

任務導向之觀光英文課程學習成效

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摘 要

本文探討以任務導向教學法，執行專業觀光英文課程之成效。英文程度均等的兩個班級，對照組以教科書為課程重點，不需執行專題任務；實驗組則以專題合作任務為主、教科書為輔，作為學習內容。實驗組之專題任務，包含拍攝觀光宣傳微电影並上傳網站、寄發行銷明信片邀請外國友人來台、與在預算內設計旅遊行程。在一學期課程之後，比較兩組之學習成效。結果發現，實驗組雖課業加重，學生除教科書內容之外，仍須執行任務並完成作品，但該組教科書考試成績表現，在統計上與對照組並無差異，推估施行專題任務教學，並不妨礙專業觀光英文課本內容學習。學習日誌也顯示，學生認為藉由同儕共同執行任務的過程中，應用各類資源，比只教授教科書內容，更貼近實際旅遊產業需求。實驗組同學認為，在學習專業英文的過程中，培養了更多專業技能(諸如微电影拍攝、經營社群媒體與宣傳觀光產品的技巧)。問卷調查亦顯示，大多數修課學生以為，小組合作一起投入專題任務，能改善學習表現、找到彼此優勢共同學習。然而，教師也需投入部份時間協助來自不同科系的小組成員溝通，找出合作模式，以發展更好的團隊精神。

關鍵詞：專業英文、觀光英文、任務導向學習、同儕互動。



The Effects of Project-based Tourism English Learning a University of Taiwan

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effects of Project-based Learning (PBL) on the English for specific purpose (ESP) course of tourism offered to all departments of students in a university. The class taught with PBL approach was designed to prime students' interest and create a context for learning content through deeper researching in order to complete collaborative works with their peers. Two classes taught by the same instructor were compared, one with the teacher-centered approach focusing only on textbook, the other with collaborative Project-based approach (shooting micro-film to promote tourism in Taiwan, writing and sending post cards with marketing messages, and planning travel itinerary within a budget). The PBL class had heavier loading as the students were required to master the contents of the textbook and also complete the projects. Even with more work, no statistical significant difference was found on the summative textbook exam performances between the students instructed with these two approaches, indicating PBL did not interfere with textbook learning. The survey data and reflective notes collected from the participants also showed that the students felt that they were empowered with the content language and knowledge through the projects and learned how to use available tools to better manage tourism (e.g., they learned the editing skills in shooting the micro-film, or marketing skills in running their websites when promoting traveling products). The survey also demonstrated that PBL approach increased students' emotional engagement which ameliorated their performance on the assignments. In students' reflective notes, it showed that through engagement, a team of students might



have developed certain ownership over their projects, and sense of pride as one of the team members. If a team could develop the ‘sink or swim’ spirit, the group dynamics could be built successfully. However, this study also showed that as the participants were from different departments, the instructor needed to provide training on developing teamwork skills; otherwise, it was difficult for some students to work together.

Key ESP (English for Specific Purposes), Tourism English, Project-based learning, peer-interaction.



I. Introduction

This Project-based tourism English course was designed to empower students with content language in tourism, knowledge and information in the tourism industry, and available tools (e.g., social media) to better plan and manage tourism in the context of Taiwan. To bridge the gap between what students learned in the classroom and what might be used in the real market, students were assigned tasks that required them to work with their classmates to transform vague ideas into concrete outcomes collaboratively. In this study, integrated and embedded learning experiences were provided so that the students who participated in the Project-based learning (PBL) could plan, draft, and design tourist projects which highlighted the main tourist attractions of Taiwan. As an island suited to develop tourism, the tourism sector in Taiwan has always been a key income-generating industry. In 2017, Taiwan Tourism Bureau recorded a total of 10,739,601 visitor arrivals, and among these travelers, tourist visits totaled 7,648,509 (71.22%), which makes tourism a huge and profitable industry.

In order to work in the tourism industry, the students needed to be creative to survive in this competitive sector. Creative tourism has no doubt gradually turned into one of the hottest trends in global travel, therefore, the students needed to stay creative and use this creativity to meet the needs of the local tourism market that they are catering to. According to the survey from the Tourism Bureau, the main attractions that appeal to visitors to Taiwan were natural marvels (e.g., beautiful scenic landscapes), culinary fare (i.e., local cuisine and street food), shopping and night markets, historic sites, and Taiwanese people. With these features, it might be an enlightening experience for university students to engage in the promotion of tourism through creativity to make a deeper impression of Taiwan on visitors and potential visitors.

Because the aim of PBL is to enhance target language for real-life purposes (Sheppard & Stoller, 1995), PBL integrates “knowing and doing,” which neatly aligns with courses that are comparatively vocational in nature, such as Tourism English. In other words, a student needs to learn the contents about the core curriculum, while simultaneously applying what they learn to complete authentic activities to produce creative results. Authentic activities require students to put into more efforts in order to



produce outputs than simply getting inputs through reading or listening from textbooks. They needed to learn to apply, evaluate, and to respond to curricular contents and produce a project with creativity. As tourism tasks can be designed to have real world relevance and utility, authentic activities provide the opportunity for students to see from the perspective of a real tourism operator, which increases their chances to work in the tourism industry in the future.

PBL builds on the principles that when students are cooperatively engaged in a motivating project, peer cooperation provokes students' learning motivation, critical thinking ability, communicative skills, and data collection ability. This approach might work well in ESP courses such as Tourism English. The tasks in the course require the students to be reflective or mindful of the results. When they actively participate in the learning process, a diversity of outcome can be expected. It takes English learning a step further, to develop both students' content knowledge, target language, and skills needed in the industry.

II. Literature Review

2.1 Combining School Training and Industrial Requirements

Tourism English is an applied subject, a language course developed specifically for tourism purposes. The goal of practical learning for this subject aims to combine language-related training with practical exercises. In the worldwide context, higher education has faced the challenge of developing employability skills (e.g., Warschauer, 2000). Based on the study from David et al., (2011), to close the gap between industry requirements and the education provided at universities, employment based training and experience is important. Following this line, the necessity of teaching English for professional purposes in the area of tourism is irrefutable. Language proficiency is essential in professional fields specifically in the tourism and hospitality industry due to the industry's specific nature.

Tourism English can be planned with structured activities such as projects or tasks which connect with reality. When the Project-based learning is incorporated into tourism English, students focus on a project over a period of time, during which they



are engaged in completing tasks, answering difficult questions, or solving real-world problems. In other words, the Project-based learning shifts the dynamics of the traditional classrooms, unlocking individual's creativity and developing team spirit. Through involvement in tourism projects, non-tourism majors might have an opportunity to enter the tourism industry from various fields, and continue to pursue their careers related to tourism.

2.2 The Approach of Project-based Learning and Its Applications

The application of the concept of Project-based learning in education can be traced back to constructivism theory, which promotes student-centered learning: instead of receiving knowledge from the instructor, students actively acquire information to finish a task (Thomas, 2000). It also incorporates the concept of learning by exploring, which indicates that students have to find the answers on their own through investigation. PBL also integrates the concept of cooperative learning. As a team, students solve problems and accomplish the project (Hassard, 2000; Foulger & Jimenez-Silva, 2007). Stroller (2006) best summarizes Project-based learning as: (a) having both a process and product; (b) giving students certain extent of ownership of the project; (c) extended over a period of time; (d) integrating skills; (e) developing student understanding of a topic through the integration of language and content; (f) students both collaborating with others and working on their own; (g) holding students responsible for their own learning through the gathering, processing, and reporting of information gathered from target-language resources; (h) assigning new roles and responsibilities to both students and teacher; (I) providing a tangible final product; and (J) reflecting on both the process and the product. From an instructor's viewpoint, Project-based learning is a more flexible teaching approach which enables teachers to move beyond the restrictions of the traditional lecturing in English curriculum. From a student's viewpoint, it allows for English four skills and subject-based content knowledge to be developed in an integrated way.

The characteristics of PBL echo in part, the main features of an ESP course as Carver also (1983) pointed out that there are three features common to ESP courses: a) authentic material, b) purpose-related orientation, and c) self-direction. Therefore, to a



certain extent, the goal of PBL and ESP are aligned; both attempt to develop students' abilities in occupational settings. Consequently, employing Project-based learning approach in the ESP course could probably enhance students' mastery in content language, and improve the overall communication skills.

Similar to ESP, Project-based learning enables EFL students to connect the English of the classroom to their own real-life interests or academic learning. In addition to finishing the English course with academic credits, students will have tangible products of their work in a semester. In tourism English, for instance, if the designated project is to shoot a microfilm to promote tourism, the students need to make a video and show it to a real audience, i.e., the class. As an audio-visual product, the project goes through the process of pre-production, production and post-production. During the period of project-making, not only the professional tourism knowledge that students learn from the course is applied, but also communication and discussion skills as the students complete the project as a team. In the end, the product is for a real life audience to see. The students are empowered when they are involved in the design, problem-solving, and decision-making activities, affording the opportunity for autonomous learning. (e.g., Haines, 1989).

2.3 Incorporating PBL into a University-level ESP Course

Taiwanese higher education institutions have promoted ESP courses in the curriculum to help students enhance not only English Language proficiency but also professional knowledge of the specific fields. PBL has caught ESP instructors' attention as an instructional approach, with more and more studies have looked into whether PBL improve students' learning in specific fields (Affandi & Sukyadi, 2016; Mamakou & Grigoriadou, 2010; Meksophawannagul, 2015; Nikitina, 2010; Khanh, 2015). These studies put forward the concept of student-centeredness into the PBL approach, which led to improved achievement at school. Petersen and Nassaji (2016) mentioned that teachers favor of PBL approach because this approach integrates multiple skills in the lessons, and the students also reap the benefits of PBL as they reported that they learned much about the areas of their projects. As an approach that encouraged collaborative work, it seemed to help students attain higher level thinking and retain more content



knowledge as a group, and push their language skills to a higher level, which is also what ESP courses aimed to achieve.

Even though Project-based learning brought many positive outcomes related to student learning, the literature rarely showed how PBL helped close the achievement gaps that separate the academic performance of various groups of students at the university level. For example, Blumenfeld, et.al (1991) also pointed out that previous studies addressing hands-on and discovery learning curricula failed to reach widespread acceptance because course developers did not fully consider their learners' needs, as they should have based their programs on the complex nature of student motivation and knowledge required to engage in cognitively difficult work. PBL attempts to address this problem and put learners in the center of learning. More research should be conducted to provide evidence on how learners themselves perceive the difficulty in learning and their motivation in taking part of the PBL learning. Thus, the impact of integrating students' project work into ESP instruction on developing their proficiency in tourism English therefore should be investigated.

2.4 The Engagement of Students in Collaborative Projects

An assumption of student engagement in a course is that positive emotional engagement could be a consequence, which then facilitates higher academic achievement for students. Boekaerts (2016) mentioned, "comprehension of the motivational, emotional and cognitive aspects of student engagement and disengagement is undeniably one of the most crucial goals" for it has "far-reaching practical implications" (p. 76). The positive emotional engagement might impact students' academic performance by influencing their motivation and effort, their use of learning strategies and self-regulation, and the availability of cognitive emotions needed for learning and performance.

In other words, if students deeply and positively engage in collaborative projects, the collaborative approach might be a catalyst for higher academic performance. The past research has indicated that emotional engagement facilitated cognitive engagement (Janosz, 2012; Pekrun & Linnenbrink-Garcia, 2012). When students have a more positive attitude toward learning, it is associated with higher achievement.



2.5 Integrating Available Resources into Collaborative Projects

Today's university students are digital learners. The students might have already used a spectrum of resources or technology tools themselves in daily lives. Working on projects is just an extension of technology use. PBL gives teachers the opportunity to design meaningful learning experiences that embed resources. Technological tools and resources can support activities such as researching and networking with others to complete product creation and presentation. Working with available tools can be a motivating way to incorporate PBL elements and prepares students for the skills they need to succeed in the future work environment. Although it is hard to predict what the workforce will look like when students graduate, the skill of digital literacy is considered no less important than the skills of collaboration, communication, and critical thinking (e.g., Apperley, et. al). Using available resources therefore provides real-world relevance for learning.

Collaborative learning with classmates

Collaborative learning promotes the concept of working together to make meaning by creating an artifact or product. The idea of collaboration is deeply rooted in Vygotsky's (1987) theory of zone of proximal development (ZPD). Social nature of learning is reflected through group-based learning. To assist a student to move through the ZPD, important components need to be considered: the presence of a more knowledgeable other from whom a learner can learn the knowledge and skills, and also social interactions with a skillful peer that allow the learner to observe and practice their skills. And finally, scaffolding, or supportive activities provided by the teacher. Following a similar vein, a more recent theory which further develops ZPD is "situated learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991), the theory proposed that learning is most effective when it is co-constructed, or, in other words, embedded within activity, context and culture. Now, with technology in our classrooms and at home, situated learning is possible through many different means or modes, such as online discussion groups, interactive platforms and online classroom environments.



In the past, collaborative learning took place in face-to-face situations, whereby students worked together while sitting in the same classroom. PBL projects bring opportunities for students to enhance digital literacy through online communication with their peers after class, allowing members to work together to create or share resources, post updates, and teach each other how to use tools, etc. The higher level of interactivity in projects can be achieved by extending the dialogue which is taking place in and out of the normal classroom into the online learning process.

Adopting online resources for authentic learning

The new generation of university students is accustomed to using computer tools and online resources to search for information, to post results and to present products. The wide selection of electronic tools available for film-making, project-planning, problem-solving and giving presentations enables learners to carry out sophisticated tasks in creative ways. For example, when students make their own digital film, they encounter an integrated activity that requires them to leverage a host of cognitive, interpersonal, organizational and technical skills (e.g., Robin, 2008). Technology has the capacity to create new opportunities for university courses by bringing real-world situations into the classroom for students to explore new ideas and solve problems. When students are making a digital film to post online, they need to understand the main stages of film-making: pre-production, production, postproduction and dissemination (or publicity), and how to use technology tools to implement each stage. When technology is used to support the making of a film, different tools are applied to collaborate and create content virtually. The school project at hand contributes to a sense of authenticity and connections to the real professional community.

This study adopted the PBL approach to teaching Tourism English to support students' deeper learning of content, language and professional skills. Tourism topics were taught through project work to prime students' interest and create a context for learning content through deeper reading and collaborative works with their peers. The assigned projects required students to research on the Internet and access online content to learn. For example, when making a micro-film, they needed to watch and read tutorials created by others and learn how to complete a specific task, sometimes without



the guidance of an instructor. Therefore, online resources enabled learning to take place outside of the classroom and helped students research subjects, share ideas, learn specific skills, and make valuable networking connections with others. And finally, when students post their film on the Youtube, they received real world feedbacks. To investigate the adoption of PBL in a tourism English course which incorporates hands-on projects required the use of available resources, this research addressed the following questions:

1. Does PBL approach make any significant difference in the students' achievement test on tourism English when compared with the textbook instruction?
2. What are the students' perceptions towards the PBL approach?
3. How did the resources used in the learning process facilitate students' collaborative project-making process?

III. Method

This study was designed to show evidence of learning in both process and product. The study compared two classes of tourism English taught in different years by the same instructor, with the same textbook, as one class incorporated the Project-based learning concepts for learning, and the other adopted the teacher-centered teaching. PBL spreads learning out over time and extends their learning after class, so the participants were provided the opportunity to learn, discover, and create throughout the entire learning process.

3.1 Participants

The participants of this study were from a university in northern Taiwan who took a Tourism English course offered by the department of English. The course was selective, but this course was open to all university students from all departments. For the present study, the students consisted of mainly English majors, with about one-fourth consisting of non-English majors from different departments who were interested in Tourism English. The participants were students who enrolled in the



Tourism English course taught by the same instructor. The students were solicited for voluntary participation in the research study during the first week of classes. The reported mean of the students' TOEIC scores of the students for the 2018 class was 608.3, with a standard deviation of 46.8; as for the 2019 class the reported TOEIC scores was 598.3, with a standard deviation of 63.9. In 2018, 45 students participated, and in 2019, 32 students participated. Statistically, there was not significant difference in the performances of the two classes.

3.2 Data Collection Procedure

The effect of learning from two years was measured by their performance in a summative final exam covering reading comprehension, vocabulary and listening comprehension in the tourism industry. The exam was revised from an item bank in Pearson: English for International Tourism (2013). The study also sought to measure students' attitude towards collaborative learning and motivation to learn tourism English through a survey questionnaire.

The 2018 class followed and used the textbook on a weekly basis. The textbook passages were organized into sequencing in-class activities for students to complete. On the other hand, the 2019 class was organized thematically based on the PBL projects (See Table 1). The instructor built upon these themes and incorporated the textbook activities related to the theme to increase student engagement and to facilitate completion of the projects.

The participants from 2019 had time to talk about their projects in class. Nonetheless, with limited time, it was sometimes difficult in classrooms to have a thorough discussion. The students therefore also had their teammates on social media to share development of their projects and also collaborated on the assignment. Some of the classroom discussion were transferred to a Line group or similar social media (SM) forum and kept the discussion going after class. The instructor also supplemented the activities by adding engaging texts, photos, and video clips featuring Taiwan. Since two classes were conducted by the same instructor, they took the same final summative tourism English assessment from the publisher's test bank. The contents of the exam were revised and validated by two English teachers.



The two classes followed the standard class meeting time, which was two hours a week, and had a final exam at the end of the term. When the final exam was administered, the students from 2019 were asked to answer a questionnaire survey when they handed in the exam paper.

3.3 Instruments

Projects Design and Tourism Textbook

The two classes from 2018 and 2019 adopted the same textbook published by Pearson: English for International Tourism (2013), upper intermediate level, written by Peter Strutt. The goal of the textbook is to meet the English language needs of professionals working in the tourism industry. This textbook includes material taken from Dorling Kindersley’s acclaimed Eyewitness Travel Guides which explored some of the world’s top tourist destinations. One class was conducted using only the aforementioned textbook with teacher-fronted instruction and activities. The other class was organized primarily around the themes of the projects (see the comparison of class 1 and class 2 in Table 1), with the textbook used to provide students ideas for collaborative discussion. Most of the class time was allocated for students to proceed in group discussion and present their research findings for the whole class.

Table 1. Comparison of two curriculum design

Course content	Class 1 (traditional teacher-centered approach, 2018)	Class 2 (collaborative Project-based approach, 2019)
Week 1-3	Textbook lesson: <i>Trends in tourism</i> Reading and Listening (1) The history of tourism, (2) Tourism development (3) Tourist motivation.	Textbook (<i>Trends in tourism</i>) discussion: (1) Trends of tourism in Taiwan. (2) Tourist motivation Destination marketing through a micro-film project: <i>Project Description:</i> The objective is to grab the interests of your viewers to make them want to visit Taiwan. Using social media to show your micro-film and post the photos your group took while producing the micro-film:



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Show the privileges of your country (region, city, town, scenic spots, local foods...). · Create and share the story of your destination you promote.
Week 4-6	<p>Textbook lesson: <i>Get the message (Social media)</i></p> <p>Reading, writing, and listening</p> <p>(1) Learn about social media</p> <p>(2) Creating web-site traffic</p> <p>(3) Case study: improve the media profile of tourist attractions</p>	<p>Textbook (<i>Social media</i>) discussion:</p> <p>(1) How do social media change tourism sector?</p> <p>(2) How does your group plan to use social media to communicate with and market to your target demographics?</p> <p>(Hotel branding) evoked discussion:</p> <p>(1) If you run a hotel or travel company, how do you distinguish yourself and establish a brand name?</p> <p>(2) Select a hotel on the textbook to invest, and talk about your business plan.</p>
Week 7-9	<p>Textbook lesson: <i>Gastronomy</i></p> <p>Reading, Speaking and Writing</p> <p>(1) Culinary tourism</p> <p>(2) Selling the menu</p> <p>(3) Describing dishes</p> <p>(4) Customer services (Writing responses to complaint letters)</p>	<p>Textbook (<i>Gastronomy</i>) discussion:</p> <p>(1) To what extent does food attract tourists to tour a country or region?</p> <p>(2) Offer five reasons why culinary tourism is becoming more popular.</p> <p>Post-crossing task</p> <p>Project Description</p> <p>Sending postcards to people in other countries. Students are sending out real postcards, not electronic:</p> <p>Students are required to log into the post-crossing system that allows them to send postcards and receive postcards back from random people around the world. Postcards are an inexpensive way to reach out to foreigners. Students needed to select and buy a series of postcards of a theme which focuses on one feature of Taiwan (e.g., Taiwanese local food) to invite foreigners to visit Taiwan. Students learned to quickly convey key messages about one feature of Taiwan.</p>



Week 10-14	Textbook lesson: <i>Heritage</i> Reading, Listing, and Writing (1) World heritage sites (2) Describing a heritage site (3) Practice saying the dates, measurements, statistics, etc. that a tour guide often has to talk about.	Textbook (<i>Heritage</i>) discussion: Working in your groups. You are going to design the layout of the museum. (1) How can you make the museum attractive to visitors, including children? (2) What kind of articles will you sell in the gift shop? Working as a tour guide <i>Project Description:</i> Your group is going to give a walking tour of a historical site/museum/natural scenic spot/ in Taiwan. Design the talk and present it to the class.
Week 15-17	Textbook lesson: <i>Managing events</i> Reading and Writing (1) The role of event coordinator (2) Event concept (3) Running an event management company (4) Make a list of the main legal issues that you would have to think about as an event manager	Textbook (<i>unit: Managing events</i>) evoked discussion: (1) Brainstorm ideas on how to make an event (a travel trip or a festival) success? Planning a travel itinerary <i>Project Description:</i> Your group has received a government funding (NT\$200,000) from Taiwan Tourism Bureau to invite an oversea children's sport team (20 students) to come visit Taiwan and participate in a sport competition with local Taiwanese children. Plan your route, activities, itinerary, and insurance to set a travel budget.
Week 18	Final exam (content language test)	Final exam (content language test)/Projects portfolio due

On the 18th week, a summative final exam based on the essential content knowledge from the textbook and on English skills required to work in tourism was administered to two classes. A high-intermediate level of English proficiency might be required to score high.



The Design of Survey Questionnaire Questions

Questions were designed for students to reflect upon their learning experiences. The instrument used was patterned to obtain adequate information regarding the effects of collaborative Project-based learning. In higher education, lecture formats have been the norm. This research looked into student's perceptions to gain insights and some understandings as to how students felt about this PBL learning technique. The survey was divided into four major sections: Attitudes Scale, Emotional Engagement Scale, Cognitive Scale, and an Open-ended Questionnaire. The survey questionnaire with Likert Scale choices (Appendix A) was modified from previous studies investigating students' attitude, engagement toward collaborative and Project-based learning (e.g., Bipp & Dam, 2014; Schunk, et. al., 1987). Two English teachers validated the content after the survey was created. The survey questionnaire has five degrees of intensity with weights of 5 being the highest and 1 being the smallest rating. Therefore, the survey helped show the effects of cooperative learning and individual learning on attitudes, emotional engagement, and benefits of the PBL approach.

In the open-ended part of the questionnaire, the researchers probed three aspects which echoes the design of this study: (1) What is your general perceptions of PBL? Positive or negative? Please elaborate your viewpoints. (2) What are the benefits of using PBL? (3) What are the challenges of using PBL? From the open-ended questionnaire, part of of students' perceptions of PBL are presented to support the notions from the participants' reflection notes.

Reflection Notes

The students participated in the study by submitting reflections that answered questions concerning the implementation of Project-based learning in the course. On their notes, they were told, firstly, they needed to write about what they learned during the process, and secondly, the difficulties they encountered, and thirdly, what tools they have used in completing the projects. The students needed to submit at least two reflections, one in the mid-semester, and the other after the final exam, when the course ended.



The instrument adopted to answer the first research question was the summative final exam. This question investigated whether PBL approach makes any significant difference in the students' achievement test when compared with the textbook only instruction. Regarding the second question on students' perception toward the PBL approach, the questionnaire was used to report the findings, supplemented by the findings from students' reflective notes. As for the third research question on the resources used in the learning process, the answers to open-ended questions and the reflective notes were collected.

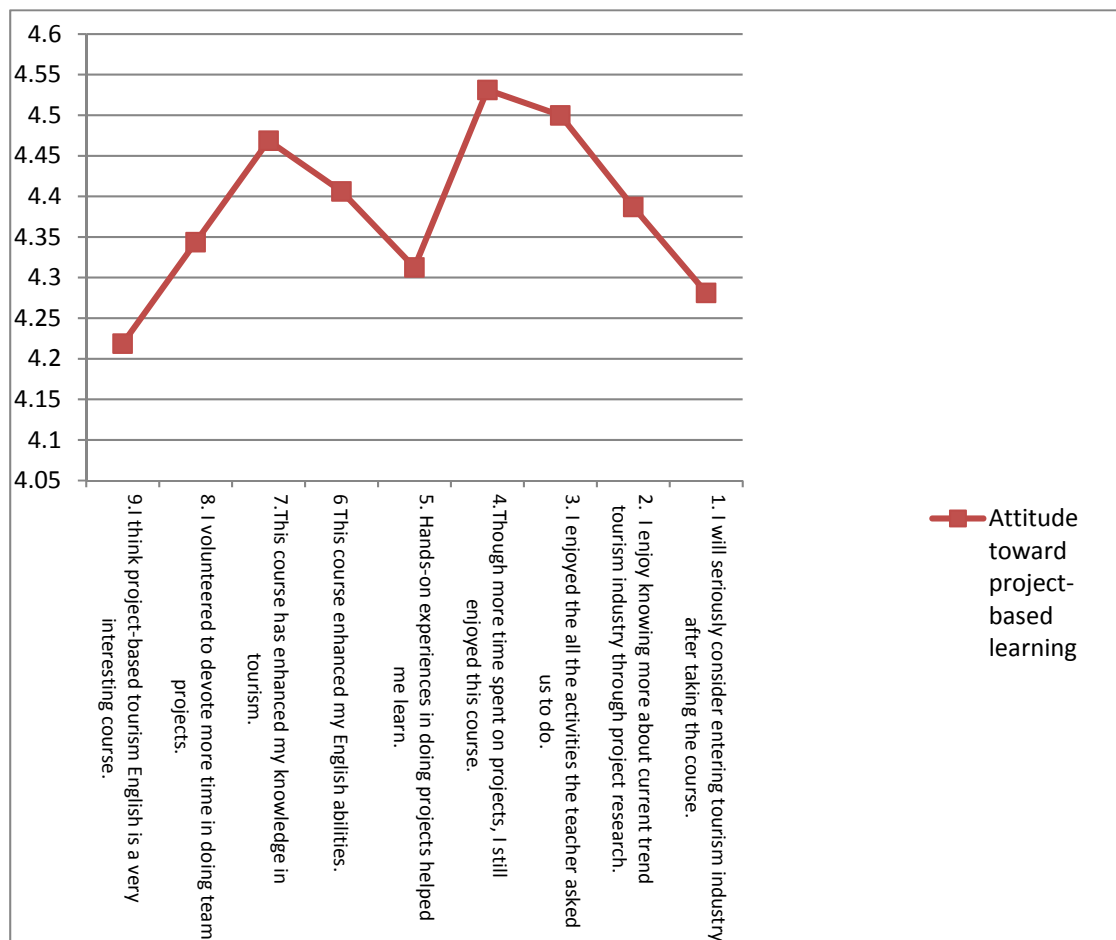
IV. Results

Collaborative learning within an ESP classroom environment was adopted as an instructional technique in this study. Two teaching approaches, traditional classroom instruction where a teacher primarily lectured to passively seated students using static visual aids and multimedia, was compared against collaborative Project-based learning where the students needed to actively participate in the classroom discussion and presented their findings using multimedia themselves.

To answer the first research question regarding whether there was a significant difference in the students' tourism English summative final exam, an independent *t*-test was conducted to compare the summative tests results for classes adopted in traditional teaching approach and Project-based approach. The results show that there was not a significant difference in the scores for students who were instructed in teacher-centered approach ($M= 61.3, SD= 8.6$) and Project-based approach ($M=62.0, SD=11.6$); $t(75)=-0.31, p = 0.76$. No matter which approach was adopted in the classroom, the students performed approximately the same when taking the final exams.



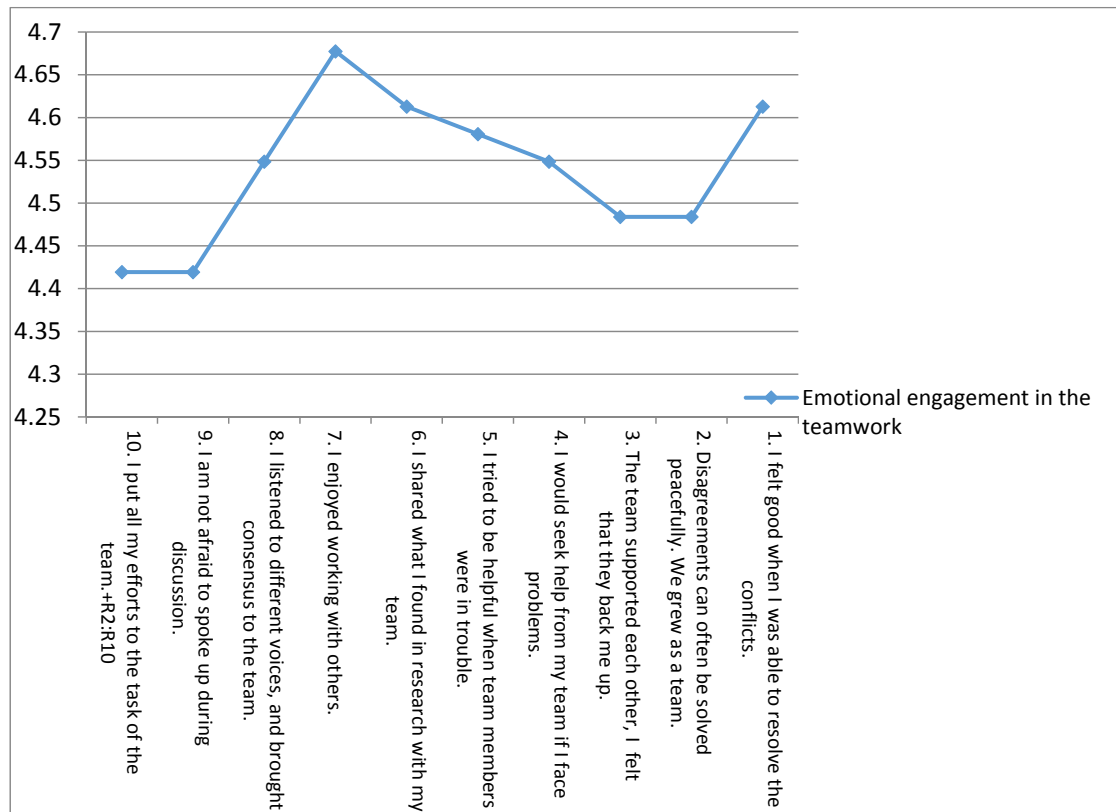
Graph 1. Students' attitude toward Project-based learning



The second question investigated students' perceptions toward the PBL approach; therefore, the scales of students' attitudes, emotional engagement were analyzed. It was found that most students who completed the Project-based course had a fairly positive attitude toward this approach (see Graph 1 above). Based on the results of this questionnaire, because of the use of collaborative Project-based learning, the participants will consider entering the tourism industry (Q1, $M= 4.3$, $SD=0.5$). Also, participants believe this course has enhanced their English abilities (Q6, $M=4.4$, $SD=0.6$), and has helped them build content knowledge in tourism (Q7, $M=4.5$, $SD=0.7$). Most important of all, the survey found that most participants enjoyed doing the project activities assigned by their instructor (Q3, $M=4.5$, $SD=0.6$)



Graph 2. Emotional engagement in the PBL teamwork

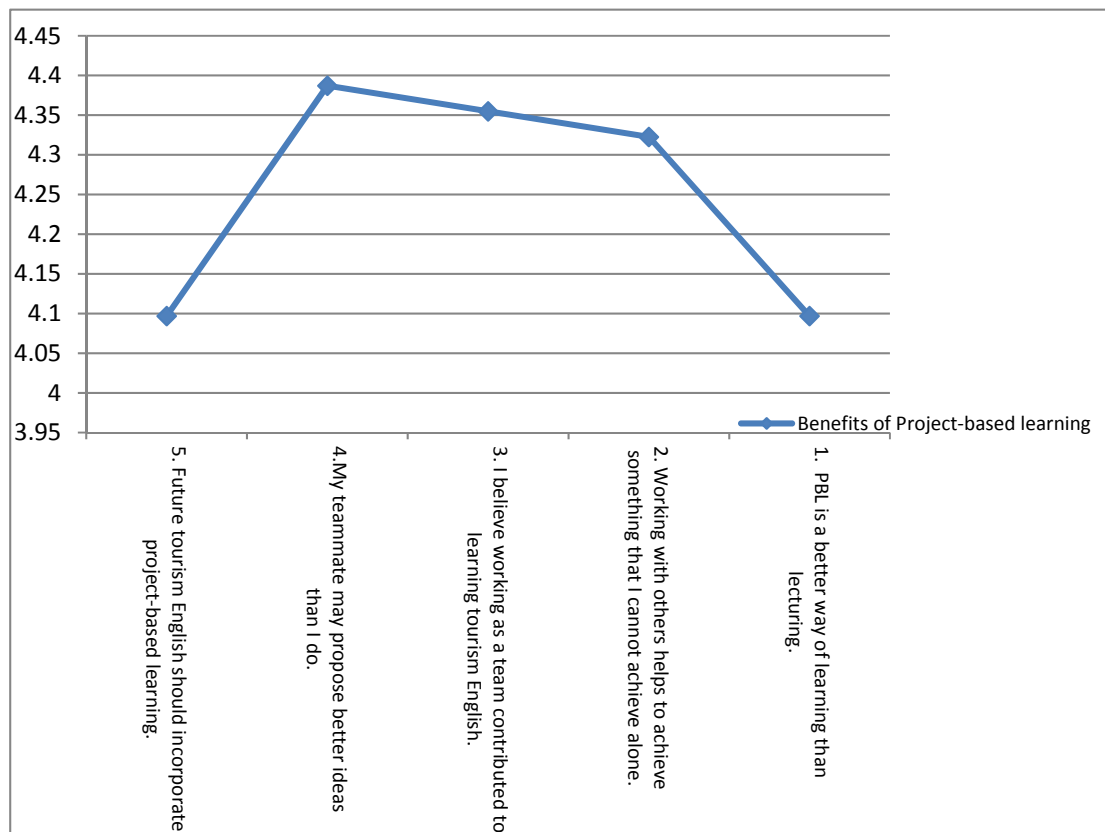


For emotional engagement, the projects required peer-interaction. The survey (Graph 2) indicated that through this peer-interaction, the students felt involved in the learning process. They had enthusiasm for learning. When the students were engaged, they enjoyed the participation (Q7, $M= 4.6$, $SD= 0.5$). They learned about how to resolve the conflicts (Q1, $M= 4.6$, $SD= 0.5$), how to support each other (Q3, $M= 4.5$, $SD= 0.4$), and how to share and learn information as a team (Q6, $M= 4.6$, $SD= 0.6$). Emotionally, they knew that at least some of the team members would support (Q9, $M= 4.4$, $SD= 0.5$) or listen to them (Q3, $M= 4.5$, $SD= 0.7$), so that they are more willing to open themselves up during the discussion, and learned to incorporate different voices into discussion (Q8, $M= 4.5$, $SD= 0.9$). The questionnaire has shown that the participants took an active role in the assignments, and participated in group discussions. However, the survey findings should be interpreted with caution. When students' reflective notes and open-ended questions were analyzed, although most students felt a positive emotional engagement, their writings also revealed that certain students



thought effortful learning experiences brought negative feelings, which will be discussed later.

Graph 3. Benefits Project-based learning



As for the benefits of project-based learning (Graph 3), to execute a project successfully, it involves alliance with and commitment to the team purpose. The survey showed that they think PBL is a better teaching approach (Q1, $M= 4.1$, $SD= 0.9$). They were able to see their team contributed more than as an individual (Q2, $M= 4.3$, $SD= 0.7$; Q3 $M= 4.4$, $SD= 0.9$, Q4 $M= 4.4$, $SD= 0.5$). Most students agreed that future tourism English courses should incorporate similar Project-based learning (Q5, $M= 4.1$, $SD= 0.6$).

When the reflective notes and open-ended questions on the survey questionnaire were cross-referenced to answer research question 2, regarding students' learning experiences, some negative comments emerged. Although mostly, the students mentioned their positive experiences in PBL projects, a few negative descriptions stood



out. For example, one student wrote in her reflective note when the first group project was underway, “I could not appreciate the design of PBL collaborative learning. I saw there was a free-rider in my group. She put less effort in the work than the rest of us did.” In the open-ended question on the survey questionnaire, regarding the negative aspects of PBL, some students also pointed out that even though they understand that in the real world, people may get “fired” from a project for failing to contribute if you are at work in the tourism industry, but in the project-making process, there is no boss to fire this student. “Some students just did not contribute” as a few students pointed out. Apparently, cohesiveness and effectiveness of a group needed to be built over a long period of time, and free-riders are not uncommon in a group. Group dynamics needed to be developed over many discussions and the consensus would not arrive easily. Merely assigning students to project teams did not guarantee they will learn to interact and operate effectively. Arguments as to which person should do what as a team and how to distribute workloads arose often.

Some students revealed a set of constraints with Project-based learning. One of these constraints to this approach to learning is the heavy workload. After they have devoted time and effort into the project, most had high expectations on the project-performance or assessment results. But they felt frustrated as they saw that other teams performed better than they did. She wrote, “I thought we will have the best results compared with other team, but clearly other teams performed better than us. Then I wondered if the return for the project is too far below.”

As for question 3, how did the available resources used in the learning process facilitate students’ collaborative project-making process? From the participants’ reflective notes, it appeared that Project-based collaborative learning forced students to develop better digital literacy for using the Internet to find the data they needed, especially during the making of the micro-film promotional video and the last project to make an itinerary for a tourist group, and some students also listed technological applications as the positive sides of PBL learning approach in the open-ended part of the questionnaire.



As one wrote in the reflection notes, “we searched on the Internet to compare the hotel prices, to find the transportation and proper routes, to design a better itinerary for our targeted travelers, and tried to arrange events for them to meet local Taiwanese’ needs.” Planning for a group of travelers was not an easy task, the teammates needed to divide the job responsibilities and combine all the information they have found. They searched for travel-related information and utilized a range of tools to facilitate the planning process. These include knowing the reservation systems and interfaces of online travel agencies. Some teams invited the elementary school students to come to Taiwan and joined the sports games with local Taiwanese elementary children. They had located a great wealth of information provided by tourism organizations and private enterprises. One of the students wrote, “For the last project, we addressed potential travelers’ concerns when planning online. We analyzed the information searched and sometimes talked about the cross-cultural impacts on tourists.”

A few mentioned that they learned how to operate editing software in the making of promotional micro-film. One participant wrote in her reflective notes saying, “My team and I learned to use the editing software to chop, change and mix video footages into a single film. I think it is a necessary skill nowadays because we may become a Youtuber, or work on similar projects to make sophisticated advertisement campaigns when we start to develop our careers.” In addition, some developed better online communication skills for communicating positively as a team. Since arguments arose during discussion, some wrote that they learned to be the middlemen to help their teammates solve the problems.

V. Discussion

5.1. Similar Final Exam Results

The results have shown that statistically there was not a significant difference in the scores for students who were instructed in the teacher-centered textbook approach and Project-based collaborative approach between two independent classes of students who took Tourism English. The final exam served the purpose of a typical achievement test which revealed how much of the syllabus or textbook contents had been mastered.



It indicated that the PBL approach did not interfere their learning of textbook, besides. The null hypotheses might be explained by the fact that the participants learned more from the projects which cannot be assessed by any final exams. Also, the null result could be that if the students taught by PBL approach decided to put projects as their only learning objectives, they might not care too much about the results they attain in the final exam. Even though statistically, the null results indicated that students still mastered the content of the textbook through the projects.

Therefore, we can conclude that assessments, especially how to measure students' learning has become a challenge in project-based learning classroom. As the null results indicates that comparing textbook-only and project-based learning using a standardized content knowledge test might not be appropriate. This result seems to suggest that for project-based learning, if a test or an evaluation is to be designed, it has to assess students' abilities to think critically, communicate effectively, and collaborate harmoniously with others.

5.2 Positive Perceptions toward Collaborative PBL Approach

The study has shown that students' attitudes, emotional engagement were positive, and the benefits of PBL was recognized, as the survey rating was high, with an average score of above 4 in all dimensions on the Likert scale. When the participants' attitude and engagement were compared to determine whether PBL collaborative learning impeded or ameliorated their performance on the assignments, the instructor observed improvement, as the results of the projects clearly showed that in general, the participants put in much effort.

Also, the participants' perspectives were positive in regard to the benefits of PBL as a learning approach. The survey questionnaires and reflective notes showed that the participants learned how to work better in groups. For example, listening to others and resolving conflicts posed challenges for students; they needed to work out the differences in order to finish the projects. Aside from forming relationships with their classmates, some wrote in their notes that they built a positive relationship with their teachers when seeking help in the after-class discussion for the team projects, and gaining insights for tourism careers in the future.



The second point that students mentioned most in their reflective notes was that they applied creative thinking skills to innovate project designs and possibilities for a future tourism industry. As in the micro-film projects, some students' travel videos to promote Taiwan have many creative attributes either through their visuals or sound presentations to keep viewers engaged and made the usual places in Taipei appeared more unusual and attractive. Through unique storytelling structures, the viewers from the Youtube (as the students were required to post their video clips online as part of the lesson in "social media") wanted to come to Taiwan, and these viewers' feedbacks have encouraged the students. The teams might develop certain ownership over their projects, and a sense of pride as one of the team members.

Also, collaborative PBL might have helped close the achievement gaps that separate the academic performance of students, as the survey question "Working in a team to achieve something I cannot achieve alone" received high rating among the participants, the students felt that they could count on others. This was a positive interdependence, and the survey also showed that they would try their best to work out the conflicts. They understood that they were responsible for the other members of the group. If the team could develop the 'sink or swim' spirit, the group dynamics could be built successfully.

Another focus of this study was to see if available tools or resources facilitate PBL learning. The study found that students utilized technology tools that facilitate collaboration, for example, tools that allowed peer feedback and discussion, such as group platform Line to discuss the projects. In addition, regarding the development of their micro-films, the students tended to use a variety of editing tools or software such as Power-movie to make the movie smoother. They learned or taught each other about the best ways to utilize these tools. The availability of the technological tools led to more interaction between the students, which provided more opportunities for the students to take on the role of teachers in completing the projects together.

5.3 Weakness of Teamwork in Project-based Learning

An essential component of teamwork learning is that group members know how each other works. In a Tourism English course, the students from any department could



enroll. Sometimes a group consisted of members from other departments. Class time should be devoted to the development of relationships and building trust among group members. For the course instructor, it was difficult to provide training on developing teamwork skills.

Also, in their reflective notes, some students commented that project scores were inflated for the other team members who probably did not deserve this high score. Some believed that they themselves contributed more than others. And since the majority of the project was done “single-handedly” by a few student, the other team members did not deserve the score because they contributed less.

The above two issues have prompted the researcher to consider early intervention in the group work. Group evaluation forms should have probably been filled out anonymously a few times as the projects progressed, so the instructor could know how many of the group members participated actively and how many were not fully prepared as a team member. Also, during the semester, the students should probably be constantly reminded to learn from the team members. This could have helped them construct the cohesiveness as a team.

VI. Conclusion

To summarize, positive experiences of collaborative learning were found in most of the students’ learning of Tourism English. The statistical measures to compare final exam scores for students instructed in teacher-centered approach and PBL approach showed that there was no difference. This result reminds the instructor that maybe the emphasis on assessment and grading was not the original purpose of Project-based learning.

The basic element of PBL learning was to ensure students will embrace the fun of cooperating with each other in dealing with authentic situations in the tourism industry. It is hoped that through this approach, English instructor could find ways to engage students in collaborative learning that brings enjoyment and enriching learning experiences. In addition, similar research on the broad topic of PBL collaborative learning, particularly in ESP courses that combines the elements of contents and language should be conducted. After all, interdisciplinary and contextualized research



can help teachers build a broader understanding of the disciplinary and professional varieties of discourse used within the field (Détourbe, 2017; Domenec, 2017), and further understand students' difficulties during learning. Understanding how and why some student groups worked productively when encountering authentic projects while others are less successful is important to improving the development of English proficiency and content knowledge or skills in specific domains such as tourism or other academic subjects in universities.



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Appendix A. Survey Questionnaire

Please fill out the questionnaire below based on your experiences and your learning of “Tourism English” in this semester

Section 1. Emotional engagement					
1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree					
1. I felt good when I was able to resolve the conflicts.	○ 1	○ 2	○ 3	○ 4	○ 5
2. Disagreements can often be solved peacefully. We grew as a team.	○ 1	○ 2	○ 3	○ 4	○ 5
3. The team supported each other, I felt that they back me up.	○ 1	○ 2	○ 3	○ 4	○ 5
4. I would seek help from my team if I face problems.	○ 1	○ 2	○ 3	○ 4	○ 5
5. I tried to be helpful when team members were in trouble.	○ 1	○ 2	○ 3	○ 4	○ 5
6. I shared what I found in research with my team.	○ 1	○ 2	○ 3	○ 4	○ 5
7. I enjoyed working with others.	○ 1	○ 2	○ 3	○ 4	○ 5
8. I listened to different voices, and brought consensus to the team.	○ 1	○ 2	○ 3	○ 4	○ 5
9. I am not afraid to spoke up during discussion.	○ 1	○ 2	○ 3	○ 4	○ 5
10. I put all my efforts to the task of the team	○ 1	○ 2	○ 3	○ 4	○ 5
Section 2. Benefits Project-based learning					
1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree					
1. PBL is a better way of learning than lecturing.	○ 1	○ 2	○ 3	○ 4	○ 5
2. Working with others helps to achieve something that I cannot achieve alone.	○ 1	○ 2	○ 3	○ 4	○ 5
3. I believe working as a team contributed to learning tourism English.	○ 1	○ 2	○ 3	○ 4	○ 5
4. My teammate may propose better ideas than I do.	○ 1	○ 2	○ 3	○ 4	○ 5



5. Future tourism English should incorporate project-based learning.	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
Section 3. Attitude toward project-based learning 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree					
1. I will seriously consider entering tourism industry after taking the course	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
2. I enjoy knowing more about current trend tourism industry through project research.	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
3. I enjoyed the all the activities the teacher asked us to do.	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
4. Though more time spent on projects, I still enjoyed this course.	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
5. Hands-on experiences in doing projects helped me learn.	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
6 This course enhanced my English abilities.	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
7. This course has enhanced my knowledge in tourism.	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
8. I volunteered to devote more time in doing team projects.	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
9. I think project-based tourism English is a very interesting course.	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5

