consequently, the completed videos contained a significant amount of incorrect language. This may have been because of their Chinese cultural background, where teachers are so respected that students hesitate to ask for additional support.

A majority of students in this study declared that project work was too time-consuming (Table 1). The problem of time management has been noted in previous studies (Huang, 2015; Hung, 2011; Kim, 2015). However, such a problem could be associated not only with time management but also with problem-solving. According to Guo and Yang (2012) and Stoller (2006), PBL is expected to improve teamwork and develop problem-solving skills. It is clear, therefore, that in this study, students were expected to encounter and deal with such problems, and that they would also develop critical thinking both through their selected topics and how they tackled them. Guo and Yang (2012) and Simpson (2011) found that to complete their projects on time and effectively, students also had to develop 'soft skills', which include teamwork, communication, and effective time management. Likewise, in this study, and in line with Grant's (2017) findings, students appeared to have benefited from improving their English by being both learner-directed and by learning more actively through project implementation.

## Conclusion

This study examined students' perceptions regarding a VP project and the problems they encountered implementing it. The findings support those of previous studies, whereby video projects create opportunities for learning English through meaningful activities, such as working collaboratively, practicing real-life skills, interacting with their peers, and facing unforeseen situations. The ultimate aim of implementing such a project, therefore, was to create a meaningful and flexible learning environment in order to

provide a situational learning environment that allowed students to acquire a deeper understanding of the topics learned in class while learning to use English in real-life situations. The findings have shown that most student participants perceived the video project as a valid language learning activity for practicing their English and also for group learning from both their peers and from the videos' subject contents. Their feedback suggests that all of these factors enhanced both their English learning and their motivation to learn. However, challenges also emerged during implementation.

Firstly, resistance to and confusion about the video project-oriented approach were evident from some students' feedback, especially from those who preferred a traditional teacher-centered approach. Secondly, even though most of the students were new to project-based EFL learning, they perceived its positive attributes when applied in a tourism-related context—indeed, most students reported a sense of achievement about the completed videos. Thirdly, this study confirmed the challenges other studies have identified when working with more passive learners, acknowledging that the complexity of the process may have compounded part of the problem, while poor time management may have contributed to another part. These deficits underscore the need for courses to incorporate problem-solving skills training. Fourthly, in terms of peer evaluation, cultural factors appear to play a crucial role, as could be seen when students marked their peers' work. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that detailed and descriptive performance criteria can help ensure the allocation of fair overall marks.

Overall, this study's findings demonstrate how integrating video projects into ETP courses benefits students by involving them in authentic tasks and simultaneously enhancing their English skills. The positive perceptions obtained from students' feedback also highlight the benefits of using video projects as motivational triggers, particularly for lower-proficiency students, to achieve better English learning outcomes.

This study's results suggest the need for modifications when future video projects are planned, particularly concerning ETP curriculum design, since this could further enhance English language learning and problem-solving skills by offering clearer instructions and improving the quality of teacher-student interactions. In addition, instead of giving students options to build

their teams, group project learning may be improved by using homogeneous grouping strategies, which may provide both better learning conditions and improved support for multilevel students.

Finally, it should be noted that this study did not include any pre-test measures, and it only had the benefit of the teacher's informal notes, which may have resulted in interpretation bias. It would be advisable, therefore, for any future studies to incorporate a more systematic and reliable method for exploring similar video projects for tourism students in an Asian EFL context.

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