

THE USE OF TASK-BASED LEARNING TO IMPROVE ENGLISH LISTENING
AND SPEAKING ABILITIES OF MATTAYOMSUKSA 1 STUDENTS AT
PIBOONPRACHASAN SCHOOL



Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Master of Arts in Teaching English as a Foreign Language
at Srinakharinwirot University

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The purpose of this study was to develop English listening and speaking abilities of Mattayomsuksa 1 students at Piboonprachasan School, Bangkok through task-based learning. The participants were 30 students in Mattayomsuksa 1, gained via convenience sampling, studying in the second semester of academic year 2011. The experiment group was taught through Task-Based learning instruction.

The instruments used for collecting data were four lesson plans, a pre-post English listening test, English speaking test, and a teaching log. The data were statistically analyzed by mean, standard deviation, and *t*-test for dependent samples. Teaching log were recoded by researcher then presented in essay form.

The results of this study indicated that:

- 1) English listening ability of Mattayomsuksa 1 students through task-based learning after the experiment was significantly higher at the .01 level.
- 2) English speaking ability of Mattayomsuksa 1 students through task-based learning after the experiment was significantly higher at the .01 level.
- 3) The students' opinion about task-based learning and teaching activities were more positive

Keywords: Task-based learning, English listening and speaking abilities.

การจัดการเรียนรู้แบบเน้นงานปฏิบัติเพื่อพัฒนาความสามารถด้านการฟังและการพูดภาษาอังกฤษ
ของนักเรียนมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 1 โรงเรียนพิบูลประชาสรรค์



เสนอต่อบัณฑิตวิทยาลัย มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ เพื่อเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษา
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การศึกษาครั้งนี้มีจุดมุ่งหมายเพื่อพัฒนาความสามารถด้านการฟังและการพูดภาษาอังกฤษ
เพื่อการสื่อสารของนักเรียนชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 1 โรงเรียนพิบูลประชาสรรค์ กรุงเทพมหานคร โดยใช้
การจัดการเรียนรู้แบบเน้นงานปฏิบัติ กลุ่มตัวอย่างที่ใช้ในการทดลองเป็นนักเรียนชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 1
จำนวน 30 คน โดยใช้วิธีการสุ่มตัวอย่างแบบตามความสะดวก เครื่องมือที่ใช้ในการทดลองและเก็บ
รวบรวมข้อมูล คือ แผนการจัดการเรียนรู้จำนวน 4 แผน แบบทดสอบวัดความสามารถด้านการฟัง
ภาษาอังกฤษ แบบทดสอบวัดความสามารถด้านการพูดภาษาอังกฤษ แบบประเมินการวัด
ความสามารถด้านการพูดภาษาอังกฤษ บันทึกหลังการสอน สถิติที่ใช้ในการวิเคราะห์ข้อมูล คือ
ค่าเฉลี่ย ค่าเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐาน และใช้สถิติ t -test แบบ Dependent samples

ผลการศึกษาพบว่า ความสามารถด้านการฟังและการพูดภาษาอังกฤษโดยใช้การจัดการ
เรียนรู้แบบเน้นงานปฏิบัติของนักเรียนชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 1 หลังการทดลองสูงกว่าก่อนการทดลอง
อย่างมีนัยสำคัญทางสถิติที่ระดับ.01

The thesis titled
“The Use of Task-Based Learning to Improve English Listen and Speaking Abilities of
Mattayomsuksa 1 Students at Piboonprachasan School”

by

Jidapa Promruang

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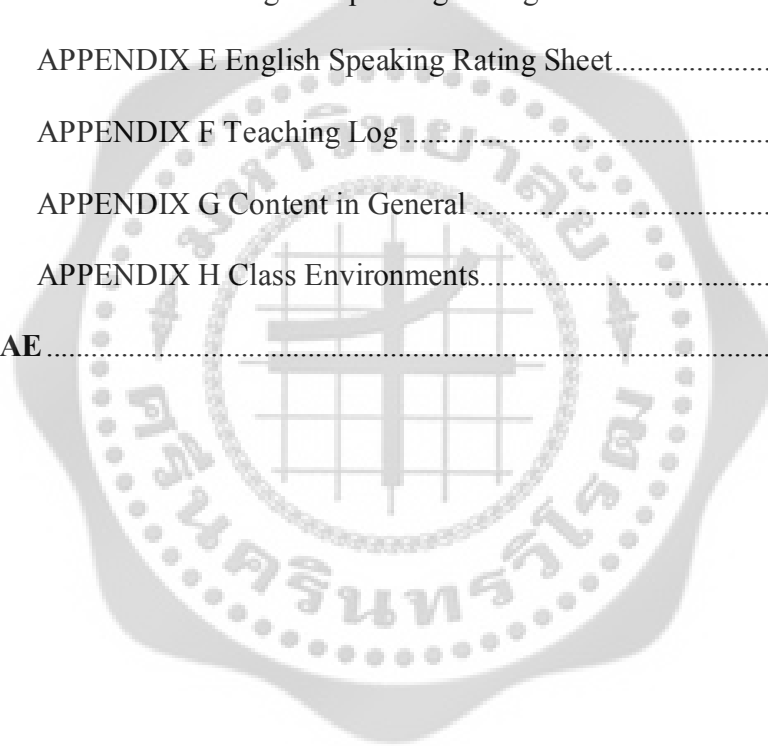
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

In the modern day communicating in foreign languages is important. English is one of the most important languages because it is the most widely spoken language globally. We use English to communicate on a daily basis in education, healthy care, business and technology. Bailey and Savage (1994) state that communication on a daily basis, listening and speaking is a necessary basic skill that also leads learners to other reading and writing skills.

The Ministry of Education (2008) demonstrates their belief in the importance of English by including it in the Core Curriculum of both primary and secondary schools. The main purpose of the Basic Education Core Curriculum for communication is to provide students with the ability to receive and transmit information, express thoughts, knowledge and understanding, feelings and opinions. Learners should develop the ability to solve problems and conflicts. Learners should also be able to choose what information to accept or reject through their own reasoning and judgment. In secondary schools it is especially important that the course focuses on using language in a way that emphasizes everyday usage in society and culture. 'Everyday usage' could be taken to mean speaking and listening, as these are the two skills that are most used to communicate on a daily basis.

According to the purpose shown above, in order to be able to gain these skills the learners must practice listening and speaking more in the classroom in order to

gain experience and more knowledge. The teacher should encourage learners to learn how to work with others and know how to solve problems among themselves. Learners should be able to make their own judgments and be able to express thoughts and feelings, be able to give an opinion and be able to apply these things into real-life.

It is widely acknowledged that currently speaking and listening learning in Thailand is not successful despite studying for many years. One of the problems, which lead to lack of success in English learning in Thailand, is that the classroom environment is overly stressful for learners. A British Council expert in teacher education in Thailand, Moutford (1986) points out some serious problems of language teaching in Thailand such as the dry teaching style and overly concern on grammar details, inappropriate texts that are not related to learners, and not giving learners a chance to interact with each other in classroom. Another problem is that class activities do not support enough language listening and speaking practice. This leaves learners with lower communications skills. The result of this is that learners lack the ability to transfer their skills from the classroom into the real world. Suan Dusit Poll (The Nation,2004) shown that 95 percent of Bangkok citizens said English was very important for a career and 5 per cent said English was mostly 'for basic communication'. Still, a common attitude was that fear of making mistakes prevented any attempt in communicating with English speaking foreigners; a high percentage also agreed that not using English daily was a problem. The fear of making mistakes coupled with the infrequent use of spoken English are major factors in contributing to the problem of learning English. Bolt's 1986 study (as cited in Muangyot, 2010) found that in traditional classrooms most activities focused on grammar and reading

more than listening and speaking. Teachers generally use too much Thai in English classrooms and do not use enough creative activities that stimulate learning. A study performed by the Ministry of Education (2002) over a period of ten years found that the communication level of foreign language learners was inadequate to perform research, study technology and communicate effectively. Another aspect was that learners did not feel confident enough to speak up in classroom settings, which led to problems in communication.

In addition, Angwattanakul's 1994 study (as cited in Thotead , 2010, p.2) found that the English ability of learners is not acceptable. Learners cannot communicate with native speakers, or if they can then their use of the language is incorrect. The reason for this is that the learners do not have a chance to practice language inside the classroom, and when they get out they lack the necessary practice to engage in communication.

As shown with the problems above, great efforts have been undertaken in the previous decades in Thailand to help learners use foreign language effectively and efficiently, yet the problems still persist.

Task-based learning is a teaching method which allows learners to have an opportunity to practice language by performing 'tasks', which focus more on meaning than on form (Ellis, 2003; Willis, 1996). There are a variety of activities in this process that encourage learners to work naturally, such as solving problems and communicating within their group both unconsciously and consciously. The unconscious aspects occur via communication between learners when attempting to complete tasks. The conscious aspects occur during language analysis when the

teacher guides learners to correct their language use. Performing tasks builds learner confidence and provides training about how to work with others.

Willis (1996) speaks of three different task phases as being the 'pre-task', 'task-cycle' and 'language focus'. The pre-task phase introduces the topic and the task. The teacher highlights important vocabulary and gives learners task instructions and guidance.

The task-cycle allows learners to work in pairs or groups. In this phase learners will prepare to give a presentation to the class. Learners have a chance to work together and solve problems by working in teams. The teacher monitors, gives positive feedback and guidance as needed. Throughout the process, learners will use language that is similar to what they would use in real life.

The language focus phase allows the teacher and learners to work together by analyzing language that was used and correcting mistakes. The teacher has the option of giving extra language input for practice. Afterwards, the teacher gives learners extra work to practice the language form of what was learned.

Task-based learning provides many advantages over other teaching methods. TBL lets learners use language in a natural way. This allows them to relax and gives them greater exposure in the target language as stated by Willis (1996). Another benefit of TBL, according to Willis, includes giving learners opportunities to use the target language for expressing meaning – both in private and in public situations, in pairs and small group interactions, monologues and writing (Willis, 1996).

The researcher has observed that the teaching of listening and speaking in Mattayomsuksa 1 at Piboonprachasan School, has not been effective because the

students are not able to communicate in English successfully. According to the researcher, a personal conversation with Mrs. Kesada Tunghun and Miss Wimonwan Liangpattanakun, English teacher of Mattayomsuksa 1 at Piboonprachasan School found that teachers do not provide classroom instruction that leads students to have an opportunity to communicate as in real-life situations. Another issue is that teachers usually ask students to repeat sentences after them with little or no thinking involved. Teachers focus on grammar formation and rules rather than practising actual listening and speaking activities. Due to these issues, and in consideration of the importance of teaching and learning English, the researcher is interested in using task-based learning activities to develop English listening and speaking skills.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the effectiveness of task-based learning on English listening ability of Mattayomsuksa 1 at Piboonprachasan.
2. To examine the effectiveness of task-based learning on English speaking ability of Mattayomsuksa 1 at Piboonprachasan.
3. To examine students' opinions about task-based learning and teaching activities

Significance of the Study

The goal of this study was to examine the language learning process and to develop the students' listening and speaking abilities by using task-based learning. In addition to the findings of this study, teachers of English could benefit by learning new ways to develop students' English listening and speaking abilities. It is

hoped that the findings of this study could go towards further refining and aiding the teaching of listening and speaking to language students.

Scope of the study

Population and participants.

The population of this study is Mattayomsuksa 1 students from Piboonprachasan School. The school has 5 classes of Mattayomsuksa 1 students totaling 190 students, with each class having approximately equal numbers of low to high achievers. The participants were 30 students chosen by a convenience sampling approach. Students were studying English in the second semester of the 2011 academic year. As a guest of Piboonprachasan School, the researcher used this sampling method due to the convenience it offered the school and researcher in terms of teaching schedule and minimal disruption caused to the students.

Duration.

The study was conducted over a 7 week period, from January 2012 to February 2012 during which time students attended four classes per week. An introduction to the experiment, a pre-test and post-test were included in the duration of the research.

Variables.

The variables in this study are as follows:

- (a) Independent variable is task-based learning
- b) Dependent variables are English listening and speaking abilities

Definition of Terms

Terms defined in this study were as follows:

Task-based learning (TBL).

Task-based learning (TBL) refers to method of language teaching with focus on meaning rather than form. Task-based learning is the English teaching method that encourages students to adopt a communicative approach via an emphasis on use of authentic language (Ellis, 2003). The different parts of task-based learning are pre-task, task cycle and language analysis (Willis & Willis, 1996).

English listening ability.

English listening ability refers to the skill of accurately comprehending oral English. This performance can be measure by the post-test score.

English speaking ability.

English speaking ability refers to the skill of accurately verbally communicating information, including the sharing of ideas with fluency, correct grammar, extensive vocabulary and good pronunciation. This performance can be measured using the rating scale adapted from Clark(1986 as cited in Wongsotorn ,1986) and Heaton (1990)

Research Questions

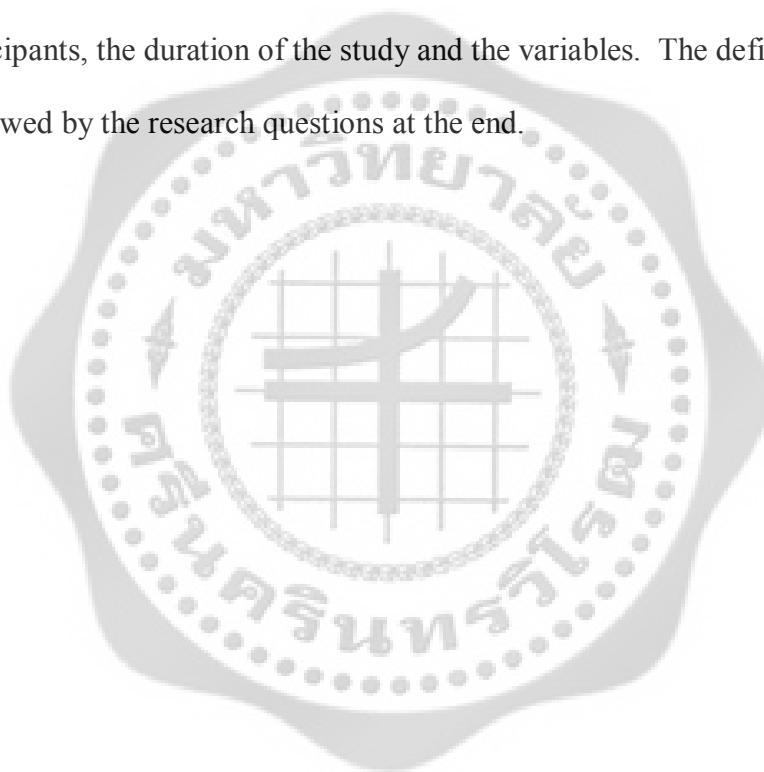
1. Is the English listening ability of Mattayomsuksa 1 English students at the Piboonprachasan School learning through task-based learning higher than before the experiment started?

2. Is the English speaking ability of Mattayomsuksa 1 English students at the Piboonprachasan School learning through task-based learning higher than before the experiment started?

3. Is the students' opinion about task-based learning and teaching activities more positive?

Summary of Chapter

Chapter I focus on an introduction to the topic. It begins by discussing the background of the study. Next follows the objectives of the study. Afterwards the significance of the study is discussed. The scope of the study deals with population and participants, the duration of the study and the variables. The definition of terms is next followed by the research questions at the end.



CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter reviews the theoretical and research literature related to task-based learning, English listening, and English speaking. It is subdivided into the following parts:

1. Task-Based Learning
2. English Listening
3. English Speaking
4. Related Literature
5. Summary of chapter II

Task-Based learning (TBL)

Definitions of task-based learning.

Task-based language teaching is one of the more modern approaches to language teaching. Edwards and Willis (2005) trace the root of the word ‘task-based’ to Prabhu (1987) who used this approach in 1979 in India. Since then, increasing amounts of teachers and scholars have adopted this method in their work. To understand the meaning of task-based learning we must first define what a ‘task’ is. Ellis (2003, p.3) defines tasks as language activities that focus on meaning. While Nunan (2004, p.4) states that communicative tasks are pieces of classroom work in which learners attempt to comprehend, manipulate, produce, and interact in the target language. Nunan goes on to say that tasks should also have a sense of completeness and should be able to stand on their own as a form of communication and learning.

Others define 'task' in their own way, such as Prabhu (1987) who defines a task as an activity that requires learners to arrive at an outcome from a given piece of information through a process of thought. In this process the teachers are expected to control and regulate the learning process. Breen (as cited in Bygate, Skehan & Swain, 2001) states that a task is any structured language learning endeavor which has a particular objective, appropriate content, a specified working procedure, and a range of outcomes for those who undertake it. While Willis (1996) states that a task is a goal-oriented activity in which learners use language to achieve a real outcome. Willis (1996) evidences this by saying that learners use whatever target language resources they have available in order to solve a problem, do a puzzle, play a game or share and compare experiences. Skehan (1996) defines language learning tasks as activities that hold meaning as their primary focus. Task success is evaluated in terms of achievement of an outcome and tasks generally bear some resemblance to real-life language use.

A task is defined as a method of learning that is focused on the use of language and on the learner making use of the new language in as close to a real-life setting as is possible. Task-based learning forces learners to apply the language in a realistic way that is similar to how one would use language in daily-life.

Task components.

Tasks are made up of different parts and can come in many different variations. In addition there are goals, input, procedures, roles of the participants and settings. The teacher must be well versed in the various task components in order to oversee a successful and productive task-based learning classroom. The 5 elements of

task-based learning according to Nunan are goals, input, procedures, roles, and settings. Goals are the teacher's stated intentions behind any learning task. Some examples of goals would be to develop student confidence in speaking, and developing their personal writing skills. It is essential that any teaching task or lesson will need to contain goals to be achieved by the learners. A teacher without clear goals for a lesson will not be successful, as to achieve something one must know where they are trying to go. Input refers to the spoken, written, and visual and auditory data that learners work with in the course of completing a task. Data can be provided by a teacher, a textbook or some other source. It can also be generated by the students. Procedures specify what learners will actually do with the input that forms launching point for the learning task. (Nunan, 2004)

Roles are the parts that learners and teachers are expected to play in carrying out learning tasks as well as the social and professional relationships between the participants. In addition, Nunan speaks about the importance of learners developing an active role in the learning process and developing an awareness of themselves as learners. When learners adopt this kind of role it makes them better able to fit into the task-based language classroom and helps the teacher also. Nunan also states that giving learners a more active role in the classroom requires the teachers to adopt a different role. According to Breen & Candlin (as cited in Nunan, 2004. p. 67) the teacher has three main roles in the communicative classroom with the first being to act as a facilitator, the second role is to act as a participant, and the third is to act as an observer and learner. It is the teacher's job to balance what they feel is the optimal method of teaching tasks with the ways the students may expect the teacher to act. In

other words, the teacher should always be on the lookout to make sure the students understand their role in the classroom and that the students are following what the teacher is attempting to do. Richards and Rodgers (2001) describe the roles of teachers as being the selector and sequencer of tasks, preparing learners for tasks and consciousness-raising. Meanwhile learner roles are group participant, monitor, and risk-taker and innovator. A Setting refers to the classroom arrangements that are prescribed in the task. A wide range of different settings is possible in the classroom, although things such as class size can constrain what is possible in a real life setting. (Nunan 2004, p. 42-71)

Phases of task.

Ellis (2003, pp. 244-250) discusses the three phases of a task as the pre-task, during task, and post-task. Ellis states that the pre-task phase exists to prepare students to perform the task in ways that will promote language acquisition. This preparation can vary but often involves doing a similar task to the one that will be performed in order to practice, or the teacher providing the students with background information about the task topic. Some activities often performed at this stage include brainstorming and mind maps. The during-task phase has several variations available to the teacher. Ellis (2003) states that teachers can elect to set a strict time limit on the completion of the task or let the students complete the task in their own time. The other option available is whether or not to allow students access to the input data while they work on completing the task. These options can affect the difficulty level of the task for the students.

As for the post-task phase, Ellis states the importance of three major pedagogical goals. The first goal is to provide an opportunity for a repeat performance of the task, the second goal is to encourage reflection on how the task was performed, and the third goal is to encourage attention on form. These all serve to provide a better understanding and a sense of perspective to the students on the recently performed task.

Willis (1996, p. 39) describes the different task phases as the 'pre-task', 'task-cycle' and 'language focus'. The pre-task phase serves as the introduction to the topic and the task. The teacher highlights useful words and phrases, and helps students with instructions and preparations.

The task-cycle is made up of three sub-sections which are task, planning, and report. The task section sees the students undertaking a task in pairs or in groups by using the given language resources, as the teacher monitors the students. Next is the planning section, in which students are given time to set up a short oral or written report in order to explain to the rest of class what happened during their task. Students then practice what they are going to say in their groups. The teacher makes him or herself available to answer student questions or clean-up language errors. Finally is the report section where students give an oral report or read their written report to the class. During this section the teacher may give some brief feedback on the content. The pedagogical goals during this section include providing a repeat performance of the task, encouraging reflection on how the task was performed and encouraging practice on problem areas that students may encounter with the language. The language focus phase is made up of two sub-sections: analysis and practice. The

analysis section allows the teacher to highlight relevant parts from the text or recording for further student analysis. The teacher may highlight the language that the students used during the report section for analysis. The practice section takes place where the teacher selects specific language for the students to practice based upon the observed needs of the students that emerged from the task and report sections. The students perform practice activities to increase their self-confidence and engage language skills.

Types of task.

Nunan (1989) divides tasks into two categories: real-world and pedagogic tasks. For example, a real-world task would have a learner listen to a weather forecast and decide whether or not to take an umbrella and sweater to school. A pedagogic task would have a learner listen to an aural text and answer questions on whether given statements are true or false.

Richards and Rodgers (2001) identify two different types of tasks as being real-world and pedagogic tasks. Real-world tasks are designed to practice events that are important or useful in the real-world. Pedagogic tasks have a psycholinguistic basis in SLA (Second Language Acquisition) theory and research but do not necessarily reflect real-world tasks.

According to Willis (1996, p. 26-28), there are six main types of tasks. Listing tasks involve students making lists. This tends to generate a lot of talk as students' debate and explain their ideas. There are different processes involved which are brainstorming and fact finding. Ordering and sorting tasks involve sequencing items into a logical or chronological order, ranking items according to personal values or

specified criteria, categorizing items into groups or under given headings, and classifying items in which the categories are not given. Comparing tasks involve comparing similar information from different sources to identify common points and/or differences. Problem solving tasks challenge people to solve problems and are often engaging and satisfying for learners. These can vary from simple tasks such as logic problems to more complex ones such as case studies. Sharing personal experiences is a type of task that encourages learners to speak and share personal experiences. They may be difficult to get started but are good in that they can result in a casual conversation. Creative tasks involve pair or group projects among learners. They have many stages and can involve a combination of task types such as listing, ordering and sorting, comparing, and problem solving.

More recently, Richards (as cited in Nunan 2004) has proposed to classify pedagogical tasks into five categories. Jigsaw tasks involve learners in combining different pieces of information to form a whole (e.g. three individuals or groups may have three different parts of a story and have to piece the story together). Information-gap tasks involve one student or group of students having one set of information and another student or group having a complementary set of information. They must negotiate to find out what the other group's information is in order to complete an activity. Problem-solving tasks involve students being given a problem and a set of information. They must arrive at a pre-determined solution to the problem. Decision-making tasks involve students being given a problem for which there are a number of possible outcomes and they must make a decision through negotiation and discussion.

Opinion exchange tasks involve learners engaging in discussion and exchanging ideas and it is not necessary that they reach agreement.

Pattison (as cited in Nunan 2004) sets out seven activity types. Question and answer activities are designed by creating an information gap by letting learners make their own choices of questions and answers. The learners use language to share an opinion and exchange their personal information with each other. Dialogue and role play activities can be scripted or improvised. However, if learners are given more choices of what to say and there is a clear aim to be achieved by what they say, they may participate more willingly and learn more thoroughly than when they must repeat a dialogue. Matching activities are designed for the learner to recognize matching items, or to complete pairs or sets. Bingo, happy families and split dialogues are examples of matching activities. Communication strategy activities are designed to encourage learners to practice communication strategies such as paraphrasing, borrowing or inventing words, using gestures, asking for feedback, and simplifying. Picture and picture story activities can be performed through the use of pictures (e.g. spot the difference, memory test, and sequencing pictures to tell a story). Puzzle and problem activities require learners to make guesses, draw on their general knowledge and personal experience, use their imagination and test their powers of logical reasoning. Discussion and decision activities require the learners to collect and share information to reach a decision.

As shown above, different researchers classify tasks differently. As a teacher the challenge is to select the proper method for the learners.

English Listening

Significance of listening.

To the non-educator, listening and hearing are synonymous. The perceptive educator recognizes the progression from hearing, a passive, innate physical skill inborn in all non-handicapped people, to listening, an active, interactive, learned process that incorporates the added dimensions of comprehension and response. Underwood (1989) points out that listening is an activity of paying attention to the speaker and subsequent attempt to understand what we hear.

Even though listening may be seen as a passive process it is not true because we as listeners have to concentrate on the message to be able to decode it. Underwood argues that while hearing can be thought of as a passive condition, listening is always an active process.

Rost (2002) defines listening as a process of receiving what the speaker actually says (receptive orientation); constructing and representing meaning (constructive orientation); negotiating meaning with the speaker and responding (collaborative orientation); and, creating meaning through involvement, imagination and empathy (transformative orientation).

For the purpose of clarity, and due to the fact that this paper focuses on lower secondary students, this research includes auditory memory as a necessary prerequisite in the listening skills continuum. Auditory memory is an important skill when working toward a productive end such as a project, a response, a dialogue or any activity utilizing the given listening input. Additionally, Rost's two comprehension levels (constructive orientation and collaborative orientation) can be combined into

one level; simply, comprehension (2002). Thus, a working definition of listening involves four progressive levels:

1. Hearing

Hearing is the physical act of receiving sound, such as identifying speech sounds. This also encompasses recognizing those sounds as words, phrases, or thoughts. This level of the listening process would equate to the first level of Bloom's taxonomy (Cognitive Domain), Knowledge.

2. Retention

The skill of auditory memory is in retaining material presented orally in sequence, in order to use the information in a future task. This level of the listening process would also equate to the first level of Bloom's taxonomy (Cognitive Domain), Knowledge.

3. Comprehension

The skill of drawing meaning from aural input, and processing that input by activating prior knowledge, using context clues, and making predictions. This level of listening would be equivalent to the second level of Bloom's Taxonomy (Cognitive Domain), Comprehension.

4. Response

The skill of physical response to auditory input; using the information presented orally to transfer information, retell a story, complete a project or task, etc. This level is equivalent to the third level of Bloom's taxonomy (Cognitive Domain), Application.

It must be recognized that listening is not an innate sense, but a skill that can be practiced and taught. A good teacher will model listening skills to his/her students and constantly provide opportunities for them to practice sequential listening skills. It is important that when teaching and practicing listening skills, all activities should be relevant to the child and involve real life situations and tasks. The incorporation of relevance in a listening activity increases the appeal and, therefore, the attention and retention levels.

The purpose of listening.

For active listening to be successful we must set a clear purpose of what we are listening for. We must select what meets our listening purpose in order to make our listening more effective. Johnson and Morrow (1981, p.81) state that people generally listen for a purpose and this affects what we choose to listen to in order to achieve that purpose. Galvin (as cited in Underwood 1989, p. 4) claims that there are five main reasons for listening: to engage in social rituals, to exchange information, to enjoy yourself, to share feelings, and to exert control.

Underwood (1989, p. 81) states that teachers should prepare their students for lots of different scenarios. Attending a lesson or a lecture as an activity will prepare the students to understand the main concept and to be able to distinguish the main information. Listening to announcements, news and weather forecasts helps to hone the listener's skills in gathering relevant information. Listening to live situations in which one takes no part is a good way to listen purely for understanding. Listening to or watching plays, watching TV or listening to a radio for pleasure is done to in order to be entertained and to practice listening comprehension. Listening to someone

giving a speech challenges the listener to become interested in the views and attitudes of the speaker. Following instructions focuses the listener's attention to try to accomplish the task successfully.

Drawing on the sources above, it is clear that there are many reasons for listening. The listener has to know what purpose they have for listening so as to make their listen skill more effective. In order to prepare students for this kind of active listening, the teacher must know what the learners' particular needs are. The teacher must provide appropriate activities that fit with what these needs are. If done properly, this will facilitate listening skills outside of the classroom.

Teaching listening strategies.

It is important for teachers to find a successful teaching strategy to help learners improve their listening skills. Speech-processing theory distinguishes between two types of processing in both listening and reading comprehension. Bottom-up processing proceeds from sounds to words, to grammatical relationships, then to lexical meanings, finally it reaches a comprehensive 'message'. Top-down processing is evoked from a bank of prior knowledge, and global expectations and other background information that listeners bring to the text. Bottom-up techniques focus on sounds, words, intonation, grammatical structures, and other components of spoken language. Top-down techniques are more concerned with the activation of schemata, deriving meaning and global understanding with the interpretation of a text. (Brown, 2001)

Rivers (1980, p. 16) states that listening is a creative skill of interpretation or analysis. Listeners must try to understand what they hear. Listeners hear a speaker

then interpret the meaning, which may or may not be the same meaning as the speaker intended. For this reason misunderstandings may occur between listener and speaker. This is true especially when the listener is not familiar with the language and culture of the speaker. There are three components of comprehension as follows.

Linguistic Information refers to the message, sounds, words and word arrangements.

The listeners do not have to listen to everything, but should be able to predict surrounding words. Situational Context refers to speaking situations that affect the listener such as the relationship between the message heard and what is spoken, including what the listeners expect to hear next. Comprehended Message refers to the ability to understand information, which depends on how the listener pays attention to interpret what the speaker says. Rost (2002, p. 155) refers to learning strategies that are used by successful listeners as predicting, inferring, monitoring, clarifying, responding and evaluating.

Listening is a multi-step process. Learners must have a high capacity for paying attention to details and be able to gather meaning from what they hear. When teaching listening skill the teacher should make learners listen to authentic materials. An example of this would be a recording of a conversation between native speakers which includes slang and everyday expressions, since spoken language differs from written language. Class materials that may help learners most are visually based, such as videos, movies, skits or role plays. Watching in addition to hearing is beneficial for learners because they are able to associate sounds with body language or facial expressions. The teacher should get learners to listen actively multiple times to the input material until they understand enough meaning in order to produce a spoken or

written answer to the auditory material. The topic chosen should be something common to daily life and familiar to most learners such as popular songs or shows. The materials used should have clear and high quality sounds and be slow enough to be appropriate to learner ability.

Types of listening activity.

Ur (1996, pp. 112-114) describes different types of listening activities in the classroom as follows. Listening with no overt response in which the learners do not have to do anything in response to the listening; however, facial expression and body language often show if they are following or not. Some examples of this type of listening are stories in which the teacher reads a joke, anecdote, and story or plays a recording of a story or song. Another example would be showing a film or movie. Short response is a type of activity such as obeying instructions where learners perform actions or draw shapes and pictures in response to instructions and ticking off items in which listeners mark or tick off words as they hear them. Other examples of short response are true/false, detecting mistakes, guessing definitions, skimming and scanning and cloze, in which the listening text has occasional brief gaps, represented by silence or a buzzing sound and learners must write down what they think the missing word or words might be.

Longer response activities demand students to provide fairly full answers or responses such as answering questions based on a text within which the answers are given. Note-taking involves learners taking brief notes from a lecture and paraphrasing and translating. Summarizing involves learners writing a brief summary of the content of the listening passage. Long gap-filling refers to a text in which a

long gap is left at the beginning, middle or end of a text; learners guess and write down, or say, what they think might be missing.

Extended response activities have the listening component as a jumping-off point for extended reading, writing or speaking: in other words, these are ‘combined skills’ activities. Problem-solving activities are those in which a problem is described orally and learners discuss how to deal with it, and/or write down a suggested solution. Interpretation activities are where an extract from a piece of dialogue or monologue is provided and with no previous information the listeners try to guess what is going on from the words, voices, tones and any other evidence.

Saengdet (as cited in Ruenyoot, 2010) describes various listening activities as follows. Putting pictures in order involves learners listening to a short story and re-arranging the story order by numbering pictures. Completing Grids and Charts involves learners listening and filling-in the missing information. In Guessing and Predicting activities learners listen to a story then guess what comes next. Other activities mentioned included Correcting Mistakes, Completing the Pictures, Following the Route which involves learners working in pairs telling directions to each other, and Total Physical Response in which learners act out by following what they hear.

Different educators prefer many different types of classroom activities. It is the teacher’s job to carefully choose the ones that are suitable with the students’ level, lesson purpose and number of students.

Listening Assessment.

Aksaranukraw (1989, p. 64-65) suggests that listening assessment may be implemented during the lesson to check the communicating ability of learners or it may be done at the final exam. The assessment can be done in many different ways such as listening then answering questions, listening then re-arranging events or pictures, listening to a conversation then filling in missing words, or listening to a conversation about selling and buying then answering questions. Assessment can be performed using closed test, written test or oral test.

Valette and Disick (1972) discuss to 5 levels of listening assessment.

Mechanical assessment measures the learners' ability of separating sounds in a foreign language without understanding. Knowledge assessment measures learner ability of understanding words or sentences that they hear. Transfer assessment measures learners' ability to comprehend familiar words in a new situation. Communication assessment measures learners' ability of understanding the general meaning of a message that is heard. Criticism assessment measures learner ability to analyze language meaning and form.

In conclusion, there are many ways to assess listening and the criteria of listening should follow the purpose of the test. The teacher decides what to test students on and chooses the right tools which fit with students' level, number of students and purpose of the test.

English Speaking

Significance of English speaking.

Speaking involves two or more people having a conversation with each other. The two roles in a conversation are that of speaker and listener. The people involved in the conversation take turns and alternate between the two roles while communicating. The speaker sends messages with language and the listener receives and processes the messages. Other than using words to communicate, the speaker may use body language such as facial expressions, body movement, and eye contact in order to better convey the intended message.

Communicative speaking is not only pronunciation or sentence intonation; it is more about the function of language. The speakers try to make listeners understand their purpose in speaking. In higher levels of communication, the speaker should know how to use expressions and phrases that are similar to native speakers. Listeners should know what the speaker's purpose is. Speakers should also know how to use the right phrases and expressions within the language. (Underhill, 1987; Underwood, 1989; and Valette, 1977)

Speaking teaching strategies.

Nunan (2003, p. 56) provides evidence for teaching strategies by stating that when we talk to someone outside the classroom we do so for purposes of interaction or transaction. Interactional speech involves communicating with someone for social purposes. It includes both establishing and maintaining social relationships. Transactional speech involves communicating to get something done, such as the exchange of goods and/or services. Spoken interaction ranges from relatively

predictable to relatively unpredictable. Conversations are relatively unpredictable and can include many topics, with the participants taking turns and speaking freely. In contrast, transactional encounters tend to be fairly restricted and usually contain highly predictable patterns (Nunan, 1991, p. 42). Examples of predictable patterns include telephoning for a taxi or performing a transaction at a bank. According to Nunan, interactional speech is much more fluid and unpredictable than transactional speech. Speaking activities inside the classroom should embody both types of speech, since language learners will have to be able to speak the target language in both settings once outside the classroom. (1991)

Types of speaking activities.

Teaching speaking is a vital part of ESL (English as a Second Language). However, in the classroom this can be a very difficult task. Speaking tasks need to be thought out carefully and effectively designed. Context is key; students need to be encouraged to practice in situations which have real-world connections - the more often students can participate in tasks and situations which mirror real-world scenarios the better. Students will benefit from locating themselves in real situations: the bank, school, factory, office and so on.

Activities, as discussed by Newton and Nation (2009), that describe learning through pushed output are ones in which learners understand input without having to attend to grammar or be 'pushed' to do so. With speaking, however, it is preferred to push the student to pay more attention. This, in turn, will allow an L2 (Second Language) transfer that involves semantic decoding and syntactic processing. The aim is to create demanding tasks. For example, information gap activities or jigsaw

activities may be employed. These tasks need to be designed in such a way as to avoid becoming merely drill activities.

Harmer (2001, p. 271-275) mentions some classroom speaking activities which many teachers currently use; Classroom script, Communication games, Discussion, Prepared talks, Questionnaires, and Simulation and role-play.

Additionally, students must practice more than just grammatical and lexical features within a set information gap activity – an example would be a timetabling activity for train times; partner A holds a card with some information, partner B holds the information needed to complete the inquiry. Both are encouraged to ask questions in order to find the answers. The timetable activity incorporates a social dimension. By utilizing real-world situations in this way learners can be ‘pushed’ to speak in unfamiliar areas. They will not be accustomed to speaking and these exercises will give them the opportunity to evolve their speaking accuracy, precision, and coherence.

Speaking assessment.

Speaking assessment can be managed in many ways. Examples of types of assessment include but are not limited to describing pictures, situation role plays, interviews, survey then report, story telling, role plays, presentations, giving directions, class presentations, giving an opinion, giving the reason for doing things, or giving instructions.

Clark (1986, as cited in Wongsothorn, 2001) gives a description about how to score the level of learner speaking ability. There are four levels. The first level is the beginner level and fourth level is the communicative level. He divides categories as follows:

Pronunciation:

- 1 Not able to respond
- 2 Mispronounce words often and difficult to understand
- 3 Mispronounce words occasionally
- 4 Pronounce words correctly

Vocabulary:

- 1 Usually use improper vocabulary and unable to have a conversation
- 2 Often use improper vocabulary but able to be understood
- 3 Able to communicate and use proper vocabulary
- 4 Use proper vocabulary in most situations

Grammar:

- 1 Use incorrect grammar and unable to communicate
- 2 Sometimes use incorrect basic grammar
- 3 Mostly use correct grammar with minor mistakes
- 4 Mostly use correct grammar and proper vocabulary with rare mistakes

Fluency:

- 1 Speak with long pauses, does not complete sentences or unable to respond
- 2 Unable to maintain a conversation
- 3 Able to converse well some of the time
- 4 Speak in a natural rhythm

Speaking assessment is used to measure the students' speaking abilities. There are different scales of speaking assessment. The teacher has to select the suitable scale that fits with students' level and the purpose of assessment.

Related Research

Yooyong (2008) evaluated English speaking learners' ability of Mathayomsuksa 2 learners. The instruments used were three lesson plans, pre/post speaking test, teacher's observation form and students' self-assessment form.

Ruenyoot (2010) conducted a study to investigate the English listening and speaking skills through task-based learning of Prathomsuksa 3 learners. The instruments used were four task-based learning lesson plans, lesson plan observation form, pre/post-test on English for listening and speaking skills, task evaluation form, and learning-log.

Vadhanamra (1996) conducted a study to investigate the effects of using task-based activities on English language communicative ability. The subjects were two groups of second year students. The first group was the experimental group taught by task-based activities and the second was the control group taught by using the instructor textbook activities which were teacher-centered. Two instruments were lesson plans for the experimental and the control groups and test of ability in using English for communication. All of these studies' results revealed significantly higher English language abilities among students after the studies were performed. The experiment results were higher at the .01 level after the post-test.

Sae-Ong (2010) studied English speaking ability of Mathayomsuksa 4 learners through task-based learning. The instruments used were seven lesson plans, pre/post speaking test, teacher's observation form, learners' self-assessment form, and group work assessment. Arumporn (2004) studied Mathayomsuksa 4 English speaking learners' ability through task-based learning and assigned into experimental and control groups. The experimental group was taught through task-based learning and

the control group was taught through the 3-P's model (Presentation-Practice-Production). The instruments used were an English speaking test, students' self-assessment form and teachers' observation form. Thongpubal(2010) conducted a study to investigate the communicative English speaking ability of Mathayomsuksa 3 learners. The research instruments used were six task-based learning lesson plans, pre/post speaking ability test, self-assessment questionnaire on speaking ability, rubric-scoring form on students learning behavior, and questionnaire on students' attitude towards studying communicative English speaking. The results of these studies revealed significantly higher English language abilities among students after the studies were performed. The experiment results were higher at the .05 level after the post-test.

Wongkai (2004) studied English speaking ability of adult learners and compared speaking ability of the learners before and after using task-based learning. The participants were 12 first-year adult learners. The instruments used for this research were the needs survey, lesson evaluation form, speaking ability evaluation form and speaking ability test given before and after task-based learning activities.

Muangyot (2010) conducted a study to compare English listening-speaking skills and self-confidence of 24 Mathayomsuksa 5 students before and after learning through task-based learning on tourism. The instruments used were English listening-speaking lesson plans, listening-speaking abilities test and questionnaire on self-confidence. The results of these studies showed that English language abilities of learners using task-based learning increased significantly after studying using task-based learning.

In another study, Murad (2009) conducted a study to investigate the effects of

task-based language teaching to develop the speaking skills of eleventh grade learners and their attitudes towards English. The instruments used in this study were pre/post tests of speaking skills and an attitudinal questionnaire. The researcher conducted the research with two sample groups: an experimental group taught by the task-based program (TBP) and a control group taught conventionally. The results of the study showed a statistically significant difference (.05) between students' scores due to the teaching procedure in favor of the experimental group.

All of these investigations pinpoint the fact that Task-based Learning (TBL) helps learners improve their listening and speaking abilities based on the results of the post-test scores. It would therefore be beneficial to investigate whether TBL strategies may help Thai students improve their listening and speaking skills. The present study seeks to determine the importance of TBL and whether or not it will be effective in improving the English listening and speaking skills of Thai students.

Summary of Chapter

Chapter focuses on a review of related literature. It goes into an in-depth description of task-based learning. Task components and phases of a task are discussed along with relevant information. There are many different types of tasks and these are described and discussed. Next follows a section on English listening with the significance of listening being highlighted. The purpose of listening is the next section, followed by listening teaching strategies. There are different types of listening activities and these are discussed along with listening assessment. Next is a section on English speaking with the significance of speaking, speaking teaching strategies, types

of speaking activities, and speaking assessment. Finally a review of related literature takes place.



CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the study is to study the effectiveness of task-based learning on improving English listening and English speaking abilities of Mattayomsuksa 1 students. This chapter describes the key elements of the research methodology of this study, namely:

- a) Research Design;
- b) Population and participants;
- c) Research instruments;
- d) Data collection; and
- e) Data analysis.

Research Design

The study was the quasi-experimental, one group pre-test – post-test design.

Population and Participants.

The researcher was granted permission to conduct the research with the Mattayomsuksa 1 students of Piboonprachasan School. The school has five Mattayomsuksa 1 classes totaling 190 students, with each class being a good balance of low to high achievers. The participants were 30 students chosen by convenient sampling. As a guest of Piboonprachasan School, the researcher used this sampling method due to the convenience it offered the school and researcher in terms of teaching schedule and minimal distribution caused to the students.

Duration.

The study was conducted over seven weeks in the second semester of the 2011 academic year. The four hours of instruction each week were split into two equal lessons. The first week included a two hour introduction lesson comprising an explanation of the purpose of the study, learner roles, assessment and method. The second lesson was comprised entirely of a two hour pre-test. Lessons were then conducted from week two until the first lesson of week seven. The two hour post-test took place during the last lesson of week seven. Thus the total face-to-face teaching time was 22 hours.

Variables

The variables in this study are as follows:

- (a) Independent variable is task-based learning
- (b) Dependent variables are English listening and speaking abilities

Research Instruments

This study examines the use of task-based learning to develop English listening and speaking abilities. The following research instruments were applied in this study for qualitative and quantitative data collection.

Task-based learning lesson plans.

Lesson plans were designed by reviewing research written about task-based learning, listening and speaking, secondary English curriculum in terms of purpose, content, grammar structure, phrases and word-list. The textbook which has been approved by the Ministry of Education which contains many conversations, real-world places and published materials was also used.

The task model follows Willis (1996) for the different phases of the task.

Willis describes the different task phases as the 'pre-task', 'task-cycle' and 'language focus'. In the pre-task phase the teacher introduces the topic, models the task and recalls/introduces language. The task-cycle phase sees students working in pairs or groups to complete tasks given by the teacher. Meanwhile, the teacher monitors students and guides them. Afterwards, students prepare and report to the whole class while the teacher observes and gives positive feedback. In the language focus the students and teacher will work together. Students then practice the language that was learned. The lesson plans covered 6 key topics used to teach over 6.5 weeks of the experiment.

Lesson plans were discussed, checked, and feedback was provided by professionals, including school teachers, native speakers and advisors. The lesson plans were designed to adapt the textbook materials into meaningful tasks and provide ample opportunities for maximum learner participation. (See Appendix A)

English listening test and English speaking test.

The English Listening and Speaking Test given in week one, and repeated in week seven, was designed using the Secondary Basic Core Curriculum 2008 for Mattayomsuksa 1 with guidelines and contents from text book approved by the Ministry of Education (2008). The activities, assessment and evaluation in listening and speaking competency were analyzed based on concepts adapted from Heaton (1990), Ur (1996) and Underhill (1987). The major focus was speaking naturally in authentic situations. Previous data and input were used to create the framework for speaking assessment and evaluation.

The test consisted of two parts. Part one was an objective listening test made up of 15 multiple choice questions. For each question a recording was played twice. Students were given three minutes to read corresponding question and select from three possible answers written on the test paper. (See Appendix B)

Part two was a set of ten interview questions. The total score was fifteen points. The speaking evaluation rate adapted from Clark (1986 as cited in Wongsothorn, 1986) and Heaton, J.B. (1990). The components of assessment included fluency, grammar, vocabulary, content and pronunciation. Students would be asked ten questions randomly. (See Appendix C)

The researcher had two assistants, one of which is a native speaker who orally asked questions and an English Teacher at Piboonprachasan. The scores were rated on each category according to student performance. The English listening and speaking test was conducted before (lesson 2, week 1) and after (week 7, lesson 2) experiment time period. Prior to giving the test experts assessed content validity by using IOC (Item-Objective Congruence) scale. The results given by the evaluators were used to find the consistency index between the test and the objectives.

Speaking assessment.

Marking of the speaking component of the English Listening and Speaking Test followed the speaking assessment criteria developed by Clark (1986 as cited in Wongsothorn, 2001, p. 233-256) and Heaton, J.B(1990, p. 70-71). The components of assessment included fluency, grammar, vocabulary, contents and pronunciation.

(See Appendix D, E)

Teaching log.

Teaching log was used primarily as a tool to obtain additional information for findings by the researcher, who observed and recorded qualitative data over the seven week period. After each lesson the key observations and outcomes of the lesson were noted by the researcher in a relatively informal manner. (See Appendix F)

Data collection procedure

The first step introduced the purpose of the study, method, activities and assessment to students, secondly the pre-test was given. The lesson applied task-based learning and was taught by the experimental group over a period of 7 weeks. The teaching log was recorded after each lesson. The post-test was given during the last week. Finally, the data was analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively.

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed to find out whether the hypotheses of this study are correct. The first hypothesis was to examine whether the use of task-based learning is effective in developing students' English listening ability. The hypothesis was analyzed based on language use in listening and speaking English effectively through communication. The English listening ability scores on the pre-test and post-test were computed and converted into mean scores. The significance was found with the t-test based on the total number of bases in the dependent sample. The steps of the data analysis process involved determining the mean and standard deviation of each student to check whether or not the mean scores of pre-test and post-test were significantly different.

The second hypothesis was to examine whether speaking ability improved after learning through task-based learning. The rating scores of the speaking assessment forms were calculated and converted into mean scores, then checked to see whether or not the mean scores of the pre-test and post-test were significantly different.

The third hypothesis was to examine the students' opinions about task-based learning and teaching activities are will be more positive. The teaching logs were recoded by researcher after each lesson for research findings.

In conclusion, the data was displayed, analyzed and interpreted to produce the findings of this study. The analysis and interpretations were based on learners' pre-test and post-test scores.

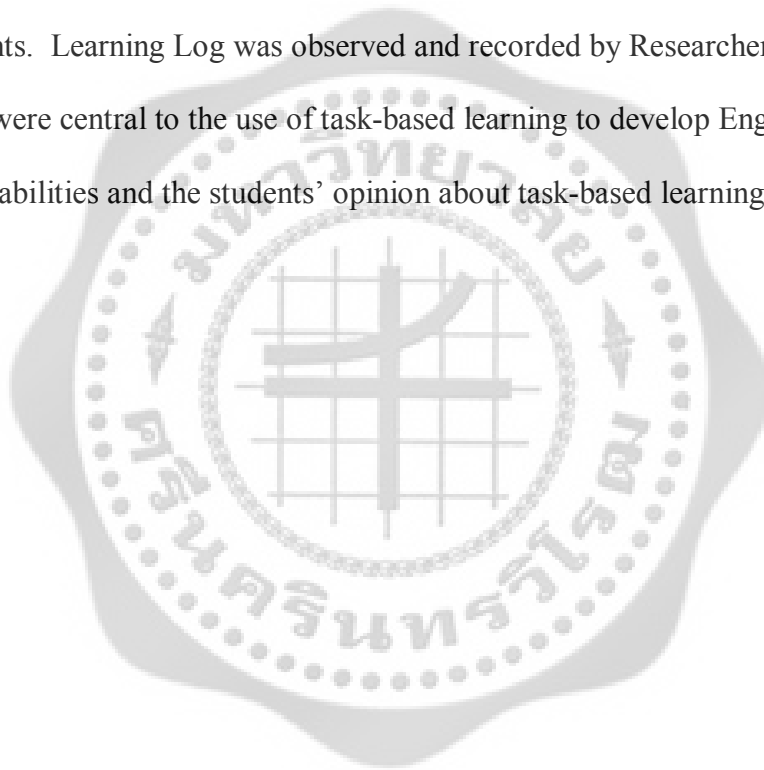
Summary of Chapter

Chapter 3 discusses the methodology used in the course of the research. The research design is mentioned. In addition, the chapter talks about population and participants, duration of the study, and variables. The following research instruments are discussed: task-based learning lesson plans, English listening and speaking test, speaking assessment, and teaching log. To close out the chapter, the data collection procedure and data analysis are discussed.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of the study was to analyze the use of task-based learning to improve English listening and speaking abilities. The participants of the study were Mattayomsuksa 1 students at Piboonprachasan School, Bangkok. Data from this study were obtained through English listening and speaking tests answered by the participants. Learning Log was observed and recorded by Researcher. The research findings were central to the use of task-based learning to develop English listening and speaking abilities and the students' opinion about task-based learning and teaching activities.



Objective 1: To examine the use of task-based learning to improve English listening ability.

Research Question: Answered by English listening tests and teaching log.

To answer this research question, the mean scores of the learners' English listening ability on pre-test and post-test were compared. A dependent t-test was used in this case.

Table 1 illustrates the comparison between the mean pre- and post-test scores.

Table 1: *A Comparison of the Mean Scores on Pre-test and Post-test*

English	N	\bar{X}	SD	ΣD	ΣD^2	t
Listening ability						
Pre-test	30	4.73	2.09			
Post-test	30	10.30	2.10	167	1013	17.98*

As illustrated in table 1, it was found that the English listening ability of Mattayomsuksa 1 students was significantly higher after post-test at the .01 level. The participants had significantly higher mean scores on the post-test ($M = 10.30$, $SD = 2.10$) than the pre-test ($M = 4.73$, $SD = 2.09$).

Objective 2: To examine the use of task-based learning to improve English speaking ability.

Research Question: Answered by English speaking tests and teaching log.

To answer this research question, the mean scores of the learners' English speaking ability on pre-test and post-test were compared. An independent t-test was used in this case.

Table 2 illustrates the comparison between the mean pre- and post-test scores.

Table 2: *A Comparison of the Mean Scores on Pre-test and Post-test*

English speaking ability	N	\bar{X}	SD	ΣD	ΣD^2	t
Pre-test	30	6.73	1.53	131	635	16.23*
Post-test	30	11.27	1.35			

As illustrated in table 2, it was found that the English speaking ability of Mattayomsuksa 1 student was significantly higher after Post-test at the .01 level. The participants had significantly higher mean scores on the post-test ($M = 11.27$, $SD = 1.35$) than the pre-test ($M = 6.73$, $SD = 1.53$).

Objective 3: To examine whether the students' opinions about task-based learning and teaching activities were more positive.

Research Question: Answered by teaching log.

To answer this research question, the teaching log was used primarily as a tool to get additional information for findings by the researcher, who observed and recorded qualitative data over the four task-based lessons which included three points as follows:

What went well:

The students enjoyed class activities and were motivated in their learning. They paid attention, helped each other and worked together to finish tasks given by teacher. The students responded well to the topics. Most of the vocabulary was already known by the students and in addition they worked hard to learn new vocabulary. Known vocabulary helped students become more confident and more communicative.

The researcher as a guest was non-threatening and welcoming to students. The researcher told them not to worry regards making mistakes while they were talking to their friends, presenting or asking questions of the teacher. The researcher told them that it was important in communicating to try to get the meaning across of what they wanted to say and to worry about grammatical form later. This has the effect in the class environment in making students feel more relaxed and confident. They tried to talk to their friends with broken English and most of the time used body language to communicate.

Students enjoyed lessons even if they were unfamiliar with the new teaching method and class activities. The variety of tasks such as listening, problem solving,

comparing and information gap were interesting and engaging for students to learn. Most students commented that task-based learning was the best way of learning English they had ever experienced. They also said that they felt free not to worry about grammatical errors which allowed them to communicate more freely and that English language learning wasn't as difficult as they perceived it to be. Students enjoyed working in pairs and in small groups which gave them an opportunity to exchange language, ideas and learn from each other. They said that they had learned more from their friends while working together. The class environment was relaxed and enjoyable.

Difficulties:

The students were not previously familiar with this method of instruction and therefore required lots of guidance and motivation. It took lots of diligence on the part of the researcher to stick to the schedule. The researcher discovered through the course of the lessons that making small groups such as pairs was not ideal. Large groups of 6 or more were not ideal either. Small groups were not ideal due to the fact that there was not enough class time for one researcher to guide 15 pairs of students. On the other hand, groups of 6 or more were also problematic because the researcher soon discovered that in many groups only 3 or 4 students were working while the others were not paying attention to the task. Over time the researcher learned that the ideal group size was 3 to 4 students.

Suggestions:

The researcher discovered during the lessons that the task should be suitable to the level of the students and also flexible in order to accommodate high and low

learners. For example, the researcher gave students a task to discuss their dream job and their reasons for wanting each job. This topic was found to be too open because this topic led to multiple jobs and reasons for wanting a specific job. The researcher could not possibly teach all of the language that was necessary to cover all jobs. In addition, it was hard to predict which jobs and which reasons students would want to discuss. In the end, the researcher decided to limit the lesson to only cover a set of jobs, their job descriptions and where do they want to live while omitting the reasons for wanting a job. Listening and speaking tasks should remain focused. Writing should be limited only to a few notes or ideas. The teacher should monitor the students closely in order to make sure they stay on track. Content chosen should include known vocabulary and topics of interest to students. A task group size of three or four students is ideal.

Summary of chapter

Chapter 4 discusses the findings of the study and examines the research questions and the study results. All three research objectives are laid out one by one. Accompanying each research objective there is a discussion relevant to the research question and a table showing the results of the study for that research question. Following each table, the researcher reviews the findings. Some of the things that went well are discussed by the researcher as well as some of the difficulties experienced by the researcher. Some suggestions of things that the researcher learned during the experiment are also discussed during this chapter.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of the study was to examine the use of task-based learning to improve English listening and speaking abilities and to examine the students' opinions about task-based learning and teaching activities will be more positive. The participants of the study were Mattayomsuksa 1 students at Piboonprachasan School, Bangkok. Data from this study was obtained through an English listening multiple-choice test and a set of ten interview question speaking tests answered by the participants. The data was analyzed according to the following objectives:

1. To examine the use of task-based learning to develop English listening ability of Mattayomsuksa 1 at Piboonprachasan.
2. To examine the use of task-based learning to develop English speaking ability of Mattayomsuksa 1 at Piboonprachasan.
3. To examine the students' opinion about task-based learning and teaching activities are will be more positive.

In this chapter, the results of the study are discussed in accordance with each objective. Discussions of the findings are included, as are recommendations and for further studies.

Research Findings

1. Students' English listening ability was significantly improved at the .01 level after learning through a task-based learning approach.
2. Students' English speaking ability was significantly improved at the .01 level after learning through a task-based learning approach.

3. Students' opinions about task-based learning and teaching activities were more positive.

Discussion of the Findings

The purpose of the study was to determine whether task-based learning was effective in improving the English listening and speaking of students in Mattayomsuksa 1 at Piboonprachasan School. The results found that the participants who studied through task-based learning lessons improved their listening and speaking abilities significantly. The process of task-based learning allowed the students to express themselves freely and with less fear of mistakes. In addition, they gained confidence over the course of the experiment. A non-threatening and welcoming teaching personality makes class less stressful, this makes students feel relaxed and willing to co-operate. Well-chosen and appropriate tasks engaged students to learn. Another factor in the success of task-based learning was well chosen content that students could relate to easily. Reflections from the learning log demonstrated that the students felt positive about learning English through task-based learning.

Foster & Skehan (as cited in Ellis, 2003, p.248) state "that when students were given detailed guidance they tended to prioritize content with resulting gains in complexity when they performed the task". The researcher drew on Foster and Skehan's research by building the pre-task phase to make sure the students received comprehensive input in the form of vocabulary, sentence structure, and grammatical needs and ideas to be contained in upcoming input. These inputs were presented in various activities such as drawing, guessing and miming words, matching words and meaning, and answering questions. These inputs provided the students with opportunities to engage in learning the language. The tasks were demonstrated with

clear steps and directions. The sufficient guidelines during the pre-task helped students become more confident and free to communicate in order to better achieve learning goals.

The task-cycle phase allowed students to work together. They shared their ideas, exchanged language background and worked together to solve problems. There was a mix between weak and strong students in each group with the strong students being encouraged to help and explain things to the weak students. The researcher allowed a few struggling students to use Thai to communicate in order to get the meaning across but the results had to be in English. The working environment was very relaxed. Students provided feedback saying that they liked learning language through task-based learning because they were able to communicate freely with less worry about grammar or sentence structure. The previous sentence is re-enforced by Krashen and Terrell (as cited in Nunan, 2004, p.21) who state that “language is best taught when it is being used to transmit messages, not when it is explicitly taught for conscious learning”. The planning phase allowed students to practice amongst their groups until they became fluent and more confident before they presented to class. In the report phase the majority of the students felt confident to speak out in front of class while a few others were too shy and instead decided to demonstrate by drawing, miming or acting as a way to help them model what they wanted to say. The researcher acted as a motivator and observer and provided positive feedback as needed. The audience shared their findings with their classmates. Each member of the audience listened and took notes then asked questions to the presenters. These interactions helped students practice their listening and speaking skills.

The language focus phase which is a central theme of the post-task, allowed students the opportunity to analyze and practice linguistic features that arose from the task. Nunan (2004, p. 101) indicated that focus on form should come later on in the lesson during the language phase. Language analyzed after the task is meant to focus on form. During the post-task, careful language focus allowed students to speak freely during the task without interruption of language input. This helped students to develop their language ability in a natural way. The practice phase allowed students to apply the language they had learned. The researcher noticed that students became more comfortable with language use at this point. This occurred because they had received lots of language input and they were able to replicate and apply what they had learned. Saville-Troike (2006, p.35) states that learners respond to linguistic input by repeating and practicing the language that they hear and when they receive reinforcement for their response learning occurs. The implication of this is that practice makes perfect.

Due to the steps shown above, the students were able to develop their language abilities consistently over the course of the task. The most productive phase was the report phase in which students asked questions to each other in rotating roles of listener and speaker. According to the learning log, students were diligent in developing their vocabulary and grammar due to all of the listening and speaking practice in the course of the task. Each phase of task-based learning emphasized the need for students to use language in real-life situations in order to achieve effective completion of the task.

Another important factor was the non-threatening and less stressful class environment. This helped students' success within task-based learning. From the first

day of meeting students the researcher presented a friendly, non-judgmental personality to students. These factors helped students feel comfortable and confident when not worrying about being judged and making mistakes. The teacher always gave positive suggestions and this contributed to improvements in student work. When students trust their teacher they ask more questions and are more willing to work. As Rodriguez-Bonces & Rodriguez-Bonces (2010, p.166) state “researchers believe there is less anxiety and learning is more effective if language form per se is not the priority. If task-based instruction takes place, language learning is more meaningful and natural”. The focus of task-based learning on fostering a comfortable and natural learning environment combined with a teacher who the students respected and trusted led to a positive and productive classroom environment. From the beginning of the experiment, the researcher presented a non-threatening personality that built trust and rapport with the students by smiling and reassuring them not to worry when they make mistakes in class. In addition, the researcher told the students to focus on the meaning they wanted to get across and not to worry about perfect language form. This led to a more open and productive classroom. The researcher agrees with Willis & Willis (as cited in Rodriguez-Bonces & Rodriguez-Bonces, 2010, p. 167) who state that teachers who engage in task-based learning promote real language use and when doing so they become leaders and organizers of discussion, managers of group or pair work, motivators to engage students in performing tasks and language experts to provide language feedback when needed.

Teaching log recorded after each task-based learning lesson indicated that the students were motivated and excited by the variety and challenge of class activities. In addition, many of the class activities were new for students. They paid attention

and completed all tasks given by the teacher. Willis & Willis (as cited in Rodriguez-Bonces & Rodriguez-Bonces, 2010, p. 171) say that “a good task not only generates interest and creates an acceptable degree of challenge, but also generates opportunities for learners to experience and activate as much language as possible”. The content was made up of things that related to students' daily lives such as birthdays, family, neighborhood and dream job. These topics aided in motivating students as they were curious to share about themselves with their friends and vice versa. The content was easy to relate to their real life. Saville-Troike (2006, p. 153) states that successful second language acquisition requires learners to be actively engaged. The researcher chose topics and content that would interest the students in order to make them more interested and motivated.

According to the teaching log, it was shown that students' opinion about task based learning and teaching were more positive. The students commented to the researcher that they feel less fear of grammar mistakes when they try to communicate to friends and teachers. They also said that English isn't as difficult as they use to believe. They had fun while learning. They had a chance to exchange their knowledge with their friends, solving problems, sharing opinions and making decisions together while they completed the tasks. They help each other with planning and practicing together for presentations with teacher support. They feel more confident of speaking in front of class and motivated to learn further.

The findings of the study on the use of task-based learning to develop English listening and speaking abilities found that the significance was higher at the .01 level which was similar to the hypotheses statements of Yooyong (2008), Thongpubal (2010), Wongkai (2004), Arumporn (2004), Muangyot (2010), and Ruenyoot (2010).

The previous studies show that the use of task-based learning effectively developed students' English abilities. These studies showed similar levels of success in implementing task-based learning due to the task component arrangement.

In conclusion the study found that task-based learning was effective in improving students' listening and speaking abilities. The structure of task-based learning allowed students to express themselves freely and to practice real-world language more than they would in a normal classroom. The keys to a successful task-based learning classroom were having a teacher that was welcoming, smiling and provided positive reinforcement to students. The researcher was able to gain the trust of the students and this allowed students to feel more comfortable to express themselves. Task-based learning provided ample opportunities for speaking and listening practice and the topics covered were of interest to the students. Overall the points above serve to show why task-based learning was effective in improving the speaking and listening abilities of students.

Recommendations for Practice

According to the findings and additional information in the teaching log, task-based learning was shown to be effective in developing listening and speaking abilities. For this reason the use of task-based learning should be used as an alternative way of teaching English with following suggestions:

1. The topic should be about a real-life situation and personal so students can relate it to their daily life.

2. The task should have clear goals and be suitable to the student level.

Teachers should assign a set amount of time for a task. They should try not to extend this amount if students request more time because in real life situations there would

not be any time to prepare or extend a situation. In addition, the directions should not be too complicated so students can achieve the intended learning goal.

3. During pre-task the teacher should not introduce too many vocabulary words. This will prevent students from getting overwhelmed. There should be enough vocabulary words to cover the task. Some of the vocabulary words introduced should be known language in order that students can feel more confident in order to produce the task.

4. Work should be done in pairs or small groups. The teacher should arrange the activity in small groups or pairs so that students can share their language and ideas with their friends and create a productive environment. Each group should be a mix of advanced and low level students so that they can exchange language and ideas with each other. The teacher should determine groups for students so they can work with other people instead of their close friends.

5. Presentation stage should be set up casually so students feel relaxed and comfortable. When the teacher sits close by students feel more comfortable to ask for feedback or to ask questions. The teacher should give positive feedback to encourage students.

Limitation of the Study

Even though task-based learning proved the hypothesis that it was effective in developing English listening and speaking abilities, a few issues remained. The study was limited to Thai Mattayomsuksa 1 students therefore we don't know its potential effectiveness with other groups of students. The time limit of the study may have affected progress of students' listening and speaking. If the study time had been extended, the results might have been different. The convenience sampling method is

imperfect because the matching of students to a researcher is mostly determined based on availability and convenience of scheduling, therefore it is not fully optimized for the needs of the study.

Recommendations for Further Studies

Recommendations for further studies are as follows:

1. Task-based learning could be implemented in the teaching of other languages.
2. Task-based learning studies could be conducted with the goal of developing the use and knowledge of linguistic elements.
3. Teacher education should be modified to train teachers in task-based language teaching so that all teachers could apply these methods in the classroom.
4. Research comparing task-based learning effectiveness with grammatical teaching effectiveness should be performed in order to get a better grasp on the strengths and weaknesses of each method in comparison.
5. Research could be conducted to measure the effectiveness of task-based learning on developing language skills of lower elementary learners.

Summary of Chapter

This chapter focuses on the conclusion and discussion and a review of the study. The research findings were stated and discussed in depth. The purpose of the study was to determine whether task-based learning was effective in improving the English listening and speaking of students in Mattayomsuksa 1 at Piboonprachasan School. The results found that the participants who studied through task-based learning lessons improved their listening and speaking abilities significantly.

The recommendations for practice are laid out next, followed by limitations of the study, and finally recommendations for further studies are discussed.





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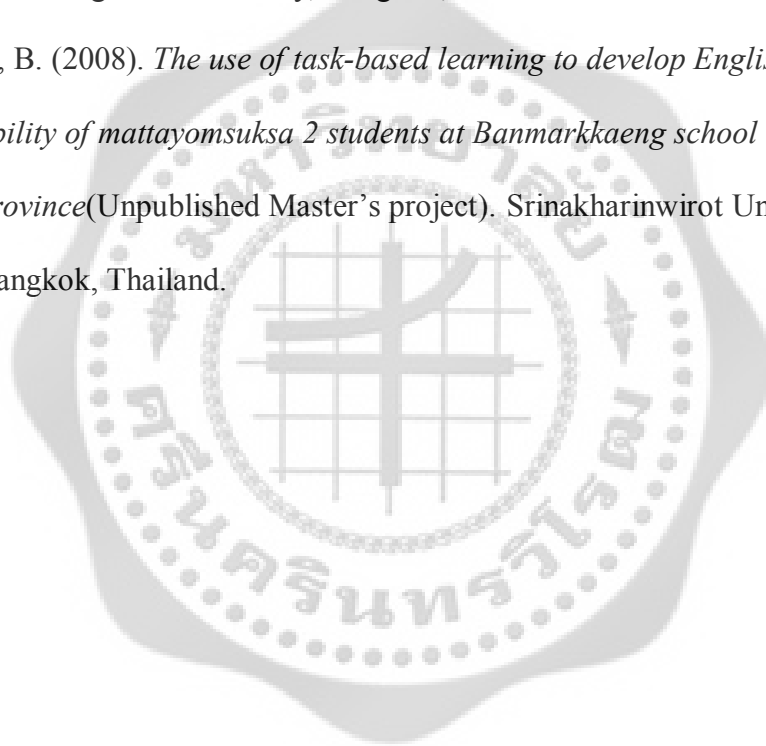
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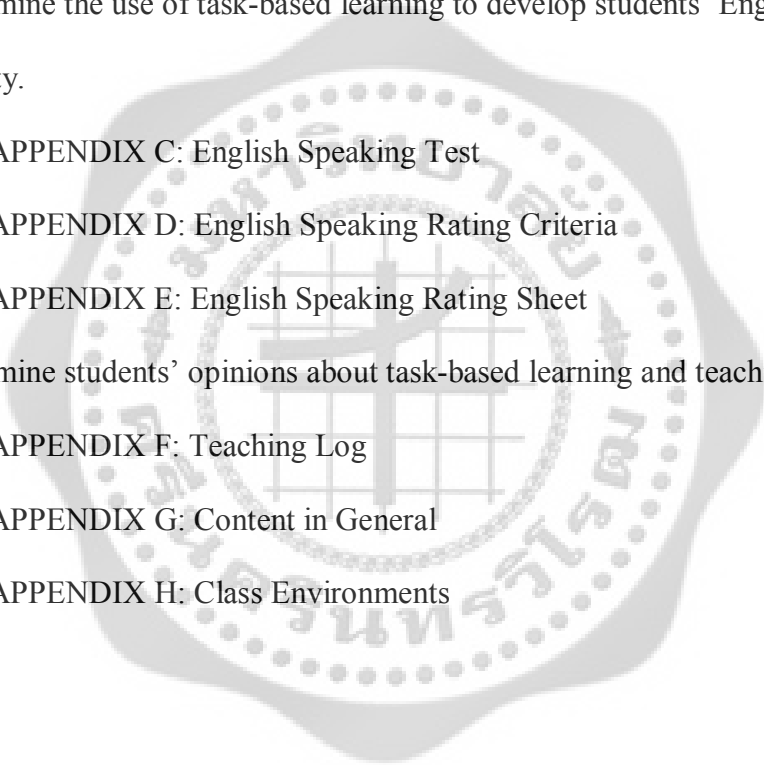
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APPENDICES

1. To examine the use of task-based learning to develop students' English Listening ability.
 - APPENDIX A: Task-based Learning Lesson Plan
 - APPENDIX B: English Listening Test
 2. To examine the use of task-based learning to develop students' English Speaking ability.
 - APPENDIX C: English Speaking Test
 - APPENDIX D: English Speaking Rating Criteria
 - APPENDIX E: English Speaking Rating Sheet
 3. To examine students' opinions about task-based learning and teaching activities
 - APPENDIX F: Teaching Log
 - APPENDIX G: Content in General
 - APPENDIX H: Class Environments
- 

Lesson Plan**APPENDIX A****Subject:** English (E 201101)**Teacher:** Jidapa Promruang**Class:** M. 1**Time:** 6 hours**Topic:** Jobs**No. of Student:** 30**Terminal Objectives:** By the end of the lesson, learners will be able to:

Use language about jobs to communicate through task-based learning and give a presentation about their project with their group.

Enabling Objectives: By the end of the lesson, learners will be able to:

- a) Listen then make conclusions about what they heard.
- b) Be able to match pictures with sentences.
- c) Present in front of class about their dream job.
- d) Ask and answer questions after listening to class presentation.

Contents:

Vocabulary: Careers and job descriptions.

Structure: Simple sentences and question words.

Function: Ask and answer questions about jobs and job descriptions.

Procedures:**Pre-task.**

- a) Teacher introduces and defines the topic.
- b) Teacher asks students to listen to tape recording about jobs then asks students to come up with questions based on what they heard.
- c) Teacher introduces vocabulary, useful words, and phrases.

- d) Teacher shows pictures then reads aloud about different jobs.
- e) In pairs, students discuss about what they hear.
- f) Teacher reads again then students match pictures and job descriptions.

Task cycle.

Task

- a) Students interview each other about their dream job, where they want to live and discuss their dream job's job description.
- b) Students do the task in pairs/small groups.
- c) Teacher monitors students and offers encouragement and support.
- d) Teacher circulates around class checking task progress and helping students.

Planning

- a) Teacher ensures that the purpose of the report is clear and acts as a language adviser.
- b) Teacher helps students rehearse oral reports.

Report

- a) Teacher asks students to take note of the language they have used and heard from other group reports.
- b) Teacher asks student audience members to come up with 3 questions for each group while they listen to reports then ask questions after groups finish reporting.
- c) Teacher gives brief comments/feedback on content and form.
- d) The teacher shares and comments on the content of the students' reports, possibly re-phrasing, but gives no public correction.

Post-task

Language Analysis

- a) Teacher plays a recording of fluent speakers performing the same task.
- b) Teacher sets up a language-focused task, based on the text students have heard and their written notes.
- c) The teacher puts students to work, and then students continue working in pairs.
- d) The teacher goes around helping, reviewing student work, and writing relevant language up on the board.
- e) Teacher brings other useful words, phrases and patterns to students' attention by picking up on language items from the report stage.
- f) Teacher asks students to take notes while listening.

Practice

- a) Teacher ask students to perform role plays in groups of three

Materials & Resources:

- b) Tape player
- c) Worksheet
- d) Papers and Markers

Evaluations:

- a) Task evaluation
- b) Students' task compilation

English Listening Test

APPENDIX B:

Subject: English (E201101)

Class: M.1

Number of students: 30

Listening Test

Part I.

Directions: Listen to conversation then select the correct answer.

1. Question: When is John's birthday?

a.

SEPTEMBER 2012						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
30						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

b.

AUGUST 2012						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

c.

JANUARY 2012						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Directions: Listen to conversation then select the correct answer.

2. Question: How does Kelly go to school?

- a. By taxi
- b. By bus
- c. By train

3. Question: What road does Kelly live on?

- a. _____
Rama 9 road

- b. _____
Suthisan road

- c. _____
Sukhumwit road

4. Question: Where is Kelly's house?

- a. in front of Tesco Lotus
- b. next to the Church
- c. opposite from the Central mall

Directions: Listen to conversation then select the correct answer.

5. Question: How many people are there in Ji's family?

- a. There are five people.
- b. There are three people.
- c. There are seven people.

6. Question: How many sisters does Ji have?

- a. 4
- b. 2
- c. 1

Directions: Listen to conversation then select the correct answer.

7. Question: What is Jang going to do this weekend?

- a. She is going to visit her friend.
- b. She is going to do homework.
- c. She is going to celebrate her birthday.

8. Question: Where is Jang going on her birthday?

- a. She is going to the park.
- b. She is going to the restaurant.
- c. She is going to the zoo.

9. Question: Who is going to the restaurant with Jang?

- a. Her friends
- b. Her family
- c. Her teacher

Directions: Listen to conversation then select the correct answer.

10. Question: Where is the Tesco Lotus?

- a. Its across from her house.
- b. It's next to the her house
- c. It's behind her house

11. Question: How many internet cafés are there in Bob's neighborhood?

- a. Two

b. Five

c. Four

12. Question: Where does Bob's live?

a. He lives in Bangna.

b. He lives in Dindaeng.

c. He lives in Sukhumwit.

Part II

Directions: Listen to story then select the correct answer.

13. Question: What does Ning's father do for work?

a. He is a teacher.

b. He is a doctor.

c. He is a chef.

14. Question: What does Ning's mother do for work?

a. She is housekeeper.

b. She is nurse.

c. She is a teacher.

15. Question: What is Ning's dream job?

a. Engineer

b. Actress

c. Doctor

Listening Tape Script

Part I.

Directions: Listen to tape and select the correct answer.

Tape script (Question 1).

Dave: Hey, John. When is your birthday?

John : It's on August 9. When is your birthday, Dave?

Dave: My birthday is on January 5.

Question: When is John's birthday?

Tape script (Question 2-4)

Josh: Where do you live, Kelly?

Kelly: I live on Suthisan road.

Josh: Where is your house?

Kelly: My house is opposite from the Central mall.

Josh: How do you come to school?

Kelly: I take bus number 12.

Question: How does Kelly go to school?

Question: What road does Kelly live on?

Question: Where is Kelly's house?

Tape script (Question 5-6)

Arm: Hey, Ji how many people are there in your family?

Ji : There are seven people in my family .

Arm: Do you have any brothers and sisters?

Ji: Yes, I have one two brother and two sisters.

Question: How many people are there in Ji's family?

Question: How many sisters does Ji have?

Tape script (Question 7-9)

Alan: Hi Jang, What are you going to do this weekend?

Jang : I am going to celebrate my birthday.

Alan: Really? What day is it?

Jang: It's on Saturday, 23.

Alan: What are you going to do?

Jang: I am going to go to the restaurant with my family.

Question: What is Jang going to do this weekend?

Question: Where is Jang going on her birthday?

Question: Who is going to the restaurant with Jang?

Tape script (Question 10-12)

Anna: Hey, Bob. Where do you live?

Bob: I live in Bangna.

Anna: Is there a Tesco Lotus near your house?

Bob: Yes, there is one just across from my house.

Anna: How many internet cafés are there in your neighborhood?

Bob: There are five of them in my neighborhood.

Question: Where is the Tesco Lotus?

Question: How many internet cafés are there in Bob's neighborhood?

Question: Where does Bob live?

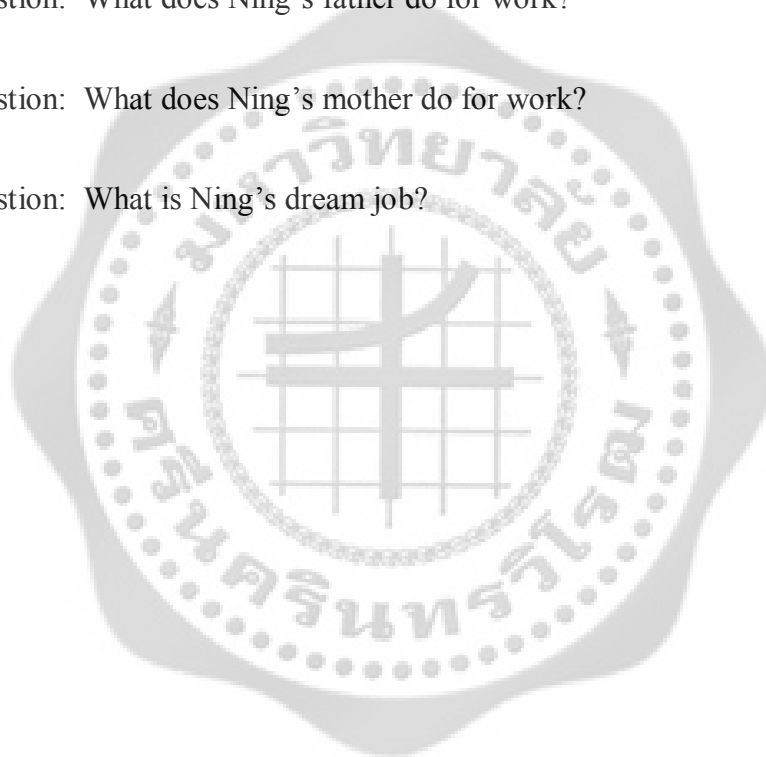
Tape script (Question 13-15)

There are 5 people in Ning's family. Her mom is named Sumalee. She is a nurse. She helps sick people at Bamrungrat hospital. Her dad is named Bob. He is a teacher. He teaches mathematic at Wells International School. When Ning grows up she wants to be a doctor.

Question: What does Ning's father do for work?

Question: What does Ning's mother do for work?

Question: What is Ning's dream job?



English Speaking Test**APPENDIX C:**

Directions: Listen carefully to interview questions then answer.

1. When is your birthday?
 - a) How old are you?
 - b) What day is today?
2. What are you going to do on your birthday?
 - a) Who...with? Where?
3. How many people are there in your family?
 - a) Who are they?
4. How many brothers and sisters do you have?
 - a) How old are they?
5. Where do you live?
 - a) Where is your house?
6. How do you go to school?
 - a) How long does it take?
7. Is there a 7-11 near your house?
 - a) How many of them?
8. What does your father do for work?
 - a) Where does he works?
9. What does your mother do for work?
 - a) Where does she works?
10. What is your dream job?
 - a) What do you want to be when you grow up?
 - b) Where do you want to live?

English Speaking Rating Criteria APPENDIX D:

Category	Description
Fluency	3 Speaks fluently with confidence and without pauses 2 Speaks fluently but some pauses 1 Lacking fluency and confidence and speaks with many pauses
Grammar	3 Uses correct grammar most of the time 2 Uses correct grammar some of the time 1 Rarely uses correct grammar
Vocabulary	3 Uses proper vocabulary most of the time 2 Uses proper vocabulary some of the time 3 Rarely uses proper vocabulary
Pronunciation	3 Pronounces correctly and clearly most of the time 2 Pronounces correctly and clearly some of the time 1 Mis-pronounces words and unclear
Content	3 Speaks accurate and relevant content most of the time 2 Speaks accurate and relevant content some of the time 1 Speaks mostly inaccurate and irrelevant content

Clark (1986 as cited in Wongsothorn, 2539), Heaton, J.B. (1990: 70-71)

Teacher Log

APPENDIX F:

Suggestions/ Feed back

What went well:

Difficulties:

Suggestions:

(.....)

Teacher

___ / ___ / ___

Content in General**APPENDIX G:**

Task-based lesson plans with content applied from English (201101). The vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure is from a textbook sanctioned by Office of Basic Education Commission the contents as follows:

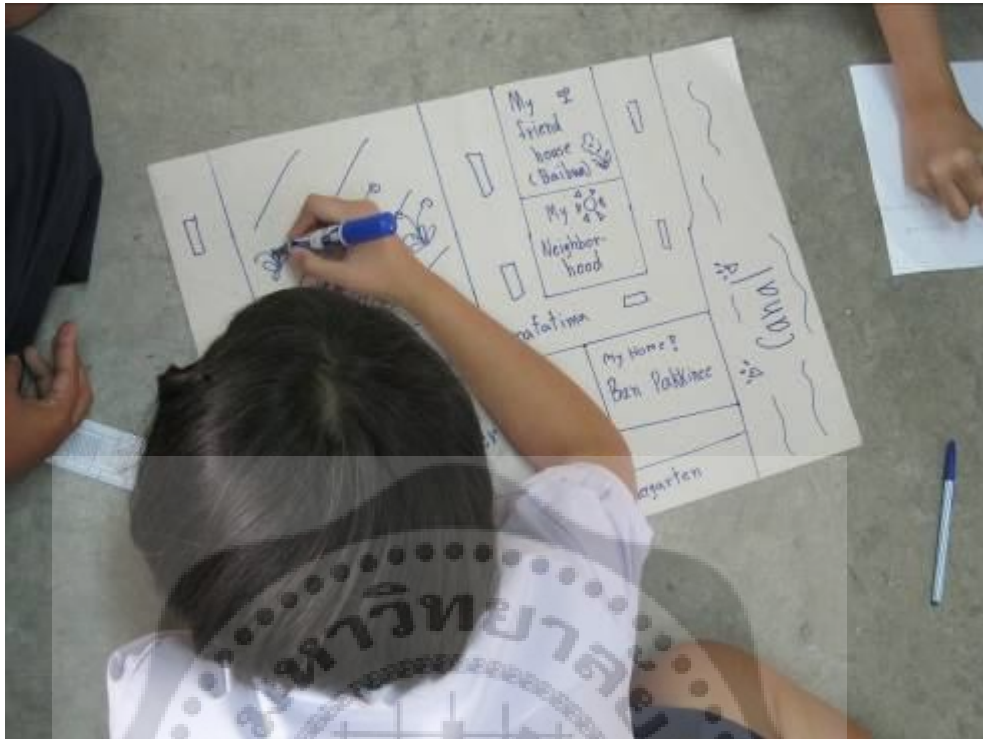
Unit	Time	Lesson	Task
1	1-5	My birthday	Plan birthday party in groups of three. Groups decide what food and drinks they are going to buy, Who they are going to invite and what activities they are going to have.
2	6-10	My families	In pairs, students make a family tree and describe people in their family and what they look like. Other student draws their friend family three.
4	11-16	My neighborhood	Students make a neighborhood map in pair by asking each other then draw their friend's map.
6	21-22	My job	In pair, students interview each other of their dream job, where do they want to live and what is their job description are.



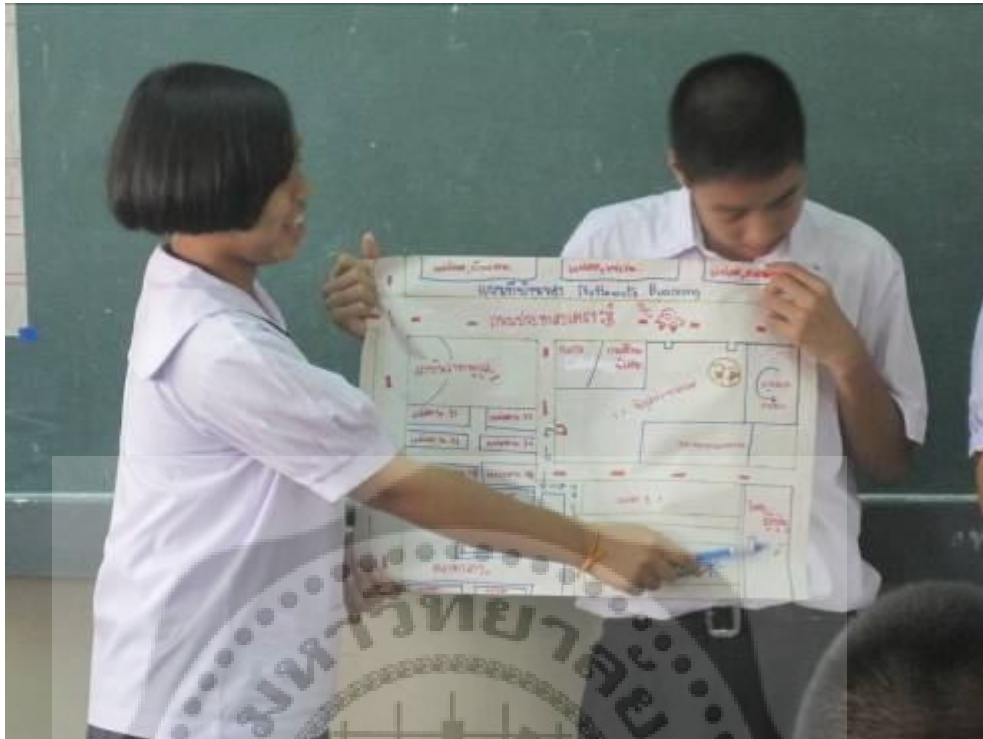
APPENDIX H:

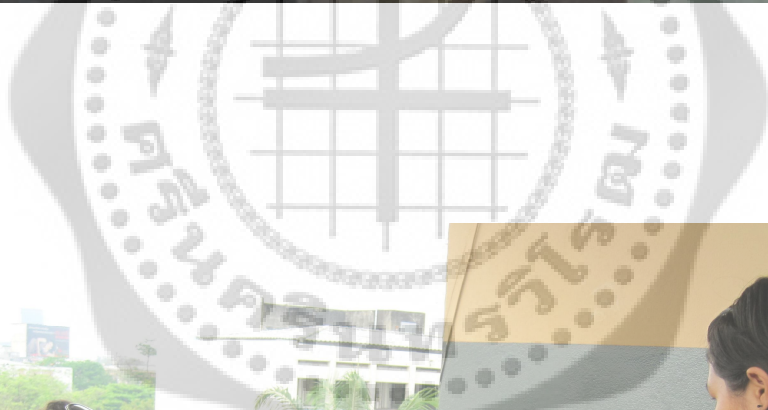














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