

THE EFFECTS OF DRAMA ACTIVITIES ON THAI SECONDARY
STUDENTS' SPEAKING FLUENCY

A THESIS
BY
SIRAYA AKWAREE

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Master of Arts Degree in English
at Srinakharinwirot University
May 2018

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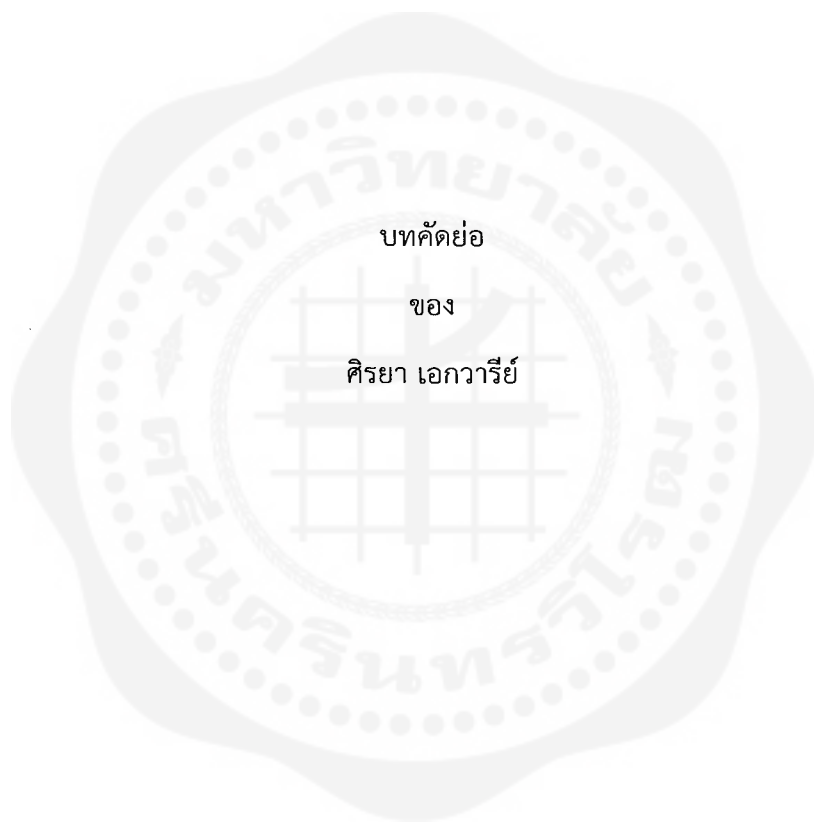
AN ABSTRACT
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The purposes of this study were to examine the effects of drama activities, i.e., mimes, role plays, and guided improvisation, on Thai students' speaking fluency and to explore the students' perception towards the use of drama activities. This research was a quasi-experimental study which involved 42 students attending Grade 9 at Horwang Pathumthani School. The students were selected via convenience sampling method. The duration of the experiment was eight weeks. The instruments in this study included drama-based lesson plans, pre- and post- speaking fluency tests, a questionnaire, and a structured interview. The students' speaking fluency was measured by comparing the pre- and post- speaking fluency tests using dependent *t*-test. At the end of the course, the students completed a questionnaire to state their views towards the teacher's use of drama activities. The students were randomly selected for a structured interview in order to gain more detailed information about their perception. The questionnaire was analyzed for mean and standard deviation and the structured interview was analyzed via content analysis. The findings revealed that the mean scores of students' speaking posttest were higher than those of the pretest. Therefore, the students' speaking fluency had developed after using drama activities at the statistical significance level of .05. Additionally, the students' perception was highly positive after the use of drama activities.

ผลของการใช้กิจกรรมละครที่มีต่อความคล่องแคล่วในการพูดของนักเรียนไทยระดับมัธยมศึกษา



บทคัดย่อ
ของ
ศรียา เอกวารีย์

เสนอต่อบัณฑิตวิทยาลัย มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ เพื่อเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษา

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งานวิจัยนี้มีจุดประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาผลของการใช้กิจกรรมละคร เช่น กิจกรรมละครใบ้ บทบาทสมมติ และ กิจกรรมการแสดงอย่างทันที ที่มีต่อความคล่องแคล่วในการพูดของนักเรียนไทย ระดับมัธยมศึกษา และเพื่อสำรวจแนวความคิดของนักเรียนต่อการใช้กิจกรรมละคร งานวิจัยนี้เป็นการศึกษาในรูปแบบวิจัยกึ่งทดลองโดยมีกลุ่มตัวอย่างคือนักเรียนระดับชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 3 โรงเรียนหอวัง ปทุมธานี จำนวน 42 คน ซึ่งมีระยะเวลาในการวิจัย 8 สัปดาห์ ความคล่องแคล่วในการพูดของนักเรียนจะถูกวัดโดยการเปรียบเทียบผลการทดสอบก่อนและหลังเรียนโดยการใช้สถิติเปรียบเทียบค่าเฉลี่ยระหว่างตัวอย่างกลุ่มเดียว เมื่อสิ้นสุดการทดลองกลุ่มตัวอย่างทำแบบสอบถามวัดแนวความคิดหลังจากเรียนโดยใช้กิจกรรมละคร จากนั้นจะมีการสุ่มนักเรียนจากกลุ่มตัวอย่างมาสัมภาษณ์แบบมีโครงสร้างเพื่อจะได้รับรายละเอียดเพิ่มเติมจากการเรียนโดยใช้กิจกรรมละคร ข้อมูลจากแบบสอบถามจะถูกนำมาวิเคราะห์เพื่อหาค่าเฉลี่ยและค่าเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐาน ในขณะที่ข้อมูลที่ได้จากการสัมภาษณ์แบบมีโครงสร้างจะถูกนำมาวิเคราะห์ผ่านการวิเคราะห์เนื้อหา ผลจากการเปรียบเทียบค่าเฉลี่ยแบบทดสอบก่อนเรียนและหลังเรียนแสดงให้เห็นว่าความคล่องในการพูดของนักเรียนมีการพัฒนาที่ดีขึ้นหลังจากใช้กิจกรรมละครอย่างมีนัยสำคัญทางสถิติที่ระดับ .05 และยังพบอีกว่านักเรียนมีแนวความคิดเชิงบวกต่อการใช้กิจกรรมละครในชั้นเรียน

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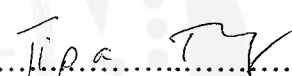
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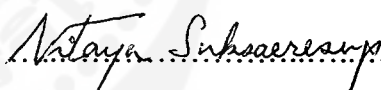
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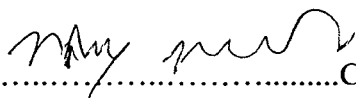
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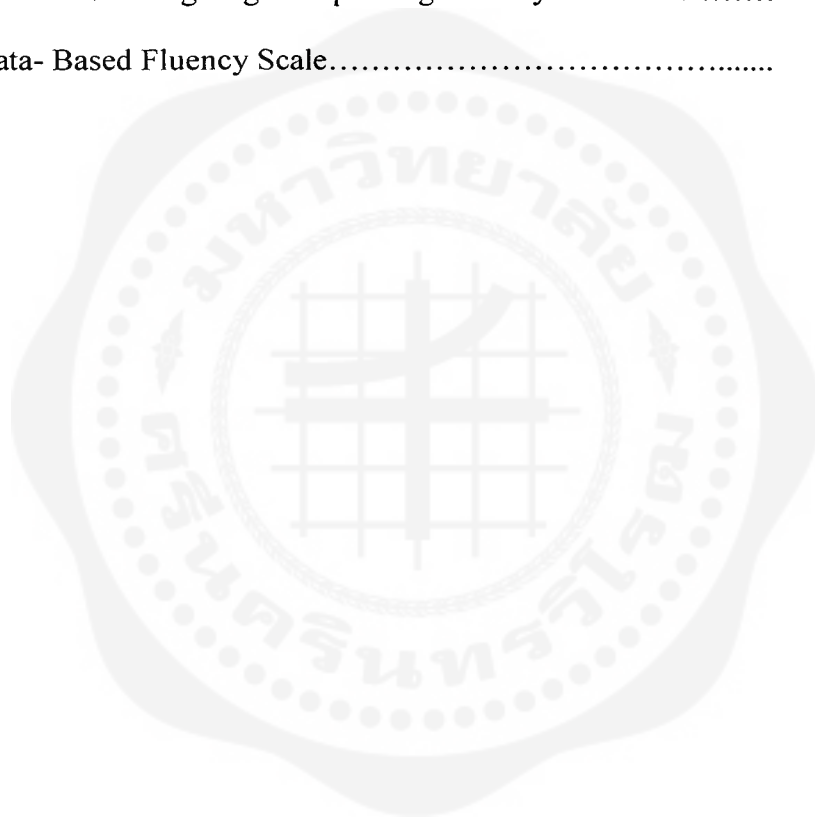
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

One of the most essential skills of English is speaking (Hosni, 2014; Khamkhien, 2010; Nunan, 1999; Ramenzani, Larari, & Kiasi, 2016; Ulas, 2008). Speaking is an interactive process that leads to communicate the meaning (Frorez, 1999). People utter to exchange their ideas, news, and information in daily lives (Ismaili & Bajrami, 2016; Khoshima & Shokri, 2016). In an educational context, a strong command in English speaking is essential for both ESL and EFL. Language students also believe that if they can communicate effectively, they will be considered successful in learning a language (Diyyab, Haq, & Aly, 2013).

However, Thai students have low proficiency of English, particularly in speaking skills (Wariyachitra, 2002; khamkhien, 2010). Similarly, Noom-ura (2013) states that Thai students have studied English for over ten years both in primary and secondary levels, but their English proficiency is unsatisfying. In this regard, Wiriyaichitra (2002) indicates that students wish to speak English fluently, but they struggle due to many factors such as interference from mother tongue use (Thai language), lack of opportunity to speak English, unchallenging English lessons, being passive learners, being too shy to speak English with classmates, lack of responsibility to construct their own learning, and fearing of making mistakes (Trent, 2009). In addition, most EFL teachers focus on lecturing and teaching grammatical rules instead of language use (Lochana & Deb, 2016). Furthermore, they still use their mother tongue as the medium of instruction that causes the failure of genuine interaction in a language classroom and it does not promote the use of the target language (Khamkhien, 2010).

Numerous studies have been conducted to develop language students' speaking skills. However, they are not effective on improving students' speaking skills (Ismili & Bajrami, 2016; Dewi, Kultsum, & Armadi, 2017). For instance, Ismili and Bajrami (2016) used information gap activities to enhance EFL elementary level students' speaking skills. They found that these activities could minimally develop students' speaking skills because information gap activities provided little opportunity for students to use the target language in the class, and the students did not have much interaction with their classmates. Moreover, Dewi, Kultsum, and Armadi (2017) studied the effectiveness of using communicative games on improving students' speaking skills. The researchers found that communicative games could improve students' speaking skills; however, the activities were mostly depended on the creativity of teachers in conducting the games. Until recently, the task-based approach has been claimed to be an effective way to enhance speaking skills. However, it does not promote much interaction and fluency in speaking because the students are required to do the task before presenting. This means that the students' attention is on accuracy of the task rather than the fluency of language use (Albino, 2017; Khoshima & Shokri, 2016; Munirah & Muhsin, 2015).

Therefore, it is necessary to come up with an approach that exposes students to the target language and requires them to interact freely in the classroom. Vygotsky (1987) claims that the development of language learning is based upon social interaction so that the students can construct their own knowledge that is meaningful to them. Consequently, providing meaningful activities that are related to social interaction can lead to students' language development (Vygotsky, 1987).

Many scholars have found that drama activities are effective pedagogical practices that provide students with the opportunity to socially interact through meaningful activities in which students construct their knowledge (Aldavero, 2008;

Gomez, 2010; Phillips, 2004). They encourage the students to speak and communicate with their peers (Aldavero, 2008; Desiatova, 2009; Phillips, 2004). Moreover, many researchers (Ashton-Hay, 2005; Maley & Duff, 2005; Phillips, 2004) state that drama activities are entertaining, fun, and useful in motivating students in learning a language. Drama activities “draw on the natural ability of every person to imitate, mimic and express himself or herself through gesture” (Maley & Duff, 1982, p. 6). Therefore, they are considered a natural and meaningful way to enhance speaking skills because they trigger imagination and background knowledge of the students through an interesting and purposeful activity.

Drama activities have been used extensively in language learning (Gill, 2016; Ulas, 2008). Several researchers have employed drama activities in language classrooms, and they have found that these activities could improve the students’ speaking abilities significantly (Gill, 2013, 2016; Iamsaard & Kerdpol, 2015; Pishkar, Moinszadeh, & Dabaghi, 2017; Ulas, 2008; Wahyuni, 2013). This is because drama activities create a relaxed and enjoyable learner-centered environment that helps extend students’ speech production (Gill, 2016).

Moreover, drama activities also develop students’ speaking fluency (Pishkar, Moinszadeh, & Dabaghi, 2017). By learning through drama activities, students have an opportunity to speak without fearing of making mistakes because drama activities help create a good environment (Phillips, 2003). Therefore, students have utmost capacity to speak fluently when they experience enjoyment while learning (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988, 1990).

Additionally, many scholars reveal that students’ perception is one of the contributing factors that motivates students to excel in language learning (Griego-Jones, 1994; Horwitz, 1989; McCaslin & Good, 1996; Norris-Holt, 2002; Walker, 1976).

Students learn a language effectively when they are emotionally engaged with the activities (Harmer, 2007). Drama activities promote not only speaking skills but also students' positive views towards language learning (Senturk, 2012). According to Gill (2013), it was found that drama activities increased students' motivation to speak naturally. Moreover, Iamsaard and Kerdpol, (2015), added that students' opinions towards the use of drama activities in a language classroom were highly positive. For one reason, drama activities provided stress-free environment. Therefore, with the benefits of drama activities applied in speaking instruction, students' speaking fluency together with the students' view towards the target language are likely to be developed.

Therefore, this study aims to investigate the use of drama activities in enhancing students' speaking fluency and the students' perception towards the teacher's use of drama activities in the classroom.

Objectives of the Study

1. To investigate the effect of drama activities in developing students' speaking fluency
2. To determine the students' perception towards the use of drama activities in a language classroom

Research Questions

This present study addresses two research questions:

1. To what extent do Mathayomsuksa 3 (Grade 9) students at Horwang Pathumthani School develop their English speaking fluency after learning through drama activities?
2. What is the students' perception towards the use of drama activities in a language classroom?

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study can be used as a guideline in developing a curriculum that fosters Thai EFL students' speaking proficiency. They can be used to plan English lessons for course developers, educators, and practitioners. Moreover, they provide useful information regarding the types of drama activities that are effective in teaching English speaking to students at the secondary school level. Additionally, the findings from this study will contribute to the body of knowledge on EFL speaking fluency development.

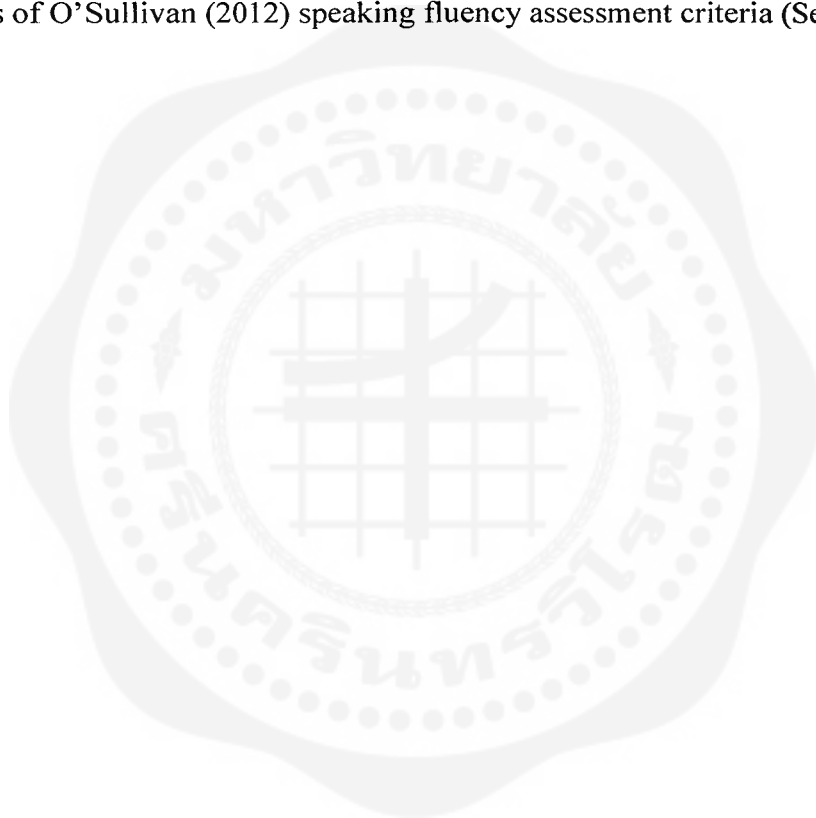
Scope of the Study

This study is a combination of quantitative and qualitative research aiming to develop students' speaking fluency via the use of drama activities. The context of this study includes 42 students of Mathayomsuksa 3 at Horwang Pathumthani School. The students are selected via convenience sampling method according to which class the researcher is assigned to teach. The duration of the study is eight weeks. The independent variable in the study is drama activities and the dependent variables involve the students' speaking fluency and their perception towards the use of drama activities.

The Definition of Terms

1. Drama activities refer to situational settings that allow students to be someone else by using their imagination through feeling and emotion to practice the language. In this study, drama activities used including mimes, role-play, and guided improvisation.

2. English speaking fluency refers to the ability to produce a speech smoothly and automatically without hesitation. This performance can be measured through the rating scales of O'Sullivan (2012) speaking fluency assessment criteria (See Appendix F).



CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The main purposes of this study are: (a) to examine the effect of using drama activities to develop students' speaking fluency and (b) to find out the students' perception towards the use of drama activities in the classroom. This chapter is divided into four parts. Firstly, it conceptualizes speaking ability with a specific focus on speaking fluency. Next, different types of drama activities and their advantages are reviewed. It will be followed by English speaking fluency assessment criteria. Finally, related studies on the use of drama activities in language teaching are presented.

English Speaking Fluency

Good speaking fluency makes good first impression to interlocutors (Mairi, 2016). According to Luoma (2004), speaking fluency is about "the flow, smoothness, the rate of speech, the length of utterances, the connectedness of ideas, the absence of excessive pausing, and the absence of disturbing hesitation markers" (Luoma, 2004, p.88). Similarly, Mairi (2016) states that speaking fluency is the ability to deliver speech smoothly and naturally as native speakers.

Additionally, Jone (2007 as cited in Buitrago, 2017) states that speaking fluency includes the speech confidence of the speakers to make the interlocutors follow their ideas in a smooth form. Speaking fluency occurs when the speakers can utter their speech without long silent pauses, hesitation, filled pauses, self-corrections, repetitions, and false start (Cucchiaroni, Strik & Boves, 2002, p.263 as cited in Mairi, 2016).

Drama Activities

In the context of language teaching, drama activities are known as creative play activities, and drama techniques (Iamsaard & Kerdpol, 2015). There are various definitions of drama activities. Maley and Duff (2005) state that drama activities are the activities that give students opportunities to use their own personality, past experiences, and imagination to act as another person. Additionally, Stern (1993) defines the term as the activities that involve real life situations. In other words, drama activities are situational settings that allow students to be someone else by using their imagination through feeling and emotion to practice the language.

Types of Drama Activities.

Drama techniques consist of various activities. Scholars (Dougill, 1987; Byrne, 1986; Scrivener, 2005; Malay & Duff, 2005) categorize types of drama activities as follows:

1. Mime

Mime is a performing action without words by using gestures and body movement (Byrne, 1986; Dougill, 1987). It is a useful activity because it facilitates the students to have an opportunity to express their performances through facial expressions and gestures without worrying about language (Kipple, 1987). For this activity, the students try to guess or comment about the mime, and then say what they are trying to guess. Mime is a “Wordless’ activity, lead naturally to talk” (Byrne, 1986, p. 116).

2. Role-play

Livingstone (1985) states that role-play is a classroom activity which gives the students the opportunity to practice the language. According to Davies (1990), role-play is the activity involving imaginary people and situation that the students can create the dialogue further. Additionally, Kodotchigova (2002) states that role-play encourages students to communicate in a foreign language, and practice language in a cultural and social context.

3. Simulation

Simulation is defined as the activity in which the students discuss a problem within a defined setting (Byrne, 1986). According to Sturtridge (1984), simulation provides the students a task to perform or a problem to solve. The students use their own personalities, experiences, and opinions to complete a task (Livingstone, 1985).

4. Drama and Language Games

Maley and Duff (2005) state that drama and language games refer to verbal and non-verbal activities which involve the movement and imagination. Drama and language games use as a natural introduction to drama activities. They are used to encourage students as the preparation for role-play, improvisation, and other drama activities (Davies, 1990). According to Dundar (2012), drama and language games include ice-breakers, energizers, and brain-teasers.

5. Guided Improvisation

Improvisation is defined as an unscripted, unrehearsed, spontaneous set of actions (Landy, 1982). The teacher provides a situational information for students to

improvise, and then the students perform the role given according to their understanding (Scrivener, 2005). Improvisation provides the students with the opportunity to improve their linguistic communication skills and their self-confidence (Trivedi, 2013).

6. Acting Play Scripts

Scripts are mainly performed by theatre groups. The scripts are provided for the students (Dougill, 1985). Then, the students prepare themselves to memorize the scripts and finally, the scripts are transformed in a drama performance (Dougill, 1985; Scrivener, 2005).

7. Prepared Improvised Drama

Prepared improvised drama is different from guided improvisation because the students have to create impromptu situations that they are familiar with (Dougill, 1985). The students have to create a scene, prepare to speak, act, and react by themselves while the teacher is a facilitator (Scrivener, 2005).

Therefore, it can be concluded that there are many ways of using drama activities. Each activity involves varying levels of students' participation and they are situated in a social context.

Advantages of Using Drama Activities for Language Learning.

Phillips (2003) states that drama activities are powerful means used in a language classroom. Drama activities encourage students to speak and provide them a good atmosphere to communicate with their partners in the classroom regardless of their language abilities (Phillips, 2003). Not only do drama activities involve the language

itself, but they also include body, mind, feeling and social interaction (Phillips, 2003; Fleming, 2016; Thongnuan, 2011).

Maley and Duff (2005) state that drama activities are helpful because these activities integrate language skills both verbal and non-verbal aspects of communication. Moreover, drama activities provide both cognitive and affective domains. For cognitive domain, drama activities can contextualize the language that helps students emphasize the meaning rather than the structure. For affective domain, drama activities create a relaxed classroom environment that leads students to achieve their language learning (Maley & Duff, 2005).

Furthermore, drama activities encourage introvert students to take on a role that enables them to escape their inhibition (Phillips, 2003). Khaemane (2011) states that drama activities make language learning activities lively and meaningful for students because they allow students to have more fun when they participate in the activities. Similarly, Desiatova (2009) points out that drama activities can create a joyful and pleasant environment for both teachers and students. Additionally, drama activities are so authentic that they can be adopted in real situations (Stern, 1993). This is because they create the situations that lead students to use the language in the real world (Aldavero, 2008). Moreover, they also combine both verbal and non-verbal communication of gestures, facial expression, and body movement.

Hence, with the advantages of drama activities mentioned earlier, it can be concluded that drama activities can give the students the opportunity to speak and provide them a chance to learn with a good environment that can help them achieve in language learning.

Evaluating and Assessing Speaking Fluency

Speaking abilities consist of pronunciation, the use of grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension (Harris, 1969). To assess speaking abilities, Luoma (2004) applies two approaches. The first one is observational approach which is assessed crudely from the observation of students' behavior and performance. The second one is structured approach in which the students are required to perform oral communication tasks, and then the assessor observes and evaluates the students' speaking abilities through their performance.

Harmer (2001) proposes two methods in assessing speaking abilities: direct and indirect methods. The direct method includes an oral interview, a conversation, and an unscripted role play and the indirect method involves a conversational cloze test, and a phoneme identifying task (Bailey, 2005). Therefore, students' speaking abilities can be evaluated through two main types including direct, and indirect test.

To select appropriate methods to assess speaking abilities, the researcher is aware of its practicality and appropriateness in the context of the test takers. In this study, the researcher used direct method i.e., an oral interview and a conversation in assessing the students' speaking fluency. The reason is because it evaluates the students' actual oral performance.

Speaking fluency is difficult to assess because it is subjective (O'Sullivan, 2012); however, the assessors can solve this problem by using rating criteria in the form of descriptors that contain speaking fluency scales because they are valid and reliable (Ur, 2012). Thornbury (2005) and O'Sullivan (2012) propose two scales of speaking criteria assessment: the holistic and the analytic scales. In the holistic scale, a single score based

on a series of descriptors is given. The assessors assess the test takers' performance and give a score that matches the closest descriptor. The advantage of the holistic scale is the simplicity and speed. It is easy and quick to evaluate the test takers. Nevertheless, the disadvantage of this type of scale includes the first impression of the test takers. The assessors can give only one score that may depend on what they are impressed with the test taker. An example of the holistic scoring is shown below.

Scores	Band
9	Expert speaker. Speak with authority on a variety of topics. Can initiate, expand and develop a theme.
8	Very good non-native speaker. Maintains effectively his own part of a discussion. Initiates, maintains and elaborates as necessary.
7	Good speaker. Present case clearly and logically and can develop the dialogue coherently and constructively. Rather less flexible than band 8 performer but can respond to main changes of tone or topic. Some hesitation and repetition due to a measure of language restriction but interacts effectively.
6	Competent speaker. Is able to maintain theme of dialogue, to follow topic switches and to use and appreciate main attitude markers. Stumbles and hesitates at times but is reasonably fluent otherwise. Some errors and inappropriate language but these will not impede exchange of views. Show some independence in discussion with ability to initiate.
5	Modest speaker. Although gist of dialogue is relevant and can be basically understood, there are noticeable deficiencies in mastery of language patterns and style. Needs to ask for repetition or clarification and similarly be asked for them. Lacks flexibility and initiative. The interviewer often has to speak rather deliberately. Cope but not with great style or interest.
4	Marginal speaker. Can maintain a dialogue but in a rather passive manner, rarely taking the initiative or guiding the discussion. Has difficulty in following English at normal speed; lacks fluency and probably accuracy in speaking. The dialogue is therefore neither easy nor flowing. Nevertheless gives the impression that he is in touch with the gist of the dialogue even if not wholly master of it. Marked L2 accent.
3	Extremely limited speaker. Dialogue is a drawn out affair punctuated with hesitations and misunderstandings. Only catches part of normal speech and unable to produce continuous and accurate discourse. Basic merit is just hanging on to discussion gist, without making major contribution to it.
2	Intermittent. No working facility; occasional, sporadic communication.
1	Non-speaker. Not able to understand and/or speak.

Figure 1. Holistic Rating Scale (Carroll, 1980 as cited in O'Sullivan, 2012)

In analytic scale, fluency scale comprises sub-scales that are divided into four to five levels. Thornbury (2005) and O'Sullivan (2012) point out that the analytic scale is used to evaluate a single skill which leads to an overall performance of the take takers. Furthermore, O'Sullivan (2012) claims that this type of scale is more reliable than the holistic scale. An example of assessing speaking fluency of this scale is presented below.

Category	Level	Description
Fluency	1	Speech is so halting and fragmentary the conversation is virtually impossible.
	2	Speech is very slow and uneven except for short or routine sentences.
	3	Speech is frequently hesitant and jerky; sentences may be left uncompleted.
	4	Speech is occasionally hesitant, with some unevenness caused by rephrasing and groping for words.
	5	Speech on all topics is as effortless and smooth as a native speaker.

Figure 2. The Analytic Rating Scale of Speaking Fluency (O'Sullivan, 2012)

Moreover, Weir (1993 as cited in Luoma, 2004) suggests that fluency rating criteria consists of four levels. The example is presented below:

Category	Level	Description
Fluency	0	Utterances halting fragmentary and incoherent.
	1	Utterances hesitant and often incomplete except in a few stock remarks and responses. Sentences are, for the most part, disjointed and restricted in length.
	2	Signs of developing attempts at using cohesive devices, especially conjunctions. Utterance may still be hesitant, but are gaining in coherence, speed, and length.
	3	Utterance, whilst occasionally hesitant, are characterized by an evenness and flow, hindered, very occasionally, by grouping, rephrasing and circumlocutions. Inter-sentential connectors are used effectively as fillers.

Figure 3. The Speaking Fluency Scale (Weir, 1993 as cited in Luoma, 2004)

Spratt, Pulverness, and William (2008) proposes five levels criteria in assessing speaking fluency. The example is shown below:

Category	Level	Description
Fluency	1	Almost unable to communicate.
	2	Extremely hesitant; very limited range of language available.
	3	Quite hesitant; limited range of vocabulary and structures.
	4	Some hesitation and sometimes has to search for words.
	5	Speaks fluently without hesitation or searching for words.

Figure 4. Scale for Assessing English Speaking Fluency (Spratt et al., 2008)

Additionally, Hasselgren (1998; based on Fulcher, 1996 as cited in Luoma, 2004) suggests the fluency scale to assess students' speaking fluency that is separated into five levels. An example is presented below.

Category	Level	Description
Fluency	1	Speakers' utterance are short, often a single word. There are long pauses when they are trying to understand the Interlocutor, get clarification, or search for words or forms. Repetitions and restarts are common. Sometimes the speakers are unable to make a response, and messages are sometimes abandoned because of language shortcomings.
	2	Speakers Frequently need help in order to understand their interlocutor, but messages, once started, are generally fulfilled In a simplistic way, without expansion, e.g. through examples. Pausing still occurs when looking for lexical or grammatical choice-sometimes with circumlocutions and often with midway switch of formulation.
	3	Speakers usually understand the interlocutor. They seem more aware of the Proposition, and spend time planning this. Appropriacy of word choice becomes more important, and pausing will occur in making these choices, with some appealing to the interlocutor. Utterances tend to be more expanded.
	4	Misunderstandings are rare. Speakers use hedges to express lack of certainty in the propositions. Few single word utterances are given, and speakers expand their utterances, e. g. providing back- ups to opinions. Time is spent planning the content of the proposition and how exactly to express themselves and present their views. Reformulations occur when the speaker is not satisfied with the proposition or the correctness of the formulation.
	5	Speakers demonstrate more confidence and are less likely to express propositional uncertainty. They rarely pause for reasons of grammar or word choice. Reformulations occur mainly for expressing proposition fully. They expand and support themselves. They respond very quickly.

Figure 5. A Data- Based Fluency Scale (Hasselgren, 1998; based on Fulcher, 1996 as cited in Luoma, 2004)

In this study, the researcher adopts the fluency rating criteria of O'Sullivan (2012) as shown in Figure 2 to assess students' speaking fluency. This is because it is appropriate for the students in the context of the researcher. In addition, it is not very complicated. Therefore, the rating training will not be too time consuming. Additionally, the description in each level contains a clear-cut criterion in terms of fluency while the other fluency scoring criteria tend to be lengthy and too detailed. Therefore, the criteria of O'Sullivan (2012) are congruent with the practicality and the context of the study.

Related Studies

Drama activities have been applied in many studies both in international and Thai educational contexts. The purpose is to promote students' language learning, especially in speaking abilities. Ulas (2008) examined the effects of drama activities in developing oral skills of grade four students in a primary school in Turkey during the academic year of 2006-2007. The participants were 65 students divided into experimental (32 students) and control (33 students) groups by using a random sampling technique. The study was conducted for 14 weeks. The researcher used an observation form, pretest and posttest to assess the students' oral communication skills. Drama activities were administered in the experimental group; however, the traditional method was used in the control group. The findings reviewed that drama activities helped improve students' oral skills because drama activities encouraged students to speak. And when students had an opportunity to speak, their oral performance, especially, speaking fluency was fostered.

Similarly, Gill (2013) investigated the use of drama activities to enhance the English-language oral skills of EFL students. This study was conducted with 10 non-

English-speaking-background students at Bond University. The duration of the study was 12 weeks. In the first three weeks, the researcher applied communicative non-drama-based (CNDB) lessons in the class. From week four to six, the researcher used only communicative drama-based (CDB) lessons. After that, from week seven to nine, the researcher repeatedly used CNDB methodology, and the final three weeks, the researcher used CDB lessons again. At the end of week 12, the researcher found that drama activities enhanced students' oral skills because drama activities helped to create convivial environment that encouraged students to speak naturally and fluently. In this study, the use of drama activities are successful because the students have the opportunity to speak and learn with the real life situations.

Moreover, Pishkar, Moinzadeh, and Dabaghi (2017) studied the effectiveness of modern English drama in developing students' speaking fluency and accuracy. Sixty participants studying at Hormozgan University, Iran were divided into the experimental and control groups. The study was conducted within 10 weeks. The researchers used two modern English dramas with the experimental group. Modern English dramas contained many short phrases, colloquial words, English idioms, slangs, and daily short dialogues. The data analysis was obtained from transcript records at the end of the last week. The researchers found that modern English drama increased students' speaking fluency whilst students' speaking accuracy was decreased because modern English drama focused on spoken language that was involved with daily conversation rather than the use of rigid language structure. Therefore, modern English dramas are beneficial because they contain spoken language that encourages students to speak English confidently.

In some studies, it was found that drama activities could reduce students' anxiety in the classroom. Atas (2014) studied the reduction of speaking anxiety in EFL

students through drama activities. The study was conducted at a high school in Kozan, Turkey in the first semester of academic year 2013-2014. The participants were 24 EFL twelfth graders selected via purposive sampling. The duration of the study was six weeks. The data was obtained from pre- and post-tests, semi-structured pre- and post-interviews, and student diaries. The participants were taught through drama activities, i.e., language games, role plays, mimes, improvisation, and drama scripts. After six weeks, the researcher found that drama activities reduced EFL students speaking anxiety because they created a good learning atmosphere for students. When the anxiety level of the students was low, they could speak confidently and fluently. Consequently, the students had the opportunity to speak when they learned through the joyful environment provided by drama activities.

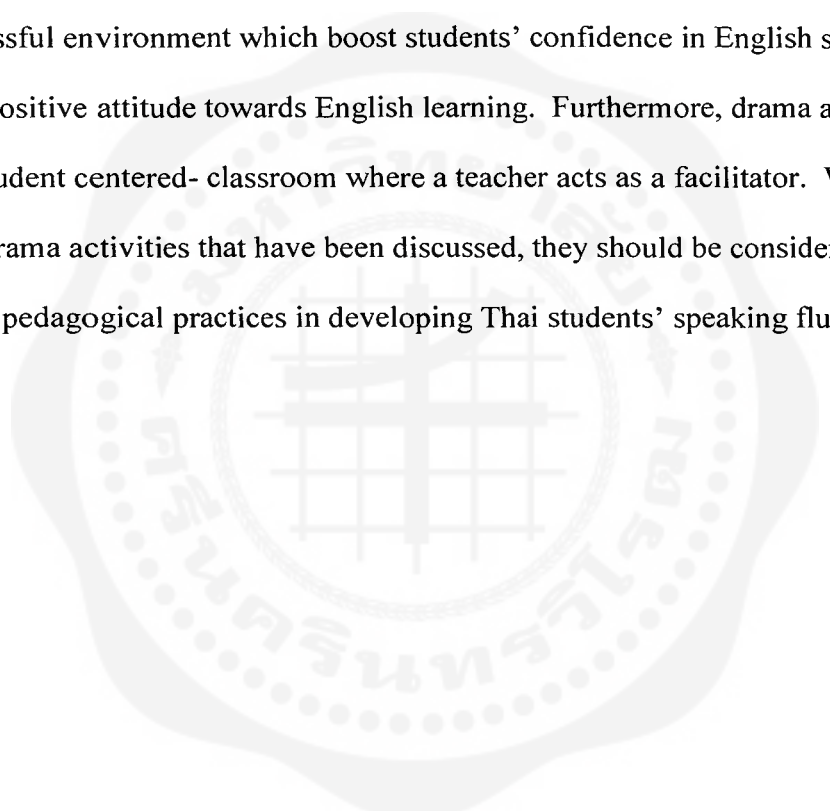
Similarly, Kardas and Koc (2017) explored the effect of drama activities in developing students' Turkish verbal skills and reducing speech anxiety. The participants of the study were 37 seventh graders attending a public school in Van provincial center during academic year of 2015-2016. The participants were divided into experimental (18 participants) and control (19 participants) groups via random sampling method. The study was conducted for eight weeks. The data analysis was obtained by Turkish Rhetorical Skills Scale (TRSS), Speech Anxiety Scale (SAS), and t-test statistics. Drama activities were used with the experimental group. The findings revealed that drama activities could develop the Turkish students' verbal skills and reduce their speech anxiety because the activities promoted a stress-free environment and it encouraged the students to speak more fluently without fearing of making mistakes. Thus, drama activities are fruitful because they help create a convivial environment that fosters students to speak freely.

Drama activities have been conducted not only in the ESL context but also in the Thai EFL context. Iamsaard and Kerdpol (2015) studied the effect of drama activities on improving English speaking skill. The study was one group design of 26 eleventh graders who studied in a high school in Sukhothai province. The duration of the study was 7 weeks. The research instruments were lesson plans, an English speaking test and a questionnaire measuring students' opinions towards the use of drama activities. The researchers found that drama activities helped students improve their speaking abilities. In addition, the students' opinions towards drama activities were highly positive because drama activities promoted a good atmosphere in language learning. The researcher argued that the students' perception towards language learning had a positive effect on their speaking fluency as well as their confidence level.

In addition, Punsiri (2011) studied the effectiveness of drama activities on Thai EFL students in reducing foreign language classroom anxiety. The participants were 44 non-English majored university students selected via a non-random sampling method. The participants were divided into two groups: a control group (22 students) and an experimental group (22 students). The study was conducted for 16 hours (two hours per class). The research instruments involved Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) questionnaires, and guided questions for a focus group discussion. Drama activities were administered with the experimental group. At the end of the study, the researcher found that drama activities, especially, prepared improvised drama and drama games were the most effective activities in reducing FLCA. In prepared improvised drama, the students had an opportunity to produce the language, and they could use their imagination to complete the given task; therefore, they felt very happy when doing the activity. Similarly, with drama games, the students actively participated in the activity because

drama games were entertaining and they helped the students to use the language without worrying about making grammatical mistakes.

From all of the studies related to the implementation of drama activities in a language classroom, the findings ascertain the effectiveness of this pedagogical practice. Drama activities are highly beneficial not only to improve students' overall speaking ability but also to foster speaking fluency. Moreover, drama activities help create a good and non-stressful environment which boost students' confidence in English speaking and promotes a positive attitude towards English learning. Furthermore, drama activities promote a student centered- classroom where a teacher acts as a facilitator. With the benefits of drama activities that have been discussed, they should be considered as one of the effective pedagogical practices in developing Thai students' speaking fluency.



CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The main purposes of this study are to examine the effectiveness of drama activities in fostering Thai EFL secondary students' speaking fluency and to determine whether drama activities develop students' speaking fluency and what the students think of drama activities. This study presents the research methodology including the research design, the participants, research instruments, data collection, and data analysis.

Research Design

This research was a quasi-experimental study with a single group pretest-posttest design. It utilized both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. The quantitative method was used in the assessment of students' speaking fluency through the pre- and post- speaking tests, and a perception questionnaire towards the use of drama activities in the classroom. The qualitative method was used in a structured interview. The duration of the experiment was eight weeks.

Variables

The variables of the study included drama activities (mimes, role-plays, and guided improvisation) as an independent variable and students' speaking fluency as a dependent variable.

Data

The data collected in this study comprised the scores of the pre-and post-speaking fluency tests, a questionnaire, and a structured interview. In the interview, 21 participants were randomly selected at the end of the course and they were asked about their perception through the teacher's use of drama activities.

Population

The population of this study was 326 students who were studying in Grade 9 at Horwang Phatumthani School. They enrolled in an English class in the second semester of the academic year 2017. All students had a similar level of English proficiency as they had been chosen to study in the class by the school placement test.

Research Site

The setting selected for this study was Horwang Pathumthani School, which was located in Phathunthani province. At first, this school was named "Sing Phathumrat Witthaya School," it was established on March 26th, 1993. Later, the school's name was changed to "Horwang Pathumthani School" on February 8th, 2011. Currently, there are 1,987 students with 101 teachers teaching at this school. The students study English based on The Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551 from Grade 7 to Grade 12.

Participants

This study consisted of 42 Grade 9 participants who took the English class. The participants were selected via convenience sampling method as the researcher had been assigned to teach Grade 9 level. The age of the participants was around 14 to 15 years.

The participants had a pre-intermediate level of English proficiency, and they shared a similar language proficiency level.

Research Instrumentation

Lesson plan.

In this study, three lesson plans would be utilized as a road map to instruct the students. One lesson plan was used for one week and the class met two periods per week (50 minutes per one period). The lesson plans were designed according to the language functions relevant to the course goals. The researcher used three steps including pre-speaking, while- speaking, and post-speaking to instruct the students in each lesson plan. Drama activities used in this study included mimes, role-plays, and guided improvisation. Three experts were asked to evaluate the lesson plans through the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) to check the content validity of the lesson plans (See Appendix H).

Pre-and Post-Speaking Fluency Tests.

The pre- and post- speaking fluency tests had two parts. In the first part, the researcher used an interview in order to assess their speaking fluency. In the second part, the teacher had a picture for the students to describe. The student had three to five minutes to do the task. The students' oral performance was recorded and rated by three raters who had the experience in English language teaching more than five years. The researcher used speaking fluency rubric (adapted from O'Sullivan, 2012) to assess students' oral performance.

Three experts were asked to investigate the pre- and post- speaking tests through the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) to check the content validity of the pre- and post- speaking fluency tests (See Appendix I). The pre- and post- speaking tests were piloted with Grade 9 students who were not the participants in the study in order to calculate the reliability of the pre- and post- speaking tests using Cronbach's Alfa Coefficient method. The results showed that the tests' reliability was 0.81 indicating high reliability.

Students' Perception Questionnaire.

The researcher used 10- item- Likert scale questionnaire to examine the students' perception towards the use of drama activities (See Appendix C). Three experts were asked to investigate the questionnaire through the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) to check the content validity of the questionnaire (See Appendix J). The questionnaire was piloted with Grade 9 students who were not the participants in the study in order to calculate the reliability of the questionnaire using Cronbach's Alfa Coefficient method. The findings revealed that the questionnaire's reliability was 0.94 indicating high reliability.

Structured Interview.

To further explore the students' perception towards the use of drama activities, a structured interview was administered after the students completed the questionnaire. The researcher chose 21 students randomly and asked them about their perception towards the use of drama activities. Each interview lasted for five to ten minutes. Three experts were asked to check the content validity of the interviewed questions (See Appendix K) through the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC). The questions for

the interview were piloted with Grade 9 students who were not the participants in the study in order to calculate the reliability of the questions using Cronbach's Alfa Coefficient method. The results showed that the interviewed questions' reliability was 0.70 indicating high reliability.

Data Collection Procedures

The data collected to answer the first research question was the pre- and post-speaking fluency test scores. The pretest was administered to the students one week before the use of drama activities, and the posttest was administered at the end of the course. The data collected to answer the second research question was the scores obtained from the questionnaire and the data from the structured interview. The schedule of the data collection is presented as follows:

Table 1

Time Schedule of the Data Collection

Weeks	Topics	Functions of Speaking
Week1	Pretest and instruction of the course	
Week2-3	Lesson plan 1: "A job interview"	-Expressing possibility for applying for a job
Week4-5	Lesson plan 2: "Back from holiday"	-Describing about holiday experience
Week6-7	Lesson plan 3: "Making arrangement"	-Talking about arrangement
Week8	Posttest, Questionnaire, and Structured Interview	

Data Analysis

Speaking Tests.

The data were analyzed to investigate the students' speaking fluency before and after the use of drama activities in the classroom. The scores gained from the pre-and post-speaking tests were calculated for mean scores and standard deviation. A dependent *t*-test was used to compare the two sets of scores via SPSS.

Students' Perception Questionnaire and a Structured Interview.

Every participant was asked to complete a questionnaire. The data were analyzed by SPSS to find out the students' view towards the use of drama activities in the classroom. A structured interview would be conducted in order to obtain more detailed information that could not be found from the questionnaire. The interview was analyzed using content analysis method.

Summary

The purpose of the study was to investigate whether the use of drama activities develop Grade 9 students' speaking fluency and to explore students' perception after learning through the activities. The participants included 42 students and the duration of the study was eight weeks. The researcher compared the mean scores before and after learning via drama activities. Additionally, students' perception towards the use of the activities was examined through a questionnaire and a structured interview.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of the study is to investigate the effect of using drama activities to develop students' speaking fluency and to determine the students' perception towards the use of drama activities in a language classroom. The participants are 42 Grade 9 students at Horwang Pathumthani School. The data from the study were obtained through pre- and post-speaking tests, a questionnaire, and a structured interview. The research findings are presented according to the two research questions.

Research Question 1: *To what extent do Mathayomsuksa 3 (Grade 9) students at Horwang Pathumthani School develop their English speaking fluency after learning through drama activities?*

The first research question was to investigate the effect of using drama activities, i.e., mimes, role plays, and guided improvisation in developing the students' speaking fluency of Grade 9 students. The research instrument used to answer research question 1 was the English speaking fluency test. The test consisted of two parts. The total score was 10 points (5 points for each part). The mean scores and standard deviation on the pre- and post- speaking tests were compared by using dependent *t*-test. The pre- and post- speaking tests scores of 42 Grade 9 students were given by three raters based on the Speaking Fluency Scale (adopted from O'Sullivan, 2012) and were calculated for mean scores and standard deviation.

In Table 2, the results showed that the students' posttest mean scores on the English speaking fluency test were significantly higher than the pretest mean scores in both parts. The students' pretest and posttest mean scores, standard deviation, t-values, and statistical significance are presented in Table 2

Table 2

A comparison of the mean scores on pre-speaking test and post-speaking test of

English speaking fluency

English Speaking Fluency Test (Total score = 10 points)	Mean Scores ($\bar{X}$)	SD	Mean Difference	T	df	Sig.
Pretest (part1)	2.04	.62				
Posttest (part1)	3.98	.57	1.95	-51.90	41	.000*
Pretest (part2)	1.87	.50				
Posttest (part2)	3.75	.51	1.87	-62.56	41	.000*

* $p < .05$ $n=42$

As illustrated in Table 2, the English speaking fluency of the participants' posttest was significantly higher than that of the pretest after learning through drama activities at .05 level. In the first part, the students' posttest mean score ($\bar{X}= 3.98$, $SD = .57$, $T_{41} = -51.90$) on the English speaking fluency test was significantly higher than the pretest mean score ($\bar{X}= 2.04$, $SD = .62$) and in the second part, the students posttest mean

score ($\bar{X}$ = 3.75, SD = .51, T_{41} = -1.87) on the English speaking fluency test was also significantly higher than the pretest mean score ($\bar{X}$ = 1.87, SD = .50).

The results showed that there was a significant difference between the pretest and posttest mean scores at a statistical significance level ($p < .05$); therefore, the answer to the first research question of students' English speaking fluency was significantly developed after learning through drama activities.

Research Question 2: *What is the students' perception towards the use of drama activities in a language classroom?*

To investigate the students' perception towards the use of drama activities, at the end of the study, all participants were asked to complete a questionnaire. The questionnaire was consisted of 10 items and the data obtained from the questionnaire were categorized into three themes: motivation, confidence, and usefulness. The students rated each item based on their perception towards the teacher's use of drama activities in the classroom by using Likert 5-point scale. Table 3 presents the mean score, standard deviation, and level of response.

Table 3

Findings of Students' Perception towards the Use of Drama Activities

Questionnaire Items	($\bar{X}$)	SD	Level of response
1. Learning through drama activities motivates me to speak English.	4.43	.59	high
2. I look forward to learning English through drama activities in future classes.	4.33	.72	high
3. I do not mind working with my friends in a role-play.	4.36	.73	high
4. I am happy to speak English with my classmates.	4.14	.75	high
5. I am more confident to speak English when I learn through drama activities.	4.43	.59	high
6. Drama activities such as role-play and guided improvisation help me speak English more fluently.	4.36	.58	high
7. I feel at ease and enjoy speaking English through mime activity.	4.24	.58	high
8. Drama activities are beneficial and make the learning lively and fun.	4.29	.71	high
9. I have more opportunities to speak English when I learn through drama activities.	3.95	.58	high
10. Drama activities give me a chance to have a good relationship with my classmates.	4.40	.67	high
Total	4.30	.65	high

Notes: 1) The agreement of the questionnaire was categorized using 5-point Likert scale:

1= strongly disagree with the statement

2= disagree with the statement

3= neither agree nor disagree

4= agree with the statement

5= strongly agree with the statement

2) The mean scores of perception were categorized below (Paranapiti, 2014).

4.51-5.00 = very high

3.51-4.50 = high

2.51-3.50 = moderate

1.51-2.50 = low

1.00-1.50 = very low

According to Table 3, the findings revealed that students' perception towards the use of drama activities were positive in every aspect. The overall mean score was 4.30 and the standard deviation was .65 which was at a high level. The highest mean score was item 1 (*Learning through drama activities motivates me to speak English*) and item 5 (*I am more confident to speak English when I learn through drama activities*) which was 4.43 and the standard deviation was .59, whilst the lowest mean score was item 9 (*I have more opportunities to speak English when I learn through drama activities*) which was 3.95 and the standard deviation was .58. However, the lowest mean score of the questionnaire was still ranked at a high level. Therefore, it could be concluded that the students' overall perception was highly positive towards the teacher's use of drama activities.

Furthermore, the findings of the questionnaire could be categorized into three themes: motivation, confidence, and usefulness. The findings of each theme are shown below.

Table 4

Findings of Students' Perception towards the Motivation of Drama Activities

Questionnaire Items	($\bar{X}$)	SD	Level of response
Section I: Motivation			
1. Learning through drama activities motivates me to speak English.	4.43	.59	high
2. I look forward to learning English through drama activities in future classes.	4.33	.72	high
3. I do not mind working with my friends in a role-play.	4.36	.73	high
4. I am happy to speak English with my classmates.	4.14	.75	high
Total	4.32	.70	high

As the result shown in this Table, the questionnaire item 1, 2, 3, and 4 were the motivation theme. The mean score of questionnaire item1 (*Learning through drama activities motivates me to speak English*) was 4.43, which was at a high level.

Questionnaire item 2 (*I look forward to learning English through drama activities in future classes*) earned 4.33 mean score which was at a high level. Questionnaire item 3 (*I do not mind working with my friends in a role-play*) earned 4.36 mean score which was at

a high level. And questionnaire item 4 (*I am happy to speak English with my classmates*) earned 4.14 mean score which was at a high level. Moreover, the overall mean score of motivation theme was 4.32, which was at a high level. Therefore, it could be indicated that the use of drama activities could motivate the students to speak English and they felt happy when they did the activities with their peers. Additionally, the students looked forward to learning English via drama activities in the future.

Table 5

Findings of Students' Perception towards the Confidence of Drama Activities

Questionnaire Items	($\bar{X}$)	SD	Level of response
Section II: Confidence			
5. I am more confident to speak English when I learn through drama activities.	4.43	.59	high
6. Drama activities such as role-play and guided improvisation help me speak English more fluently.	4.36	.58	high
7. I feel at ease and enjoy speaking English through mime activity.	4.24	.58	high
Total	4.34	.58	high

In Table 5, there were three questionnaire items (questionnaire item 5, 6, and 7) which were categorized into the confidence theme. Questionnaire item 5 (*I am more confident to speak English when I learn through drama activities*) earned 4.43 mean score which was at a high level. Questionnaire item 6 (*Drama activities such as role-play and*

guided improvisation help me speak English more fluently) earned 4.36 mean score which was at a high level. And questionnaire item 7 (*I feel at ease and enjoy speaking English through mime activity*) earned 4.24 mean score which was at a high level. The overall questionnaire mean score of confidence theme was 4.34, which was at a high level. Therefore, it could be concluded that students' perception through the use of drama activities, i.e., mimes, role plays, and guided improvisation in terms of confidence was highly positive because drama activities could help the students speak English more confidently.

Table 6

Findings of Students' Perception towards the Usefulness of Drama Activities

Questionnaire Items	($\bar{X}$)	SD	Level of response
Section III: Usefulness			
8. Drama activities are beneficial and make the learning lively and fun.	4.29	.71	high
9. I have more opportunities to speak English when I learn through drama activities.	3.95	.59	high
10. Drama activities give me a chance to have a good relationship with my classmates.	4.40	.67	high
Total	4.21	.65	high

For the usefulness theme, questionnaire item 8, 9, 10 were categorized into this theme. Questionnaire item 8 (*Drama activities are beneficial and make the learning lively and fun*) earned 4.29 mean score which was at a high level. Questionnaire item 9 (*I have more opportunities to speak English when I learn through drama activities*) earned 3.95 mean score which was at a high level. Questionnaire item 10 (*Drama activities give me a chance to have a good relationship with my classmates*) earned 4.40 mean score which was at a high level. With the high mean score of each item in this theme, it could be indicated that drama activities were useful for students to improve their speaking fluency. Moreover, drama activities gave the students the opportunity to have a good relationship with their classmates while they were doing the activities.

In conclusion, students' perception towards the use of drama activities, i.e., mimes, role plays, and guided improvisation was highly positive. Learning through drama activities could motivate the students to speak English confidently because drama activities helped create a good environment that encouraged them to speak English. Furthermore, they felt very happy and had fun while they were doing the activities with their classmates. Finally, they also looked forward to learning through drama activities in the future classes.

In order to find out more information on the students' perception towards the use of drama activities in the classroom, a structured interview was conducted at the end of the course. Twenty-one students were randomly selected to be interviewed and the information obtained from the interview was transcribed and analyzed through content analysis. The findings of the interview are presented below.

1. To what extent do you think drama activities help reduce your anxiety in speaking English?

Most students (85.71%) said that drama activities could help reduce their anxiety in speaking English because the activities provided them a friendly environment. When they studied in a stress-free environment, they could speak English without fearing of making mistakes. Moreover, the students had the opportunity to perform the activities, i.e., mimes, role plays, and guided improvisation with their classmates that made them enthusiastic and joyful. Therefore, the students could speak English confidently and fluently with little anxiety. Some examples of students' viewpoints are presented below.

Students 7 "I felt relaxed when I learnt through drama activities because drama activities provided a joyful environment in the class. Therefore, I did not mind speaking English with my classmate."

Students 13 "I felt that I could speak English confidently when I learnt through drama activities because drama activities helped me practice my English and they created a good atmosphere that made me speak fluently. Moreover, I was very happy to speak English in the class."

On the other hand, some students (14.29%) said that they felt anxious when they performed drama activities, especially, guided improvisation because they had not enough time to prepare themselves to speak English. This minimized the capacity of the students to deliver their speech which in turn made them awkward and reluctant.

The examples of students' perception are presented below.

Students 2 “I was anxious when I did the activities because there was limited time to practice speaking before doing the performance in the class. Therefore, I could not perform well.”

Students 6 “I felt worried when I spoke English through drama activities because I had not much time to prepare myself; thus, it made me speak reluctantly.”

2. Do drama activities help you speak English more fluently? How?

Most students (90.48%) said that drama activities helped them speak English more fluently because the activities focused on the meaning of communication rather than on the structure. The students were confident to speak English without fearing of making mistakes. Moreover, the students could use both verbal and non-verbal communication while they were speaking. Hence, the students were courageous and were not shy to speak English with their classmates. They felt happy and they could speak English fluently. The examples of students' views are presented below.

Students: 16 “I could speak English fluently because I did not focus too much on grammar. I tried to speak English in order to convey the meaning with my classmates. Therefore, I could speak English confidently without fearing of making mistakes.”

Students 19: “Learning through drama activities could help me speak English more fluently because I could use my gestures and my feelings while I was speaking. Furthermore, drama activities also made me feel confident when I spoke English in front of the class.”

However, some students (9.52%) said that drama activities did not really encourage them to speak English more fluently because they were afraid their classmates would laugh at them when they said something wrong. Therefore, when they spoke English, they were very careful and tried to think about the right words or sentences. Thus, they could not speak English naturally and fluently. The examples of students' perception are presented below.

Students 1: "Drama activities could not help me speak English more fluently because I felt shy to speak English with my classmates. Additionally, when I spoke incorrectly, my friends laughed at me."

Students 20: "When I participated in drama activities, I tried to speak carefully because I was afraid to make mistakes. Therefore, I spent a lot of time thinking before I spoke."

3. What do you like or dislike about drama activities?

Most students (85.71%) said that they liked drama activities because they had the opportunity to be someone else based on the situation in the activities. They could use their imagination to act as the character they got. Moreover, the students could express their gestures, feelings and emotions while they were speaking. Therefore, they were very happy when they did the activities. Furthermore, the students said that drama activities were meaningful for them because they could apply the conversations that they had learnt in the class to real life situation. The examples of students' perception are presented below.

Students 9: “I liked it when I learnt through drama activities because they gave me an opportunity to speak English; moreover, I could use my imagination, body movements, and feelings when I acted as another character from each situation. I was very happy and had fun.”

Students 5: “I loved learning via drama activities because it was very useful for me. I could adapt the conversation to my daily life outside the class. Furthermore, it could improve my speaking ability, especially, speaking fluency because drama activities made a nice environment that fostered me to speak English happily.”

In the contrary, some students (14.29%) did not like drama activities because they were too shy to speak in front of the class. Furthermore, they felt worried when they had limited time to prepare themselves before they performed the assigned tasks. The examples of students' perception are presented below.

Students 8: “I did not like drama activities because I had to speak among many people in the class. I was too shy and I was so excited.”

Students 21: “I felt nervous to speak English when I had the limited time to create and think about the conversation; therefore, I did not want to join the activities sometimes.”

According to the information obtained from the interview question 1, 2, and 3, it could be concluded that a majority of students had positive perception towards the use of drama activities. They liked it when they did the activities with their classmates. Drama activities gave them an opportunity to speak and gave them a chance to use their imagination, facial expressions, body movements, feelings, and emotions while they were doing the performance. Therefore, they felt happy and had fun when they did the

activities. Additionally, drama activities helped create a good environment that minimized the students' anxiety. They could speak English confidently and fluently because they did not worry to make mistakes while they were speaking English. Furthermore, the students could apply the conversation to use in their daily life. Thus, it was found that drama activities were very useful for them.

Summary

This chapter presented the findings with an emphasis on the effects of drama activities. The results were investigated to answer two research questions: (a) to what extent do Grade 9 students develop their English speaking fluency after learning through drama activities and (b) what is the students' perception towards the use of drama activities in a language classroom.

The findings revealed that the participants gained the posttest mean scores of speaking fluency tests higher than the pretest mean scores. Furthermore, the results from a questionnaire and a structured interview pointed out that students' perception towards the use of drama activities was highly positive after learning through drama activities.

In conclusion, mimes, role-plays, and guided improvisation were an effective pedagogical practice that could help students foster their speaking fluency. Additionally, students also had positive views after learning through drama activities. The next chapter will present the summary of the study, discussion, implications, limitations, and recommendations for further research studies.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the findings of the study based on the two research questions and to discuss the implications of these findings. According to the results of the study, recommendations for English language teaching are offered as a way to enhance Thai students' speaking fluency. It concludes with a consideration of the limitations of the research and some recommendations for further studies.

Summary of the Research

The purposes of the study were to (a) investigate the effect of using drama activities in developing students' speaking fluency and (b) to determine the students' perception towards the use of drama activities in a language classroom. This research was a quasi-experimental study with a single group pretest-posttest design. The participants were 42 Grade 9 students selected via convenience sampling method as the researcher had been assigned to teach. The instruments used in this study included pre- and post-speaking fluency tests, lesson plans, speaking fluency criteria, students' perception questionnaire, and a structured interview. Each lesson was 50 minutes long, and the class met twice per week during the eight-week period. The students' speaking fluency rates were measured by comparing their pre-speaking fluency test with their post-speaking fluency test by using a dependent *t*-test. A questionnaire was analyzed to find out their views towards the use of drama activities in the classroom. Furthermore, a

structured interview was also conducted in order to gain more detailed information about their perception towards the use of drama activities in the classroom.

Summary of the Main Findings

The findings of the study can be summarized into two aspects based on two research questions: (a) the students' speaking fluency and (b) the students' perception towards English speaking instruction through the use of drama activities.

Research Question 1: *To what extent do Mathayomsuksa 3 (Grade 9) students at Horwang Pathumthani School develop their English speaking fluency after learning through drama activities?*

The findings of the first research question revealed that drama activities used in this study, i.e., mimes, role plays, and guided improvisation could develop students' speaking fluency. The mean scores and standard deviation of students' speaking posttest were higher than those of the pretest. Additionally, a dependent *t*-test showed that students' mean scores had increased from 2.04 to 3.98 in the first part and in the second part, the mean scores had increased from 1.87 to 3.75 at the end of the course. Therefore, students' speaking fluency had a significant difference at the level of .05.

Drama activities have an impact on students' speaking fluency. This is because the activities encourage students to speak and when they have an opportunity to speak, their oral performance develop. This study is consistent with Ulas (2008) who investigated the effects of drama activities in developing oral skills. The results show that drama activities help the students speak English fluently because the activities provide

them a good atmosphere that promote them to speak with their partners regardless of their language abilities.

Furthermore, drama activities contain daily conversations that focus on the meaning of communication rather than the use of language structure; therefore, the students can speak English smoothly. This study is in line with the study of Pishkar, Moinzadeh, and Dabaghi (2017), who studied the effectiveness of English drama in developing students' speaking fluency and accuracy. It has been found that drama activities do not help boosting speaking accuracy, but they can develop students' speaking fluency. This is because they have an emphasis on spoken language that can encourage students to speak English without fearing of making mistakes.

In addition, in this study the students can develop their speaking fluency through the use of drama activities because drama activities provide real life situations that they are familiar with. Therefore, they are very happy to speak English in each situation. The findings of this study is consistent with Gill (2013) and Iamsaard and Kerdpol (2015) who examined the use of drama activities in enhancing the English oral skills of EFL students. This study claim that drama activities help students to speak English fluently because the students have a chance to speak and learn with the real life situations provided by drama activities in the classroom.

Based on the finding of this study, it can be concluded that drama activities are effective activities that can promote students' speaking fluency. At the end of the course, the students can speak English more fluently compared to the beginning of the course. Additionally, drama activities provide the students the opportunity to practice speaking; hence, the students can speak English confidently.

Research Question 2: *What is the students' perception towards the use of drama activities in a language classroom?*

In the second research question, the students were asked to complete the questionnaire and some of them were interviewed at the end of the course. The findings from the questionnaire revealed that students' perception towards the use of drama activities i.e., mimes, role plays, and guided improvisation were highly positive. The overall mean score of students' perception towards the use of drama activities was at a high level.

Furthermore, in the structured interview, most students stated that learning through drama activities helped them developed their speaking fluency as well as their confidence. Drama activities allow the students an opportunity to use their imagination to act as the role they get in each situation; moreover, they can express their feeling and emotion while they do the performance which make the learning lively and fun. This reflects the statement of Phillips (2003) who states that drama activities give the student the opportunity to use their body movements, gestures, and emotions that encourage students to speak English fluently and confidently.

In addition, in terms of the environment, drama activities help create a joyful and relaxed environment that can minimize students' anxiety; therefore, the students can speak English confidently and fluently. This is consistent with the study of Atas (2014) and Kardas and Koc (2017), who studied the reduction of speaking anxiety in EFL students through drama activities. The results of the studies have revealed that drama activities can reduce students' anxiety to speak English. This is because drama activities provide a friendly atmosphere that fosters students to speak English fluently and confidently. Similarly, Punsiri (2011) also argued that drama activities gave the students

the opportunity to use their imagination to complete the conversations. Consequently, the students are very happy and feel at ease while they are doing the performance with their classmates.

Moreover, the findings also revealed that the students loved to learn speaking English through drama activities because they were beneficial for them. They said that they could apply the conversation in real life situations. This is in line with the studies of Iamsaard and Kerdpol (2015) and Gill (2013) which have found that drama activities can enhance students' speaking fluency because the students have the opportunities to speak English through the situations that they experience in the real world and the students acknowledge their benefits.

All in all, it can be concluded that the students' perception towards the use of drama activities, i.e., mimes, role-plays, and guided improvisation was highly positive. This is because learning through these activities, the students have an opportunity to speak English. Similarly, they have a chance to use their feelings, emotions, and body movements while they are doing the performance. Additionally, the activities help create a friendly environment that can minimize students' anxiety in speaking English. Consequently, the students feel happy and have fun to speak English and they can speak English more fluently and confidently. Moreover, they can apply the activities that they have done in the class to the real situation in their daily lives.

Limitations of the Research and Suggestions for Further Studies

Although this study provides some insights into the implementation of drama activities in a language classroom, the researcher has found some limitations of the study and would like to offer some suggestions for further studies.

1. This study was emphasis on only three types of drama activities: role plays, mimes, and guided improvisation. Further studies may incorporate other types of drama activities such as simulation, drama and language games, acting play scripts, and prepared improvised drama. This is because some students can learn to speak more fluently if they have an opportunity to remember the script before performing their speech through ‘acting play scripts.’ Additionally, students who prefer to spend time to prepare themselves may speak more fluently through ‘prepared improvised drama’ because they have more time to think and create the performance before they do the activities.

2. In this study, the participants were limited to 42 Grade 9 students in English speaking class. Due to the small number, it would be inaccurate to state that the results can be generalized to other population. The results obtained from the study need to be proved by further research in which a wider range of participants in different levels is involved such as primary, college, or university in order to confirm the effectiveness of drama activities.

3. The length of the data collection was only eight weeks which was not a long period. Therefore, further studies might extend the length of data collection period to at least one semester or whole academic year to confirm the results of the study.

4. It should be noted that drama activities are time constraint. The activities require continuity; thus, the hours should be organized for the continuity of doing the

activities. Further studies may probably allocate the time for all students to have an opportunity to speak in front of the class as much as possible.

5. In this study, only 21 students were randomly interviewed through structured interview to gain more information after learning through drama activities. Further studies should probably interview all of the students because it is possible that the rest of the students have something more to say about the use of drama activities.

Recommendations for Teachers and Practitioners

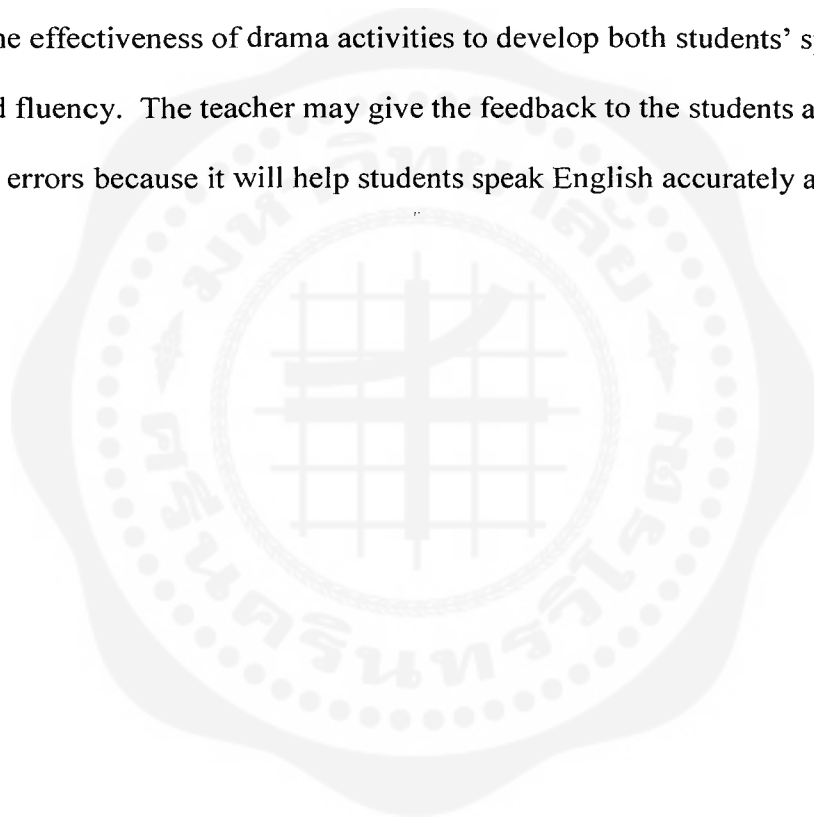
According to the research findings, the researcher would like to offer some thoughts on how to enhance students' speaking fluency. The intention is to guide and facilitate teachers' use of drama activities in developing English speaking in a language classroom.

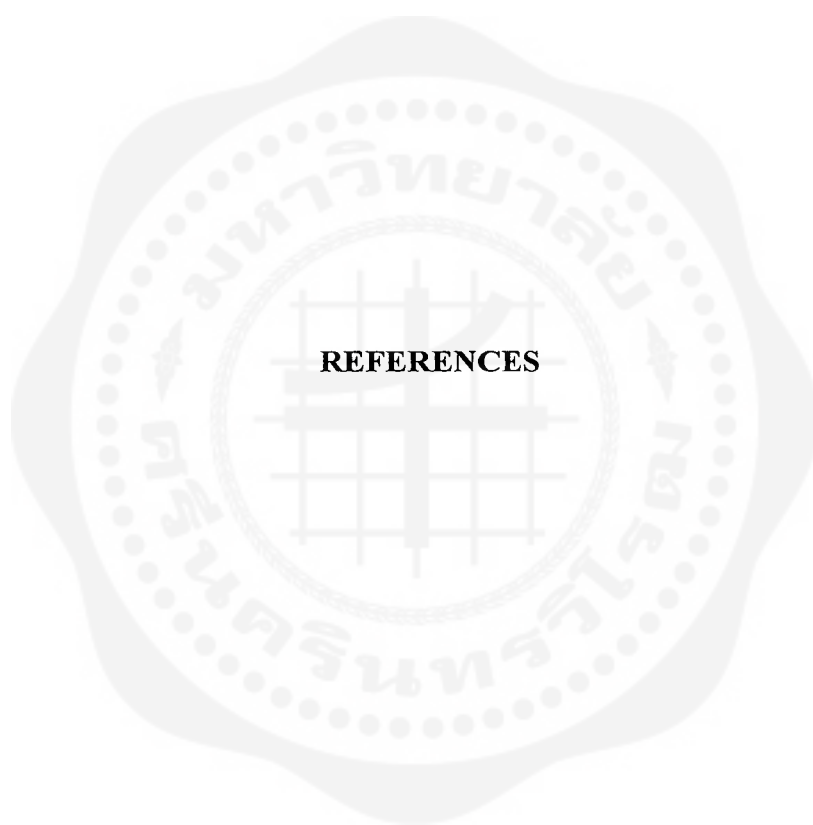
1. Drama activities such as mimes, role plays, and guided improvisation should be utilized as an alternative pedagogical practice to foster students' speaking fluency. As the findings from students' perception questionnaire and the information obtained from the structured interview, the students had positive perception towards the use of drama activities. They felt happy and confident when they spoke English; moreover, they could speak English smoothly because drama activities could minimize their anxiety. Additionally, they looked forward to learning through drama activities in the future classes.

2. Drama activities are student-centered. The students have an opportunity to create their own conversation that is guided by the teacher. Moreover, they can imagine

or pretend to be someone else based on the character they get. On the other hand, in the classroom, the teacher acts as a facilitator to assist the students when they need some help about the assigned task. Therefore, the students are no longer recipients of knowledge and take a passive role in the learning process. Drama activities help them assume an active role when they take responsibilities for their own learning.

3. Accuracy is not emphasized in this study. Further studies may consider examining the effectiveness of drama activities to develop both students' speaking accuracy and fluency. The teacher may give the feedback to the students about the grammatical errors because it will help students speak English accurately and confidently.





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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

An Example of Drama activities Lesson Plan

Appendix A

An Example of Drama activities Lesson Plan

Institution: Horwang Pathumthani School

Course/Level: English, 100-munite class/ Grade 9

Students: 42 students, age of 14-15

Overall course goals:

1. To develop learner' vocabulary and structures to talk about jobs and the interview process
2. To provide speaking practice by taking part in a job interview role-play

Texts/materials: Teacher-created materials

Lesson aim(s):

1. Students will be able to do a role-play based on the dialogue required for a job interview.
2. Students will be able to use the expressions and vocabulary relating to a job interview.
3. Students will be able to improvise the conversation for a job interview.

Procedures Activities/timing	Objective (s)	Materials/ equipment	Step by step details	Interaction/ seating	Contingency plans/other notes
	2. To teach the structure in describing job characteristics: to be (is, am, are) + adjective (friendly, honest, reliable, etc.) 3. To teach other expressions that are used in a job interview		2. Teacher teaches grammatical structure of “to be+ adjective” to describe the characteristic and provides some examples, e.g., “Why do you want to be a?” “Well, I’m honest, ...” 3. Teacher teaches other expressions that students can use in a job interview, e.g., “Please have a seat.” “Yes, that’s right.” “I’m good at....” “Yes, that’s no problem.” “I’m free on Monday, though.” “... if all goes well ...”		
			4. Teacher presents a dialogue about a job interview and ask the students to read and practice speaking all together.	T-Ss	

Procedures Activities/timing	Objective (s)	Materials/ equipment	Step by step details	Interaction/ seating	Contingency plans/other notes
			5. Teacher divides students into two groups: an employer group and a job applicant group. Each group has to practice speaking based on the role assigned.	Ss-Ss	
Post-speaking stage (30 minutes)	To help students involve in a speaking activity and practice their speaking		1. Teacher asks students to work in pairs. Each student has a given role as either an employer or a job applicant 2. Teacher gives each pair a job advertisement. They have to create a dialogue and they are encouraged to use the expressions that they have already learned. 3. Teacher asks some volunteers to present in front of the class.	Ss-Ss T- Ss	1. Teacher explains and demonstrates to students who don't understand 2. Teacher walks around to check the students' understanding and provides students needed.
Closure (5 minutes)	To review the vocabulary and sentences for a job interview		1. Teacher asks for a volunteer to come in front of the class for practicing the structures that have been taught.	Ss-Ss	Teacher encourages students to speak

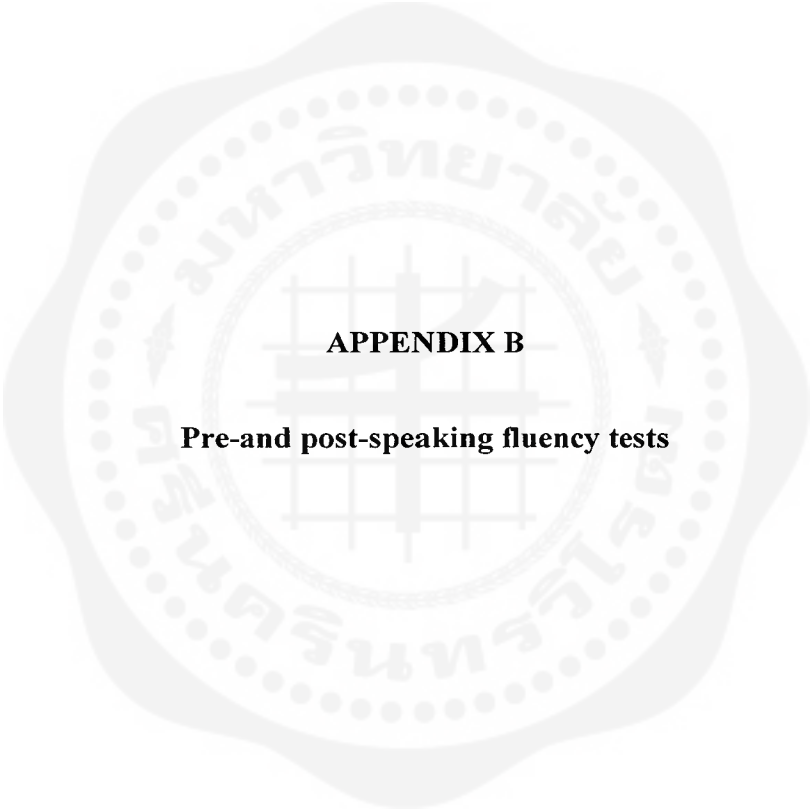
Follow-up, future ideas

A class discussion to observe students' preference about their future careers.

Evaluation:

1. An appropriate expression use for a job interview
2. The participation in the activities
3. Homework (a job interview dialogue)





APPENDIX B

Pre-and post-speaking fluency tests

Appendix B

Pre-and post-speaking fluency tests

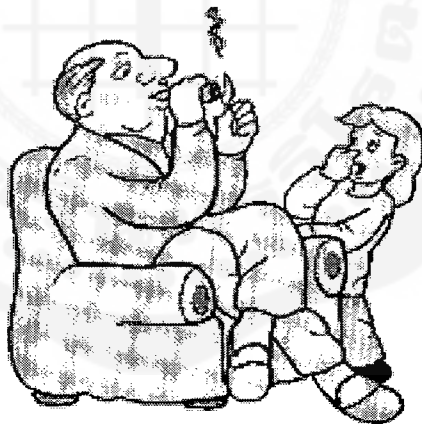
Part 1: Interview

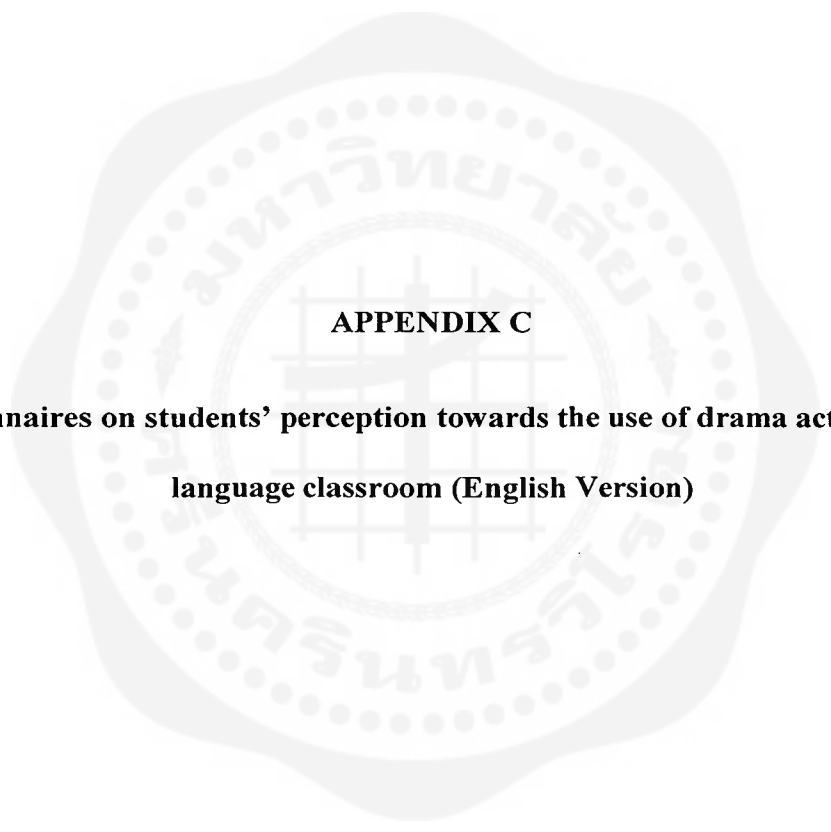
Direction: Answer the following questions.

1. What do you do in your free time?
2. What are your favorite subjects in school? (Why?)
3. What is a good and memorable experience in your life?
4. What do you like and dislike about your home town? (Why? and why not?)

Part 2: Picture description

Direction: What do you think about this picture? You have three minutes to describe and talk about the picture.





APPENDIX C

**Questionnaires on students' perception towards the use of drama activities in a
language classroom (English Version)**

Appendix C

Questionnaires on students' perception towards the use of drama activities in a language classroom (English Version)

- Directions:**
1. This questionnaire has 10 items.
 2. Please read the statements on the left hand side and tick $\sqrt{\quad}$ in a box to indicate the degree of your agreement to each statement.

1= strongly disagree with the statement 2= disagree with the statement

3= neither agree nor disagree 4= agree with the statement

5= strongly agree with the statement

	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
1	Learning through drama activities motivates me to speak English.					
2	I look forward to learning English through drama activities in future classes.					
3	I do not mind working with my friends in a role-play.					
4	I am happy to speak English with my classmates.					
5	I am more confident to speak English when I learn through drama activities.					
6	Drama activities such as role-play and guided improvisation help me speak English more fluently.					

	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
7	I feel at ease and enjoy speaking English through mime activity.					
8	Drama activities are beneficial and make the learning lively and fun.					
9	I have more opportunities to speak English when I learn through drama activities.					
10	Drama activities give me a chance to have a good relationship with my classmates.					

Thank you for your cooperation

APPENDIX D

**Questionnaires on students' perception towards the use of drama activities in a
language classroom (Thai Version)**

Appendix D

Questionnaires on students' perception towards the use of drama activities in a language classroom (Thai Version)

แบบสอบถามการรับรู้ของผู้เรียนเกี่ยวกับการสอนโดยใช้กิจกรรมละครในชั้นเรียน

คำชี้แจง 1. แบบสอบถามนี้มีทั้งหมด 10 ข้อ

2. โปรดอ่านข้อความทางด้านซ้ายมือแล้วทำเครื่องหมาย ✓ ลงในช่องทางด้านขวามือที่ตรงกับความคิดเห็นเกี่ยวกับการรับรู้ของผู้เรียนมากที่สุดเพียงข้อเดียว

1= ไม่เห็นด้วยอย่างยิ่ง

2= ไม่เห็นด้วย

3= ไม่แน่ใจ

4= เห็นด้วย

5= เห็นด้วยอย่างยิ่ง

ลำดับ	ความคิดเห็น	1	2	3	4	5
1	กิจกรรมละครช่วยให้ฉันกล้าพูดภาษาอังกฤษ					
2	ฉันตั้งตารอคอยการเรียนรู้ภาษาอังกฤษโดยใช้กิจกรรมละครต่อไปในภายหน้า					
3	ฉันสามารถทำกิจกรรมบทบาทสมมุติกับเพื่อนได้					
4	ฉันมีความสุขในการพูดภาษาอังกฤษกับเพื่อนร่วมชั้น					
5	ฉันมีความมั่นใจในการพูดภาษาอังกฤษมากขึ้นเมื่อได้เรียนโดยใช้กิจกรรมละคร					

ลำดับ	ความคิดเห็น	1	2	3	4	5
6	กิจกรรมละคร เช่น บทบาทสมมติ (Role-play) และ กิจกรรมการแสดงอย่างทันที (Guided improvisation) ช่วยให้ฉันพูดภาษาอังกฤษได้คล่องมากยิ่งขึ้น					
7	ฉันรู้สึกผ่อนคลายและสนุกสนานกับการพูดภาษาอังกฤษโดยใช้กิจกรรมละครไป					
8	กิจกรรมละครมีประโยชน์กับฉันและทำให้การเรียนรู้มีชีวิตชีวาและมีความสุข					
9	ฉันมีโอกาสดูพูดภาษาอังกฤษมากขึ้นเมื่อได้เรียนโดยใช้กิจกรรมละคร					
10	กิจกรรมละครทำให้ฉันมีโอกาสดูสร้างความสัมพันธ์ที่ดีกับเพื่อนร่วมชั้น					

ขอบคุณที่ให้ความร่วมมือ



APPENDIX E
Structured Interview
English Version

Appendix E
Structured Interview

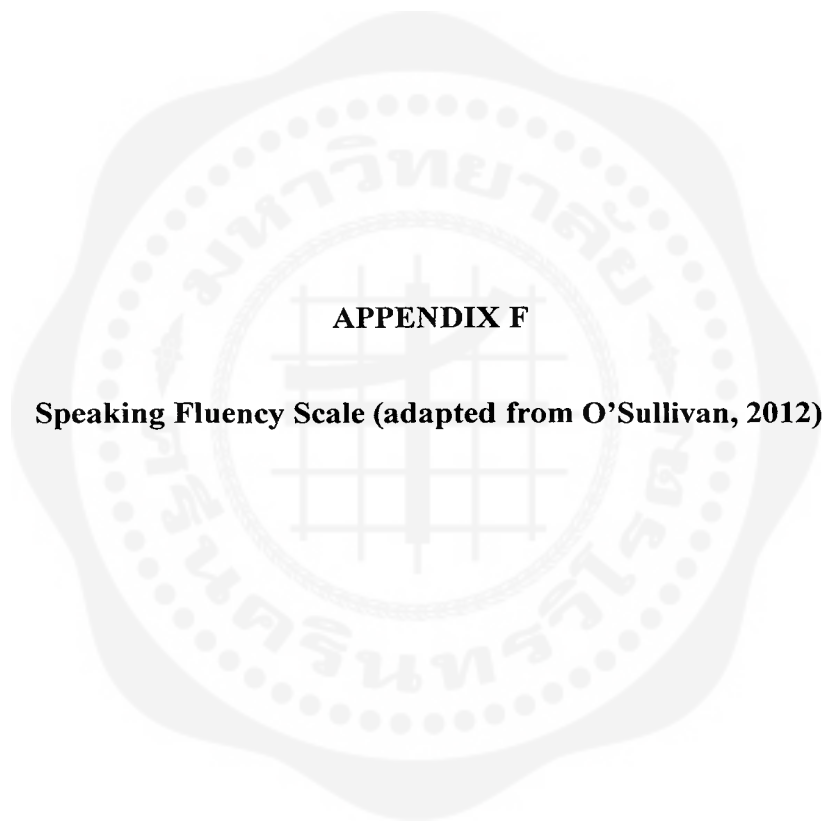
English Version

Direction: Answer the following questions.

1. To what extent do you think drama activities help reduce your anxiety in speaking English?
2. Do drama activities help you speak English more fluently? How?
3. What do you like or dislike about drama activities?

คำถามที่ใช้ในการสัมภาษณ์

1. นักเรียนคิดว่ากิจกรรมละครช่วยลดความกังวลในการพูดภาษาอังกฤษของนักเรียนได้อย่างไร
2. กิจกรรมละครช่วยให้นักเรียนพูดภาษาอังกฤษได้คล่องมากขึ้นหรือไม่ อย่างไร
3. นักเรียนชอบหรือไม่ชอบอะไรเกี่ยวกับการใช้กิจกรรมละคร



APPENDIX F

Speaking Fluency Scale (adapted from O'Sullivan, 2012)

Appendix F

Speaking Fluency Scale (adapted from O'Sullivan, 2012)

Speaking Fluency Scale (adapted from O'Sullivan, 2012)

Category	Level	Description
Fluency	1	Speech is so halting and fragmentary the conversation is virtually impossible.
	2	Speech is very slow and uneven except for short or routine sentences.
	3	Speech is frequently hesitant and jerky; sentences may be left uncompleted.
	4	Speech is occasionally hesitant, with some unevenness caused by rephrasing and groping for words.
	5	Speech on all topics is as effortless and smooth as a native speaker.

APENDIX G

English Speaking Fluency Evaluation

Appendix G

English Speaking Fluency Evaluation

English Speaking Fluency Evaluation

☐ Pre-test

☐ Post-test

Student..... Rater Date

Score	Level	Description
	1	Speech is so halting and fragmentary the conversation is virtually impossible.
	2	Speech is very slow and uneven except for short or routine sentences.
	3	Speech is frequently hesitant and jerky; sentences may be left uncompleted.
	4	Speech is occasionally hesitant, with some unevenness caused by rephrasing and groping for words.
	5	Speech on all topics is as effortless and smooth as a native speaker.

APPENDIX H

Lesson Plans Evaluation

Appendix H

Lesson Plans Evaluation

IOC Results of Lesson Plans

The criteria are: +1 = Appropriate, 0 = Not Sure, -1 = Not Appropriate

Item	Expert' judgement			IOC Mean Score	Meaning
	A	B	C		
1. Objectives					
1.1 The objectives are clear and concise.	+1	+1	+1	1	Reserved
1.2 The objectives are relevant and congruent with the content of the lesson.	+1	+1	+1	1	Reserved
2. Content					
2.1 The content is appropriate for the participant.	+1	+1	+1	1	Reserved
3. Procedures					
3.1 The teaching procedures are clearly stated.	+1	0	+1	0.67	Reserved
3.2 The teaching procedures are in logical sequence.	+1	+1	+1	1	Reserved
3.3 The time given in each teaching procedure is suitable.	+1	+1	0	0.67	Reserved
4. Materials					

IOC Results of Lesson Plans (continued)

Item	Expert' judgement			IOC Mean Score	Meaning
	A	B	C		
4.1 The materials are appropriate for the lesson.	+1	+1	+1	1	Reserved
4.2 The materials are suitable for students' language level.	0	+1	+1	0.67	Reserved
5. Evaluation					
5.1 The evaluation is appropriate with the lesson plan.	+1	+1	+1	1	Reserved

APPENDIX I

Pre- and Post- Speaking Fluency Test Evaluation

Appendix I

Pre- and Post- Speaking Fluency Test Evaluation

IOC Results of Pre- and Post- Speaking Fluency Test

The criteria are: +1 = Appropriate, 0 = Not Sure, -1 = Not Appropriate

Item	Expert' judgement			IOC Mean Score	Meaning
	A	B	C		
1. The tasks are relevant to speaking fluency tests.	+1	+1	+1	1	Reserved
2. The time allocation is suitable.	+1	0	+1	0.67	Reserved
3. The instructions are clear and comprehensible.	+1	+1	+1	1	Reserved
4. The pre- and post- speaking fluency tests are parallel.	+1	+1	+1	1	Reserved
5. The scoring rubric is clear and practical.	+1	+1	+1	1	Reserved

APPENDIX J

A questionnaire Evaluation

Appendix J

A questionnaire Evaluation

IOC Results of a Questionnaire

The criteria are: +1 = Appropriate, 0 = Not Sure, -1 = Not Appropriate

Item	Expert' judgement			IOC Mean Score	Meaning
	A	B	C		
1. Content					
1.1 The questionnaire is able to evaluate students' perception towards the use of drama activities.	+1	0	+1	0.67	Reserved
2. Language					
2.1 Every item is comprehensible and unambiguous.	+1	+1	+1	1	Reserved

APPENDIX K

A Structured Interview Evaluation

Appendix K

A Structured Interview Evaluation

IOC Results of a Structured Interview

The criteria are: +1 = Appropriate, 0 = Not Sure, -1 = Not Appropriate

Item	Expert' judgement			IOC Mean Score	Meaning
	A	B	C		
Question 1: To what extent do you think drama activities help reduce your anxiety in speaking English?	+1	+1	+1	1	Reserved
Question 2: Do drama activities help you speak English more fluently? How?	+1	+1	+1	1	Reserved
Question 3: What do you like or dislike about drama activities?	+1	+1	0	0.67	Reserved



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