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Enhancing Students'Speaking Performance through a Mock Interview Project

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Over the past years, using projects in teaching has been widely used in language classrooms. Research has proved that project-based language teaching successfully helps improve learners'language skills through meaningful learning activities or simulations (Noraisah et al.,2017) in which students collaborate to solve real-life problems (Sheppard and Stoller, 1995; Stoller, 2002; and Tessama, 2005). Also, project-based learning benefits students of different proficiency levels because it offers various roles and types of work throughout the process. This study was carried out at a university in Hanoi, Vietnam. The subjects of the study were first-year English-majored students. The study aims to (a) introduce a model of a mock interview project to help first-year English major students improve their speaking skills and get ready for the speaking test, (b) explore both teachers'and students'feedback on the effectiveness of this mock interview project, and (c) elicit suggested ideas from both teachers and students to improve this project. 48 students from two groups of first-year English-majored students were asked to give feedback on the mock interview project. Interviews with three other teachers were also exploited to get a deeper understanding. The findings have revealed that both teachers and students found this project not only improved students'language skills, especially speaking skills but also increased their confidence in their preparation for the final speaking exams. In addition, students'other soft skills such as collaboration, teamwork and negotiation skills were also reported to improve significantly.

Keywords: project-based instruction, project work, simulation

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